

ASSOCIATION **FORUM** of

HOLIDAY SHOWCASE[®] 2024

Real World Accessibility and UX Website Improvements You Can Make Today

Janna Fiester, VP of UX and Creative
Alma Meshes, Sr UX Architect

AMPLIFY

Hello, we're Sandstorm.



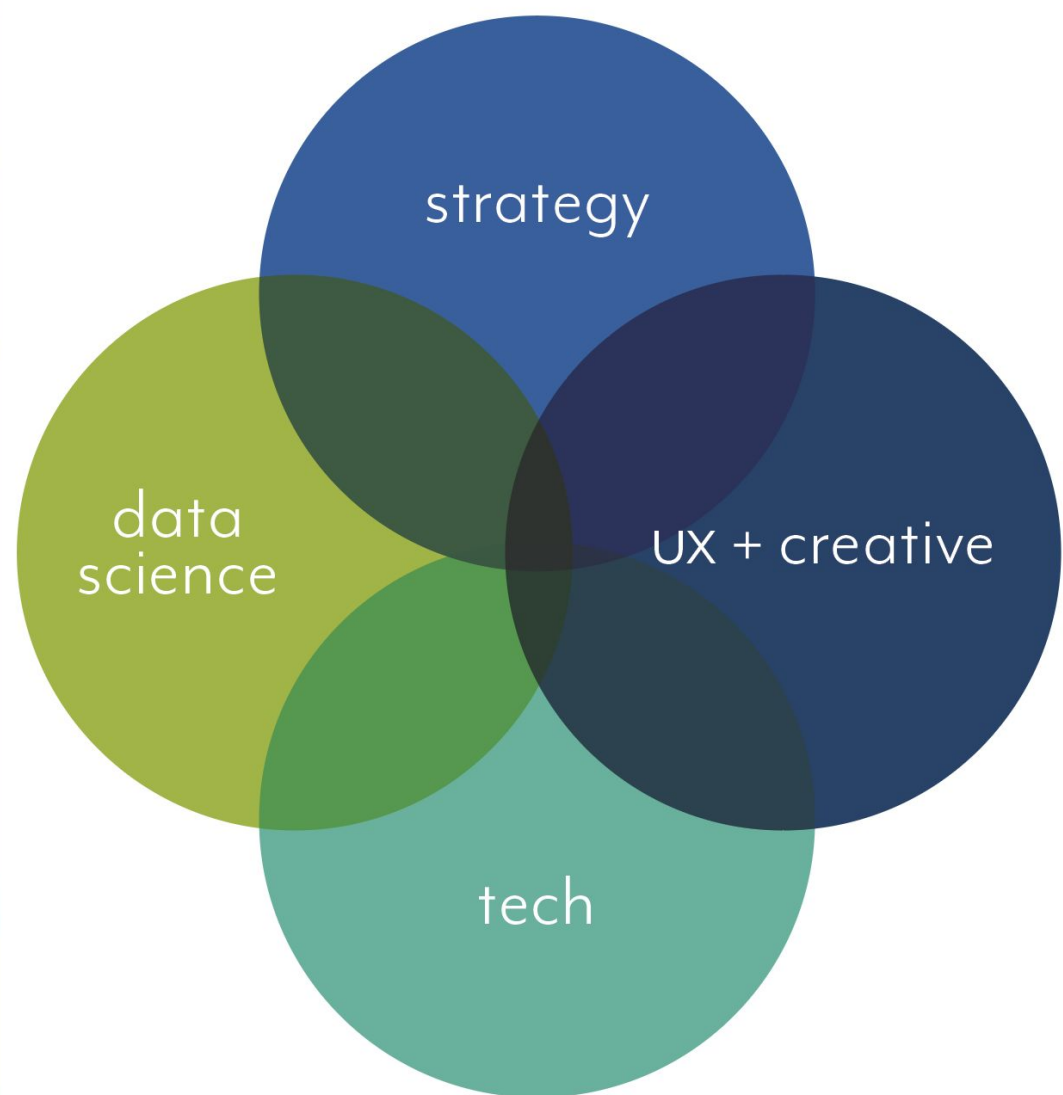
Janna Fiester
VP of UX and Creative
she/her/hers



Alma Meshes
Sr UX Architect
she/her/hers



More about Sandstorm.



25+ yr old digital experience design agency

- + 15+ yrs building **digital experiences for associations, nonprofits & healthcare organizations**
- + **4,600+ hrs** of usability & UX research
- + **CPACC** (Accessibility) certified
- + **DEIB Specialist** (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging)
- + **WBENC certified** (women-owned)

FUN FACT

1 in 4 US adults, or
27% of the US population,
have a disability.

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html>

NOT-SO FUN FACT

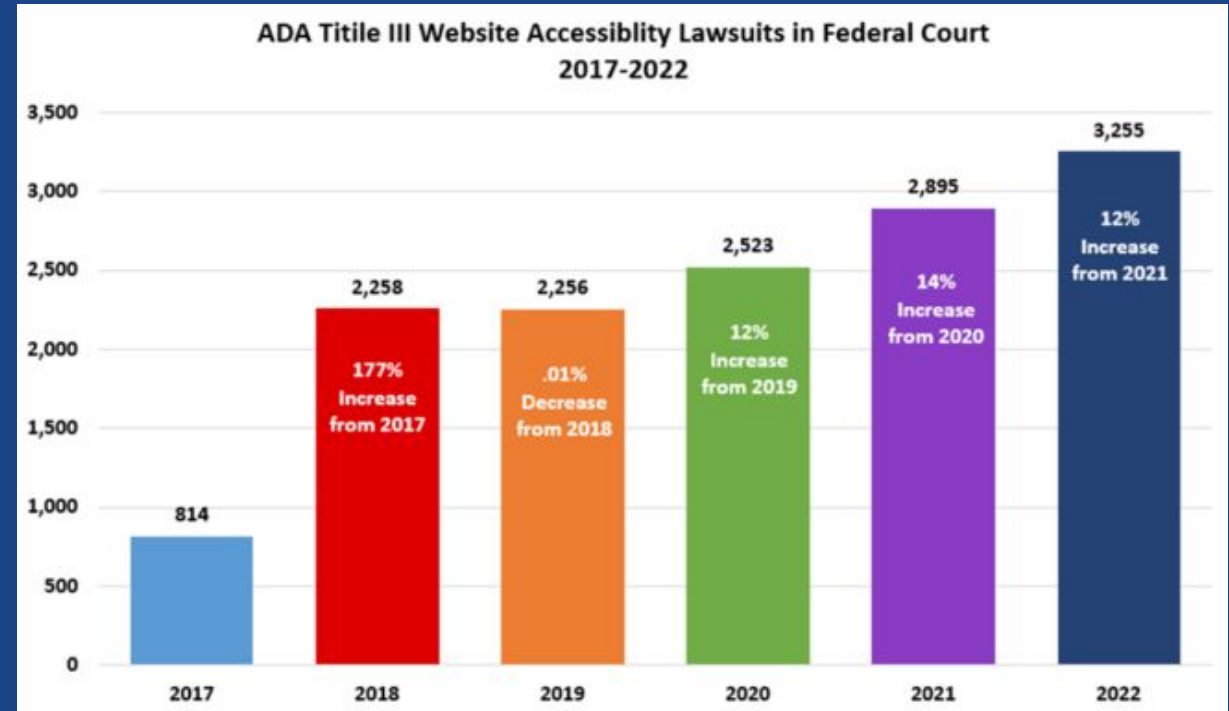
Only 2% of all websites meet accessibility standards.

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html>

NOT-SO FUN FACT

Almost 300% increase
in website accessibility
lawsuits since 2017.

And over 100 companies
receive claims weekly.



<https://www.adatitleiii.com/2023/01/plaintiffs-set-a-new-record-for-website-accessibility-lawsuit-filings-in-2022/>

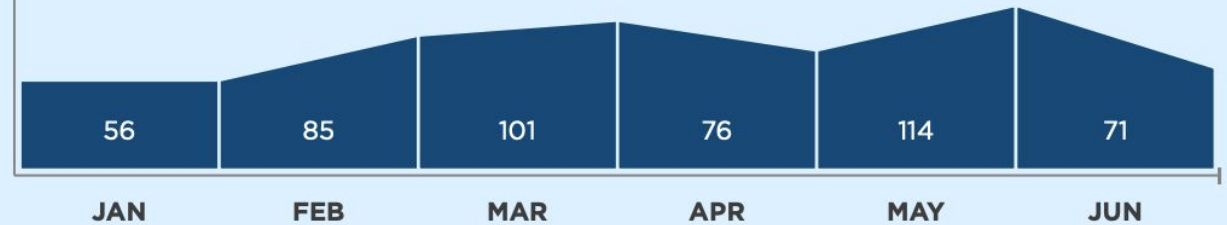
<https://3280432.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/3280432/Remediated%20-%202024-Midyear-Report-1.pdf>

NOT-SO FUN FACT

Over 20% of lawsuits are sites using widgets in 2024.

As of July 2024, 503 lawsuits against websites with active widgets, compared to 449 suits in 2023.

Number of 2024 cases filed against companies using widgets or overlay features on their websites



<https://3280432.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/3280432/Remediated%20-%202024-Midyear-Report-1.pdf>

GOOD NEWS

Building, testing and updating your website following WCAG guidelines will remove the need for overlays and help keep you safe from legal action.



A SPECIAL THANK YOU

American Public Power
Association (APPA)
for allowing us
to review their site.




ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW

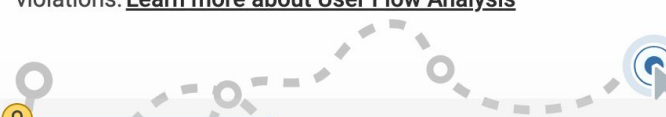
Mixture of automated tools and human testing to get the best results.





Download the Free Chrome Extension





 **User Flow Analysis** Beta
Test a series of pages and interactions for accessibility violations. [Learn more about User Flow Analysis](#)





 [Scan User Flow](#) →



Full Page Scan



Partial Page Scan

 **Start an Intelligent Guided Test**
Select an IGT, we'll scan your entire page, and then you can start testing! [Learn more about IGTs!](#)


Table


Keyboard


Modal Dialog


Interactive


Structure


Images



wave.webaim.org

Or [Download the Free Chrome Extension](#)



Web page address:

WAVE Web Accessibility Evaluation Tools

WAVE[®] is a suite of evaluation tools that helps authors make their web content more accessible to individuals with disabilities. WAVE can identify many accessibility and Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG) errors, but also facilitates human evaluation of web content. Our philosophy is to focus on issues that we know impact end users, facilitate human evaluation, and to educate about web accessibility.

WAVE Browser Extensions

You can use the online WAVE tool by entering a web page address (URL) in the field above. [WAVE Chrome, Firefox, and Edge browser extensions](#) are available for testing accessibility directly within your web browser - handy for checking password protected, locally stored, or highly dynamic pages.

WAVE API and Testing Engine

The [WAVE subscription API](#) and [Stand-alone WAVE API and Testing Engine](#) are powerful tools for easily collecting accessibility test data on many pages. The stand-alone API and Testing Engine can be integrated into your infrastructure for testing intranet, non-public, and secure pages, including in continuous integration processes.

Accessibility Impact (AIM) Report

Your [Accessibility Impact \(AIM\) assessment report](#) provides detailed WAVE test data, your site's AIM score (a measure of end user impact compared to web pages generally and as determined by human testers), and expert manual test results to give you insights into the accessibility of your web site for users with disabilities.

ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW

We also include human testing for the best results.

We review the accessibility of the

- Visuals
- Content
- Navigation
- Functionality

GOOD USABILITY IS GOOD ACCESSIBILITY

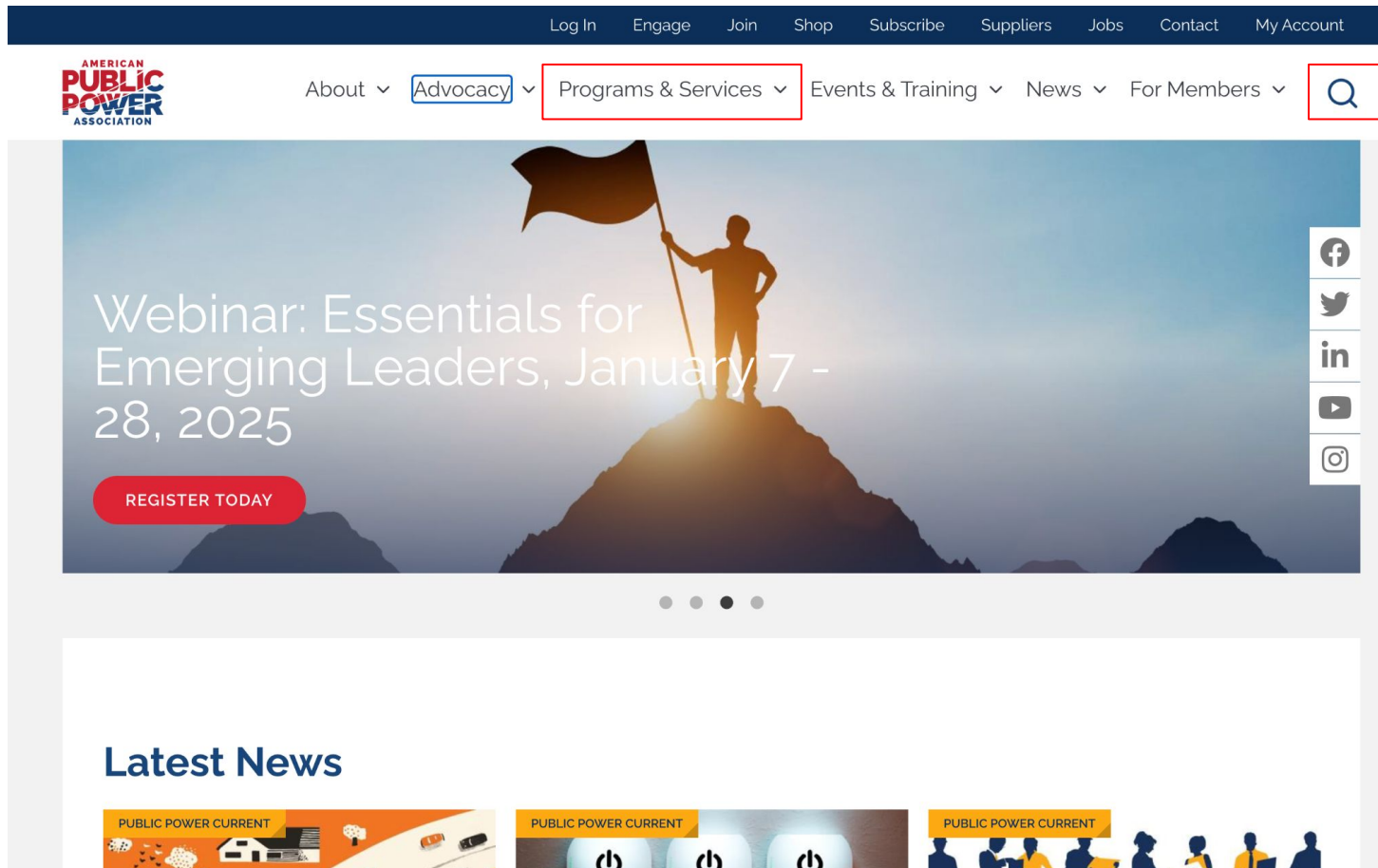
5 real world accessibility and
UX improvements you can
make today

1

Tab the Nav

and don't forget about search

Tab through your navigation



- Includes a skip to main content which is good.
- Navigation is a hover navigation.
- Users cannot access the subpages from the navigation.
- Programs and services label is not accessible by tabbing.
- Search is not accessible through tabbing.



TAKEAWAY

- * Tab through the website to test if users can access the content

2 Buttons and links need more than color to be clickable

Don't use only color for buttons and links



- Buttons get slightly darker on hover, this is not enough of a visual cue
- Titles in the news have an underline appear on hover, this is much better

Latest News



North Carolina Towns Receive Downtown Revitalization Grants from ElectriCities

November 27, 2024



Logan City Light and Power Executive Director Details Energy Storage Project, Discusses Benefits of UAMPS Membership

November 26, 2024





Dr. Charles Moreland Named as New JEA Chief Customer Experience Officer

November 26, 2024







Key

-  Incorrect
-  Correct

Inaccessible
color is the only indicator of correct vs. incorrect

Key

-  Incorrect
-  Correct

Accessible
both color and shape indicate correct vs. incorrect

When using color to convey information, you must provide visual cues to support color and content differences



Schedule

Wednesday 9:00 am - 9:50 am EST Type: Keynote

The Future of Accessibility

- Vint Cerf

Wednesday 10:00 am - 10:50 am EST Type: Keynote

The State of Accessibility and axe Updates

- Preety Kumar
- Dylan Barrell

Wednesday 11:00 am - 11:50 am EST Type: Breakout

Unblocking Backlog Jams with Multi-Dimensional Accessibility Audits

- Dave Rupert

Wednesday 11:00 am - 11:50 am EST Type: Breakout

Approach Accessibility As A Customer Experience Imperative: It Starts With Design

- Gina Bhawalkar



Visual indicators like a change in button shape or adding an underline on hover/click can support color cues



VIRTUAL ZOOM WEBINAR

Diabetic Limb Salvage

April 7-10, 2021
Bangkok, Thailand

[See details](#)

VIRTUAL ZOOM WEBINAR

Diabetic Limb Salvage (DLS) Conference

April 7-10, 2021

[See details](#)

SVS needs your help! Complete the annual physicians member census by December 14. Your responses will help us meet our diversity, equity and inclusion goals

[Access the Survey](#)

SVS needs your help! Complete the annual physicians member census by December 14. Your responses will help us meet our diversity, equity and inclusion goals

[ACCESS THE SURVEY](#)

Visuals cues can provide an opportunity for more branding in the UI



TAKEAWAY



Buttons need more than color to be clickable

3

Many users struggle
with contrast

An advertisement for a survey. The background is a photograph of two utility workers in blue shirts and yellow hard hats working on a power line tower. They are using bucket lifts. The tower is covered with orange safety tarps. The sky is clear blue. The text 'Participate in the Distribution Transformer Supply Chain Survey' is overlaid in white on a semi-transparent dark blue rectangular background. Below the text is a red button with white text that says 'TAKE SURVEY'. On the right side, there is a vertical stack of social media icons: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram.

Participate in the Distribution Transformer Supply Chain Survey

TAKE SURVEY

- Headline content is not legible on the image.
- Does the red button have enough contrast?

Enter the Hex code of the foreground color here
(i.e, the color of your text)

Foreground
Hex Value
#FFFFFF
Color Picker
Alpha 1
Lightness

Background
Hex Value
#DD2335
Color Picker
Lightness

Contrast Ratio

4.8:1

[permalink](#)

Normal Text

WCAG AA: **Pass**

WCAG AAA: **Fail**

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

Large Text

WCAG AA: **Pass**

WCAG AAA: **Pass**

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

Graphical Objects and User Interface Components

WCAG AA: **Pass**

Text Input

- [Quick Reference: Testing Web Content for Accessibility](#)
- [WebAIM Auditing & Evaluation Services](#)
- [Web Accessibility for Designers](#)
- [Contrast Checker Bookmarklet](#)

Enter the Hex code of the background color here

FREE TOOL <https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>



Participate in the Distribution Transformer Supply Chain Survey

TAKE SURVEY



- White text on the red button has enough contrast.
- Button is not accessible on the image, consider adding a stroke/outline.
- Consider flipping the image so the people are on the right and darken the area behind the headline content

Contrast Grid

Test many foreground and background color combos for compliance with WCAG 2.0 minimum contrast.

Include one color per line, with an optional comma-separated label.

Rows & Columns

#FFFFFF, White
 #000, Black
 #333, Text
 #01509b, dark blue
 #00A7E1, light blue
 #87cbac, green
 #f44708, dark orange
 #faa613, light orange
 #E9E8CF, JOT beige

Use distinct rows & columns values

Tile Size

S (80x80) M (100x100) L (150x150)

Show

AAA AA AA18 DNP

Copy Grid HTML & CSS

Tweet My Grid

By Eightshapes • On Github

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	Text	#FFFFFF	#000	#333	#01509B	#00A7E1	#87CBAC	#F44708	#FAA613	#E9E8CF
Background										
White #FFFFFF			Text AAA 21	Text AAA 12.6	Text AAA 8			Text AA18 3.6		
Black #000	Text AAA 21					Text AAA 7.6	Text AAA 11.1	Text AA 5.7	Text AAA 10	Text AAA 16.9
Text #333	Text AAA 12.6					Text AA 4.5	Text AA 6.7	Text AA18 3.4	Text AA 6.3	Text AAA 10
dark blue #01509B	Text AAA 8						Text AA18 4.2		Text AA18 4	Text AA 6.4
light blue #00A7E1		Text AAA 7.6	Text AA 4.5							
green #87CBAC		Text AAA 11.1	Text AA 6.7	Text AA18 4.2						
dark orange #F44708	Text AA18 3.6	Text AA 5.7	Text AA18 3.4							
light orange #FAA613		Text AAA 10	Text AA 6.3	Text AA18 4						
JOT beige #E9E8CF		Text AAA 16.9	Text AAA 10	Text AA 6.4						

AAA Pass, AAA (7+)

AA18 Pass, Large Text Only (3+)

AA Pass, AA (4.5+)

DNP Does Not Pass

About WCAG 2.0 contrast

<https://contrast-grid.eightshapes.com/>



TAKEAWAY

- * Test all your colors to make sure they pass contrast

4

Users think your rotating homepage image is an ad



Log In Engage Join Shop Subscribe Suppliers Jobs Contact My Account

AMERICAN PUBLIC POWER ASSOCIATION

About ▾ Advocacy ▾ Programs & Services ▾ Events & Training ▾ News ▾ For Members ▾ 🔍

Webinars: New eSafety Tracker, Sept. 25 & Oct. 16

REGISTER TODAY

- Remove all auto-rotators
- Make them all user initiated
- Add arrows to clearly enable users to the action of changing the rotation, do not rely on the rotation order dots below the image



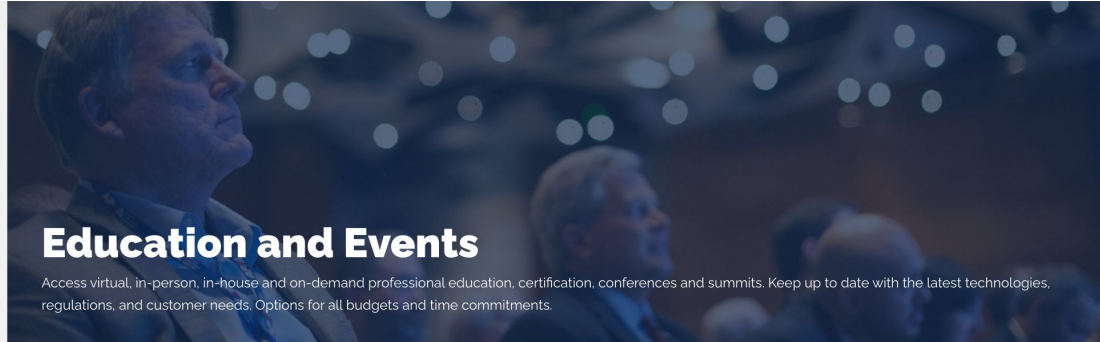


TAKEAWAY

- * Make sure rotators are user activated and the controls are easy to use

5

Users don't read –
they scan blocks of content
based on the visual hierarchy



Education and Events

Access virtual, in-person, in-house and on-demand professional education, certification, conferences and summits. Keep up to date with the latest technologies, regulations, and customer needs. Options for all budgets and time commitments.

Home / Education and Events

SHARE THIS 

OCT 27

FEATURED CONFERENCE

Customer Connections Conference

📍 Louisville, Kentucky

FEB 24

FEATURED MEETING

Legislative Rally

📍 Washington, DC

In-Person Courses
Learn more >

In-House Training
Learn more >

Virtual Training
Learn more >

EVENTS BY TOPIC ▾

EVENTS BY TYPE ▾

LIST VIEW

CALENDAR VIEW

JUN 26

How the New eSafety Tracker Will Make Your Employees Safer

SEP 19

September 2024 RDIG Webinar on Electric Vehicle Rate Design

SEP 25

How the New eSafety Tracker Will Make Your Employees Safer: Session Four

Emergency Response Support for Utilities

WESCO

- Landing pages are confusing with no clear hierarchy of content.
- Ads become visual noise that adds to the clutter
- In page navigation in an unexpected placement so users do not see it as navigation but an ad
- Use negative space to break up the page. Filters are lost on the page.

DEED Funding for Students

Home / DEED Funding for Students

SHARE THIS

Scholarship Opportunities

DEED offers three types of [funding for students](#) to pursue energy-related careers: lineworker and technical education scholarships, student internships, and student research grants. Check out our scholarship options below. [career videos](#) highlighting several job options in public power, use APPA's [online job board](#) to see current openings, and consider the benefits of [student membership](#) in the American Public Power Association.

Eligibility

Student applicants must be attending or planning to attend an accredited vocational institution, lineworker school or two to four-year college/university within the U.S. and must not be graduating within 12 months of the application deadline.

Directions

DEED offers two scholarship application cycles each year. Application deadlines are **February 15** and **October 15**. Email DEED@publicpower.org to request login credentials to begin your application through our web-based scholarship application site. Official transcripts as well as the application must be submitted by the application deadline.

For Utilities: Read the [Utility Guide for Internship Funding](#) to learn how an APPA/DEED member public power community may also apply for an intern.

Lineworker and Technical Education Scholarships

These scholarships support the education of students working toward lineworker and other technical careers that are in high demand by electric utilities. [Students talk about the benefits of a DEED scholarship](#). A [DEED member utility](#) must sponsor your scholarship application. Review the [scholarship requirements](#), [checklist](#), and [application questions](#).

- \$2,000 per scholarship paid directly to the student's university.
- Spring Application Cycle: December 1 - February 15
- Fall Application Cycle: August 1 - October 15

Student Internships

Paid internships provide work experience at a participating [DEED member utility](#). Review the [internship requirements](#), [checklist](#), and [application questions](#).

Elite Corporate Associate Members



- DEED Home
- Utility Grants and Internships
- Student Scholarships
- DEED Project Library
- DEED News
- Awards
- Board of Directors
- Members
- Webinars
- DSTAR Collaboration
- National Community Solar Partnership



DEED RESOURCES



- Content pages are better in regards to hierarchy, but the heading structure is not correct. Deed funding for Students is an H1
- Scholarship Opportunities is an H2
- Eligibility and Directions are not an H3. It is defined in the WYSIWYG, but it should be an heading style.
- Lineworker and Technical Education Scholarships is a H3.
- Elite Associate member pattern from the homepage is here and uses an H2 that is different than the content H2



TAKEAWAY

- * Break up copy with scannable headlines, subheads, bullets, and other visual assets and have a clear heading structure



BILLS AND RATES
Public Power Statistical Report

Home / resource / Public Power Statistical Report SHARE THIS

The Public Power Statistical Report is the central source for American Public Power Association members to find data that detail key aspects of public power and the electric utility industry overall - including generation, capacity, sales, and rates. The 2024 report pulls together data from state and federal agencies, APPA, and other industry sources.

The report includes:

- Generating capacity and generation by fuel type and utility type
- Ranking of the 100 largest public power utilities by generation, customers, revenue, and sales
- Average rates by customer class and utility type
- Public power data by state and territory

[Download the report](#)

For more data related to the electric utility industry, visit our [Stats and Facts](#) page.

Transforming Supply Chain Services for Utilities
wesco

RELATED DOWNLOADS

2024 Public Power Statistical Report

sensus
a system brand
FLEXNET
Utility-driven solutions for ultimate scalability, flexibility, & reliability

- APPA uses gateway pages for their reports.
- The download the report link is lost visually.
- Needs to include what type and size of file it is.
- We recommend for items to NOT download in a new tab. If it automatically does, the user can get lost or not realize it open in a new tab especially on mobile.



TAKEAWAY

- ✳️ Try to convert all PDFs into HTML content. If the PDFs are too large, create a gateway page.

GOOD USABILITY IS GOOD ACCESSIBILITY

Bonus accessibility tip

6

All images need alt text

There are three primary kinds of alt text



Standard Alt Text

- **Less than 250 characters**
- Conveys the purpose of an image (e.g. “Search” vs “Magnifying Glass”)

Short Description

- **More than 250 characters**
- Conveys the purpose of an image
- Image is more complex
- Might involve a person or a group of people

Long Description

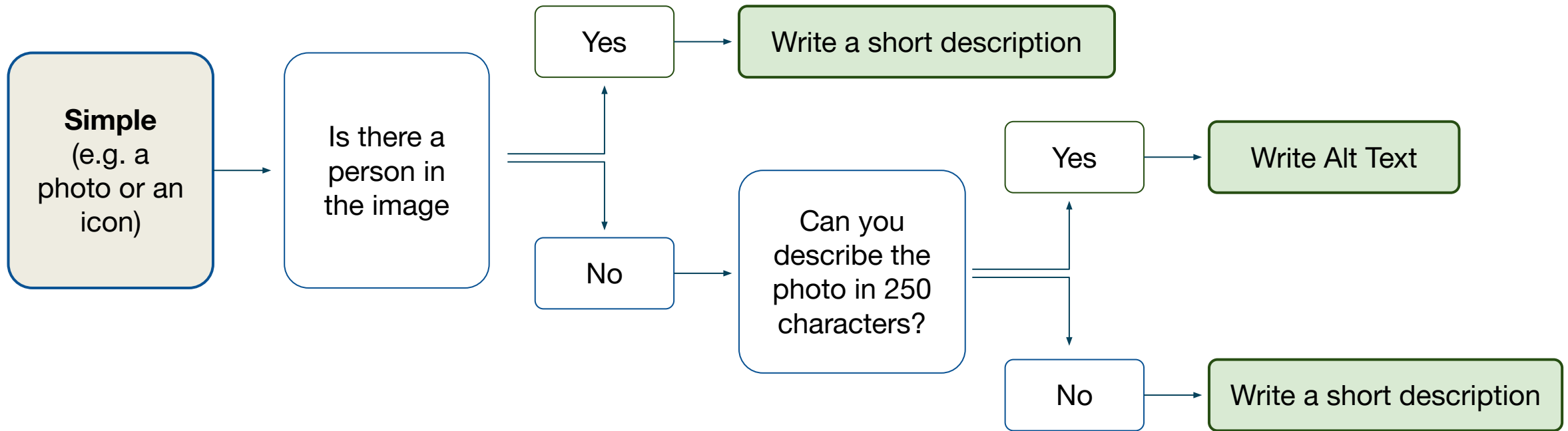
- **Can be as long as you need**
- Used for complicated images (e.g. infographics) or charts
- Need an HTML equivalent
- Also requires alt text



```
 == $0
```

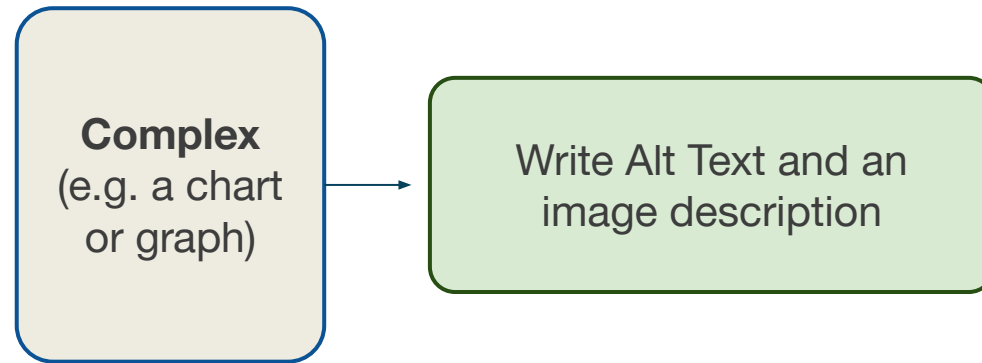


For Simple Images:





For Complex Images:





TAKEAWAY

- * All images need to have alt text, even infographics.



5 Takeaways

1. Tab through the website to test if users can access the content
2. Buttons need more than color to be clickable
3. Test all your colors to make sure they pass contrast
4. Make sure rotators are user activated and the controls are easy to use
5. Break up copy with scannable headlines, subheads, bullets, and other visual assets, make sure you have a clear heading structure and make PDFs HTML pages

Bonus Tip

All images need to have alt text, even infographics

REMEMBER

Good usability
is good accessibility.

Upcoming Webinar

From Data to Insights: GA4 Visualizations in Looker Studio

Date: Thursday, December 5, 2024

Time: 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM CT

Location: Online via Zoom

Secure your spot today. Scan the QR code or visit sandstormdesign.com





Want more? Check out our blog!

- How to Make Websites Accessible: [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)
- [Our Controversial Take on These 3 Common Feature Requests](#)
- [Mega Menus vs. Drop-Down Menus: Which One is Right for Your Website and Meets UX and Web Accessibility Best Practices](#)
- [10 Design Principles for Better UX and Accessibility](#)
- [How Prioritizing Accessibility and Usability Helped Deliver an Inclusive Web Experience](#)
- [Website Accessibility 101: 5 Best Practices for Writing Alt Text for Images](#)
- [4 Ways To Ensure Your Brand Meets Website Usability Accessibility Requirements](#)

Let's connect!

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