

# Digital Accesibility



February 29, 2024

# Access notes

## 1 Captions

Access by clicking the caption button at the bottom of the toolbar in your Google Meet window.

## 2 Recording

This session will be recorded.

## 3 Access to slides?

Yes.

## 4 Pacing

Stop me if I'm speaking too fast or if there's anything that I can do to make the experience more accessible.

# Agenda

- Level-setting and defining terms (slides 4-14)
- Word choice and appropriate language (slides 15-18)
- Copywriting and formatting (19-26)
- Image descriptions (27-34)
- Captions (35-38)
- Limitations for each social platform (39-43)
- Web accessibility (44-49)
- Resources and reminders (50-53)

# Defining our terms

# What is digital accessibility?

- Disability-inclusive marketing is built on the premise that marketing should represent and be accessible to all people with or without disabilities.
- Digital accessibility removes barriers that would prevent someone from accessing information.

**Over 1 billion**

**20.3 million**

**1 in 4 adults**

# Definitions of Disability.

The ADA defines a person with a disability as someone who has “**a physical or mental impairment** that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a **history or record of such an impairment**, or a person who is **perceived by others as having such an impairment.**”

# Disability Diversity

# Disability itself is incredibly diverse

- Disabilities are not always apparent.
- Disability is often broken into several broad classifications. Here are just a few examples:
  - Blind or low-vision
  - Chronic health condition (e.g., diabetes)
  - Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing
  - Learning (e.g., dyslexia)
  - Neurodiversity (e.g., on the autism spectrum)
  - Physical (e.g., spinal cord injury)
  - Psychiatric (e.g., depression)
  - Speech

# Assistive Technology

# Accessing your content

- Assistive technology is “any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to **increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities** of persons with disabilities.” Source: ATIA
- Not everyone uses assistive technology or identifies as being a user of assistive technology.
- May not use assistive technology in the way that it was designed for.
- There’s a wide range of assistive technology and there isn’t a 1:1 mapping of technology to disability.

# Assistive Technology

- **Screen reader:** It converts text, buttons, images, and other screen elements into speech or braille.
- **Captions:** Visual display of the audio component of video programming, allowing people to read spoken dialogue, and non-speech information, like music or sound effects.
- **Speech synthesizer:** Text-to-speech systems used with computers that are programmed to include all the phonemes and grammatical rules of a language, allowing words to be pronounced correctly.
- **Color modification:** Allows people to change colors to a more suitable display.

# Word choice & appropriate language

# Be thoughtful about word choice...

**...but don't let it derail the story.**

- There is no common language about how to address disability.
- Some people advocate for the use of people-first language (e.g., people with disabilities),
- while others push for identity-first language (e.g., disabled people).
- While language is important, don't let it be so intimidating that you avoid the conversation altogether.

# Considerations

- **Avoid generalized statements:** Acknowledge people as individuals where possible and when speaking about groups, use words like “some” and “may.” Be mindful of when and how you use the word “community,” to avoid grouping all disabled people into one box.
- **Avoid othering phrases:** Avoid phrases that create an “us vs them” mentality. For example, avoid referring to people without disabilities as “normal users.”
- **Empower, don't glorify:** Be humble when talking about disability solutions, and avoid ‘miracle’ storytelling.

# Ableism and Language

- A lot of words that are considered minor insults today are actually deeply ableist, but widespread knowledge of their origins has faded over time.
- Anyone looking to learn more about ableist language visit [Autistic Hoya — A blog by Lydia X. Z. Brown and Self-Defined.](#)

# Accessible practices for copywriting and formatting

# Hashtags

Instead of this:

**#homelessnessissolvable**

Write your hashtags like this:

**#HomelessnessIsSolvable**

# Hashtags

- #CamelCase makes it easier for **everyone** to read
- It also assists automated screen readers in reading the hashtag

# Formatting - Tabs and Spacing



**Accessible Social**  
@CarlCamelCase



This is the path a »» »» »» »» »» »» »» »» Please stop formatting your screen reader follows »» »» »» »» »» »» tweets to look like this just when you force your »» »» »» »» »» »» for the sake of viral memes. tweets into two columns. »» »» »» »» It's not accessible. Thanks.

9:24AM · Nov 4, 2021

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# Formatting - Punctuation and Lettercase



spongemock

@TheSpongeMock · [Follow](#)



Instagram: "Today we're introducing face filters"

Snapchat: "tODay wE'rE iNTr0DuciNG fAcE FiLteR5"



4:42 PM · May 17, 2017



80



Reply



Copy link

[Read more on X](#)

# Emojis

- Abandoned House
- Old House
- Haunted House
- Derelict House

# Emojis

- 🙌 = Raised Hand
- 🙋 = Raised Hand: Light Skin Tone
- 🙋🏃 = Raised Hand: Medium-Light Skin Tone
- 🙋🏆 = Raised Hand: Medium Skin Tone
- 🙋🏈 = Raised Hand: Medium-Dark Skin Tone
- 🙋🏊 = Raised Hand: Dark Skin Tone

Use [emojipedia.org](https://emojipedia.org) to double-check emoji descriptions before using an icon.

# Emojis

- Use them in moderation
- Double-check their description before using them
- Place them at the end of posts and tweets to avoid clarity issues
- Resist changing the color on emoji with variable skin tones unless necessary for context

# Image Description

# Alt text vs. Image description

- **Alt text:** short, concise text description of an image. While normally brief, alt text should still accurately convey the content and function of an image.
- **Image description:** a more detailed description of an image. Provided in the body of your post. May include details such as the colors, shapes, sizes, textures, and other elements in an image, as well as its context and meaning.

# Alt text vs. Image description



Photo Credit: [Ash Craig](#) via Pexels

- **Alt text:** Pancakes
- **Image description:** A stack of pancakes covered in gooey syrup, powdered sugar, and fresh fruit on a white ceramic plate.

# Alt text tips

- Goal should be to experience spirit of image without seeing it
- **Characteristics**
  - 1) **succinct** — 1-3 sentences max.
  - 2) **objective** – let the reader draw their own conclusions about the image
  - 3) **descriptive** – includes all essential and relevant details of the image

# What to include when writing alt-text

## INCLUDE

- Physical attributions of people (skin tone, hair type, glasses, etc)
- Names of people, when possible
- Emotions (frowning, smiling, crying, etc)
- Text
- Details that are the focus of the image
- Consider asking the person in the photo for an alt-text description if they are comfortable.

## DON'T INCLUDE

- Things that aren't in the image (sexuality, religion, etc)
- Flowery language
- Personal opinions
- Assumptions about people's bodies
- Details that are not the focus of the image

# Alt-text is subjective

- Writing alt-text brings up larger sociological questions
- The writer decides which aspects of the image are essential
- Two writers may have differing opinions about what is essential and what is not
- What is appropriate to include in alt-text may change depending on audience, source material, and context.



**ASK YOURSELF:** What context is this photo being used in?

# AI generated image descriptions

- Use with caution and be sure to edit!



can you please write an alt-text and an image description for this? 



[View other drafts](#) 



Sure, here is some alt text and an image description for the image you sent:

**Alt text:** A cartoon drawing of a doorway with a uniform and slippers on the floor. A welcome mat lies in front of the door.

**Image description:** A cartoon drawing of a doorway with a uniform and slippers on the floor. The uniform is a blue collared shirt with a red tie and a pair of black pants. The slippers are red and furry. A welcome mat with the word "WELCOME" written on it lies in front of the door. The door is half open, and light is streaming out from inside.

# Alt-text and third party tools

## Facebook

- Buffer
- Hootsuite
- Hubspot
- Later
- Meta Business Suite
- Metricool
- Sprout Social

## Twitter

- Buffer
- Hootsuite
- Hubspot
- Later
- Metricool
- Sprout Social

## Instagram

- Meta Business Suite

## LinkedIn

- Buffer
- Hootsuite
- Hubspot
- Later
- Metricool
- Sprout Social

# Captions

# Closed captions

- Can be toggled on and off based on the preferences of the viewer.
- Can also be moved and resized
- Add captions through YouTube
  - Easy and free
  - Instructions [here](#).

# Open captions

- Permanently embedded into a video during post-production and always visible
- Apps available for creating open captions including:
  - AutoCap
  - MixCaptions
  - Clipomatic
  - Kapwing
  - Clips

# Open captions

- Tips for accessibility
  - Use a clean sans serif font like Helvetica or Arial
  - Readable font size and weight.
  - Do not put captions in ALL CAPS.
  - Keep the size of your text uniform throughout the video.
  - Position captions clearly on the screen where a viewer can find them.
  - Place a block background behind the text to improve readability.
  - Stick to black and white for the color scheme.
  - Reduce any motion in your captions.
  - Allow time for viewers to easily read your captions.

# Accessibility Advisories

# Facebook + Instagram

- Facebook and Instagram posts scheduled with **custom image descriptions in Meta Business Suite do not get published** with their custom image descriptions.
- There is no way to add **image descriptions to Stories** on Facebook or Instagram.
- There is no way to add **image descriptions to ads** created on Facebook or Instagram.
- Suggested hashtags on Facebook and Instagram appear in **all lowercase**.

# LinkedIn

- Information added to the **alt text field** on LinkedIn posts with multiple images does not get published with the post via the desktop.
- **Image descriptions** cannot be added to LinkedIn posts with multiple images in the mobile app.
- Suggested hashtags on LinkedIn appear in **all lowercase**.
- There is **no alt text field** for images added to post comments.

# Threads

- The option to see a visible **alt text badge** is only available on mobile.
- There is **no in-app captioning** option for videos on Threads.
- There is **no setting to reduce motion** on Threads.
- There is **no way to prevent GIFs or videos from auto-playing** on Threads.
- There is **no setting to adjust font size or color contrast** on Threads.

# Twitter/X

- Tweets longer than 280 characters require a "show more" cut. The **"show more" cut cannot be detected by some assistive devices** in the feed.
- **Closed captions do not show up** on videos in the Twitter **Android app**.
- There is a glitch on the Twitter Android app where the **visible alt text badge does not show up** for some users.
- There is **no way to add image descriptions to ads** created on Twitter.
- Twitter no longer shows headlines or excerpts for links in tweets, and **some assistive devices are unable to describe the link** or provided open graph image beyond saying, "link, image."

# Web accessibility

# Guidelines

- **Check that the layout is linear and logical.** Section heading levels should be defined in a hierarchical manner.
- Check that the website is **fully accessible via keyboard-only navigation and via screen reader.**
- **Ensure all text is legible with color and font considerations.**
  - Ensure the contrast ratio of all colors used on your site exceeds 4.5:1. This is the difference in brightness between two colors.
  - For fonts, consider what you are using for large text such as headlines, and smaller text which should have improved readability, avoiding the use of all caps.

# Guidelines

- **Ensure hyperlinked text provides context** so people know what to expect when the link is opened.
- **Include labels or alternative text for all buttons and non-decorative images.** Images that are purely decorative should have an empty alt tag (`alt=""`).

# Tips for revamping website

## Project setup:

- Set accessibility goals in the creative brief
- Communicate the importance of accessibility to all stakeholders
- Build a minimum of 2+ weeks into your timeline for accessibility reviews and testing

# Tips for revamping website

## Design and engineering:

- Understand accessible design and development principles:  
<https://web.dev/explore/accessible>
- Develop with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines in mind:  
<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>

# Tips for revamping website

## Testing and launch:

- Conduct an accessibility audit on your site: <https://web.dev/lighthouse-accessibility/>
- Manually test your site using Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and assistive technologies:  
<https://webaim.org/standards/wcag/checklist>
- Consider usability testing with disabled people prior to launch

# Resources and Reminders

# Closing thoughts

Supporting people with disabilities is a 12-month commitment.

- The anniversary month of the Americans with Disabilities Act is in July.
- Disability Employment Awareness Month is celebrated annually in October.
- Showing meaningful representation outside of these two months demonstrates a deeper commitment to inclusion.

# Closing thoughts!

## Accessibility takes time

- Ensuring digital content meets digital accessibility guidelines will mean adding extra steps into your workflow.
- Never too early to start thinking about accessibility

## Practice makes perfect

- Adding digital accessibility standards to your work can feel daunting, but the more you practice, the easier it will get.

## This is the beginning, not the end

- This is a learning journey

# Resources

- For more language insights, explore resources like this [writing guide](#) and [terminology guide](#).
- Great site for deep dives into accessible social: <https://www.accessible-social.com/>
- Proper captioning etiquette and practices: [meryl.net](http://meryl.net)
- <https://all-in.withgoogle.com/audiences/disabled-people/>
- Contrast checker: <https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>
- The accessible social checklist: <https://bit.ly/3ICQ0Zv>



**Thank You**

**COMMUNITY  
SOLUTIONS**