



Arts Access Australia

## AAA Advice : Accessible Marketing

People with disability make up about 20% of Australia's population. That's an audience of over 4 million people (plus family and friends) that your standard marketing messages may not reach.

Here's some tips on how to make your marketing materials, communications and website more accessible.

### 1. What to say

The language of disability changes quickly and different terms are used within and outside of Australia. It can be political, it can be very personal and can sometimes be quite confusing.

But don't panic! If you have good intentions and treat everyone with respect, you'll get by. Visit our website and grab the AAA Advice on Disability Language for more information.

And here are a few tips to help you on your way...

Words we recommend...	Words we don't recommend...
• people / person with disability	• person with a disability / disabilities
• wheelchair user	• wheelchair bound
• blind / vision impaired person	• the Blind
• deaf / hard of hearing / Auslan user	• the Deaf / deaf and dumb
• learning disability / difficulty	• retarded / special needs
• mental health issue	• mentally ill
• has / experiences	• suffers from / afflicted with

### 2. How to say it

Wherever possible, talk about the person, not the disability. Use people's names.

Never ask anyone what his or her impairment or disability is. The only thing you need to know is what their access requirements are. Anything else is their own personal business.

If you want to target people with disability in particular, ask everybody whether they identify as a person with disability or whether they face barriers as a result of their impairments. Ask everybody about their access requirements to make sure your services are accessible to all.

Try not to use impairment-specific language and to respect the language that people use about themselves. For example, we use the term 'people with disability' to describe who we work with but try to use the terms 'person', 'artist' or 'artswoker' about individuals. We prefer not to use the term 'disability artist' unless an artist wants to make that point in their work.

### 3. Access (vs) Design

Marketing materials can't be all things for all people, but design doesn't have to be sacrificed for usability.

Some people have problems convincing their graphic designers to put access over aesthetics. But if your marketing doesn't communicate well, then it's not good design.

A good designer will see the creative challenge in making your marketing and website attractive and accessible.

### 4. Keep it simple

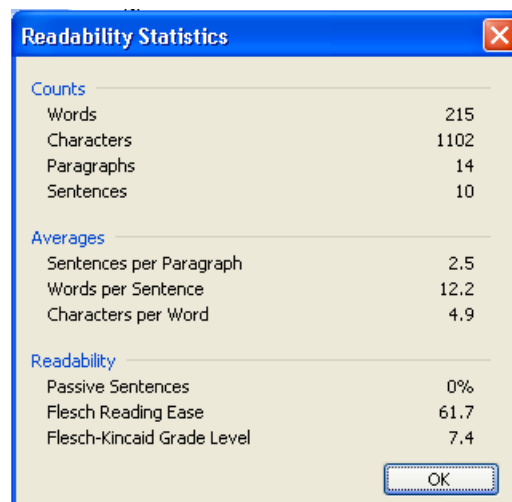
Use Plain English, short words and simple language. It's clearer for everyone. Keep your sentences short and don't use a complicated word if an easier one will do.

Did you know that the average reading age across the whole population is only 9 years (according to UK stats)?

Check the reading age of your documents in Microsoft Word and aim to make sure everything has a reading age of 12 or below. Here's how to do it...

Go to: Tools / Spelling and Grammar / Options. Tick the 'show readability statistics' box.

Every time you do a spell-check, it will bring up a box on Readability Statistics at the end. The last number will be the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (the school year your writing is suitable for). Add 5 to this number to get the reading age.



Readability Statistics	
<b>Counts</b>	
Words	215
Characters	1102
Paragraphs	14
Sentences	10
<b>Averages</b>	
Sentences per Paragraph	2.5
Words per Sentence	12.2
Characters per Word	4.9
<b>Readability</b>	
Passive Sentences	0%
Flesch Reading Ease	61.7
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	7.4
OK	

### Accessible Print

Here's some easy ways to make your print marketing more accessible:

#### Fonts

- Use a sans serif font (like this one) in at least 12-point (or 20-point for large print).
- Avoid using *italics* or ALL CAPS.
- Close-set type can be daunting. Leave space between paragraphs and keep your paragraphs short.

#### Colours

- Contrast between colours and text should be at least 25%.

#### Images

- Try to use positive images of people with disability actively engaging with your venue or work. Avoid 'hero' or 'victim' imagery.
- Show everyday situations that include people with disability, rather than situations especially associated with disability.
- Avoid putting text over images, unless you use a semi-transparent layer in between.

## **Access Information**

- Include information about the accessibility of your venue.
- Help people find you by including public transport directions and a map.
- Invite people to ask for information in the format that they need – don't make it sound like a chore.
- Make sure this information is accessible by writing it in 20 point font.
- Keep some funds available for alternative formats and don't assume this always means Braille. An electronic Word document, Auslan video or an audio format is just as likely.
- Know which alternative formats you can supply, and how long it will take. Find some suppliers and find out their costs.

## **Design**

- Don't cram the page – keep it clear and simple.
- Avoid glossy papers (they reflect too much light), low paper weights (text can show through), and paper folds that obscure text.

## **Accessible Websites**

Here's some easy ways to make your online marketing more accessible:

### **Content**

- Write in simple English, and keep your paragraphs really short – two or three lines will do.
- Use images of your work. For each image provide a text alternative that describes the picture (the title is not enough). Check your site has this ALT text for every image.
- Use meaningful links. Imagine the link appears on its own at the top of the page – will people know where they'll go or what they'll get if they 'click here'? Make the whole sentence the link by saying "click here for more info about accessible marketing".
- Turn off the sound and check whether audio content is still available through text equivalents.

### **Design**

- Do a quick scan of your website's accessibility. Choose a sample page and run through the following checklist:

- Look at the page using a range of web browsers, as your website might appear differently on each one.
  - Use browser controls to change the font-size. Is the page still readable using larger font sizes?.
  - Resize the window to make sure horizontal scrolling is not required.
  - Change the display color to gray scale (or print out the page in gray scale or black and white) to check the color contrast.
  - Without using the mouse, use the keyboard to navigate through the page. Can you access everything?
  - Look at the page using a voice browser (such as Home Page Reader) and a text browser (such as Lynx) to make sure all the information is available and makes sense.
- Make sure your web designer knows that you want your site to be accessible and knows about the tools and standards that can help them make it so:
    - The Worldwide Web Consortium (WC3) publish a list of web accessibility evaluation tools on their website: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/>
    - WC3's Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) is an accessibility standard for website, allowing you to achieve an A, AA or AAA rating. For more information, visit their website: <http://www.w3.org/WAI>

## **Audience Development**

There are a whole range of factors that can motivate (and prevent) people with disability from attending your events or visiting your venue.

First impressions count: and this means your marketing as much as your front-line staff. If someone can't read your brochure, can't see where to go for access information, or is offended by the language you use then they just won't bother.

You need to develop trust and build a relationship with audiences with disability. This will take time. Start by making a commitment to access, communicating with people in the right way and in the right places, providing as much information about access as possible and making sure you deliver on your promises.

And remember, the improvements you make with people with disability in mind will help make your services, activities and venue more accessible for everyone.

Here's some easy ways to make your audience development and marketing more accessible:

- Include disability media on your media list and start to develop relationships with them.
  - Included access information in all material sent to general media.
  - Make a contact list of disability organisations in your area. Working with a variety of groups and networks will broaden your range and increase your chances of diversifying your audience.
  - Start building relationships by going to visit people on their own ground. Make sure they get all your publicity material (in formats that are accessible to them).
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**For more information, contact AAA on:**

Phone: (+61) 0419 201 338  
Email: [info@artsaccessaustralia.org](mailto:info@artsaccessaustralia.org)  
Skype: artsaccessaustralia  
Website: [www.artsaccessaustralia.org](http://www.artsaccessaustralia.org)

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