

Guide

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# An Accessible Marketing Guide

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## Guide:

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The Unlimited commissions programme aims to embed work by disabled artists within the cultural sector, reach new audiences and shift perceptions of disabled people.

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[www.weareunlimited.org.uk](http://www.weareunlimited.org.uk)



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# An Accessible Marketing Guide

## 20 simple ways to increase accessibility

### Introduction

Accessibility most directly helps disabled and older people but, in fact, all audiences benefit from inclusive design: people watching videos on noisy trains need subtitles, simple use of English helps those who don't use it as their first language, and clean design aids readability for all. Around a billion people worldwide (that's 15% of the global population<sup>1</sup>) have some form of impairment.

Why would you want to miss out on this growing market?

There are always exciting and attractive ways to make your events, exhibitions and performances more accessible, and ultimately serve a more diverse audience. It's the same with your marketing.

So, let's get started. Firstly, think about your audiences...

Now think about your marketing materials:

- Can they be opened?
- Can they be read?
- Can people find the info they need (not just easily, at all)?
- Can they be understood?
- Is the event itself accessible?
- Where are you distributing your materials: can they be found in the first place?

Not sure? We've pulled together 20 simple ways of making your marketing more accessible. A reference guide at the end tells you where you can get more information.

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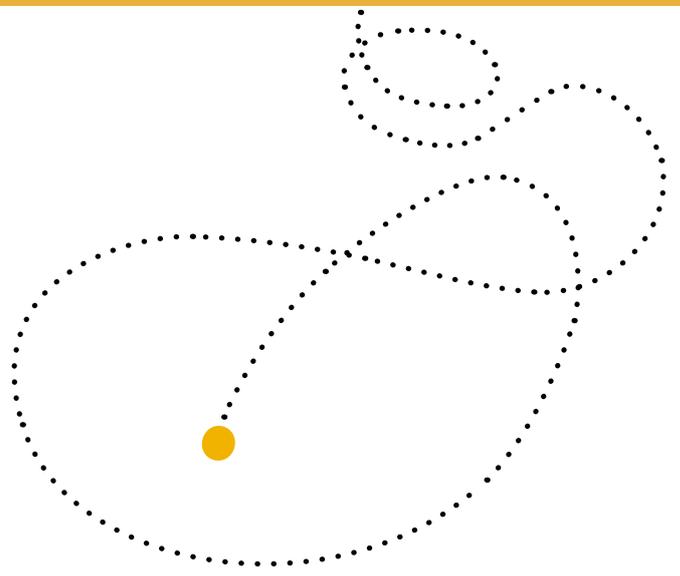
<sup>1</sup><http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs352/en/>

## The Basics

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‘Unfathomable marketing speak in standard print doesn’t become more readable in braille; it just takes you longer to get annoyed!’

Emma Bennison, Arts Manager, Australia



## The Basics

### 1. Get it right from the start

Access for disabled people is often about your organisation getting its main marketing materials right. It's not just about alternative formats.

### 2. Don't assume

Not all disabled people see themselves as disabled people. Loads don't.

Often older people, who have a range of impairments in relation to aging would never think to look at a page labeled 'disability', so don't marginalise access information.

### 3. Mind your language

Get a language guide together so that everyone in your organisation uses the same words in the same context - and more importantly know why they are doing so. Disability Equality Training for your organisation will help this exercise.

In the UK, most of the arts sector find it more acceptable to say 'disabled person' than 'person with a disability'.

#### 4. Keep it simple

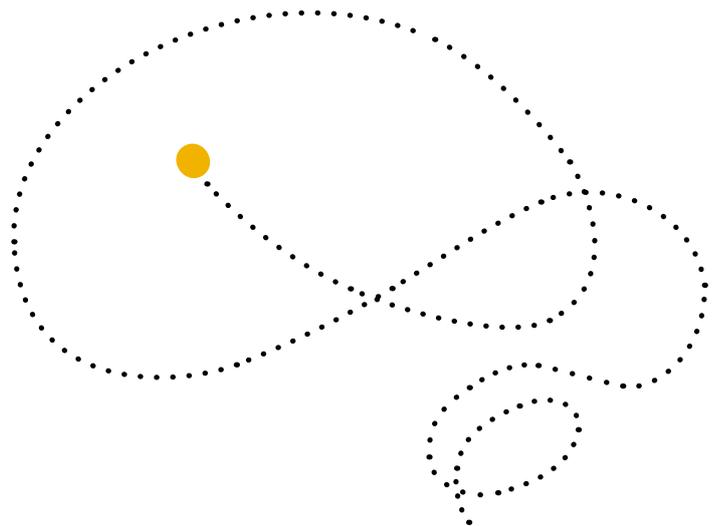
And keep it short.

#### 5. Easy English

Check the reading age of your copy for free in Microsoft Word to get your Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (the school year your writing is suitable for). You should aim for 8 on the Flesch-Kincaid scale (which is the average reading age of 13 years old).

#### 6. Ask

- Consult with actual disabled people. This is not just the key to getting it right but to building audiences too.
- Ask for feedback, then act on it.
- Invite people to ask for different formats – don't make it sound like a chore. For example, say 'please ask us for this information in alternative formats' rather than 'this information is available in alternative formats upon request'.
- Know which alternative formats you can supply, and how long it will take you to produce them. Be aware that you are required by law to do this (Equality Act 2010).

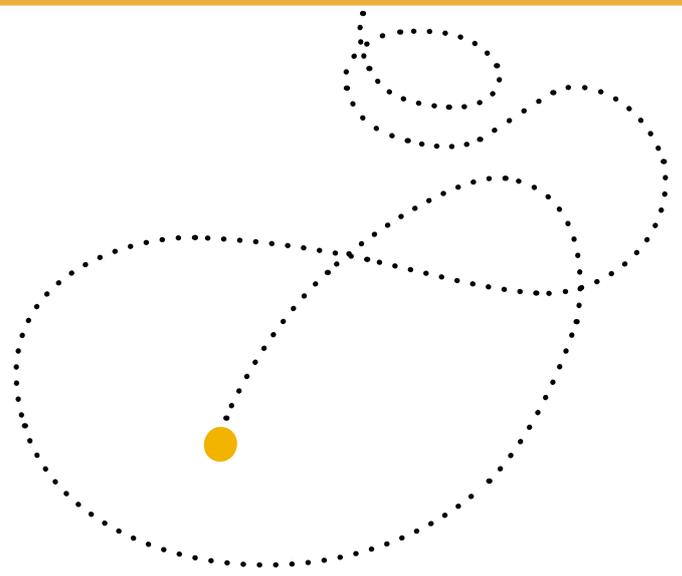


## Design, Formatting and Production

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‘Simplicity is key for effectiveness as well as accessibility. Why limit the number of people you could reach? I recommend clear and bold with no clutter; matt, large and double spaced for printed materials and lots of contrast (dark on light or vice versa - this includes dark and light colours). Be creative - simple means style.’

Chloe Phillips, artist



## Design, Formatting and Production

### 7. Design

News flash! Marketing communications can be attractive and accessible. Design and accessibility are not mutually exclusive.

Keep designs clear, simple and clutter-free. 'White space' is great.

In print, boxes and borders can also be used for effective emphasis.

### 8. Imagery

Images support meaning when chosen well. Illustrate your commitment to equality with images that include disabled people and show off your access provisions.

Always put text descriptions ('Alt text') on images you post online so that screen readers can capture the information.

Do not put text over images.

## **9. Text size and formatting**

Don't make it too small: 12pt is the absolute minimum recommended, with 14pt being advisable. (See #12 for Large print formats.)

Avoid italics. In fact, don't use them at all. Use bold instead. Italics are not accessible for people with visual impairments or dyslexia: almost two million people in the UK live with sight loss; 10% of the population have dyslexia. Also, many screen readers do not read italic formatting.

Try not to use serif or 'handwritten' fonts or capitals for long, continuous blocks of text – they are hard to read. As are BLOCK CAPITALS in large blocks.

## **10. Colour contrasts**

Contrast between coloured backgrounds and overlaid text should be at least 25%. So no pale colours on a pale background, however pretty it might look.

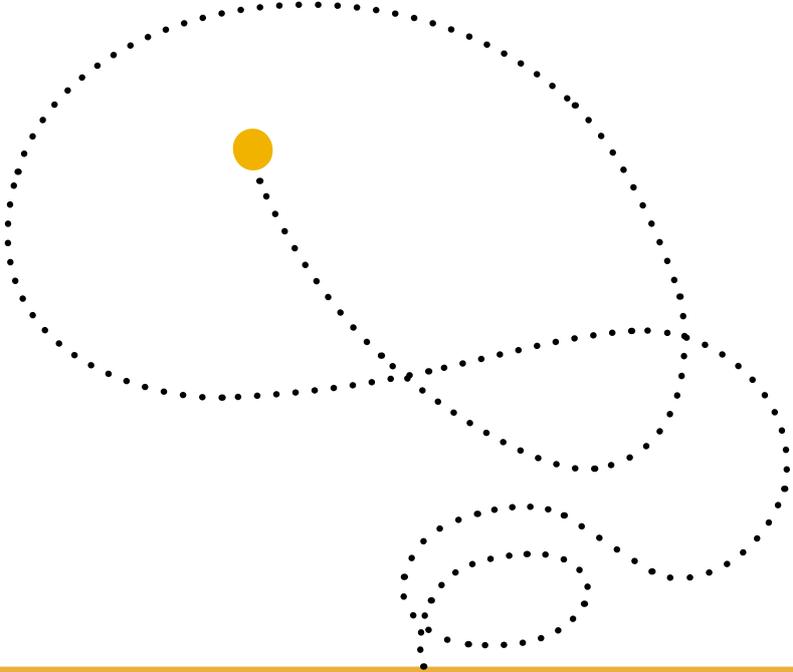
Think too about colour-blindness and the colours that are most often confused (e.g. red and green).

## **11. Paper**

- Gloss finish on paper is often too reflective, and sheen can be too, so use matt.
- Low paper weights show text from the reverse and can be too flimsy to hold.
- Complex folds can obscure text and images.
- Size is important - if the print is too big, it's hard to unravel; too small and you won't be able to fit a decent font size.

# Accessible Formats

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## Accessible Formats

### 12. Large print

The default for large print is 18 point, with 16 point as the minimum.

24 point is sometimes known as giant print.

No fancy fonts, no italics, no large blocks highlighted or in capital letters.

### 13. Audio

Record your own audio versions simply as mp3 files which can then be downloaded from your website.

Ensure each recording begins with a clear description of what it is you'll be covering in that recording.

Break large documents into separate files for each chapter or section.

### 14. Braille

Braille is designed to be read by fingers rather than eyes. It's a code based on six dots, arranged in two columns of three dots. There are two grades of braille:

- Uncontracted (previously Grade 1) - a letter for letter translation from print, includes the alphabet, numbers and punctuation marks;
- Contracted (previously Grade 2) - a condensed version reducing the size of Braille documents by about 25 per cent, generally increases reading speed.

You can buy the kit and produce Braille in-house or you can use an agency to help you - search for 'text to Braille translation'.

## Digital

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'If you are trying to reach out to deaf audiences, captioning is a must, BSL interpretation a bonus.'

Emily Crowe, Unlimited Impact Trainee

## Digital

### 15. Online access

Build access into your web design brief from the get-go.

Check out the Worldwide Web Consortium's (WC3) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI and their A, AA or AAA rating) and see how good/bad your existing website is with their evaluation tools: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/>

### 16. Basic online checks

Pick a page, does it look the same using a range of web browsers? Is it still readable using larger font sizes?

Can you resize the window and still read everything? If you change the display colour to greyscale can you still read everything?

Some things to try:

- navigating without a mouse
- using a voice browser or a text browser (free options available online)
- turning off the sound

### 17. Online copy

Use even simpler words.

Use even shorter text.

## **18. Links**

Make them usable: what does 'click here' mean? How about 'click here for more details on our next show' instead?

Keep a good amount of space between menu titles and other links.

## **19. Word documents**

Include both Word docs and PDFs as downloads because some screen readers (a form of assistive technology often used by people who are visually impaired, or with dyslexia) can't scan PDFs.

Many screen readers do not read italic formatting. Another reason not to use italics.

## **20. Social Media**

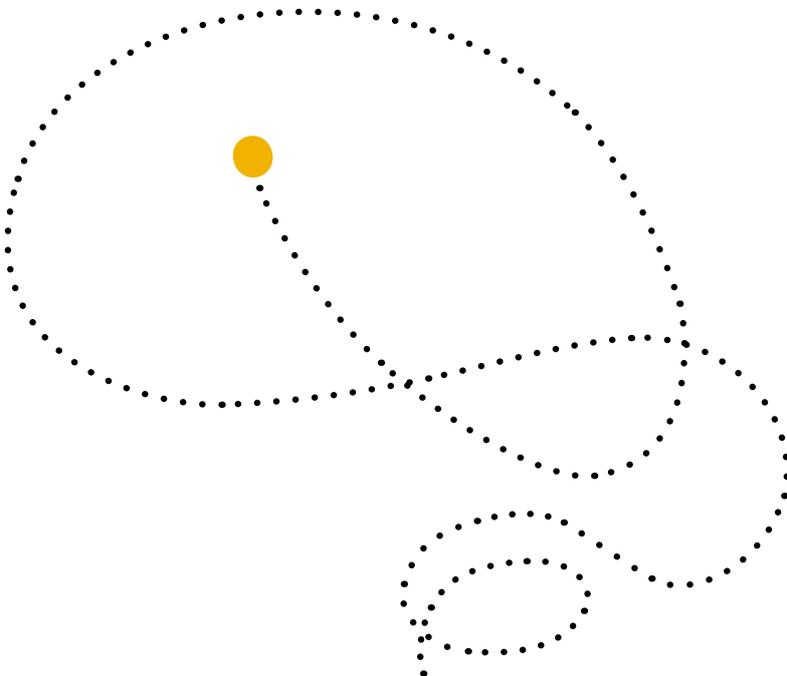
YouTube: create both a subtitled version and an audio-described version of your films if you can. If budgets are really tight, YouTube do provide a subtitle option - turn it on and check that they make sense (sometimes they don't!). Simplest option is to provide a transcript of your video as an alternative.

Twitter: make sure images are additional and not integral to your tweets (as there aren't enough characters to describe photos) e.g. a photo of a previous performance when promoting a new one is fine, but an e-flyer is not so great.

Facebook: you've got more space here so use the alt text option to briefly describe your image. If you're uploading videos via the Facebook video platform you can now supply captions. This is a must as most people scroll without sound turned on!

## References and further reading

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## Reference and further reading

### The Basics

Unlimited's delivery partner Shape Arts have loads of really great resources to get you started:

<https://www.shapearts.org.uk/Pages/News/Category/resources>

Here's more on the language of disability:

<http://www.disabilityartsonline.org.uk/why-we-are-disabled-people-not-people-with-disabilities>

Making written information easier to understand for people with learning disabilities:

<http://www.inspiredservices.org.uk/Government%20EasyRead%20Guidance.pdf>

Dyslexia style guide by British Dyslexia Association:

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/educator/additional-resources-for-educators>

### Design

A guide for designing inclusive exhibitions by National Museums of Scotland:

[http://swfed.org.uk/images/resources/Users\\_\\_Visitors/access/EXhibitions\\_for\\_all\\_NMScotland.pdf](http://swfed.org.uk/images/resources/Users__Visitors/access/EXhibitions_for_all_NMScotland.pdf)

For more on colour blindness:

<http://www.abetterimageprinting.com/resources/the-ideas-collection/designing-for-color-blind-viewers/>

## **Formats**

From the Royal National Institute for the Blind/UK Association for Accessible Formats (UKAAF):

A guide to creating clear print and large print documents:

**<http://www.ukaaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/G003-UKAAF-Creating-clear-print-and-large-print-documents.pdf>**

Text to braille translation:

**<http://www.rnib.org.uk/braille-and-other-tactile-codes-portal-writing-and-producing-braille/transcribing-text-braille>**

For more on audio formats:

**<http://www.rnib.org.uk/information-everyday-living-reading/audio>**

## **Online**

Perspectives on Web Accessibility:

**<https://www.w3.org/WAI/>**

For the latest on Facebook accessibility:

**<https://www.facebook.com/accessibility/videos/1082033931840331/>**

Check your website for access:

**<http://www.webcredible.com/blog/ten-quick-tests-check-your-website-accessibility>**