

Strategies for Creating Accessible Digital Marketing Content

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Abstract

This research is a response to the challenge faced by those seeking more inclusivity in the practice of digital marketing. It focused itself on outlining different techniques applicable in making content for different platforms, including, but not limited to, emails, social networks, videos, and infographics. Many marketers appreciate the need for inclusive strategies, but there are barriers to their actual practice, such as technological and financial limitations. Their anxiety is compounded by the moral and legal aspects of producing content that is not accessible. The findings show that there are positive correlations between placing more focus on accessibility and improvement of the engagement of users with the content as well as the accessibility of the platform. Therefore, such works are a gap for future marketing strategies.

Keywords: Digital Accessibility, Content Creation, Inclusive Marketing, Social Media, Video Accessibility

1. Introduction

By the beginning of 2019, accessibility in digital marketing was already cited as a challenge, indicating that there were attempts to create content that differed for various users. Seeing the number of people using and interacting with digital platforms increase, the marketers had no choice but to make it accessible for all. Many, however, were still struggling with the notion and actual practice of accessible design principles in their true sense.

Inclusive content is important because it expands reach and improves the overall user experience [5]. This demand, however, creates an ethical responsibility for internet marketers who target people having different users, including people with sight, hearing, and cognitive disabilities.

This report aims to present concrete tactics and methods of working with various types of digital marketing materials, such as email campaigns, social media posts, videos, and infographics focusing on accessibility [10]. The report contends, through the study of these areas, that the best workable solutions effective marketers should apply, placing them in an inclusionary space and state of equity to information and services in the digital environment.

2. Understanding Accessibility in Digital Marketing

In the digital marketing space, access is built by creating easy content to get hands-on to people who have varying capabilities, about being able to see, hear, think, or physically. In this case, accessibility is not about compliance with the law, but rather, it is an essential aspect of user-centered design [3]. Frameworks through key guidelines such as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) and the Disabilities

Act of America (ADA) mandates enable marketers to visualize digital content inclusively. Nevertheless, it remains to be fully compliance a challenge; even after these frameworks, you have to understand deep technical and user experience principles.

Brand perception is affected greatly by accessible content. Inclusion can be powerful marketing fuel because when brands and people work together, they can communicate the image of an empathetic and responsible brand that's trustworthy and lovable. On the flip side, inaccessible content can be used to turn off some user groups, resulting in less engagement, and at worst could damage brand reputation [7]. However, brands that have put in the effort to create accessible design have found better audience engagement with inclusive content, since inclusive content is more shared and appreciated from a broader network. For that reason, as a matter of ethics and law, and to achieve the widest possible audience, accessibility standards need to be adopted. With this foundational understanding of accessibility, marketers don't only aim to comply but also make practical benefits of inclusive digital content.

3. Techniques for Accessible Content in Various Digital Formats

3.1 Accessible Email Marketing

In order to make email content available to all user groups, it is important to create accessible email content. Email readability may be an often forgotten marketing stat, but it can greatly affect engagement. It's best to use high color contrast between text and background so it helps individuals with visual impairments. While font size should generally be avoided of fewer than 14 pt for readability, there are exceptions to this rule. Additionally, when content is structured with separate headers and tidy paragraphs, people can navigate information more easily, even on mobile devices or tiny screens [4]. Additional techniques in terms of screen reader compatibility make the email more accessible. Images must include descriptive alt text that provides context to users dependent on screen readers to understand image elements not otherwise reachable. Because screen readers interpret content linearly, to avoid complex and complex layouts and too many links. Hence, each visual and structural object must serve as a tack to the overall message without redundancy.

Accessible email marketing is built around plain language. Certain industry-specific jargon or technical terms may be required, but they should not take over in order to reduce confusion. The ease with which a text can be studied, in this case, a message sent via email, is characterized by compressed and very direct text that is intended for different target groups and spheres of action, in this case, the email [1]. In addition to that, it helps to reduce the length of the text of an email, making it more understandable and also assists the readers who are often faced with obstacles, including those who have a disability or are using a translation device. Overall, accessible email marketing is a saber of alignment between a design, a functionality, and a language, all aimed at building a positive, inclusive user experience. Not only does this increase brand reach, but it also reassures the audience that this is a brand committed to accessibility and user-centric design.

3.2 Social Media Accessibility

Access to social media content is very important to be able to reach a wider public. While social platforms in general can be visual, with some tweaks, posts can be accommodated with the user's disabilities in mind. One way to do that is with descriptive captions attached to images and videos that help provide context to them. Visual information that might be inaccessible without these captions should be conveyed through these captions so that screen reader users can understand the content's purpose and key details [9].

Furthermore, hashtags written in CamelCase (such as #AccessibleContent) make them easier to read as they allow the screen readers to discern each word.

In 2019, social platforms launched limited tools with limited access, and even these tools contributed positively to making the platforms more inclusive. In terms of customizing alt text, for instance, Instagram allowed for it, and users were able to add descriptions that screen readers could interpret [2]. Like Twitter, they offered ways to add alt text to images. These tools were somewhat constrained but were important steps toward a more people-friendly social media landscape.

Visual adaptations are also key to cater to the users with color blindness or low vision. Simply adjusting color contrast in images and avoiding color-coded information alone can keep critical details visible. Inclusivity without compromising the aesthetic appeal: some brands have allowed for the use of color schemes found by users with color-blind impairment [7]. Secondly, a good practice would be to add high-contrast visuals and steer clear of overly saturated or bright color combinations to ensure greater visual accessibility of content.

Posting content that is devoid of disabilities will reflect negatively on the particular brand. All posts will employ Descriptive text, visual adjustments and tools available within the different platforms to make sure every user's experience is better on the particular brand's social media handles.

3.3 Video Content Accessibility

Digital marketing isn't complete without the availability of accessible video content that reaches and resonates with audiences of all abilities. These are foundational to inclusivity, and closed captions are a big part of that. Not only does it support the hearing impaired, but it also aids engagement for non-native speakers and in rationally sound constraints. Correct captions ensure that all said information and sounds are clear and filmic. But even closed captions alone don't provide a full accessibility solution [11]. Also, transcripts should be provided since they enable users to engage with the video's content more easily, or by screen readers.

The more audio descriptions help make the norm in elevating accessibility and adding crucial context for visual components. In many video narratives, visuals often take center stage, but audio descriptions do offer a way to fill in when these gaps occur: explaining actions, scenes, or on-screen text necessary to understanding what has happened or is happening [2]. The results are meaningful because the technique enables visually impaired users to comprehend the whole narrative while losing no important information. Accessibility needs to be built in from the video production start so that rework doesn't require a lot of additional funds. For example, planning visual cues and high-contrast elements before filming might help to alleviate accessibility problems while editing with an emphasis on clarity and simplicity of visualization helps all viewers [8]. Of course, these practices will demand more resources, but they are telling signs of the brand making the effort for inclusivity and stimulating broader audience reach. In the end, brands that embed features such as captions, transcripts, and audio descriptions in their video content can create video content that is informative as well as universally engaging and accessible.

3.4 Infographics and Visual Content

Because of infographics and visual content's highly visual nature, they can be barriers to users with disabilities, and partnering with someone who can help you solve this can pay a great dividend. Therefore, using color contrast judiciously is key to solving this. If the text is difficult to see in the background, the new case will help give sight to people with low vision or color blindness. Text size is also a big factor; text that is ready comfortably is readable without strain. While these may seem like simple adjustments, this is critical to expanding accessibility and keeping their visual appeal [4]. Nonetheless, more than just

visualizations are necessary for accessible infographics. It's important to make sure it's screen reader compatible. As an example, describing the alt text for each visual component in the form allows the screen reader to capture the content and makes this information accessible to people who suffer from some form of visual impairment. When you place alt text for images, keep it succinct and to the point, focusing on the upshots of the picture without burdening your user with more images.

Besides that, the structure of the infographic itself and the flow of the infographic itself should be designed logically and be readable [5]. The content becomes hierarchical with a clear sequence, making it possible for all users, whether they use a screen reader or not, to make sense of it smoothly. Breaking down complex data into more digestible chunks can help immensely with understanding the content. Realistically, it's the access to infographics that benefits a diverse audience and allows for the accurate portrayal of a brand's commitment to inclusion. Visual content can communicate clearly while respecting the diverse needs of an audience through broken-down color contrast, alt text, and structured layout integration.

4. Challenges and Considerations

Accessibility in digital marketing materials was a lot of work, and even though there were many accessibility challenges when implementing, everything wasn't done well. In reality, technical complexity raised its challenging head, and old platforms or tools that were not built with accessibility in mind often created limitations. Features of this situation put in place such hurdles that content needed to be produced, which addressed the needs and interests of users [2]. The high barrier posed by resource constraints was directly related to that creation: many organizations simply did not have the budget or personnel to devote to prioritizing accessibility, leaving them reliant upon dated practices.

More importantly, little thought was put into the ethical or legal issues associated with accessible or inaccessible content. Organizations must be liable if they do not comply with existing standards, for example, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and considering the accessibility guidelines is important as well. Yet, the legal obligation to provide the content lacked ethical allowance to do so [10]. Brands risked alienating huge segments of their audience if they weren't accommodating all users, which would then erode their reputations and market coverage. Henceforth, organizations had to be proactive in dealing with this challenge to integrate access into their digital marketing strategies.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, accessibility in digital marketing was identified as a priority to increase inclusivity and enlarge audience reach. These best practices, like making content readable, supporting assistive technologies, and improving visual accessibility, were necessary for successful engagement. However, it was not until it became a sustained effort and adaptation to evolving standards that full accessibility was achieved. Thus, organizations were led to consider accessibility as a legal or ethical obligation as well as a strategic advantage. As companies continuously refine their practices around accessibility, they could make inclusivity a key ingredient to their brand in an increasingly diverse digital landscape.

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