ACCESSIBLE STARTUPS DIGITAL INCLUSION TIPS

Guidance from the Accessibility Team at WeCo / TSCW21

Take advantage of <u>WeCo's Resources</u> to learn more.

SITES & SOFTWARE

Making websites and software accessible to users who live with disabilities most often means that you follow the basic processes, and employ the existing tools, you learned to develop. This section will walk you through the basics of HTML accessibility.

HTML is a Wayfinding Feature for Assistive Technology

For this reason, it's vital to properly identify the below items as primary navigation points for screen readers, speech recognition software, and more.

- Navigation bars/lists
- Headings
- Footers
- Lists
- Site Maps

How to Create Navigation Points for Accessibility

Firstly, identify the above listed items properly in your CSS. Then remember these basic, but essential, practices:

TITLES/HEADINGS:

DON'T: **Bold** and CAPITALIZE

DO: Properly identify with CSS

HEADING ORDER:

DON'T: Apply based upon "looks"

DO: Apply correct hierarchy

TITLES/HEADINGS

created through font modification aren't accessible.

Out of order heading hierarchy:

Heading 2

HEADING 1

heading 3

Using Existing Accessibility Features

Next, make sure you're using the accessibility features already present in your website or software creation tools. Many people aren't aware that these exist, but they do for most digital products. Below are two examples:

TABLES:

DON'T: Approach tables as purely visual

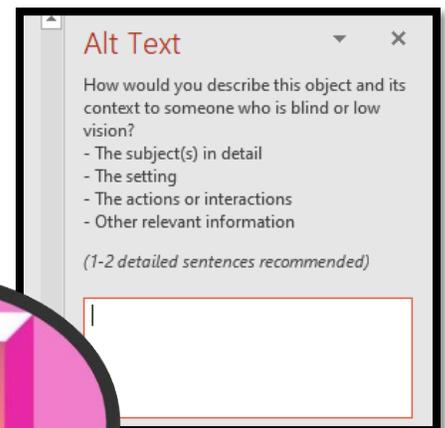DO: Identify "Header Row" to create navigation point

Table	Headings	Marked	Header Row
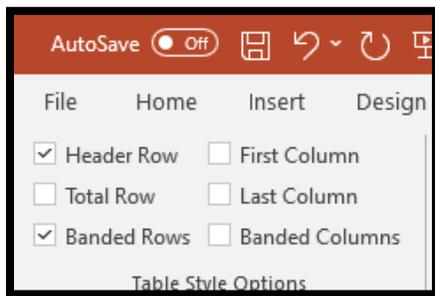
IMAGES:

DON'T: Leave images unidentified

DO: Use the "alt text" feature to describe image

Design as an Accessibility Tool

Not everyone who has a disability uses a device to access your website or software. Sometimes, design considerations are the accessibility tool. Here are a few suggestions to keep in mind:

FOR USERS WITH COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

1. Simple, straight forward text
2. Avoid jargon and anacronyms
3. Limit page clutter: white space is a good thing!
4. Allow user to control moving graphics
5. Information architecture principals
6. Search boxes, topic tiles, helpful drop-down box prompts

FOR USERS WITH HEARING DISABILITIES

1. Success indicators, warnings, etc. should be communicated visually
2. Video captioning
3. Transcripts
4. Help sources should have basics on ASL structure differences

Accessible Forms

Forms are often overlooked regarding accessibility and can be the source of a great deal of frustration for those of us living with disabilities. Here are some basics to keep in mind:

1. **Beware of "repurposing"**: If you do reuse a form, remember to change the field identification on both the back and the front end.
2. **Proper field ID:** As stated above, make certain that people who do not view your form, but relay upon proper code identification, can put information in the right fields.
3. **Check "tab order":** Simply tab through the form yourself and make certain it flows in order, so that someone relying on keyboard navigation will be a good experience.

AUDIO/VIDEO ACCESSIBILITY

Again, when we focus only on one aspect of a medium, we can render it inaccessible to people with disabilities. Here are some tips to keep you on track.

Audio:

Offer alternatives: don't make sound the only way information is received.

- **Visual messaging**: this is like a "success" message when a form is completed, in addition to using a sound.

- **Transcript**: transcripts are a great way to allow people with both hearing and cognitive related disabilities to be able to take in the information in a video, for example.

Video:

- **Captioning (correct ones):** captions convey what is being heard, like dialogue and sounds, so that users who cannot hear them receive the same information as those who do. <u>DO NOT</u> rely upon "auto captioning", as it may not be entirely accurate. Go back and correct it. It takes a bit of time but is something you can figure out how to do with a little research.
- **Audio description**: many people aren't aware that there is a legal requirement to make videos accessible to people who cannot see them. Relying on the audio alone, when the pictures tell part or all the story, is exclusionary. Audio description is something startups and small businesses can do on their own, as they create presentations and film. You can also have it inserted professionally post-production.
- **Transcripts:** providing transcripts is one of the easiest, low-cost, and most helpful things small businesses and startups can provide for their videos. It helps people with sight, hearing, and cognitive related disabilities take in the information in a different way AND in their own time.

ACCESSIBLE PRESENTATIONS: POWERPOINT

PowerPoint is pretty easy to make accessible. Just follow the basic trend you're spotting here in creating accessible navigations points. Below are some solid suggestions:
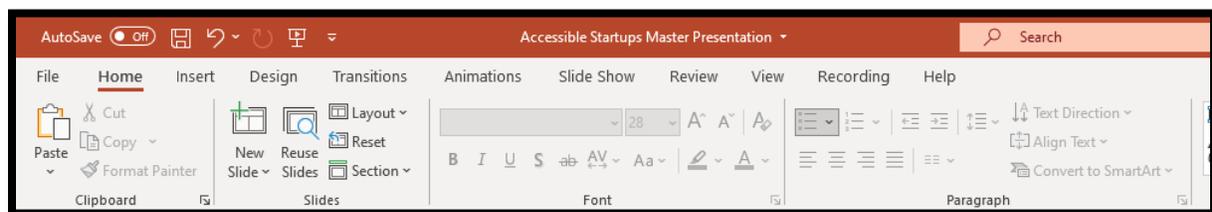
- Use **existing structure in tool bar**—don't strip out text boxes and create your own!
- **Bulleted and numbered lists**
- **Alt tags:** images and charts too
- **Table identification**
- **Litmus Test: "Outline" View**

ACCESSIBLE WORD AND OUTLOOK EMAIL TIPS

Making Word documents and Outlook emails accessible to readers who live with disabilities means that you need to apply structure that devices can detect as navigation points. These diagrams show how to apply a title, headings, bulleted lists, and alternative text tags in Outlook emails, which also translates to similar features in Word documents.

"Format Text" Tab

LIST SETTINGS:
Bulleted, Numbered,
Outline

"STYLES" TOOLBAR:
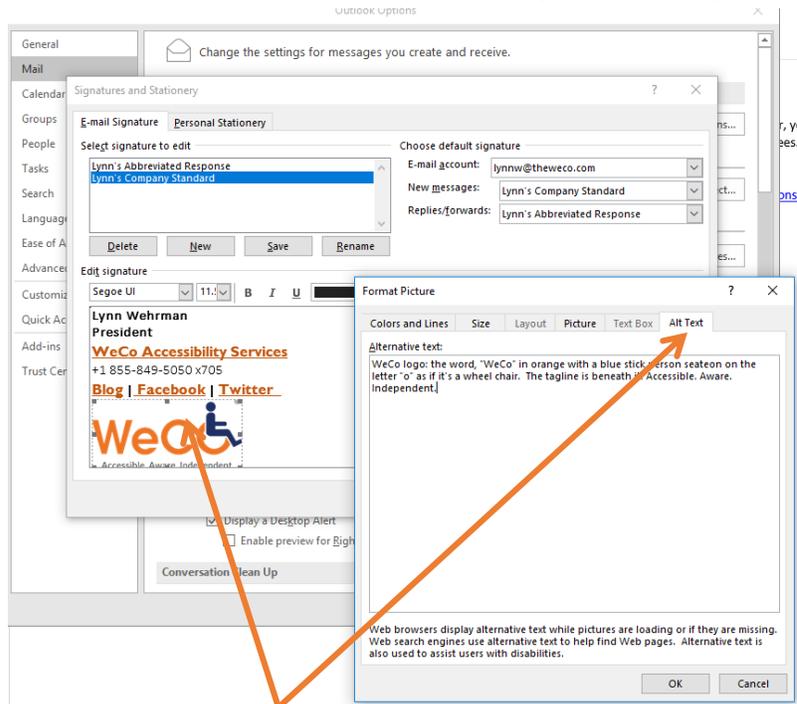Title, Headings 1-2-3

APPLYING STYLES: Highlight the text and select the style, such as "Title".

ALTERNATIVE TEXT:
Right click on image,
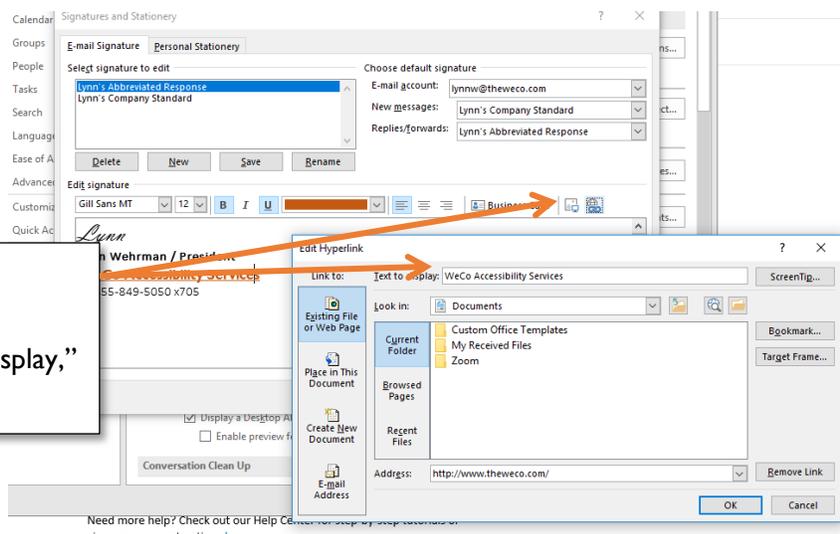select "Edit Alt Text",
write description in box

Signature Line Identification

The first diagram shows how to add alternative text tag to your signature line logo.

Right click on the logo,
select "Picture",
click on the "Alt Text" tab,
enter the logo description,
click "OK"

The below diagram shows you how to properly label a hyperlink in your email signature line.

Place your cursor on the link,
click on the "Hyperlink" icon,
enter a link description in "Text to Display,"
click "OK"

FREE RESOURCES FOR YOU

WeCo is a social enterprise, dedicated to educating the public about digital accessibility and the talents and skills of individuals living with disabilities. We invite you to use our free resources to make your startup digitally accessible and inclusive.

- [Free Accessibility Review](#)
- [Free Accessibility Library](#)
- [Live and recorded webinars](#)
- [Accessibility Events](#)
- [Accessibility MeetUp](#)