



ACCESSIBLE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE FOR CO-OP & WIL

What's Covered

Images

- Alt Text
- Diverse Representation
- Perception & Body Language
- Readability

Copy

- Fonts and Hashtags
- Animations
- Inclusive Language

Video

- Closed Captions
- Descriptions

Accessibility Tools

- WAVE Browser extensions
- Contrast App
- Hemmingway Editor



IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY

Accessible Social Media Content

Social media content is accessible if it meets the needs universally of all audience members.

This means understanding and implementing communication practices that maximize adaptive technologies, ensuring that published content optimizes accessibility features used by some audience members to interpret content.

It also means considering all perspectives and providing engaging content that is respectful of diverse abilities and needs.

Why is Accessible Social Media Important?

Accessible design is inclusive design.

Being inclusive is the right thing to do and making sure all social media audiences feel that they belong and are being communicated with is important.

Content goals are being achieved if it can be accessed by everyone in a universal way. Good marketing presents information in a clear and inclusive way.

"Over one billion people – about 15% of the global population – live with some form of disability and this number is increasing."

- World Health Organization (WHO)

IMAGES

Alt Text

Include alternative text (alt text) for content with imagery, including GIFs. Alt text is used to describe the image and allows screen readers to read the description out so that students with vision impairment or low vision can consume the content.

Alt text needs to convey the concept and function of the image and not include the words “Image of” or “Photo of” as it is announced as an audio image to screen readers. In the alt text description, include any text on an image, if applicable. To be functional for the student, limit description to 120 characters or less.

Example



Alt Text:

Male student in bright living room, smiling while sitting at desk, typing on laptop with text books open in front.

Tips

- Use plain language without flowery wording
- Keep language concise
- Don't include the words “photo of” or “image of”
- Prioritize important details
- Avoid using acronyms- use long form

IMAGES

By Platform



On Facebook, alt text can be added when uploading an image and can be edited in the upper left corner of the image before posting.



On Instagram, alt text can be added by clicking the three dot menu (...) of your posting, then clicking Edit. On the image click Edit Alt Text to add a description.



To add alt text on Twitter, the words Add Description or +ALT should pop up when you've uploaded an image.



To add alt text on LinkedIn, a button with the words Add Alt Text appears when you've uploaded an image.

IMAGES

Diverse Representation

Content that displays people, whether people in real life or animated, should be reflective of the diversity of student populations served.

Examples



IMAGES

Perception and Body Language

Reflecting a positive atmosphere in imagery is important. Examining images for inferred body language is best practice to ensure that overtones do not convey discrimination or subordination against a person with a disability.

Body language should convey comfortableness, acceptance, confidence and personal and/or professional development.

Examples



IMAGES

Readability - Colours

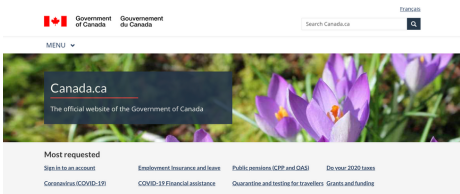
For some people who identify as having a vision impairment, colour may not convey meaning. Instead of emphasizing visuals by colour, add an underline or a hover animation to convey that text is hyperlinked. Using symbols or patterns as an alternative can be helpful as well.

If you do choose to use multiple colours, the ideal contrast between the background colour and text colour is at least 4.5 to 1. People who have colorblindness will have an easier time reading the coloured text, making this accessible and friendly.

To ensure your font colour and background colour have a ratio of at least 4.5 to 1, use WebAIM's contrast checker:

<https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>.

Example



The screenshot shows the Government of Canada website with a high-contrast theme. At the top, the Canadian flag and the text "Government of Canada" and "Gouvernement du Canada" are visible. A search bar is present with the text "Search Canada.ca" and a magnifying glass icon. Below the header, there is a "MENU" dropdown. The main content area features a large image of purple crocuses. Overlaid on the image is a dark grey box containing the text "Canada.ca" and "The official website of the Government of Canada". At the bottom, there is a section titled "Most requested" with a grid of links: "Sign in to an account", "Employment Insurance and leave", "Public pensions (CPP and QAP)", "Do your 2020 taxes", "Coronavirus (COVID-19)", "COVID-19 Financial assistance", "Quarantine and testing for travellers", and "Grants and funding".

IMAGES

Emojis

Screen readers read out emoji graphics so there are some best practices to share around accessible use of emojis.

The best approach is to use emoji's sparingly. Accessible tools and features do not read out multiple emojis side by side that are the same, nor do they read out symbols that form an emoji.

Example

Do this: 😊

Not this: ":-)" OR 😊 😊 😊

As the screen reader and other tools read out a descriptive commentary, embedding emojis in text disrupts the flow of the communication is a practice to avoid.



PRO TIP

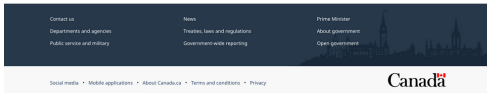
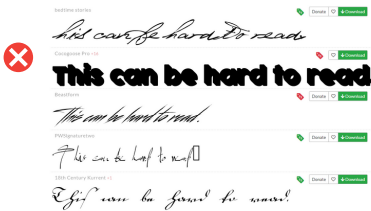
Using emojis as bullets for lists is not a recommended practice.

Readability - Fonts

When writing captions for social media, consider how screen readers will read your copy.

Write copy using plain language while avoiding jargon or slang to make your copy more accessible. Avoid overusing capital letters, as this can be difficult to read and may confuse readers. Place hashtags and mentions at the very end, so readers can focus on your main message without difficulty reading different symbols and pops of coloured text. Last, use a font and font size that are easy to read.

Example



COPY

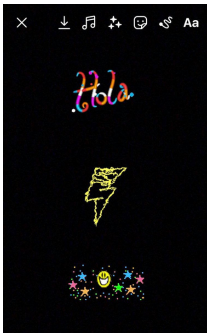
Readability - Animations

Using GIFs and other animations in social media posts and stories are often the first choice a social media app offers. However, use of animations may cause harm for some individuals.

Certain animations can cause epilepsy seizures and may present difficulties for individuals with neurodiversity or visual concerns to process.

Avoid using flashing and bright GIFs that can be visually triggering. Below are examples of GIFs that are not visually inclusive.

Example



Readability - Hashtags

When implementing hashtags avoid overuse. If hashtags are being used, be mindful of upper/lower-case readability as well as hashtag placement within the posting.

For optimal hashtag readability, start each unique word with a capital letter. Screen readers and assistive technology devices find it difficult to read out hashtags with all capital or all lowercase letters.

Further, it is recommended to place all hashtags at the conclusion of a post or post the batch of hashtags in the comments section so all hashtags are contained in the first comment.

Example

Lower case: #workintegratedlearning

Upper case: #WORKINTEGRATEDLEARNING

Better option: #WorkIntegratedLearning



Searching for a #coop this fall? New co-op job postings are being posted #daily! Start your #coopjobsearch now to secure your #2021 opportunity.



Searching for a coop this fall? New co-op job postings are being posted daily! Start your co-op job search now to secure your 2021 opportunity.

#Coop #CoopJobSearch #2021

Inclusive Language

Ensure copy is not promoting ableist or other stereotypes. To learn more about non-ableist and accessibility-friendly language, consider common phrases and language that may be excluding people who do not have that physical ability, is offensive or perpetuates stereotypes.

For example: “Come **see** us at the job fair!” is exclusive of some audience members and can be easily reworded to convey meaning without dismissing certain individuals.

Similarly, many common metaphors and phrases impart a negative insinuation in relation to someone’s gender identity, race, sex, or disability and cause harm in the form of micro-aggressions.

Examples

Instead of this: Did you hear about our social media giveaway?

Write this: Our social media giveaway is now live!

Instead of this: Come see us at the job fair!

Write this: Stop by our job fair booth!

Suggested Resources

<https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210330-the-harmful-ableist-language-you-unknowingly-use>

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/disability-language-work_l_5f85d522c5b681f7da1c3839

VIDEO

Include Video Captions

Each social media platform offers different caption options, each outlined below.

Examples



Facebook has auto-generated captions for posts, however, you do have the option to write them yourself. Captioning is available for Facebook Live as well.



Instagram has automatic closed captioning for IGTV Live and IGTV. Captions can also be created for Instagram stories.



Twitter offers the option to upload an .srt file with a video post.



LinkedIn offers the option to upload an .srt file with a video post.



VIDEO

Add Video Descriptions

Adding a video audio description will allow people who are Deaf, hard of hearing or deafened understand and enjoy video content. In doing this, videos can reach and beneficially impact a larger audience.

Descriptive audio in a video is a second audio track that describe the elements of a video that only display visuals without text- so the 2nd audio serves to communicate what's being shown.

Adding a descriptive transcript is a way to convey meaning to each piece of information being communicated in the video including visual scenery or contextual information.

Example

- Use when an object is shown on the screen that is not referred to verbally but has importance to the information being conveyed.
"smoking gun"

In instances like Instagram Stories, Reels and/or TikTok, add open captioning embedded onto the screen as closed captioning is not always possible to turn on.

Tips

- Describe what the video is about, separating each topic by section
- Can you block the screen and still fully understand what's happening in the video? If not, add described video
- Try to write spoken words verbatim when adding closed captioning

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS

Accessibility Tools

Looking for accessibility tools to add to your browser?

WAVE Browser extensions

Hemmingway Editor

Microsoft Accessibility Checker

Thread Reader App

Cliptomatic

Contrast App

For more information or to discuss please contact

Kathryn Hall, Coordinator

Okanagan College- Student, Graduate and Co-op Employment Centre

khall@okanagan.bc.ca | 250-864-4108

