Creating Accessible PowerPoint Presentations
QUICK GUIDE

How to Create Accessible PowerPoint Presentations

- The correct use of slide layouts is the most significant thing you can do to ensure that your content is accessible to screen reader users.
- Choose a slide theme or template from the Design tab.
- Choose a theme with good contrast and a simple background.
- Create all slides using the pre-built slide layout.
- Use the Slide Master to make changes to slides within the presentation.

Font, Font Size, and Color

- Use recommended fonts such as: Times New Roman, Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, Helvetica, and Courier New.
- Select a font size no smaller than 12 point.
- Avoid the use of text shadow.
- Do not use color as the only means of conveying information.

Slide Title

- Create a slide title using a "Title Holder," **not** a "Text Box."

Outline View

- Use the Outline View to enhance accessibility.

- The Outline View panel contains the text outline of the content that appears in each of your slides.
- This view ensures the content on the slides is logically sequenced, and that slide titles are unique and meaningful and the reading order is appropriate.
- Alternative text for images is not part of the default layout and will not be included in the Outline View.

Graphics or Images

- Select a slide layout that incorporates an "image placeholder."
- Do not place image directly into the slide. Instead, use "image placeholder."
- Remember, all graphics require an alternative text description.

Alternative Text

- Alternative text conveys information about the graphics or images on each slide for screen reader users.
- You must provide alternative text for all slides that contain graphics or images.
- Alternative text should summarize the purpose of an image as briefly as possible for people with visual impairments.
- Alternative text should not exceed 125 characters.

- Illustrations created from several smaller images must be grouped to form one object, and this object requires one alternative text statement.
- For decorative images that do not convey unique content, apply empty alternative text by entering "".
- If the graphic or image does not have alternative text, it will be skipped by a screen reader.
- To add alternative text to an image, right click on the image, select Format Picture. In the Format Picture sidebar, select Size, Properties Icon, and chose Alt Text. Enter appropriate alternate text in the description field (not the title field).

Tables

- Tables should be created within PowerPoint using the "Table" feature.
- Data tables should be simple.
- Table headers should never be empty.
- Tabular data should not be displayed through the use of tabs and spacing.
- Tables should have logical relationships between data.
- The best way to create accessible data tables is to design rows and column headers.
- Header cells must be marked up with <TH>, and data cells with <TD> to make the table accessible.

Converting PowerPoint to PDF

- PowerPoint is a good format for face-to-face presentations, but it is usually not the best format for content on the web. The file can be large, and users must either have Microsoft Office or a special plugin to view the file.
- **PDF is often the best format to display PowerPoint presentations on the web**. The file size is relatively small, distracting slide transitions can be removed, and almost everyone has a PDF reader.
- Most importantly, heading structure and other accessibility information will remain intact if you export the file correctly.

NOTES: Any time you are preparing an electronic document that will be posted online or distributed via email, whether it is an internal document or an external document, follow the Section 508 guidelines. Use this Quick Guide and the HHS checklists to help ensure compliance with the guidelines.

Questions?

Ask the 508 remediation expert at **jnr5@cdc.gov**.