



**visits4u Access Guide:
Accessibility in Information,
Marketing and Promotion**

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Language and information

Designing marketing materials and websites that are both accessible and attractive is relatively easy if you follow a few key principles.

The Top Tips below are based on resources that have been created in the UK. Although some of these can be applied in other languages too, it is important that you customise some terms and words for your local area. For example, in the UK the preferred term is 'disabled people' (as politically correct) rather than 'people with disabilities'. These terms may not translate exactly so it is worthwhile finding national or regional disability led organisations to ask them about appropriate wording.

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- Keep language plain and simple - it helps everyone.
 - Keep your sentences short. If you want to say or write a lot of things, split the text into shorter sentences (recommended word count is around 25 words per sentence)
 - In landscape documents, consider columns of text
 - Consider adding symbols and icons where possible to support your text.
 - Use respectful language and think what your customer might find offensive. For example, in the UK the following guidelines are provided around use of language:

Prefer ✓

- ✓ wheelchair user
- ✓ people with learning disability or learning disabled people
- ✓ access needs
- ✓ person of small stature

Avoid X

- x wheelchair bound
- x mentally handicapped
- x retarded
- x special needs
- x dwarf

Font - use a typeface/font that is:

- A minimum of 12 points (Arial equivalent), preferably 14-16 points+ for printed materials
- Large enough for posters is larger so that it can be easily read from a distance (15-25mm text height for close level door signs, 50-100mm for medium distance).
- A plain font (sans serif) which is simpler to read than serif fonts
 - ✓ sans serif examples: Calibri, Arial, Trebuchet MS,
 - ✗ serif font examples: Times New Roman, Footlight MT LIGHT

Text:

- Left justify all text, do not centre, do not fully justify
- Use mixed case lettering, not BLOCK CAPITALS
- Avoid using *italics* or underlining
- Aim for good visual contrast between text and background:
 - black or dark blue text on white or yellow
 - white or yellow on black or dark blue

Images:

- Avoid putting text over images
- Keep a good balance between images and text. Too much of one or both makes it more difficult to digest
- Select images / photos that represent positive and respectful messages on disability:
 - avoid the images that imply disabled people are 'heroes' or 'victims'
 - consider showing everyday situations that include disabled people, rather than situations especially associated with disability.
 - aim to show disabled people interacting with non-disabled people in a non-disabled specific context

- aim to use images that evoke empathy rather than sympathy
- including a mix of people in images, with a range of needs, is helpful

Website

- Write in simple language and keep paragraphs short - using bullets is helpful
- Use images of your building (rooms, entrance, reception, customer area, key facilities and spaces) and your service (tour activities, equipment, vehicles). For each image provide a text alternative that describes the picture (the title is not enough!). Check your website shows this ALT text for every image
- When adding links, give a clear text description or add a sentence to explain what the link is about, for example 'click here for details about our group tours'
- Consider including short descriptions about what your customer can expect. This can be beneficial to people with learning disabilities and people on the autistic spectrum

Materials:

- Use matt paper and at least 90gsm (this reduces the chance of seeing text coming through from the other side).
- Where possible ensure you are able to provide, on request, materials / handouts on cream coloured paper (as some people find brilliant white paper difficult, eg some people with dyslexia)
- Use the colour red with caution - it can be difficult for some users. Red text should always be avoided.
- Ensure your publicity, print and online, contains all the important information and how people can find out more.

- Keep the page clear and simple
- avoid glossy/reflective finishes and use matt sheets when laminating
- avoid low paper weights (because text can show through), and paper folds that obscure text

Alternative formats:

- Encourage your visitors and customers to tell you if they want the information in alternative formats. For example, say “please ask us for this information in alternative formats” instead of “this information is available in alternative formats upon request”
- Don’t assume ‘alternative formats’ always means Braille. A video in **Sign Language**, information in **audio format** or in **Large Print** or in **Easy Read** are also ‘alternative’ formats:
 - **Easy Read** is a way of making information easy to read and understand. It uses simple words, pictures and everyday language. It can be useful and accessible for many people. For example, for people with learning disabilities, people who find it difficult to read or people who do not speak or have limited knowledge of your language
 - **Sign Language** is the first and preferred language for many D/deaf people across the world. Each country has its own Sign Alphabet and Sign Language (for example, the Latvian Sign Language the British Sign Language are not the same). There is also an international one, which is called ‘International Signs’, and it is mostly used in international conferences.
- Be sure you know which alternative formats you can supply!
- Where possible, add a section in your budget costs to create information in alternative formats
- Remember that alternative formats can benefit many more people at the same time. For example:
 - an audio file with information about your service is accessible for visually impaired people and people with learning disabilities

- large print information will also help people who have simply forgotten their reading glasses

Promotion

It is important to include information on your accessibility in any directory or website you promote your services or business. There are also dedicated websites and booking sites that are particularly interested in presenting businesses that have good accessibility.

It should be noted that the examples given below do not imply endorsement or a guarantee about suitability for each tourism business. They are given as examples to encourage tourism businesses to identify and promote their services to websites that focus on accessible tourism.

- National or local tourism boards

Many tourism boards have a dedicated section on accessible tourism. For example Visit England, England's tourism authority, has a dedicated section on their website (www.visitengland.com/plan-your-visit/access-all) with information on accessible places, destinations and 'things to do' in the region. Contact your local tourism board to find out if they have a similar section where you can add your business.

Furthermore, **Visit England** have designed a dedicated website where tourism businesses in England can create their own Accessibility Guide. It is a useful example of the type of access information to collect about your business and how to do it. The website includes step-by-step guidance that can be useful to tourism businesses interested to create an access guide for their facilities. It can also be useful to tourism boards, tour operators and destination managers in any country interested to support businesses involved in the local tourism supply chain: www.accessibilityguides.org

- PANTOU

A worldwide directory of suppliers of accessible tourism, covering the whole tourism and value chain. Potential tourists with access needs can visit the directory to find suitable tourism services where they plan to travel.

www.pantou.org

- European Network for Accessible Tourism - ENAT

ENAT aims to make European tourism destinations, products and services accessible to all travellers and to promote accessible tourism around the world. Its list of members, national coordinators and directory of further links, may act as contact points to find out more about developing and promoting accessibility of your business.

http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.who_we_are



visits4u is co-funded by the
COSME Programme of the European Union