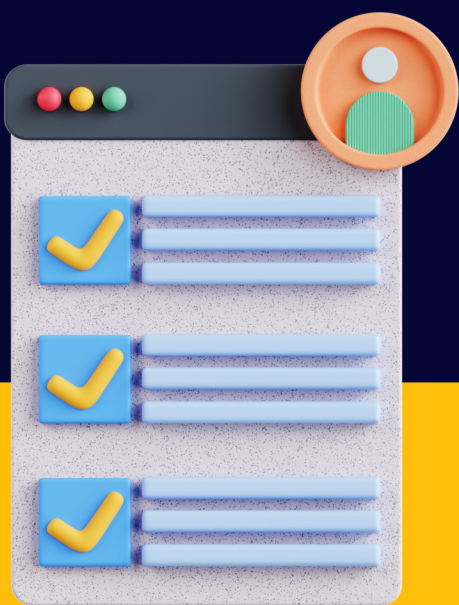


MAKE YOUR IMAGE DESCRIPTIONS EVEN BETTER

When creating image descriptions for content - ensure improved accessibility and discoverability with better context. Combine manual expertise and automated tools to effectively generate image descriptions and alt text.

Make accessibility part of your core workflow from day one. Rather than treating as an afterthought - build it into your standard process and timeline to ensure better success.



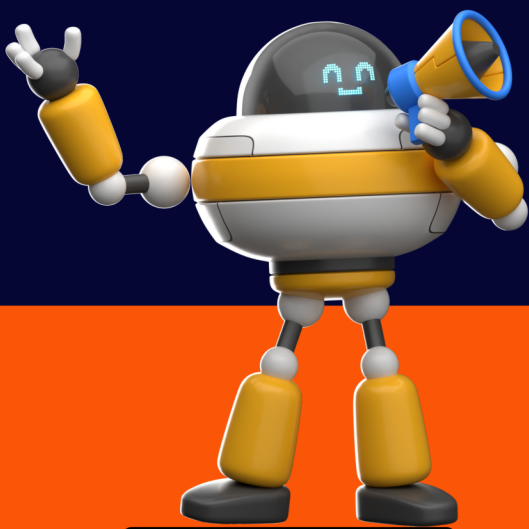
Accurate and contextual

Clearly describe the image's content and relevance to the surrounding text.



Concise, yet informative

Provide enough detail to convey essential information without being overly verbose.



Purpose-orientated

Focus on the meaning and function of the visual element, rather than merely its visual characteristics.



Relevant and complementary

Align closely with the accompanying text's central message to enhance overall comprehension.

10 PITFALLS TO AVOID FOR ALT TEXT

1

Don't rely exclusively on figures.

Important information should always be included in the surrounding text. Alt text is a supplement, not a replacement for context.

2

Avoid redundancy.

Screen readers indicate that alt text is an image replacement, so don't use phrases like "Image of..." or "Graphic of...".

3

Don't repeat the caption.

Alt text should provide additional context, not duplicate what's already in the caption or surrounding text.

4

Avoid irrelevant details.

Information not displayed in the figure (such as author, date, source, or bibliographical references) doesn't belong in alt text.

5

Steer clear of interpretation.

Alt text should describe what's visible, not offer subjective interpretations or opinions.

6

Don't overload with text.

Keep alt text concise. Avoid lengthy descriptions that overwhelm readers with unnecessary details.

7

Avoid formatting.

Screen reading software doesn't interpret formatting (e.g., bullet points). Stick to plain, straightforward descriptions.

8

Don't assume visual context.

Describe the image and its purpose within the publication as if the reader can't "see" it. Avoid phrases like "As you can see...".

9

Avoid gender assumptions.

Be specific. Instead of "Man," use "Smiling person reading a book." You can't tell someone's gender; simply refer to them as a Person or Individual.

10

Don't forget to test.

Always verify your alt text using tools like screen readers to ensure it conveys the intended message effectively, and combine with usability tests, focus groups and the human element.

TOP 10 ALT TEXT TIPS

Thoughtful and considered alt text enhances accessibility. Make your content more inclusive for your readers.

THINK ABOUT THE WHY.

Decide how best to convey to someone what this image is, with or without having been able to "see" it before. Why is it relevant, and what does this description add to the overall content?

"Illustration of a diverse team collaborating on a project."

1

BE CONCISE.

Avoid verbosity and be clear while providing all the details. Deliver a powerful message in a few words - no longer than a sentence or two or fewer than 125 characters. Screen readers may stop reading at this point and cut off the description. Use descriptive keywords. Check spelling and grammar!

"Close-up of a blooming sunflower."

2

CAPTURE EMOTIONS.

Avoid verbosity and be clear while providing all the details. Deliver a powerful message in a few words - no longer than a sentence or two or fewer than 125 characters. Screen readers may stop reading at this point and cut off the description. Use descriptive keywords. Check spelling and grammar!

"Happy children playing in a sunlit park."

3

PROVIDE CONTEXT.

Make sure you add context to a description to make it relevant. Your alt text needs to provide the appropriate context to help bring the story to life.

"Vintage typewriter on a wooden desk, with a sepia filter to make it look like an old photo."

"My grandfather's typewriter on a wooden desk."

4

AVOID REPETITION.

Focus on the unique aspects of the image.

"Golden retriever dog catching a frisbee mid-air."

5

HIGHLIGHT KEY ELEMENTS.

Describe what draws attention and be specific.

"CEO addressing a packed conference hall."

6

BE DESCRIPTIVE, NOT PRESCRIPTIVE.

Describe what is happening but avoid telling people how to interpret the image.

"Abstract artwork with vibrant colors and flowing lines."

7

USE ACTIVE LANGUAGE.

"Hiker walking up a rugged mountain trail."

8

THINK ABOUT COLORS AND CONTRAST.

Be mindful that some will have never seen colour to understand what it 'looks' like.

"High-contrast black-and-white portrait of an older adult artist."

9

TEST WITH SCREEN READERS AND TOOLS.

10

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Source: Beyond Open Access, Part II: Make Images Truly Accessible for All, The Scholarly Kitchen Blog. Amanda Rogers, Beth Richard, Carsten Borchert, Lou Peck, Simon Holt

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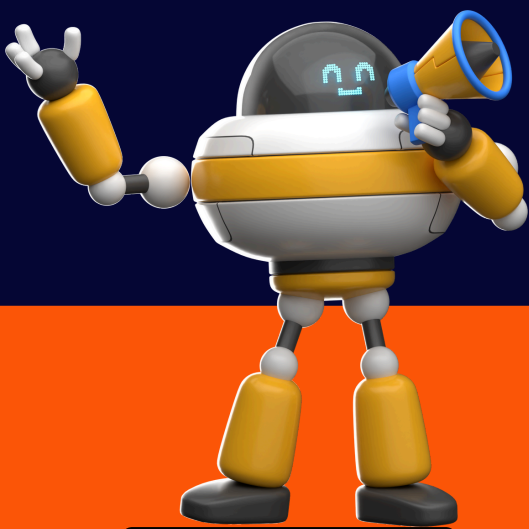
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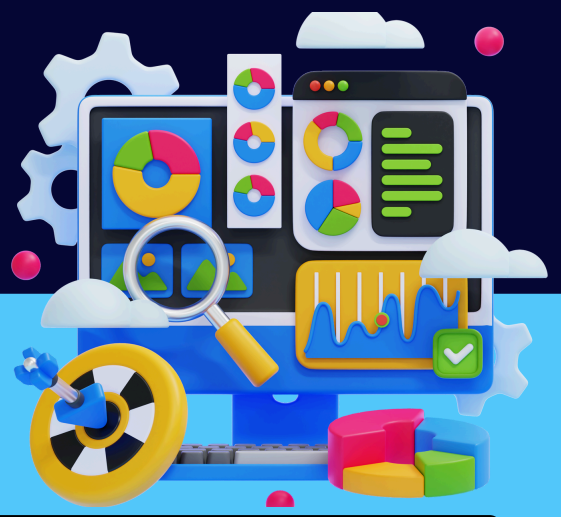
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