Document, Digital, and Web Accessibility

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What is Web Accessibility?

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What is Web Accessibility?

Web Accessibility

- Websites, tools, and technologies are designed so that people with disabilities can use them
- Allows everyone to perceive, understand, navigate, interact, and contribute to the web
- Essential for some, useful for all

What is Web Accessibility?

Assistive Technologies

- Tools, devices, and systems that help eliminate barriers for people with disabilities
- Accessibility needs typically fall into four areas: visual, auditory, motor, cognitive

What is Web Accessibility?

DOJ Ruling

- Final rule issued in April 2024
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (WCAG 2.1) Level AA
- Applies to all digital content made available online
- Deadline of April 2026 or April 2027 depending on population

What is Web Accessibility?

DOJ Ruling

- Limited exceptions to the rule:
  - Archived web content
  - Pre-existing conventional electronic documents
  - Individualized password-protected documents
  - Pre-existing social media posts

What is Web Accessibility?

Statistics

- 94.8% of website homepages have detected WCAG failures
- According to the CDC, 27% of adults have a disability
- Approximately 20% of the U.S. population rely on assistive technology to access the web
- 2,281 website accessibility lawsuits were filed in 2023

Web Accessibility

Web Accessibility

Principles of Accessible Web Design (POUR)

- Perceivable – Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive
- Operable – User interface components and navigation must be operable
- Understandable – Information and the operation of the user interface must be understandable
- Robust – Content must be robust enough to be interpreted by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies

Web Accessibility

Content Management Systems (CMS)

- Software that allows users to create, manage, store, and modify digital content without in-depth web design or coding knowledge
- User-friendly interface for building websites
- Allows multiple users to contribute to content

Web Accessibility

Alternative Text

- Sometimes called "alt text"
- Short descriptive text that provides context for images and other visual content
- Allows screen readers to convey the meaning of images to users with visual impairments

Web Accessibility

Alternative Text

- Decorative Images – don't add information to the content of the page.
  - Visual styling like borders, spacers, etc.
  - "Eye-candy"
  - Image is described by surrounding text on page
- Use null alt text so the image can be ignored by assistive technologies
  - Alt=""

Web Accessibility

Headings

- Communicate the organization of content on the page
- Heading levels range from <h1> to <h6>
  - <h1> is top level (most important)
  - <h6> is low level (least important)
- Think of headings like an outline
- Levels cannot be skipped

Web Accessibility

Headings

Example of appropriate use of heading levels

- <h1> is page title
- <h2> is a category
- <h3> is a sub-category

Cybersecurity <h1>

Heading Level 2 <h2>

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

Heading Level 3 <h3>

Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.
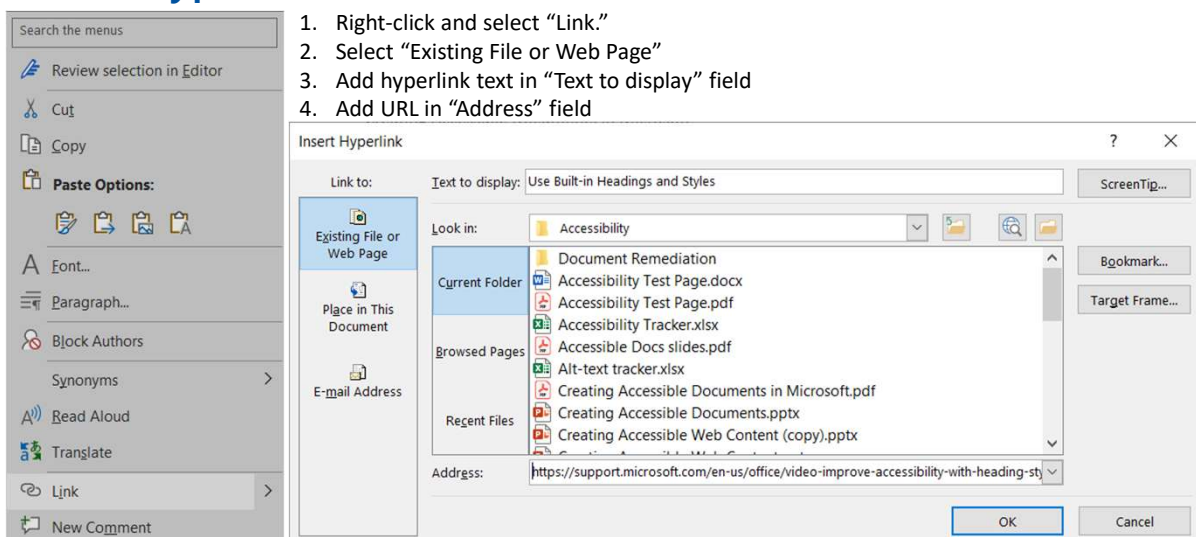
Web Accessibility

Hyperlinks

- Hyperlink text must make sense when read out of context
- Link text must describe the purpose of the link
- Don't copy and paste URL as link text
- Avoid use of "Click here"

Web Accessibility

Colors and Contrast

- Colors must have sufficient contrast to be distinguishable
  - Luminance ratio should be at least 4.5:1
  - Free contrast checker from WebAIM
- Color must not be the only means of conveying information, indicating an action, prompting a response, or distinguishing a visual element

Web Accessibility

Colors and Contrast

Example of sufficient contrast:

Example of insufficient contrast:

**Black text on white background
21:1 = Pass**

Light gray text on white background
1.56:1 = Fail

Web Accessibility

Readability

- Content should be written as clearly and simply as possible
- Avoid technical jargon
- Acronyms must be written in full the first time they appear on a page
- Avoid use of all caps, underlines, bold & italics for emphasis

Document Accessibility

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Document Accessibility

Headings and Styles

- Headings are used to communicate organization of the page
  - Title >Heading 1 > Heading 2, etc.
- Avoid use of bold and italics, use strong and emphasis styles instead

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Document Accessibility

Hyperlinks

- Hyperlink text must make sense when read out of context
- Link text must describe the purpose of the link
- Don't copy and paste URL as link text
- Avoid use of "Click here"

Document Accessibility

Insert Hyperlink in Microsoft Product

1. Right-click and select "Link."
2. Select "Existing File or Web Page"
3. Add hyperlink text in "Text to display" field
4. Add URL in "Address" field
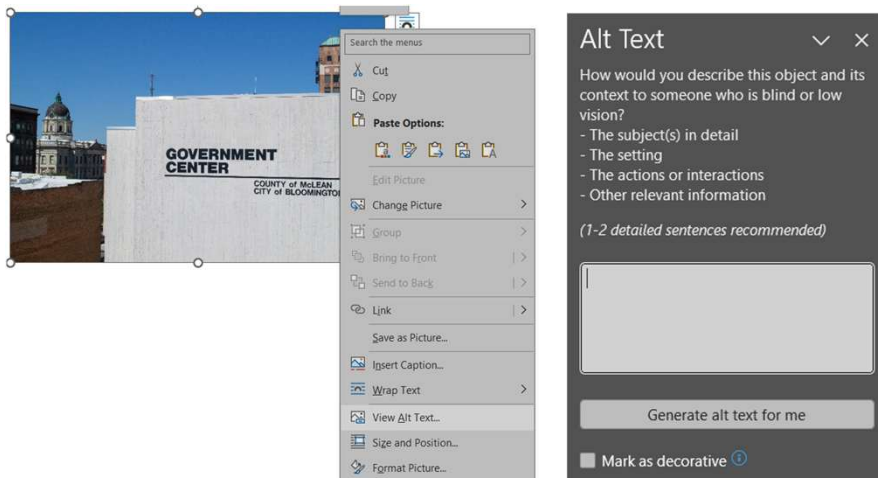
Document Accessibility

Alternative Text

- Required for all graphics
  - Images, shapes, smart art, charts
- Short descriptive text that provides context for images and other visual content
- Can be marked as decorative if image adds no information to the page

Document Accessibility

Insert Alt Text in Microsoft Product

1. Right-click on image
2. Select "View Alt Text"
3. Add brief description of image

Document Accessibility

Colors and Contrast

- Same guidelines as webpages
  - Colors must have sufficient contrast to be distinguishable
  - Color must not be the only means of conveying information
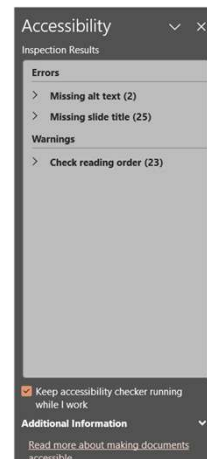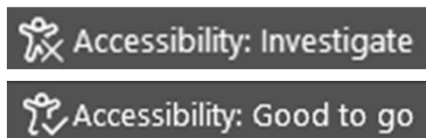 - Utilize free online contrast checkers

Document Accessibility

Accessibility Checker

- Use the Accessibility Checker built-in to Microsoft products
- Conduct manual review

Accessibility for Multimedia

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Accessibility for Multimedia

Audio and Video

- Provide a descriptive text transcript
- Add captions to video
- Audio descriptions of key visual information for video

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What's Next?

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What's Next?

- Have a plan
- Engage key stakeholders
- Educate your team
- Document everything!

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