

# BCcampus Social Media EDI and Accessibility Practices

## Current Strategies and Actions in Place

- Alt text for social media
  - On Instagram, it is found within the caption.
  - On Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, Mar/Comm uses Hootsuite's alt text function.
  - The level of description and detail varies by platform and image as each social media platform has its own individual character limits set for alt text.
- Use of plain language
  - When writing for social media, Mar/Comm actively tries to use plain language when possible.
  - Some common things Mar/Comm keeps in mind for social media copy when writing in plain language:
    - Use active voice, not passive voice.
    - Use "you" or other pronouns.
    - Use common, everyday words and as little jargon as possible.
    - Sparse use of emojis.
    - Avoid CAPS as much as possible, as it confuses screen readers. CAPS typically will cause a screen reader to read out individual letters, rather than pronounce the whole word.
  - On social media — especially on Twitter, where character count is limited — Mar/Comm does use abbreviations and acronyms (e.g., OER instead of open educational resources). Linked items should provide the full term spelled out.
- Hashtags
  - Mar/Comm is mindful that all multi-word hashtags are capitalized. This is called CamelCase. This helps screen readers, but also generally makes hashtags easier to read and decipher for all.
    - Example: #blacklivesmatter without capitalization is read like this on a screen reader: "black live (the verb) smatter." #BlackLivesMatter is read correctly.
  - Mar/Comm tries to put hashtags at the end of a post to avoid further confusion for screen readers.
- Video captioning
  - Mar/Comm uses video captioning for better accessibility.
- Link shortening
  - Link shortening services are an accessibility tool because they limit the characters a screen reader may have to read.



- For Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook, Mar/Comm uses the link shortening tool available on Hootsuite.
- For Instagram, Mar/Comm uses Linkin.bio. It replicates the Instagram grid, but with a clickable link found on each image. Instagram does not allow links in captions that allow users to leave the app, nor does it allow users to copy and paste a link into their browser.
- Images
  - Mar/Comm strives to have good colour contrast on our images.
    - WCAG 2.1 AA compliance is a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 between foreground and background colours when using regular font and 3:1 with large font.
    - [Tools are available to test colour combinations.](#)
  - Mar/Comm has created templates that include a balance of both text and graphics for promotion of events, funding opportunities, and blog posts.
  - Mar/Comm avoids placing text on textured backgrounds or over images, unless the text is large and contrast is high.
  - Mar/Comm has built a repository of diverse imagery, which draws from openly licensed repositories like [Unsplash, Pixabay, Pexels, and more](#). It is regularly updated.

## Out of Scope

- Mar/Comm also uses alt text for BCcampus' newsletter and websites.

## Areas of Improvement and Challenges

- Accessibility functions on each individual social media platform are very easy to use in the moment. For example, Instagram's app has an alt text function, but neither Hootsuite nor Linkin.bio allow Mar/Comm to use that function when scheduling posts in advance. For an organization that is scheduling things days or weeks in advance, Mar/Comm's current social media management tools do not provide adequate opportunities to be as accessible as best practices suggest. Mar/Comm will conduct a social media management tool audit to better understand how our efforts are implemented when scheduling posts.
- Avoiding acronyms when character count is not limiting.
- The subscription to Linkin.bio is up in the spring, and Mar/Comm can look into alternative link options for Instagram that are more accessible and less visual.
- While our imagery has improved for diversity in gender, age, and race, more could be done to include imagery of people who self-identify as queer, non-binary, plus size, and as a person with a visible disability. So far, Mar/Comm has relied on openly licensed resources, but they lack diversity or do not provide imagery for the context BCcampus typically needs (e.g., in settings related to an office, education, or technology). Paid stock photography subscriptions also seem to be limited, but more research needs to be done.
- A BCcampus staff member asked if videos posted to BCcampus' social media channels can also have transcripts. It is not common practice on social media to include a



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transcript if there are already captions. If Mar/Comm implemented this, transcripts would need to live on the BCcampus website.

- Even if an image does not require attribution (as is the policy of the sites BCcampus uses for images), it is good practice to provide attribution. Start in February 2021, Mar/Comm is going to start attributing photos on our website.
  - Template: PHOTO [link to photo] by CREATOR [link to creator page] is used under LICENCE NAME [link to description of licence]
  - Example: [opened book on bed photo](#) by [Alif Caesar Rizqi Pratama](#) is used under an [Unsplash License](#).