Email Accessibility
Email Client, 1 of 2

Software client
Outlook
  • Plain text
  • Rich text
  • HTML

Web/browser
  • Gmail, Yahoo, etc.
  • Email Marketing
    • MailChimp
    • Campaign Monitor
    • Constant Contact
Making Email Content Accessible

Overview
Email accessibility relates to the creation of email content that is accessible, usable, and readable so that the email can reach the greatest amount of readers including readers with disabilities.

Why is this important?
In today’s digital age, email is one of the most common methods of communicating information to a wide range of readers. However, emails that lack accessibility markup prevent readers with disabilities from accessing and reading the email content. Creating accessible emails not only provides access to readers with disabilities, it also improves the overall readability of the email for all readers.

Plain Text Format
• No structure but widely compatible

Rich Text Format
• Follow Word best practices
• Not compatible with every client

HTML Format
• Follow web best practices
Email Client, 2 of 2

Outlook Desktop
Microsoft Word features

Outlook Web Mail
Basic features
Creating accessible email content not only provides access to people with disabilities, it also improves the overall readability of the email content.

Use the same strategies as **Word Essentials** best practices in **Format Text > HTML**.
Creating Accessible Email

Use the same strategies as Word Essentials best practices in Format Text > HTML

Accessibility Tips

• Text Display
• Content Organization
• Bulleted and Numbers Lists
• Alt Text to Images

• Descriptive Links
• Extra Spaces
• Color Contrast
Forwarding Image-Only Email

SUMMIT FOR GAY LATINO MALE COLLEGIANS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2018
10AM TO 4PM
USC UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS,
FERTITTA HALL 125 LL
LOS ANGELES, CA
Avoid Image-Only Email

Creating email to send text on image of the event poster/flyer. Two major drawbacks:

1. Text on image will not be accessible to readers who have visual impairments rely on **screen readers** or **braille writers**.
2. Readers may be **blocking images** from their email client if they use plain text format.

**Best practices**

Provide a text-based equivalent to the information contained in the image. Email with all of the relevant information typed in text then add image with Alt Text.
Summit for gay Latino male collegians

Summit for gay Latino male collegians

Saturday, February 17, 2018
10AM to 4PM
USC University Park Campus,
Fertitta Hall 125 LL
Los Angeles, CA

Description

Summit for gay Latino male collegians event flyer
What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology (AT) are “products, equipment, and systems that enhance learning, working, and daily living for persons with disabilities.”

- Screen Readers
- Magnification Software
- Speech Recognition
- Trackball Mouse
- Keyboard
- Zoom Text
- Braille
- Captions/Subtitles
- Captioned Telephone
- Video Relay Services
What are Screen Readers

Screen readers are a form of assistive technology (AT) software that enables access to a computer, and all the things a computer does, by attempting to identify and interpret what is being displayed on the computer screen using text-to-speech. Screen readers can only access and process live text. Normally used by someone who is visually impaired.
Types of screen readers

**Screen reader program for Microsoft Windows that allows blind and visually impaired users to read the screen either with a text-to-speech output or by a refreshable Braille display.**

**NVDA screen reader** can be downloaded free of charge by anyone.

**Provides auditory descriptions of each onscreen element using gestures, a keyboard, or a braille display.**

**Addrs spoken, audible, and vibration feedback to your device.**

**Screen magnifier for Microsoft Windows that allows you to see and hear everything on the computer.**

**TalkBack Screen Reader**

**ZoomText**
Benefits of using a screen reader

• provides access to someone who does not have useful vision, mobility or has a learning disability to access text on the screen

• offers same level of independence and privacy as anyone else
Text Display

• Text should be clear and easy to read

• Use simple, sans serif fonts, which don’t use decorative details. Examples of sans serif fonts include: Arial, Calibri, Verdana or Franklin Gothic Book

• Avoid difficult fonts, fancy script, or decorative fonts with curly edges

• Font size of 12 points or larger

• Ensure there is enough contrast between the foreground color and background color
Use **Heading Styles** in a logical sequence

- Heading 1 `<H1>` is usually the **title** of the document or a major section. Heading 2 `<H2>` is the next level of heading, first subhead.
- **Heading styles** are Heading 1 `<H1>`, Heading 2 `<H2>`, Heading 3 `<H3>`....Heading 6 `<H6>`
- *Modify ALL Heading Styles before first use*
Example 1: Reading long, dense text documents can be a daunting task for learners

As part of our commitment to excellence through diversity and inclusion, California State University, Northridge (CSUN) strives to ensure that campus communication and information technology is accessible to everyone. The California State University system statement on accessibility is articulated in California State University - Executive Order 1111, in accordance with both federal and state laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act.

Need assistance or have a question not answered here? Please contact the Universal Design Center (UDC) at UDC@csun.edu or, during business hours (Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm Pacific time), at (818) 677-5898.

In this context, “accessibility” means that people with disabilities have access to facilities, to information and to technology.

“Universal design” takes this concept one step further, to ensure that everyone can perceive, understand, engage, navigate and interact regardless of ability or preference.

The UDC supports the campus community in their efforts to make it possible for individuals to learn, communicate, and share via information and communication technology. One way we do this is by assisting the campus community to ensure their information and communication technology is interoperable, usable and accessible, so that individual learning and processing styles and/or physical characteristics are not barriers to access.

The role of the UDC is to help CSUN implement business practices which enable the campus to meet policy standards under the Accessible Technology Initiative Coded Memoranda. What does this mean to me?

Everyone has a part in creating accessible and usable information. The responsibility of creating and maintaining accessible content falls to the entire campus community.

Example 2: Well-structured documents help students organize and process texts

Universal Design Center (Heading 1)

Accessibility Statement (Heading 2)

As part of our commitment to excellence through diversity and inclusion, California State University, Northridge (CSUN) strives to ensure that campus communication and information technology is accessible to everyone. The California State University system statement on accessibility is articulated in California State University - Executive Order 1111, in accordance with both federal and state laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act.

Need help? (Heading 3)

Need assistance or have a question not answered here? Please contact the Universal Design Center (UDC) at UDC@csun.edu or, during business hours (Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm Pacific time), at (818) 677-5898.

What is Accessibility? What is Universal Design? (Heading 2)

In this context, “accessibility” means that people with disabilities have access to facilities, to information and to technology. “Universal design” takes this concept one step further, to ensure that everyone can perceive, understand, engage, navigate and interact regardless of ability or preference.

Universal Design Center Mission (Heading 2)

The UDC supports the campus community in their efforts to make it possible for individuals to learn, communicate, and share via information and communication technology. One way we do this is by assisting the campus community to ensure their information and communication technology is interoperable, usable and accessible, so that individual learning and processing styles and/or physical characteristics are not barriers to access.

The role of the UDC is to help CSUN implement business practices which enable the campus to meet policy standards under the Accessible Technology Initiative Coded Memoranda.

Shared Campus Responsibility (Heading 3)

Everyone has a part in creating accessible and usable information. The responsibility of creating and maintaining accessible content falls to the entire campus community.

As part of our commitment to excellence through diversity and inclusion, California State University, Northridge (CSUN) strives to ensure that campus communication and information technology is accessible to everyone. The California State University system statement on accessibility is articulated in California State University - Executive Order 1111, in accordance with both federal and state laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act.
Outlook Heading 1 – Modify Style

- Modify heading styles to match your preference
- Repeat for Heading 2 to 6

Modify Style
Email Marketing Headers/Styles

**Mail Chimp:** Templates have heading levels 1-4 to organize the content in a hierarchical structure. Headings are located under the “styles tab” in WYSIWIG.

**Campaign Monitor:** There are heading levels 1 - 3. In addition, creators can choose from normal text, numbered or bulleted lists, and block quotes.

Refer to [Email Marketing Accessibility](#)
Bulleted and Numbers Lists

• Use list to organize information by ideas or processes
• Use Outlook’s built-in functionality to create
  • Bulleted List (order of list items does not matter)
  • Numbers List (order of list items does matter)
Visual Challenge

What’s the best way to make images accessible to everyone?
Alternative or Alt Text

• A written description of images and/or objects that can be read by a blind or low vision using screen reader technology.

• Screen readers and other assistive technologies can’t convert images into words/texts.

• Captions are universal and accessible for everyone.

• “Image of...”, “photo of...” is not needed.

• Recommend brief descriptive text within 8 to 80 characters long.

• Best practices for accessible images

Tiny turtle eating a ripe strawberry.
Add Alt Text to an image in an email

1. Right-click the image, select **Format Picture**, select **Layout & Properties**, and then select **Alt text**.

2. Add a detailed description of the image, and why the image is important to your message.
Outlook Client: Adding an image in Email Signature (Alt Text)

Outlook 2016

1. After adding Alt Text to an image, select the entire email signature to copy.
2. Open email signature box (File | Options | Mail | Signatures) then paste in signature box.

Outlook 365

1. Open email signature box (File | Options | Mail | Signatures).
2. Add an image, right-click to select Pictures then Alt Text tab.
Office 365 Outlook Web App (Alt Text)

1. Insert Image
2. Right click on image to select Insert alt text
3. Add alternative text to image
4. Run Accessibility Check

- Insert Image
- Right click on image to select Insert alt text
- Run Accessibility Check
Office 365 Outlook Web App Email Signature (Alt Text)

- At the top Settings
- Your app Settings > Mail
- Layout > Email Signature

Add alternative text to image
Descriptive Hyperlinks, 1 of 2

**Not Accessible** – vague and redundant

**CSUN News**

**Woman of the Year for the 18th Senate District**

California State University, Northridge President Dianne F. Harrison has been named Woman of the Year for the state’s 18th Senate District by Sen. Robert Hertzberg. Read more

**Important Dates for CSUN Commencement 2019**

For graduating seniors, CSUN GradFest 2019 will take place from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., March 13 and 14, at the CSUN Campus Store Complex. The event gives students the opportunity to make their final preparations for graduation, including renting caps and gowns, information on ceremony schedules, reserving guest tickets, purchasing souvenirs and taking graduation portraits. Read more

**Blinky the Friendly Hen: 40th Anniversary Exhibition**

Comprised of a Relic Chamber, a Blinky Theatre, Blinky book editions (1979-2019), chapel, gift shop, stained glass, and historical artifacts, this fourth retrospective exhibition celebrates historical and contemporary works relating to four decades of the Blinky phenomenon. Read more

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**Accessible** – descriptive and unique

**CSUN News**

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- Read more, click here, email me, or continue is vague and redundant
- Full URL text [https://www.csun.edu/universal-design-center](https://www.csun.edu/universal-design-center) (raw URL may not make sense to screen reader users or others, so make the link text descriptive i.e. Universal Design Center)
Descriptive Hyperlinks, 2 of 2

• Link text should clearly identify the target of each link.
  Good link text should not be overly general.
    • Make sense when read out of context.
    • Describe the destination (document name, website).
    • Be unique for unique destinations.
    • Do not use click here or read more or continue.
    • Do not use different link text to refer to the same resource.
    • Do not to use the same link text to refer to different resources.

• Best practice is to **bold** or **underline** links.

• Do not use color links as the only method to convey important information.
Avoid Extra Spaces, 1 of 2

- Screen readers will read blank or multiple spaces created using the space bar, empty line, empty tab, empty paragraphs or carriage returns as “Blank”.
- This can be very irritating for someone using assistive technology to listen multiple blank characters and may assume they’ve reached the end of a document.
- Use Outlook’s built-in formatting, alignment, tab stop position in paragraph options to create whitespace instead of repeating blank characters.
Turn on the ruler when composing an email message

In Outlook, a horizontal ruler is available across the top of the message body to help align text, graphics, tables, and other elements.

1. From the Home tab, in the New group, click New Email.
2. In the Message window, click Customize the Quick Access Toolbar, and then click More Commands to display the Outlook Options dialog box.
3. In the Choose commands from list, click Commands Not in the Ribbon.
4. Choose the Ruler command, and then click Add.
5. The ruler is added to the Quick Access Toolbar on top.
Avoid Extra Spaces, 2 of 2

Example: to create three columns in 1 line, set Tab stops:

1. Select Ruler to set indents
2. Set Tab Stops
Provide descriptions if using color to convey meaning

Example 1: Inaccessible color highlights in red
May 11-17, 2019

Example 1: Accessible with a description
May 11-17, 2019 (final exams)

Example 2: Inaccessible table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments (overdue in red)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 2: Accessible table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Overdue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 3: Inaccessible color shape

Color identical may not be recognized by colorblind users

Example 3: Accessible color and number
Check Color Contrast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bad Examples</th>
<th>Good Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red on black is bad</td>
<td>Yellow on black is good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue on orange is bad</td>
<td>Black on orange is ok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red on green is bad</td>
<td>White on green is good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey on purple is bad</td>
<td>Aqua on purple is ok</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Download [Colour Contrast Analyser](https://www.webaim.org/tools/color-checker) onto your computer (PC/Mac) to ensure accessible contrast or use an online contrast checker from WebAIM.

- WCAG Level AA requires a contrast ratio of at least **4.5:1** for regular sized text (12 or 14 pt. font) and **3:1** for large text (18 pt. font).

- [Coblis Color Blindness Simulator](https://www.coblis.com/color-blindness-simulator)
Attachments

• Files attached to an email must also be accessible.
• Use a descriptive and distinct file name.
• Videos in emails must be captioned.

Unclear / Vague File Name
• 00123345667987.pdf
• Resume.pdf
• Reports.docx
• Excel_2019.xlsx

Descriptive File Name
• Accessible_Email_Infographics.pdf
• Nguyen_Van_Resume.pdf
• UDC_Captioning_2018.docx
• UDC_Budget_2019.xlsx
Accessibility Checker

Office 365 Outlook Client

Office 365 Outlook Web App

Outlook 2016/2013 - No Accessibility Checker
Regardless Email Communication Programs

Email Accessibility relates to the creation of email content that is accessible, usable and readable so that the email can reach the greatest amount of readers including readers with disabilities.

or any email communication programs

Best Practices

Email Format
- Plain Text
- Rich Text
- HTML Format

Attachments
- Descriptive Filename
- Videos (transcript or caption)

Images
- Alternative Text
- Caption

Content Organization
- Headings
- Lists
- Numbers

Text Display
- Font styles
- Color

Links
- Link Text
- Link Display
- Underline Links

PeopleSoft Comm Gen

MailChimp

Campaign Monitor

Constant Contact

SUNlink

Jobs, Internships, & More
General Email Checklist, 1 of 3

All Email
• Is the email free from content that flashes more than 3 times per second?
• Is the order of the content accurate and logical?
• Can text be resized and considered readable when magnified to 200%?

Headings
• Is text intended to act as a visual heading styled with the built in heading tags (H1 through H6)?
• Do heading styles follow a logical hierarchical progression? (Do not skip)
• Does the Heading text accurately describe the sectional content?
General Email Checklist, 2 of 3

Lists
• Are all visual lists created with the built-in list styles?
• Are multiple lists in the same email properly grouped / separated?

Links
• Are links distinguished by a method other than color? Bold or underline.
• Can all link text be understood out of context? If not, does generic link have sufficient content?
General Email Checklist, 3 of 3

Color

• Does any information conveyed with color have a non-color method for understanding?
• Does all text (with the exception of logos) have a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 or greater no matter the size

Images

• Do all images conveying information have alt text that provides the same level of understanding a visual user would gain?
• Do all decorative images have “ “ in the alt text field?
• Have all multilayered objects been flattened into one image and does that image use one alternative text description for the image. Use SnagIt screen capture.

Refer to HHS.GOV Email 508 Checklist
Resources

• UDC Email Accessibility

• Creating Accessible Emails: Outlook 2013 & 2016

• Improve Email Accessibility

• Improve Image Accessibility in Email

• Add Accessible Tables and Lists to Email

• Accessibility Challenges in Email
  an infographic about accessible email with text-based equivalent

• Email 508 Checklist by HHS.GOV
How can we help you make a difference?

Universal Design Center Offers
- Online, self-paced training
- In-person training each semester
- Consultations
- Tools and Services

Universal Design means design for everyone