

DYK
DID YOU KNOW SERIES

ACCESSIBLE PRINT

BRING FORM AND
FUNCTION TOGETHER



THE
PAPER
PROFESSOR®

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DID YOU KNOW?

More than 65 million Americans¹ have some form of learning or reading disability, and more than 12 million Americans 40 years² or older suffer from some degree of visual impairment. Considering accessibility in terms of colors, font and even digital integrations can help marketers connect with a larger audience and think outside the box about the most effective way to marry form and function.

WHY CHOOSE PAPER FOR ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS?

We've come a long way in terms of digital accessibility standards, but not all websites adhere to them. In the U.S. alone, more than 2 million people suffer from some form of epilepsy where prolonged exposure to computer screens or constant scrolling can trigger seizures.³ While assisted reading programs for the vision impaired are common,

74% of working-age vision impaired individuals are unemployed and require some form of disability income benefits,⁴ which can make access to the right technology challenging. This is why accessibility in print is critical to ensure everyone has a seat at the table — and why paper provides a bigger sandbox for you to play.

HOW TO BUILD A PRINT PIECE WHERE ACCESSIBILITY AND CREATIVITY THRIVE

Whether it's contrasting colors, font adjustments or unique finishing for a specific tactile experience, there are a handful of components marketers can incorporate to help increase the accessibility of their print campaigns.

CONSIDER CONTRAST



Color is critical in effective design, but relying too much on subtle differences in color can hamper your accessibility efforts. Color-blind people may have trouble distinguishing between shades, so a high contrast between the background and text is key. The Google Chrome Extension™ ColorZilla is an easy-to-use tool to identify background and foreground in your contrasting color scheme.

PUT TEXT TO WORK



This doesn't mean letting loose with font styles — in fact, it's best to stick to common font types such as Helvetica or Arial, and it's also important to be conscious of kerning, as letters that touch can be difficult to distinguish. Instead of relying on color for headlines or sections, use bolded text or symbols such as asterisks to draw attention and guide the reader through the piece. You can also use directional language like *learn more at the bottom of the page* to replace design flourishes.

FOCUS FROM THE TOP DOWN



A clear and organized hierarchy of information is important to effectively convey ideas to a broad audience. This means putting the most valuable information at the top of the piece, such as a call-to-action, dates and times of events, addresses and more. Also, it's important to be purposeful with headings and print them in order of decreasing size based on the value of the information.

PRIORITIZE PAPER SELECTION



Extremely glossy paper can be difficult to read for the visually impaired, so go with a matte or uncoated stock if possible. A more sturdy stock may be required to integrate braille or other kinds of tactile finishes to guide those with visual impairments through your piece. Finally, the higher the brightness of your paper, the more color contrast you'll see in the finished piece.

SOURCES

¹ https://ldaamerica.org/lda_today/the-state-of-learning-disabilities-today/

² <https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/basics/ced/fastfacts.htm>

³ <https://www.epilepsy.com/stories/shedding-light-photosensitivity-one-epilepsys-most-complex-conditions>

⁴ <https://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/about/aboutbraille/needforbraille.html>

RESOURCES

The brightness of your paper stock is key in creating greater degrees of color contrast. Accent® Opaque provides 97 brightness for superior accessibility with your print project. Learn more at accentopaque.com.