

MSDE Document Creator Policies & Procedures

POLICY: "Nothing goes on a public MSDE-related website that isn't accessible or doesn't have an accessible alternate format posted with it. No exceptions."

POLICY: "Nothing is distributed electronically to all employees or posted to an Intranet available to all employees that isn't accessible or doesn't have an accessible alternate format posted with it."

Definitions

Accessibility Documentation – Screen shots or Snipping Tool images of the MS Office, Acrobat or Foxit Accessibility Checker sent to the Content Creator responsible for the page the document goes on, or an email with the document attesting to how a PDF works using the Read Out Loud function.

Adobe Acrobat vs. Adobe Reader – Adobe Reader is free software that allows a user to view a PDF. To make changes to a PDF, such as making the document accessible, the fully-featured Adobe Acrobat software is required. The 3rd-party software Foxit PhantomPDF may also be used.

Adobe InDesign – InDesign is desktop publishing and design software used for print and PDF documents. InDesign is the only design software that can create accessible PDFs. However, accessible PDFs are not created automatically. The designer needs to learn what settings to tweak in the software in order to export an accessible document.

Alternate Format – Alternate formats of print materials can be electronic, audio, Braille, text-only or large print versions. Alternate formats of inaccessible digital documents and media can be text-only, large print, text-only large print, or audio digital files, as appropriate.

Alternate Text (ALT Text) – Alternative text is text associated with an image that serves the same purpose and conveys the same essential information as the image. Alternative text ensures that no information or functionality is lost to a reader who cannot see the image.

Caption – Captions are on-screen text descriptions that display a video's dialogue, identify speakers, and describe other relevant sounds that are otherwise inaccessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. "Open" captions are always visible to all viewers. "Closed" captions can be turned on and off by the viewer.

Content Creator – An MSDE employee who has permissions set on the MSDE website that allows them to create new web pages and make changes to existing web pages. See companion document, MSDE Content Creator Policies & Procedures.

Document Creator – An MSDE employee who makes and formats Microsoft Office, Google Docs, or PDF documents designed to be accessed on a public website or otherwise be distributed electronically.

Foxit PhantomPDF – a PDF software program that can be purchased and used as an alternative to Adobe Acrobat Pro.

Grackle – Google Docs (including Slides & Sheets) are not accessible when converted to PDFs. Grackle Docs Chrome extension is a Chrome browser add-on that runs in Google Docs when using Chrome. It scans the current document for accessibility issues, guides the user in how to fix the errors and make the document accessible, and then creates an accessible PDF from the document.

MSDE-related Websites – Includes all websites funded or administered by MSDE, not just MarylandPublicSchools.org.

- Office Accessibility Checker** – Since Office 2010, Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel have featured the ability to run an Accessibility Checker once a document is complete that spots accessibility issues with the document and guides the creator in fixing the issues.
- OCR** – Optical Character Recognition is the conversion of images of text into machine-encoded text from a scanned paper document. Without OCR, a scanner is merely taking a photograph of a piece of paper. The text is not available for searching and not available for a screen reader to read aloud. On some scanners (e.g., Xerox), the OCR setting is called “Make Searchable.”
- Publish** – The final step in the process to post information to the public website. After the new page or modification is approved, the Web Manager (or designee) is the only one who uses the Publish button to make the new information live on the website.
- Read Out Loud** – Read Out Loud is a text-to-speech tool that is built into Adobe Reader and Adobe Acrobat. Using the Read Out Loud function to read a PDF is a quick way to determine if a screen reader will be able to read the document and if it will read the PDF in the Document Creator’s intended reading order.
- Snipping Tool** – Snipping Tool is a screenshot utility included in Windows. MSDE employees should be familiar with it, as it is the recommended tool for submitting mileage expense reimbursements.
- Visual Description** – Ideally, this is a separate audio track on a video that describes what is going on visually in the video for someone who can’t see what’s on the screen. In practice, it is more often a text document posted along with the video that includes both a transcript of the dialogue and a written description of what is going on visually as the dialogue is spoken.
- Web Manager** – Also called a Webmaster. Currently, Josh Walley.

Responsibilities of Document Creators

POLICY: "If you are responsible for creating content, you are responsible for making it accessible."

1. Creators of Word/Powerpoint/Excel documents (or PDFs made from those documents) are responsible for emailing the Content Creator responsible for the page the document will be posted to both a copy of the file they’ve uploaded and a screenshot/Snipping Tool showing the Office Accessibility Checker inspection results showing no errors or warnings. This demonstrates that they’ve done their due diligence and made an accessible document.
2. If the Word/Powerpoint/Excel document has been converted to a PDF after passing the Office Accessibility Checker but the Document Creator does not have the full Adobe Acrobat or Foxit PhantomPDF, at minimum the Document Creator should open the PDF in Adobe Reader and turn on the Read Out Loud feature to ensure the document is being read, and read in the proper order. Note that this has been done in the email in which you send the file to the Content Creator.
3. If the Word/Powerpoint/Excel document has been converted to a PDF after passing the Office Accessibility Checker and the Document creator has the full Adobe Acrobat or Foxit PhantomPDF, the document creator should open the PDF in Acrobat or Foxit and turn on the Reading Order feature on the Accessibility panel to ensure the document is being read in the proper order. Alternatively, Read Out Loud can be used, as in #2

above. Note which method has been done in the email in which you send the file to the Content Creator.

4. For PDFs that were created from other sources, such as OCR scanning or InDesign, a screen shot or report from the Acrobat or Foxit Accessibility Checker should be sent the Content Creator responsible for the page where the document will be posted, showing it has passed the checker (except for areas marked as “needs manual check”).
5. For PDFs that were created from other sources, if the PDF Document Creator only has Adobe Reader, the creator should open the PDF in Adobe Reader and turn on the Read Out Loud feature to ensure the document is being read, and read in the proper order. Note that this has been done in the email in which you send the file to the Content Creator.
6. If the PDF document is complex or the reading order or other accessibility issues cannot be corrected, Document Creator is responsible for supplying a “text-only” or “text-only large print” Word or PDF document to be posted concurrently with the original PDF. This alternate format file should be submitted to the Content Creator (and later, the Web Manager) along with the copy of the original file and the Accessibility Checker documentation.

Responsibilities of Content Creators

1. The Content Creator reviews the accessibility documentation sent with the documents from the Document Creator for all attachments to be linked to a MSDE-related website page.
2. If the documentation is in order (and the document has been approved by the chain of command, if necessary), the Content Creator posts the documents to the website.
3. The Content Creator then forwards the accessibility documentation to the Web Manager for approval and publication. If the Web Manager does not receive the documentation within two business days of receiving the automatic notice from SharePoint that someone has uploaded a document to the site or a new/modified page has been checked in, the Web Manager will remove the document or the active links to the document and inform the Content Creator.

Responsibilities of Web Manager

1. The Web Manager approves the accessibility of each new or modified page and attachments after the page has been checked in before he Publishes the page.
2. If the Web Manager doesn't receive results within two business days of receiving the automatic SharePoint alert that someone has uploaded a document to the site or a new/modified page has been checked in, he will remove the document or the active links to the document from the live site and alert the Content Creator.

3. On a regular schedule (no less frequently than once weekly, to start), Web Manager should run OzART and do the manual checks specified by the OzART report to ensure inaccessibility has not crept into any of the MSDE-related sites.