

YSlow - Expires Header and gzip

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When you run your website through the YSlow addon ([YSlow documentation and extension can be found here](#)) you might get low grades for the way your content is transmitted (uncompressed) and how your headers are set (expires headers).

To remedy the first problem (the uncompressed content) just go to the Administration Panel -> Site Menu -> Global Configuration. On the Server page (the third link) just enable the GZIP Page Compression option.

The second item is a bit more complex. The problem is that all static elements should be set in a way that the browser caches the content so that page loading times get reduced after the first visit (and before the cache is getting cleared by the client). So, how does the browser know if the content file has changed/is stale and should be updated? That's where the expiration header comes into play. As a rule of thumb all .pdf .flv .mp4 .mp3 - i.e. real static content should have extremely far reaching expiration headers. Frequently updated content items (such as a slide show) should not be cached at all (with some reservations). The real tricky question is regarding the items that lay in between. Consider your css files (which most developers would add to the far reaching headers section). I happen to update my css quite frequently especially during the initial development/launch phase. The real challenge lies therefore in determining which content really should be considered static.

Once you have that content you can use an extension that sets the header for you. This extension is called " [Expires Headers](#) " (what a novel name :-) and was developed for exactly the same reason that we are discussing, namely: YSlow grade.

On his page there is a .htaccess rule that you might use to address the file types that can't be configured via the plugin.