

# Use of te reo Māori online

Executive summary

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# Executive summary

## Research overview

### Purpose of the engagement

Archives New Zealand, The National Library, and Te Papa Tongarewa are committed to increasing visibility of te reo Māori and access to taonga Māori across their websites. They have engaged Indigenous Design and Innovation Aotearoa (IDIA) to help them understand how to approach the usage and presentation of te reo Māori across their digital channels to create a welcoming and mana-enhancing experience for reo Māori speakers with varying levels of proficiency.

### Research objectives

- Develop a deep understanding of what makes Māori feel welcomed and that their language and culture is valued when using our online services.
- Understand the level of reo Māori that best suits different learning levels.
- Understand where the inclusion of reo Māori content is most effective and impactful for those browsing our kohinga taonga.
- Understand the quality of whakamāoritanga expected, the voice, and the proportion of translated content in relation to the language proficiency of those using our online services.

### Who we spoke with

- Māori tertiary students spanning a range of ages including rangatahi, pakeke and kaumātua at a beginner or an intermediate level of reo proficiency.
- Rangatahi Māori currently enrolled in whare kura.
- First Language Speakers

### Research approach

- One-to-one interviews
- One workshop/wānanga with self-led digital activities

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## Key findings

### Priority content for translation

- Headings, labels, and navigation
- Kaupapa Māori content that focuses on or references Māori historical events, tūpuna, and taonga and for all things fall into the realm of mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori
- Educator resources to support teachers in recentering histories and narratives regarding te ao Māori.

### Considerations when translating

- Where applicable, begin with whakaaro Māori to avoid sounding too Pākehā
- Ensure high-quality, grammatically correct translations
- Use the most obvious translation of content for greater accessibility
- Avoid excessive use of embellishments to improve understanding
- Use conversational language and common kupu

### The significance of an āhua Māori

Māori desire to see themselves and their Māoritanga reflected in the experience, and feel most comfortable when there is a more obvious āhua Māori to the website consisting of reo Māori and imagery relating to or expressing aspects of te ao Māori.

- Indicators that this is a Māori-friendly space
  - Visual cues such as bilingual signage or posters, menus etc.
  - Imagery which includes Māori interacting in uniquely Māori ways
  - Audible cues such as music or sounds of te taiao
  - Toi Māori, whakairo or kowhaiwhai, and the presence of taonga Māori
  - The types of people who are present and the types of kaupapa
  - The use of te reo Māori

*You don't know how empty you are until you've experienced what it's like to be full. For reo itself, but also to be in a reo environment.*



*If I visit any site, being able to see myself visually represented is important to me. So the graphics are very important to me. If it has the reo, I can feel the āhua of the site, and understand that “OK, this is a safe space for me to move into and to navigate with our Māori worldview as well”.*



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## Key findings

*When we privilege and normalise te reo in those spaces, we can do a lot of healing in terms of fixing that narratives that says te reo is not relevant. We can start healing racism if we gently place it in their environment, and hopefully bring others into our spaces.*



*If you go for something like this, you make it much more accessible to somebody that's learning te reo Māori. I might challenge myself first to read it in te reo Māori, and if I get a little bit caught out, I can just look right there. It just creates a space for everybody to be learning.*



## The amount of te reo Māori content and its presentation

- While rumaki reo experiences were considered the ultimate future goal by First Language Speakers and proficient Second Language Learners, all speakers recognised the immediate value of a dual-language approach which prominently simultaneously displays te reo Māori and English alongside one another.
- A simultaneous dual-language approach offers many benefits. This approach:
  - caters to reo Māori speakers of varying levels of familiarity, confidence and understanding of te reo Māori.
  - better supports learning and reclamation of reo Māori.
  - provides an opportunity to apply and test knowledge and understanding of te reo Māori.
  - creates an opportunity to discover new kupu, sentence structures and ways to communicate ideas and ways of thinking.
- Invites those that are curious about te reo Māori to engage and learn at their level of understanding.
- Phased approach to achieve reo e rua and rumaki experience was understood but a very strong desire to simply start with reo e rua experience.
- The dual-language approach was appreciated and seen as an invitation for non-Māori to engage with te ao Māori through te reo.

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## Recommendations

**Prototype, test and evaluate ideal online reo Māori experiences with a broader segment of our wider community to ensure an accessible and more inclusive digital experience for those accessing your digital services.**

- Speak directly with whānau hauā/tāngata whaikaha to understand how appealing the proposed experience is, create new concepts if required, and learn how to enhance the experience to be even more accessible to a wider audience
- Digitise concepts with a focus on accessibility and responsive design and evaluate the prototypes with Pākehā, Tauīwi, and Tāngata Tiriti