



How To Be Inclusive for Visually Impaired Readers Online:

Alternative Text Resources

(Created Wednesday August 4th, 2021)

Did you know that CAMT currently uses alternative text, or “alt text”, for all images on social media and in communications?

Alternative text is an image description embedded into the file name, which can be read by screen readers to ensure image content is accessible to people who are blind and low vision. Occasionally an image description in the caption may be used for some communications, which is visible to sighted people as well.

Alternative text is the standard for images, as established by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) created by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), in keeping with the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), and in the spirit of the Accessible Canada Act of 2019.

Image description in the caption is not needed in most scenarios when alternative text is used, but additional image descriptions may be applicable when images require a lengthy explanation.

Alternative text is also increasingly becoming incorporated into major platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google Docs, so that users can easily edit and change the file.

CAMT encourages all members to use alternative text in communications to increase the accessibility of their content.

It is important to know that people with low vision and visual impairment who use screen readers have different needs as the spectrum of visual acuity is broad. Considerations to take into account when meeting the needs of those with visual impairment include high image quality, legible font, high colour contrast, and layout that is not overly busy. For awareness, content could include a single line stating that an image has been captioned with alt text.

Please see the below resources for further information on incorporating alternative text into your everyday practice, and special thanks to Dr. Cynthia Bruce, MTA and Danielle Main, RMT for their consultation on this matter.

Accessibility Guidelines Resources:

[World Wide Web Consortium Guidelines](#)

[Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission Guidelines](#)

[Accessible Canada Act of 2019](#)

Social Media Alternative Text Instructions:

[Facebook Alternative Text Instructions](#)

[Instagram Alternative Text Instructions](#)

[Twitter Alternative Text Instructions](#)

[LinkedIn Alternative Text Instructions](#)

[Google Docs Alternative Text Instructions](#)