



Creating and Delivering Accessible Presentations

An accessibility resource prepared by Includia
Prepared for Commitment to Opportunity, Diversity and Equity (CODE),
a program of The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce.



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Introduction

As Manitoba's leading business association, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce is committed to providing support and resources for our community to help ensure greater diversity and equity in Winnipeg and beyond.

The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce's Commitment to Opportunity, Diversity & Equity (CODE) represents a movement of business leaders, diversity and inclusion practitioners, community advocates and those with lived experience, coming together to achieve three critical goals:

- 1) Expand awareness of the opportunities for and benefits of greater diversity and inclusion in the workplace;
- 2) Increase the number of organizations in Winnipeg committing to enhance inclusion and equity in their workplace; and
- 3) Increase measurable actions taken by workplaces to further these goals.

CODE acts as a professional development resource through its Resource Hub and events that provide a range of learning opportunities. Businesses that want to implement diversity and inclusion strategies in their workplaces will find learning opportunities to get started and develop their knowledge and skills.

Ensuring that accessibility is a priority when developing and delivering presentations for employees, volunteers, customers, and the public is an important measurable action that workplaces can take to increase diversity and inclusion.

Purpose

CODE provides organizations with tools, resources, and pathways to build capacity within their organizations. This document, developed by Includia, will assist organizations in people's knowledge of and access to tangible strategies to improve accessibility efforts and experience the business benefits of doing so.

Most of the information can be applied to the planning, preparation, and delivery of both in-person and remote presentations.

This resource includes information to help organizations create presentations that (1) meet *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (AMA) compliance requirements for the Information and Communications Standard and (2) follow best practices and guidelines using accessible print materials, incorporating common audio and video technology and assistive technology.

(1) AMA Information and Communications Standard requirements:

- a. The Accessibility Standard for Information and Communication is the third regulation under the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (AMA). The purpose of the standard is to remove and prevent barriers that exist digitally, in print, or through interactions with technology or people. This standard applies to all organizations in Manitoba with one or more employees.
- b. Organizations need to consider the ways in which participants interact with or access information they provide. If an organization receives an accommodation request or a request for information to be provided in an alternate format, it needs to consult with the person making the request.

The goal is to identify a support or a format that removes the barrier and provide the accommodation or alternate format in a timely manner. No additional charge can be made to the person making the request (greater than what you would charge for the information to someone who did not make the request).

(2) Accessible information and communications best practices:

- a. Guidelines in this resource go “beyond compliance” and include information from current research and various sources not related to AMA or other legislated compliance requirements. We have included suggestions from individuals with lived experience, common accommodation requests, additional hints and tips, and best practices from organizations recognized for creating accessible content and presentations.
- b. [Additional accessibility resources](#) referenced in this document or suggested for further research or training purposes are included at the end of this document.

Whether you develop and deliver presentations for internal employee or volunteer training, sales or customer presentations, for conferences or other public audiences, it’s important that you understand how to create and present accessible content. It’s also important to understand how to address requests and requirements to provide information in alternate formats.

This document can be used as a reference guide and as a resource in training content developers and presenters within your organization. Some information might be more applicable to organizations that have more resources available, but all information is relevant to helping you consider accessibility when creating presentations.

To request this document in an alternate format, contact The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce:

Phone: 204-944-8484

Email: code@winnipeg-chamber.com

If you would like to connect with Inluzia directly, please visit:

<https://www.inluzia.com/>

Planning Accessible Presentations

It's important to begin considering accessibility requirements at the design stage. In this section, we'll review several things to consider before creating presentation content.

What is the purpose of your presentation?

Presentations are created for a reason. They typically require consideration of the message or purpose of the presentation, which can affect how the presentation is designed and delivered.

Is the presentation:

- Intended to provide or share information only?
- Meant for training or education purposes?
- Meant to demonstrate a task, skill, or technique?
- Meant to persuade, inspire, or motivate participants?
- Intended to build goodwill or community engagement opportunities?
- Intended to present, promote, or sell a new idea, product, or service?

There may be multiple purposes for a presentation, but there's typically a primary goal. Presentation choices will be affected by the presenter, the audience, and the resources available. To ensure success of your goal, consider accessibility in all of these areas as you plan your presentation.

Who is your audience?

Who will be viewing or participating in your presentation? Will it be employees or volunteers from your organization, current customers or potential clients, or members of the public?

Will persons with disabilities be participating? Will you be aware of specific disabilities, accessibility barriers, and accommodation requests of participants? Based on current statistics, one in four people identify as living with a disability that affects their day-to-day functioning. This suggests that people with disabilities may be viewing or participating in your presentation, whether they identify as disabled or whether or not they request an accommodation.

Most disabilities and chronic conditions, including those that impact how people receive information, are invisible. Be aware that you might not know what accessibility barriers your audience could be impacted by. Plan and prepare your presentation being open to diverse possibilities. For example, some participants might not be able to:

- see or hear information;
- respond verbally to questions or activities;
- move easily or at all;
- process information quickly; or
- process information in certain formats.

Ensuring plenty of advance notice and including clear instructions on what to expect and how to request accommodations should be described in announcements or invitations to any presentation. Addressing accommodation requests can provide some indications of barriers for individuals who request alternate formats or supports prior to the presentation. However, it's best to ensure all content is designed to be as accessible as possible and not rely on accommodation requests to apply accessibility features.

Ideally, you will be creating presentations designed to meet current accessibility standards (for example, WCAG 2.1 AA guidelines) and to address individual accommodation requests as needed.

What accessibility barriers and accommodation needs must be considered?

Different types of presentations can present different types of barriers.

Question	Accessibility planning considerations
<p>Will the presentation be viewed independently (for example, self-directed by user)?</p>	<p>Consider the technology requirements, flexibility, and accessibility of features required by participants</p> <p>Consider the length of the presentation and the ability for participants to save and return to content for further review or to pause and continue the presentation later</p> <p>Design for easy independent access – consider the source content format and the presentation format; anticipate requests for alternate format; consider accessibility of text, image, video, and media choices; consider security or permission requirements to access (for example, avoid elaborate Captcha tests or multiple username, login, or security steps for access, wherever possible; consider time limits for access to the presentation)</p> <p>Ensure contact information and steps to access technology support are included (and provide real-time support, wherever possible)</p>
<p>Will the presentation be delivered (in-person or remotely) with a presenter guiding the flow and timing of information?</p>	<p>Consider current accessibility recommendations for content to be developed and delivered in person, including any interactive portions of the presentation.</p>

Question	Accessibility planning considerations
	<p>Guidelines for in-person and remote presentations are described in this document, with additional accessibility resources included.</p>
<p>Will the content be delivered as a one-way sharing of information or will participants be invited or expected to interact during the presentation?</p>	<p>Ensure that participants understand the platform, presentation format and agenda, and technology requirements available for participation.</p> <p>Be prepared to provide accessible real-time communication accessibility features that can support a broad range of user needs.</p> <p>Real-time communication features and tips for accessible participant interactions are included in this resource.</p>
<p>Will the presentation be recorded for later viewing or will it be delivered live?</p>	<p>Deciding whether to record a live event and make it available to participants afterwards is a decision you should make as you're planning the event.</p> <p>Participants need to be made aware that the presentation will be recorded. Include this information in the presentation announcement or invitation. Remind participants again at the beginning of the presentation or event.</p> <p>Provide clear and specific information regarding how the recording will be used. Is the recording for archival purposes, provided to participants only, or intended for wider distribution afterwards?</p> <p>Describe how the privacy of participants will be ensured, particularly if participation is requested or expected. For example, you can offer options for participants to not be filmed or recorded. If the presentation is remote, you can offer options for participants to turn off their video. Ensure that participants can ask questions anonymously or directly to organizers before or during the event or in a private chat, rather than needing to ask them aloud or publicly.</p>

Question	Accessibility planning considerations
	<p>Recording sessions can discourage participation, as people might not want to have their questions or comments recorded. This is especially important if you're addressing sensitive topics or requesting personal anecdotes.</p> <p>If you are hosting a speaker series or a panel discussion, you might want to choose to record the "presentation" portion of an event, and then turn off the recording for a Q&A portion following the presentation.</p> <p>Considering and having clear answers to these questions will influence whether participants feel comfortable participating in your event.</p>

What resources are available to help ensure accessibility?

- Include **persons with lived experience** throughout the process (including design, development, testing, delivery, and evaluations).
- Ensure **your budget is adequate** and includes consideration of accessibility requirements (for example, trained and skilled designers and developers, translators, captioners, and technology support; accessible development tools; assistive technology).
- **Designers and developers** – Remember to begin with and save accessible source content, in anticipation of requests for content in an alternate format.
- **Translators and captioners** – Consider the need to train, hire, or subcontract sign language interpreters; individuals able to provide accurate live captioning, closed captioning, and transcripts; as well as those able to provide technological support during program development and delivery.
- **Reviewers and testers** – Engage content and format reviewers and testers to verify accuracy of information, ensure acronyms are spelled out at first use, ensure links are clear and working, ensure images have alt-text descriptions (and ensure the presenter is comfortable describing and delivering in an accessible manner).
- **Accessible development tools and technology** – Consider what options are available and what's needed to ensure creation and maintenance of accessible presentations.

Preparing Accessible Presentations

After determining the purpose and general guidelines for the presentation, arranging the development team and delivery method, and ensuring that accessible resources are available, create checklists to ensure that accessibility features are included in the preparation stage.

- Develop guidelines and checklists for both internal and external developers and presenters.
- Prepare your presentation using a format that can be converted easily into alternate formats, or used with assistive devices or communication supports.

Accessible Format

Your first step is to choose an accessible source application. Use formats that allow users to adapt the presentation to meet their needs (for example, MS Word, PowerPoint).

Maintaining source presentation content in an accessible format, including plain text transcripts for any video scripts, means that you are likely to have accessible or alternate format available upon request. Some participants will request or need print material in alternative formats such as large print and braille. If you give participants basic accessible digital material in advance, then you usually don't need to provide additional alternative print formats.

Use built-in accessibility features and checkers

- Be familiar with and use common accessibility features built into common presentation formats (including effective alt-text for images, content outlines and reading order, style tags and headings, meaningful hyperlinks, unique slide titles, use of font, colour, and contrast).
There are several links in this document to information and training resources regarding how to use Word and PowerPoint accessibility features.
- Use built-in software accessibility checkers (including step-by-step instructions on how to fix common or identified accessibility errors).
- Anticipate requests for alternate format and ensure you save a plain text or accessible Word version of content, if possible.

Avoid inaccessible formats

Avoid creating or providing material in formats that users cannot adapt, including PDF and protected Word documents. Even properly formatted and tagged PDF documents are not accessible to users with low vision or cognitive disabilities. PDFs tend to have limits on whether users can adjust the font size, line spacing, or colours, or even use the Zoom feature.

Accessible Content

- When designing content to be presented, consider the visibility of content (if online or size of venue and screen).
- When adding images, consider how you will describe those images, both in alt-text descriptions and when delivering the presentation.

- Review content to ensure plain and accessible language (acronyms, terminology, etc.). Some spellcheck or accessibility checker tools include options to check for grammar and reading level suggestions.
- Use inclusive language and representative examples and images. This resource includes some suggestions on where to access photographs and graphics that reflect diverse and accessible audiences.

Accessible Text

Font style and size

- Use simple, familiar, and easily-understood fonts. Avoid complex or ambiguous fonts (including script or heavy use of italics).
- Use clear, wide, sans serif fonts (for example, Arial, Calibri, Verdana) as opposed to narrow, light, or serif fonts (for example, Avenir Condensed, Freestyle Script, Bodoni).
- Use a limited number of typefaces, fonts, and font variations. Use no more than two or three different fonts in a presentation or document. (NOTE: Each time you encounter a new typeface or font, your mind must build a map or model of the characters and patterns to scan and interpret words and process meaning. This requires cognitive effort and time. If the typeface is already familiar, this effort is reduced. This familiarity and consistency goal applies to the layout of slides as well. Using a template and being consistent on most slides (headings, subheadings, body text, image location) is most easily understood.
- Use a font size of 12 point and larger for Word, and 20 point and larger for PowerPoint.
- Typical PowerPoint font format example:
 - Slide title text: Arial, 40 pt, bold
 - Heading text: Arial 36 pt, bold
 - Subheading text: Arial 32 pt, bold
 - Body text: Arial 24 pt, plain
- Avoid font sizes smaller than 10 pt (example) on handouts or supporting documents. If the “fine print” of a document is meant to be read and understood, make it legible as well.
- When necessary, use bold (**example**) for emphasis instead of italics or underlining text. In some presentations, if each slide is not text heavy and includes ample white space, then bolding more text is acceptable.
- Avoid using all caps (EXAMPLE) where possible, except for brief titles or headings only.
- Understand that large sections of text in all caps or with bolding, underlining, or italics can be difficult to read.

Use of colour

- Use appropriate colour contrast (e.g. black and white). This includes contrast between text and background colors, and between colors in graphs. Even though presentations are different than web pages, there are guidelines for accessible contrast for web pages that you can use.
- Make sure that all information conveyed with colour can also be conveyed without colour (for example, use text as well as colour to describe information,

direct attention to part of an image, chart, or graph or indicate which visual elements need to be selected).

- If you have control over the room you're presenting in and whether lighting will be on, off, dim, or bright, this information can help you decide the best contrast to use. For example, if presenting in a bright room, it's recommended to display dark text on a light background. If presenting in a dimly lit or darkened room, it's recommended to display light text on a dark background. In either case, make sure the font choice is bold or wide enough, but with ample space between characters and words.
- If distributing print documents, use a matte or non-glossy finish.

Spacing

- If you find yourself editing the format or content to fit more information onto a slide, you're probably including too much information. It's better to create more slides with less information on each slide.
- Blocks of text over one sentence in length should:
 - Be no more than 80 characters wide (across the slide);
 - Left aligned (not fully justified);
 - Have adequate line spacing (at least ½ the height of the text) and paragraph spacing (1.5 times line spacing is preferred over single spacing);
 - Not require horizontal scrolling if the text size is doubled (for example, the participant chooses to Zoom to 150-200% for viewing online).

Slide animations and transitions

- Avoid automatic slide transitions.
- If your slides contain animations, ensure that they are brief and do not distract from the most important content on the page.
- Ensure that viewers reviewing the presentation online have access to control how and when slides transition.

Tables

- Use Insert > Table steps to properly insert a table.
- Use proper Table Headings and check the Header Row check box to indicate to a screen reader which content is a heading.
- Do not merge cells in a table.

Hyperlinks

- Ensure that any hyperlinks within documents or presentations use language to describe where each link leads and what content will be opened.
- Avoid using "Click here" or "More info" or similar vague wordings as link descriptions.

PowerPoint Outline and Notes panels

- Each PowerPoint slide should have a unique title, for screen reader navigation.
- Even if similar content is continued onto two or more slides, modify the slide title somewhat (for example, include – 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3 in the title itself).

Even slides with visuals only should have a slide title assigned, since they will be used in the Outline and for screen reader navigation, even if not visible on the slide.

- In the Outline panel, place the slide content in a logical order for a screen reader to read screen content.
- In the Notes panel, avoid repeating slide content and avoid adding detailed image or chart descriptions.

Accessible Images

There are two main types of images in presentations:

- Functional images
- Decorative images

Functional images

Functional images include information required for the presentation. They can add value to presentation content, if they can provide information more clearly or quickly than text. Functional images:

- Illustrate information or data to help people understand it;
- Explain a complex concept (for example, in a flow chart);
- Illustrate items being discussed (for example, images of people, places, or things being referenced in the presentation); or
- Convey branding (for example, corporate logos).

Decorative images

Decorative images are images added solely to add visual interest or break up text-heavy content. They do not contain information essential to the message of the presentation.

When selecting the content of images to use, consider the following:

- Images can distract people. They can also make the page take longer to load (for the presenter and the remote viewer).
- Make sure you use and select images to add value to your presentation and its message and purpose.
- Where possible, ensure diverse representation of people and settings.
- Where possible, use relatable images and examples for your audience. Avoid cultural or situational images or examples that don't reflect your audience. Engaging individuals with lived experience when preparing your presentation can help ensure that content is relatable.

When selecting the format of images to share, consider the following:

- Make graphics as simple and clear as possible. Avoid using movement and special effects that cannot be controlled or prevented by the user.
- Where possible, set the "Text Wrap" wrapping style of non-text elements as "In line with text."

- Avoid images that are text-heavy (for example, word maps, organizational charts).

Creating alternative text (alt text) for images

All images used in a presentation should include alternative text (or alt text). Creating and linking alt text to an image makes it possible for people using assistive technologies to access the information conveyed by an image.

Alt-text descriptions will vary, depending on whether the image is functional or decorative.

When you're writing alternative text for a functional image:

- Describe the image as if you were describing it to someone over the phone;
- Use as few words as possible;
- Limit the alt-text description to no more than 140 characters (including spaces), wherever possible;
- If there is text embedded in the image, use that text as alt-text only if it provides enough context – otherwise, write a difference description that provides more or clearer information; and
- Don't use the words "image of..." or "graphic of..." to begin your description – screen readers do this already.

If the image is decorative only and doesn't provide any more information than what is already provided in the text on the page, descriptive alt text is not needed.

Decorative images don't require additional information to make them accessible or visible to search engines. For example, if you're adding a stock image or graphic to add visual interest only, select the "Mark as decorative" checkbox (in Word or PowerPoint) for decorative images.

Accessible Video and Audio Content

If you plan on using videos, podcasts, or other media during your virtual event, consider the following to ensure you're selecting or creating accessible videos and audio content.

- Content:
 - Introduce or summarize video and audio content before and after presenting with a summary/overview and end with a review of the most important points
 - Ensure representation of your audience where possible
 - Avoid triggering content, where possible, or include trigger warnings at the beginning of the content
 - Ensure that content can be paused and reviewed by the audience (by the presenter, if necessary, or by the audience, if being viewed independently)
 - Use plain and clear spoken language, where possible
 - Ensure that captions and transcripts are accurate before sharing

- Format:
 - Choose videos that have closed captioning (CC), and ensure that CC is ON when you play the video
 - Ensure adequate colour contrast and good lighting, where possible
 - Avoid flashing or strobing lights
 - Provide transcripts upon request

Captions for videos can be generated two different ways: using voice-recognition technologies, or by having a human captioner live transcribe the session. When possible, use videos with clear captions that you have reviewed for accuracy.

YouTube auto-generates captions for English videos that do not have closed captions produced by the creator. PowerPoint enables presenters to turn on a subtitle function which automatically generates captions for all viewers. These captions are rarely 100% accurate and should be previewed or edited for accuracy.

For podcasts or audio clips, ensure that you provide transcripts. Some podcasts publish their own transcripts, while others you might need to create or request ahead of time. Transcripts should be available upon request to all participants before you begin an audio clip.

Captions are sometimes referred to as subtitles. If the language of the subtitles matches the language of the audio, then subtitles can be used as captions.

Accommodation Requests

In the promotional material or invitation for a presentation, include the following:

- an accessibility statement that lets participants know you are committed to creating an accessible event or presentation;
- a description of included or planned accessibility features, as well as any known or anticipated barriers (to the facility, with online technology); and
- contact information offering various methods of contact (for example, email, phone, social media). Ensure that queries, comments, and requests for accommodation are responded to promptly.

On the registration form, include options for participants to indicate any accessibility requirements and accommodation requests. Indicate what accessibility features are already being provided (for example, live captioning, ASL interpretation) and provide checkboxes for additional requests (for example, slides in advance, transcript following the presentation). Always include an Other option for participants to make individual requests.

Ensure you provide enough time (between the presentation announcement or invitation and the presentation itself) to allow for accommodation requests to be made and to be arranged. For example, you can indicate generally that accommodation requests will be met wherever possible, or you can request that registrations including accommodation requests are made “two weeks in advance” or a timeframe that will help ensure that you can meet accommodation requests.

Delivering Accessible Presentations

Before you deliver a presentation

- Where appropriate, share the presentation, in accessible format, in advance on a website, Intranet location, or email it to individual participants upon request.
- Have a large print version of all materials and presentation available (at least 20 point), with a transcript available of all audio-visual materials.
- Rehearse the presentation, including additional time for:
 - Describing any included images;
 - Questions regarding language and terminology or examples used;
 - Questions regarding real-time accommodation requests; and
 - Questions or issues with technology, including assistive technology.

Check on accessibility features and technology

- Check that accommodation requests have been addressed before beginning presentation.
- Check that accessible technology is working properly before beginning – audio, captioning, chat, Q&A process, ideally, have a support and/or technology assistant to address chat and technology questions so the primary presenter is not distracted from the presentation delivery.
- Check in with interpreters or captioners to ensure they have everything they need. If there will be an ASL interpreter at your session, provide your content to them in advance. Explain acronyms, terms, names, etc. that you will use.
- Remember potential accessibility issues with participation requests or activities, including question and answer periods. For example, it might be difficult or impossible for some people to use an online polling feature, to arrange sticky notes on a virtual or physical board, or to change locations quickly or easily (for example, for in-person or online breakout sessions).
- Work with participants and service providers to ensure that important details are taken care of. For example, ensure that a remote captioner can hear the audio clearly, an in-person captioner has the connections they need, and a screen is provided for participants to read the captions.

Ensure sound quality is good

- Use a microphone whenever possible. Some people might need the audio electronically, even in a small room. This includes remote captioners, sign language interpreters, and people using hearing aids. Provide hearing loops where possible.
- Ensure the microphone is positioned so it picks up your voice well. If you ask, “Can everyone hear me okay?” or “Do I need to use a microphone?” some people might be uncomfortable saying that they cannot hear well enough.
- Ensure that all speakers have access to a microphone (for example, have multiple or individual microphones available for a panel presentation, in-person: have portable microphones available for audience questions, online: ensure mute is available for use and control to avoid distractions and to ensure audio when needed).

Introducing a presentation – “What to expect”

The following are some ideas that you can incorporate at the beginning of your presentation. Most ideas are relevant to all types of presentation, while some suggestions are relevant only for an online or hybrid presentation.

- Welcome the participants. (Optional: Open with a land acknowledgement.)
- Introduce yourself and your pronouns. Most online platforms allow participants to add and edit their name and pronouns. (Optional: For online presentations, some presenters and participants prefer to include a verbal description of what they look like. There are pros and cons to including this option and, if used, it should not be a mandatory expectation for either presenters or participants.)
- Set the tone by inviting participants to participate in the way that feels most comfortable to them.
- Inform participants whether the event will be recorded. If so, describe clearly when, where, how, and by whom the recording will be made available and used.
- Give a quick inventory of how to use the different features of the platform (for example, chat box, hand raising) and housekeeping items (for example, turn mics off when not speaking, option to turn camera on or off).
- Inform participants how questions and comments should be shared (e.g. Q&A period at the end, live in the chat).
- Inform participants on how to access links or other materials referenced during the presentation (e.g. email, chat, website).
- Provide an overview of the event (e.g. with both a visual agenda and verbal outline of the event).
- Be sure to identify planned breaks (approximate timings).
- Keep to the schedule as much as possible and inform participants ahead of time of any changes.

Limit distractions

- Ask participants to turn off mobile phone notifications, and presenters to turn off system notifications.
- Have a “point person” whose contact information you can share, who is responsible for monitoring chats, messages, and questions during the event. Ensure this person has the power to interrupt the event (by signalling in person or by using available online settings (for example, a co-host in Zoom). Remember to announce this person's role to participants at the beginning of the event.
- Provide available real-time communication accessibility features that can support a broad range of user needs. These technology features can include improved audio and video quality (including high-quality microphones, high-resolution video) audio captioning, live transcription of spoken words as well as live description of non-spoken activities (if necessary), alternate formats of interaction (such as sign language interpretation, text messaging or live chat, and real-time user support).

Be visible

- Be visible when you talk so participants can see your face, whether in person or on screen. This helps people understand and hear you better, including those who are hard of hearing or who might be unfamiliar with the language you're speaking.
- Ensure good lighting and that nothing is blocking or distracting the audience's view of your face. Address the audience or the camera – whenever possible, avoid looking down at notes or looking back at the screen to read projected material.

Speak clearly

- Speak clearly and slowly. Avoid speaking quickly, so participants and interpreters can better understand you and keep up.
- Pause and check in with participants, especially between topics. When you ask if anyone has questions, ensure you pause for enough time for everyone to respond. Some people with cognitive disabilities will need extra time to form their thoughts into words.
- Always repeat participant questions before providing a response.

Describe information clearly

Even the most technically accessible PowerPoint presentation can still include barriers if the presenter neglects to describe information in a clear and accessible manner. Remember to apply these accessible techniques when presenting:

- Avoid using jargon, acronyms, or slang, particularly if you're not familiar you're your audience. Explain or define the first use of a term or acronym rather than assuming your audience will be familiar with it.
- Give specific directions if you want to direct attention to something specific on the screen. Instead of providing general directions (for example, "as you can see" or "if you look closely"), include more specific directions (for example, "on the right-hand side of the slide" or "in the second column in the table").
- Not everyone understands humour or irony or social cues in the same way. Use images for this purpose sparingly. If you do use images for humour or to make a point using irony, don't assume it will be understood by everyone. Take time to explain to participants what the message or point of the image is.
- Avoid using cultural expressions or idioms (for example, "raising the bar" or "shooting for the moon"). These expressions, or sarcastic comments, can be confusing, misunderstood, or interpreted literally by some people (for example, neurodivergent, with cognitive disabilities, with cultural differences).

Describe all relevant visual information

- If you're using an image to convey information, make sure you provide a description as the image appears on the screen. Essentially, you need to provide live "alt text" for participants, which will be conveyed verbally and through captions.
- Allow plenty of time for participants to read a slide. Don't rush through or skip slides without explaining why (for example, mention if you'll be returning to the

content later, if the content was already reviewed in advance of the slide, or if the information is for reference only and how it will be made available following the presentation).

- When appropriate, describe what is happening in the audience during the presentation. For example, if you ask people to respond in person by a show of hands (“if you’re able”) or by clicking the “Raise Hand” button, describe the response to your request (for example, “about half of you raised your hand”).

Engage participants

Most platforms offer some form of engagement for participants such as:

- Q&A toolbar
- Polling function
- Chat box
- Participation buttons (e.g. Raise your hand, yes/no buttons)
- Microphone (e.g. For participants to speak up and verbally comment)

A few things to remember when using any of these virtual participation activities in your event:

- The chat feature can be distracting or difficult to navigate for participants using screen readers. Consider turning it on only at designated points in your session to minimize interruptions.
- When responding to a question or comment in the chat, the presenter should always read the comment aloud so that all participants can follow along.
- If someone submits a question or comment anonymously, ensure you do not mention their name as you respond.
- Provide multiple means of participation. For example, if you’re asking a question, mention that people can respond in the chat or use the Raise Hand option to respond verbally.

Provide check-ins and breaks

- Check in with audience members at regular intervals and natural breaks in the presentation, or when it seems like it might be helpful (a technology or presentation assistant or chat monitor can be helpful here).
- A typical timing for breaks is a minimum of one 10-minute break for every 2 hours of presentation (for example, for participants to go to the washroom, drink a glass of water, respond to urgent emails). However, you should encourage participants to take a break whenever they feel the need (similar to a “relaxed performance” atmosphere).

After you deliver a presentation

- Request an evaluation or feedback for the presentation, with accessibility questions incorporated in any surveys.
- Have print copies of an evaluation available and provide the option to submit feedback online, anonymously or with contact information if participants want to request a response.

- Save and distribute recordings and transcripts of the presentation, as described prior to the event.
- Ensure follow-up where needed (for example, respond to outstanding questions, email presentation or transcript if requested, add individuals to a mailing list, if desired).

Accessible Presentations Checklist

Planning

- Be clear on the purpose and goals of the presentation.
- Know your audience. Anticipate potential accessibility barriers and accommodation requests.
- Plan the format and content, including audience engagement, for how the presentation will be delivered – in-person, remote, hybrid, with a presenter, viewed independently.
- Consider the need to record the presentation and be clear on the privacy needs and parameters for use of a recorded version.
- Include persons with lived experience in the planning and ongoing development stages.
- Be aware of and follow established accessibility requirements, guidelines, and standards, and ensure that you have the tools and resources to meet requirements.

Preparing

- Use appropriate font styles and sizes.
- Ensure that you've used headings and style tags to your document to help organized the heading and subheading structure.
- Ensure that the colour contrast of text (and images and videos, if used) is high contrast.
- Left-align text.
- Limit or avoid use of all caps, bolding, italicizing, and underlining, except for small areas of text, where needed (for example, short headings, titles of books or articles).
- Ensure that your hyperlinks are informative and describe where they will take users.
- Correctly format lists in your document (using the List style tag).
- Make your tables accessible.
 - Define the header row.
 - Do not use colour only to convey meaning.
 - Do not leave any cells, rows, or columns empty (add N/A or a dash to empty cells).
 - Include a caption and title for your table to provide more information and explain what the table is for.
 - Do not merge or split table cells.

- Add alt text and captions to all images, including photographs, gifs, charts, and graphs.
- Avoid slide animations and transitions.
- Check to ensure your presentation is accessible (check it with built-in accessibility checkers, and have it reviewed and tested by others, preferably those with lived experience – for clear and accessible format and content).
- Ensure all videos have appropriate contrast, use closed captioning (that has been checked for accuracy).
- Ensure all accommodation requests have been reviewed and addressed prior to the presentation.
- Ensure all accessible options have been applied, test, and are working well prior to the presentation.

Delivering

- Where appropriate, share the presentation in advance. Upon request, email the presentation to individual participants, in the format requested.
- Where possible, have a large-print version of all handouts available, along with a transcript of all audio and video materials.
- Rehearse the presentation, including image descriptions.
- Check that accommodation requests have been addressed.
- Check that accessible technology is working properly.
- Check in with support team contacts (for example, interpreters, captioners, technology support) to ensure they have the information, tools, and resources they need.
- Ensure that sound quality is clear and is working with any assistive technology being used.
- Introduce the presentation clearly, describing what to expect and reminding participants of key information (for example, privacy, recording, use of technology, access to information, how to ask questions, anticipated schedule and breaks).
- Be visible to participants.
- Speak and describe information clearly.
- Engage participants inclusively and respectfully.
- Provide check-ins and breaks, including the opportunity for participants to take breaks when needed.
- Request feedback following the presentation.
- Ensure follow-up with participants where needed.

Additional Accessibility Resources and References

Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) Information and Communication Standard and related government resources

Government of Manitoba resources

- [Manitoba Accessible Information and Communication Standard](#)
- [Information and Communication Standard Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [How to Create an Accessible Word Document](#)

Government of Canada resources

- [Accessible Web Content Style Guide](#)
- [Making Documents More Accessible](#)

External resources for creating and delivering accessible documents, presentations, and events

Creating Accessible Content

- [Creating Accessible Content for Remote Meetings](#) (W3C – Web Accessibility Initiative)
- [Make your document, presentation and sheets more accessible](#) (Google Docs Editors Help)
- [Accessible Typefaces and Fonts](#) (WebAIM article)
- [Accessibility Toolkit for Open Educational Resources \(OER\): Alternative Text \(alt-text\)](#) (City University of New York Library resource)

PowerPoint Accessibility Guidelines

- [PowerPoint Accessibility](#) (WebAIM article)
- [Make your PowerPoint Presentations Accessible to People with Disabilities](#) (Microsoft)

Planning Accessible Meetings, Presentations, and Events

- [Planning Accessible Events](#) (Accessibility Services Canada)
- [Checklist for meetings, conferences, training, and presentations that are remote/virtual, in-person, or hybrid](#) (W3C – Accessible Presentations and Events, Web Accessibility Initiative)

- [Holding Accessible Remote Meetings](#) (W3C – Accessible Remote Meetings, Web Accessibility Initiative)
- [Holding Accessible Hybrid Meetings](#) (W3C – Accessible Hybrid Meetings, Web Accessibility Initiative)

Accessible Real-Time Communication

- [Accessible Real-Time Communication User Requirements](#) (W3C – Real-time communication working group notes)

Checking for Accessibility

- [Contrast Evaluation Tools](#) (W3C – Resources for evaluating colour contrast)

Captioning

- [How to Present Slides with Captions](#) (Google Docs Editors Help)
- [Accessible Captions and Subtitles](#) (W3C – Making Audio and Video Media Accessible)

Plain language guidelines

- [Ontario Style Guide for Plain Language](#) (Government of Ontario guidelines)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

- [Universal Design for Learning guidelines](#) (CAST, formerly Center for Applied Special Technology)

Glossary

Assistive technologies

- Assistive technologies include software or equipment that people with disabilities use to improve interactions or access to information. These include technology such as screen readers (that read aloud web pages for people who cannot read text), screen magnifiers (for people with low vision), and voice recognition software and selection switches (for people who cannot use a keyboard or mouse).

ALDs, hearing loops, induction loops

- Assistive listening devices (ALDs), hearing loops, and induction loops amplify sound from a microphone for people who are hard of hearing.

Captions, captioner

- Captions are a text version of speech and essential non-speech audio occurring in a video or live event.
- Live captioning can be referred to in different ways (for example, CART (Computer Aided Real-Time Captioning or Communication Access Realtime Translation).
- A captioner (or “live subtitler”) is a professional who creates captions of what is being said verbatim, so that people can read the text output of the event audio.

Closed captioning

- Closed captioning is captioning that a viewer can turn on or off (for example, CC in YouTube videos).

Open captioning

- Open captioning is embedded in the video, visible to all viewers, and cannot be turned off.

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