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Pacific Northwest Drupal Summit October 19, 2025

Good Accessibility Is Good SEO: Big Wins For Both

Syd Hunsinger (they/them), Product Owner, DEIB Specialist



Fun facts about Sandstorm®



Accessibility-certified,
creative technology
agency for 25+ years
for **purpose-driven
brands**

Deep expertise with **Higher
Ed, Associations, Global
Non-Profits, &
Healthcare**



Certifications:

CPACC (accessibility), AWS
Cloud, Pantheon, Acquia,
Drupal, DEIB, and WBENC
(women-owned)

15+ yrs working
in Drupal



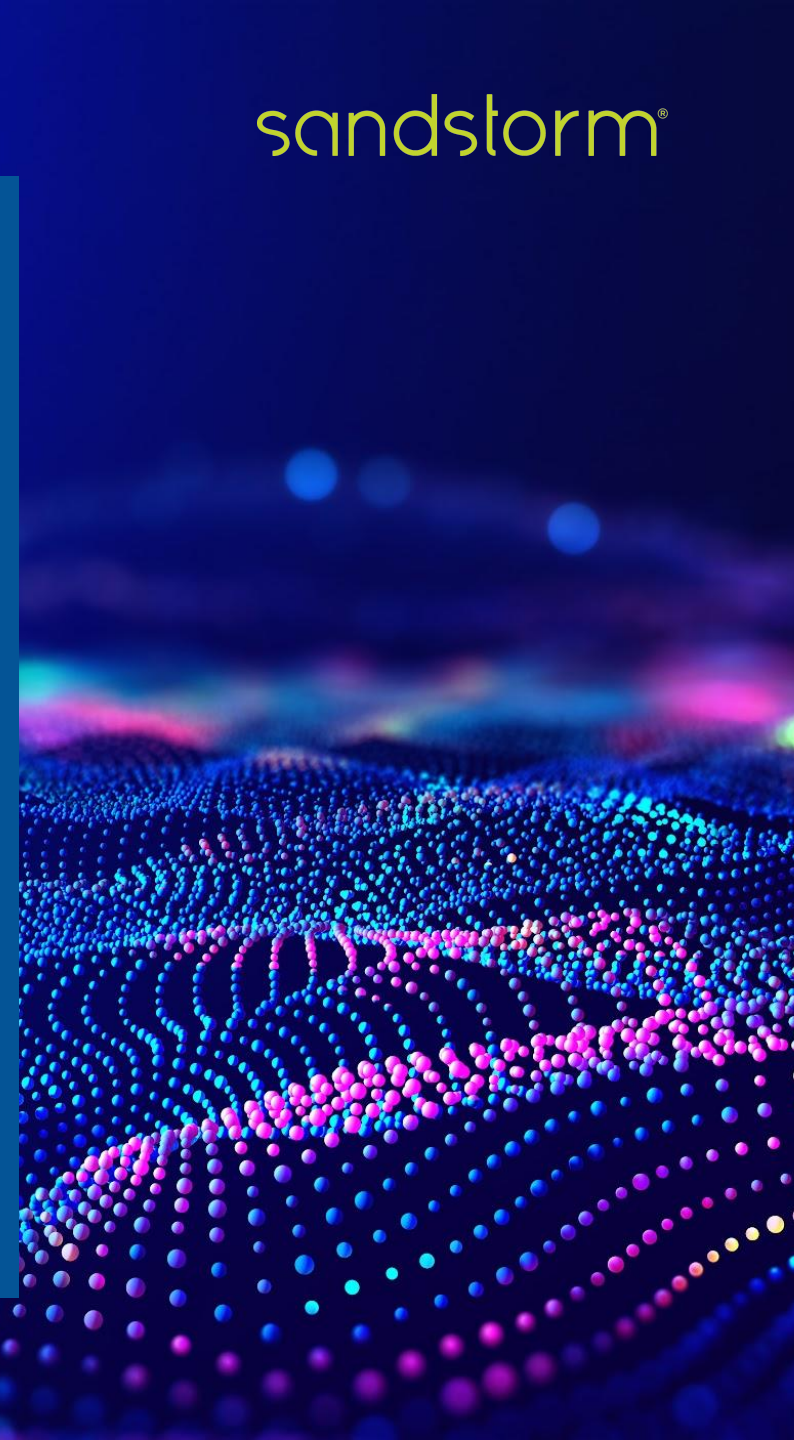
Interdisciplinary team:
UX, UI, AI, strategy,
technology, analytics

UX practice started by
Ph.D in human factors
in 2006

FUN FACT

1 in 4 US adults, or **28.7%**
of the US population,
have a disability.

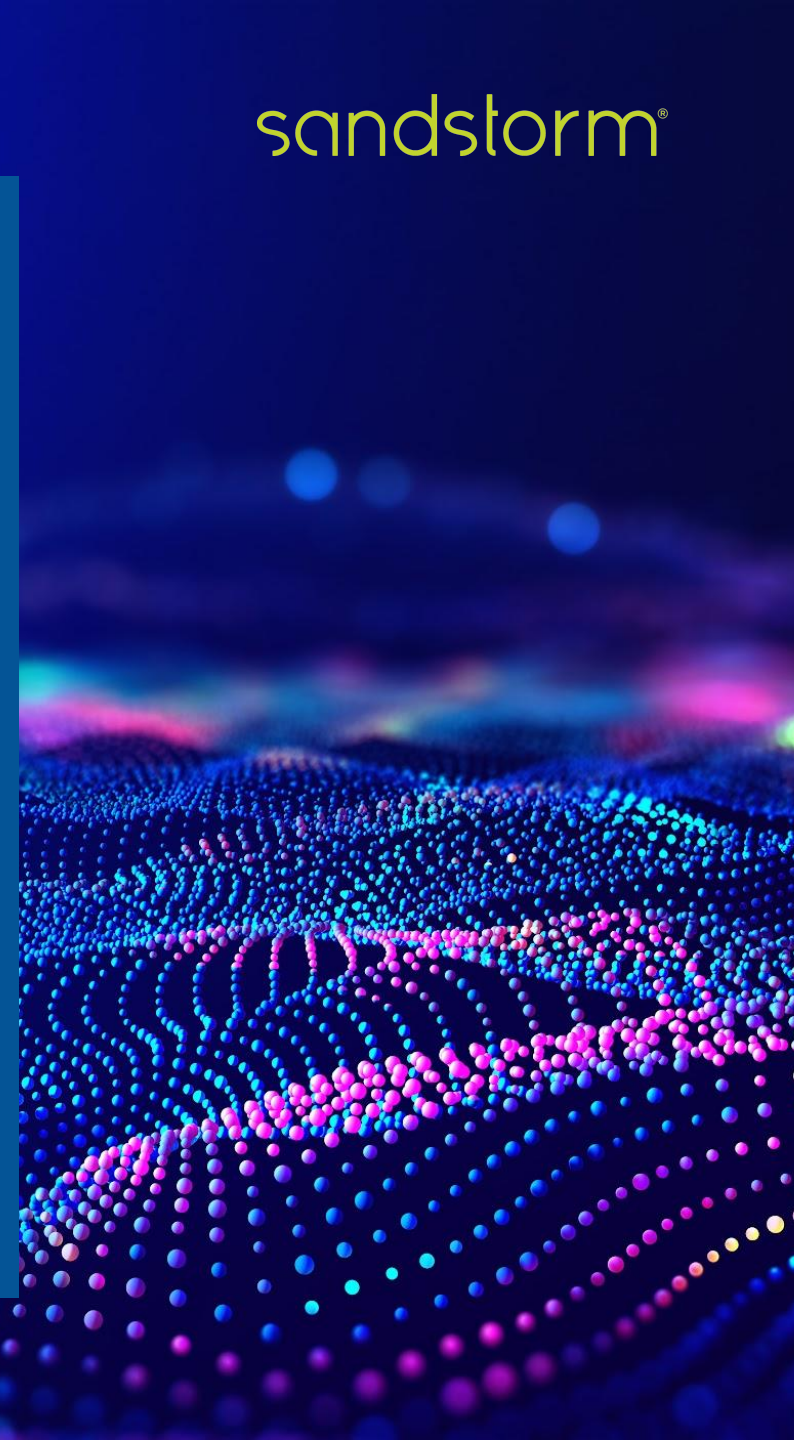
[Source: CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/)



NOT SO FUN FACT

**Only 5.2% of the top
million websites** meet
accessibility standards.

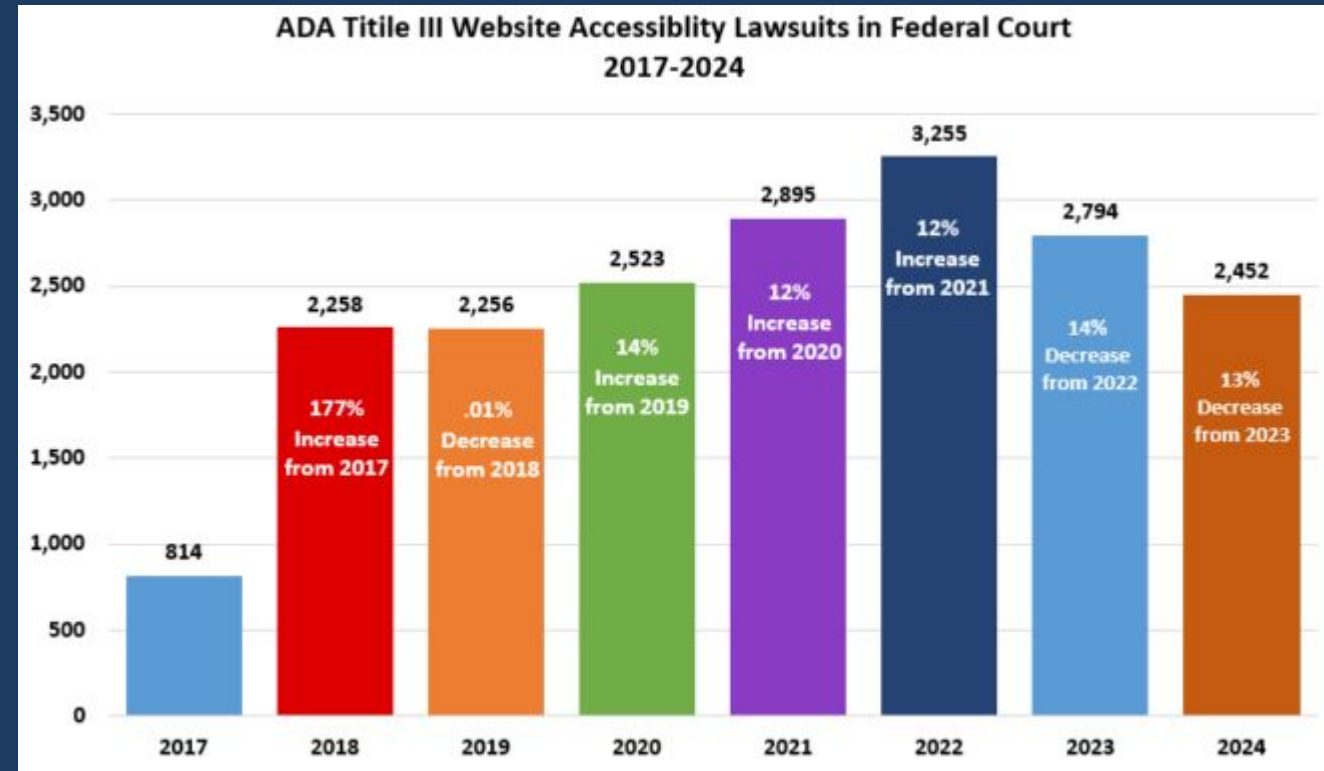
Source: WebAIM



GOOD/BAD FACT?

Almost 200% increase
in website accessibility
lawsuits since 2017.

The good news is that
these lawsuits have
**decreased in recent
years.**



WE LOVE A TWO-FER

Many common accessibility issues
are **resolved in content which
can also help your SEO.**

BEFORE WE BEGIN...

A word on AI and AEO

(Answer Engine Optimization)

10 Key Takeaways

Good Accessibility Is Good SEO

1 The importance of effective writing can't be overstated

Format for Scannability

- **One-sentence paragraphs are easier to read on the web.** People generally skip big walls of text.
- **Begin with the end.** Put the most information first in a sentence, first in a paragraph, and first on the page.
- **Use lots of sub-heads.** These help people scan the page for the part they want to read. Make sure the subheads are descriptive.
- **Cut extra words.** The more unnecessary words you have, the more likely visitors are to miss the important ones.

Motivation Inspiration for your perspiration.



Music, Podcasts, and Audiobooks. Listen to whatever motivates you to move. Including 70 million songs on Apple Music.⁴



Activity Rings. Stay motivated to sit less, move more, and get some exercise. Day after day.



Activity Sharing. Share your Activity rings with friends and family to encourage each other.

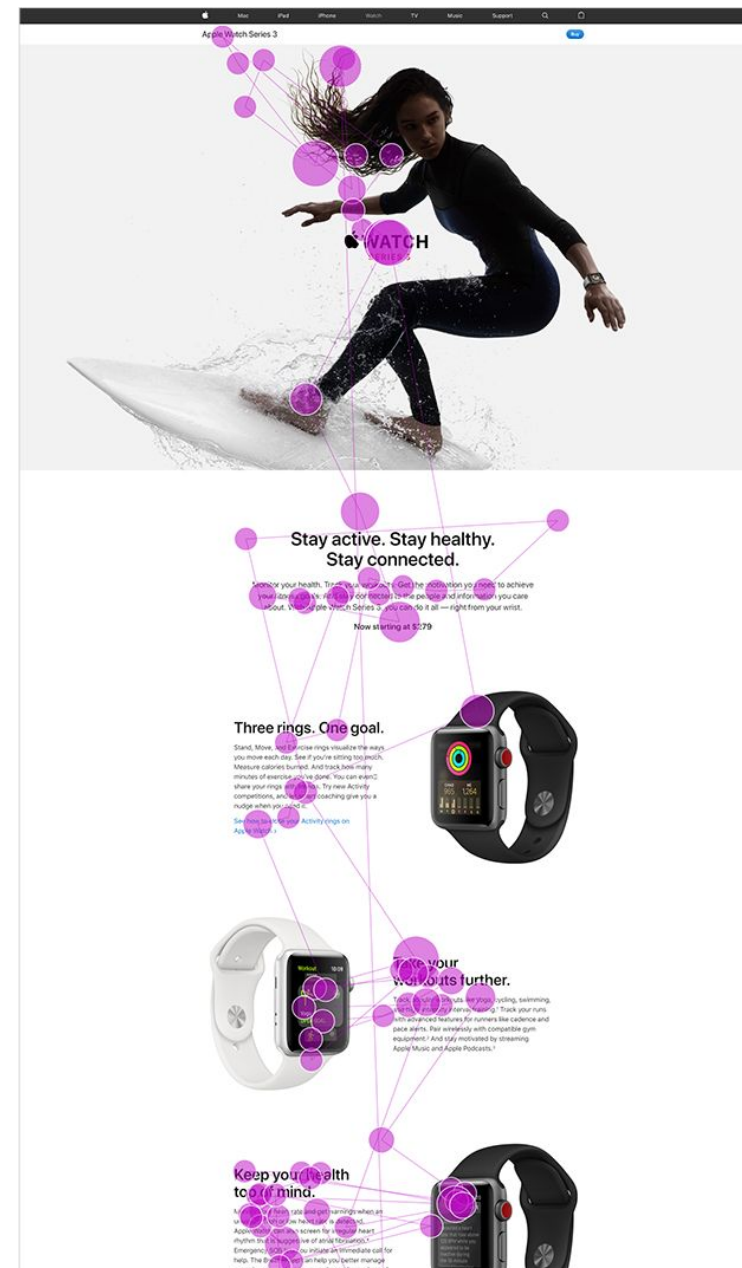
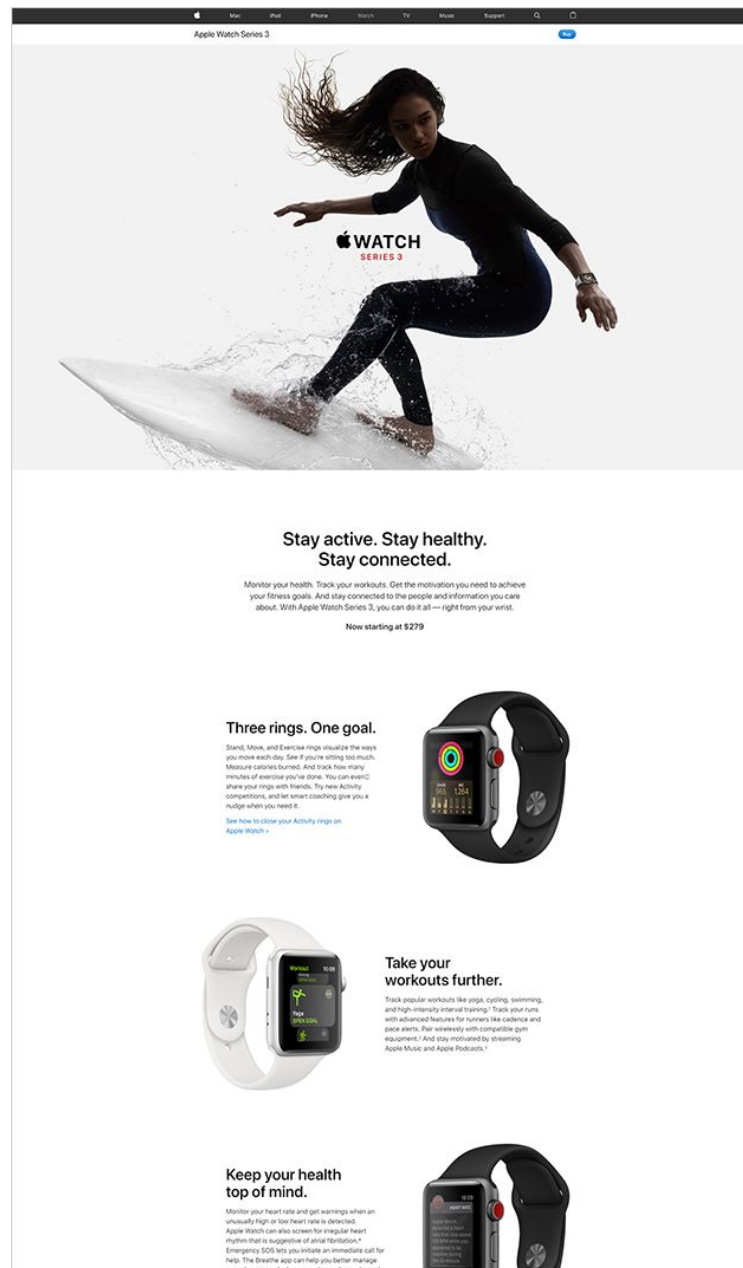


Competitions. Invite friends to compete in a seven-day Activity challenge.

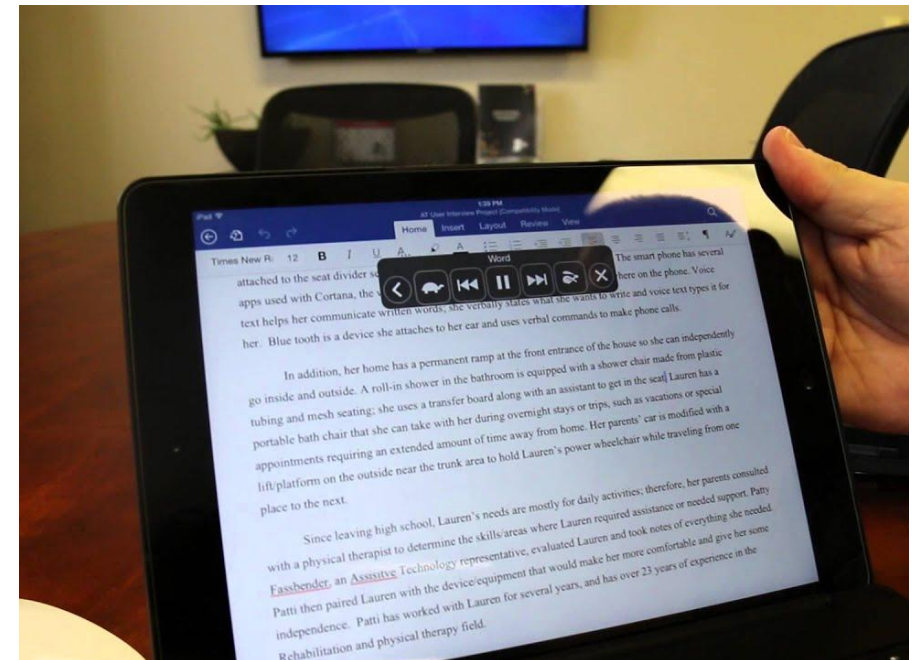
Relevant photos

Catchy headline

Scannable subheads



Screen readers render text and image **content** as **speech** or **braille**.



Increase readability with...

Bullets, numbered lists and tables

- If you can **show something in bullets or a table**, do.
- If you list a series in a paragraph, **make it a bulleted or numbered list instead**.
- **Bolding keywords** within each bullet (often at the beginning of the bullet) can make them even **more scannable**.

FACT:

Fewer and fewer visitors are arriving through the homepage.

TAKEAWAY



Keep your content scannable and free of jargon with short, easy-to-read paragraphs

2 Utilize clear headings in a logical order

What are
headings?



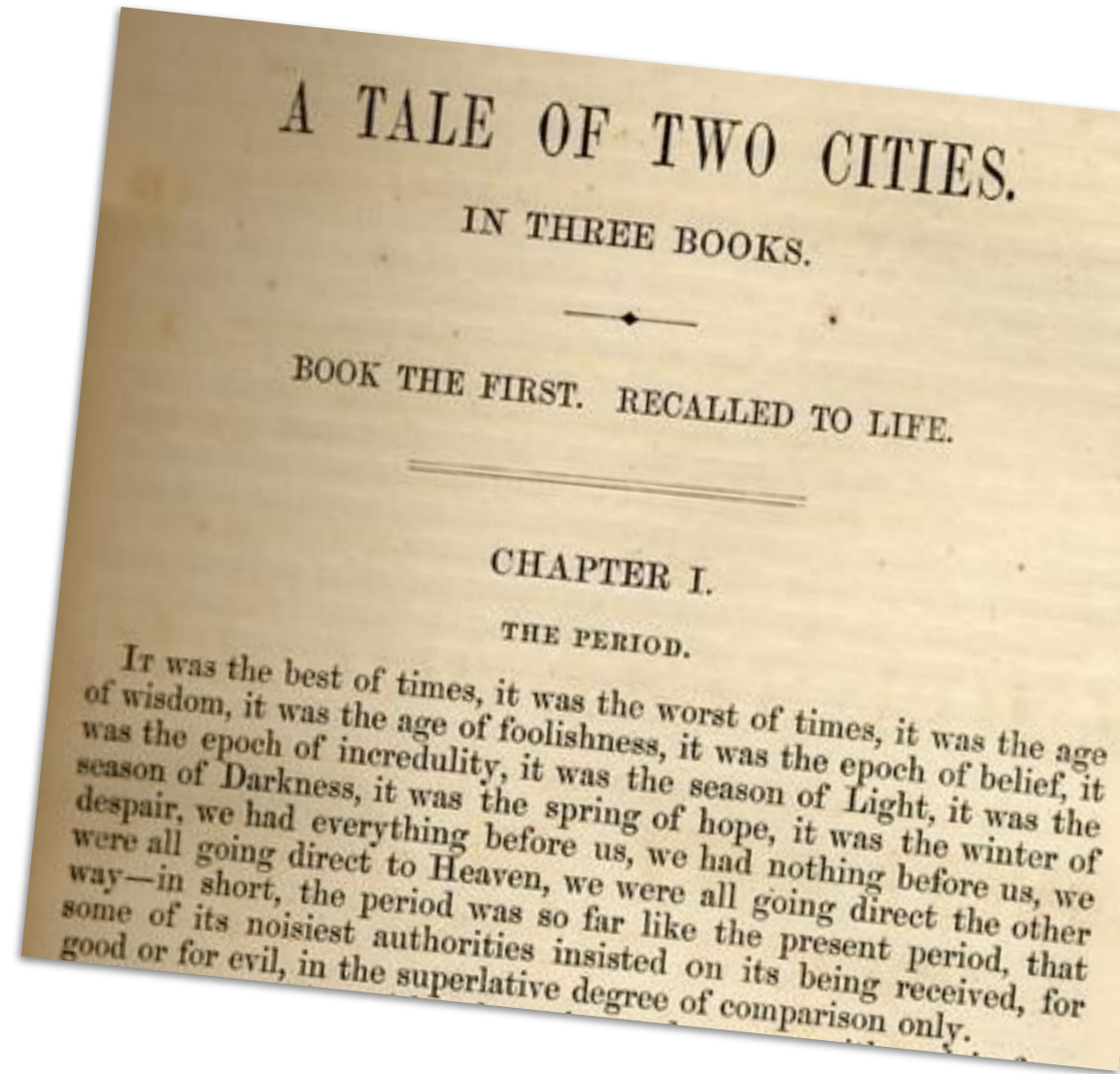
A heading is a word, phrase, or statement that starts **a section of content, similar to a title.**

Heading tags are **HTML elements** used to define the heading to **differentiate from the rest of content on a web page.**

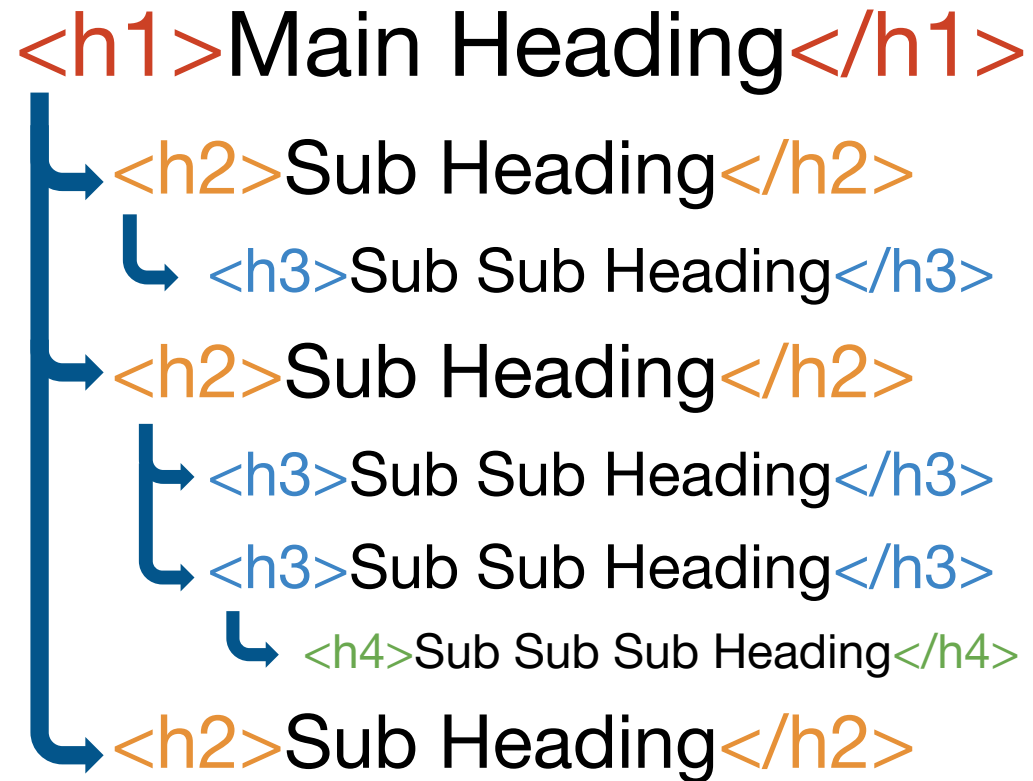
Think of It Like...

the structure of a book.

- `<h1>` is the title of the book
- `<h2>` is the chapter title
- `<h3>` is a subsection of the chapter
- `<h4>` is a subsection of the subsection of the chapter
- ...and so on



Appropriate Heading Structure



This is the page title -
your developer does
the `<h1>`

Content admins are
responsible for `<h2>`,
`<h3>` and onward

TAKEAWAY



Good headings provide a scannable roadmap of the content for all users

3 Accurate metadata benefits everyone

What is
metadata?



Metadata is simply
data that describes
other data.



sandstorm design capabilities



Sandstorm Design

<https://www.sandstormdesign.com> › capabilities

Capabilities: Human-Centered and Research-Driven

Capabilities: Human-Centered and Research-Driven ... **Reuse UI design patterns, code and OOD features for scale.** ... Sandstorm Design. 4422 N Ravenswood Suite #50



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Sandstorm Design

Brilliant ideas have no boundaries. We're here to share our insights— from 4200+ hours of UX research and analysis — to help you implement compelling ...

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Sandstorm Design

<https://www.sandstormdesign.com> › Capabilities

Capabilities: User Experience

Starting with 1:1 in-depth interviews, we begin to identify **a user's content and functional requirements, purchasing rationale, behaviors, and trends.** We mold ...



Sandstorm Design

<https://www.sandstormdesign.com> › about

About Us: Shared Values Make All the Difference

Sandstorm Design. 4422 N Ravenswood Suite #50. Chicago, IL 60640. 773.348.4200. WBENC-Certified | [Privacy Policy](#). **Capabilities.** [Capabilities Overview](#) · [Brand](#) ...

Page Address

Page Title

Meta Description

For your website,
**meta data best
practices** look
like...

- **Title:** Under 60 characters. Includes primary key phrase
- **Meta Description:** Up to 300 characters and includes natural use of the primary keyword
- **Headings:** H1 (oftentimes the same as Title) includes primary keyword. Subheadings (H2, H3, etc.) include variation of primary keyword or secondary key phrase when appropriate
- **Page Address:** e.g. /your-keyword-here, whenever possible

TAKEAWAY

- * Page titles, meta descriptions, and page addresses all inform users they're in the right place

4 Alt text isn't just important; it's a necessity

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

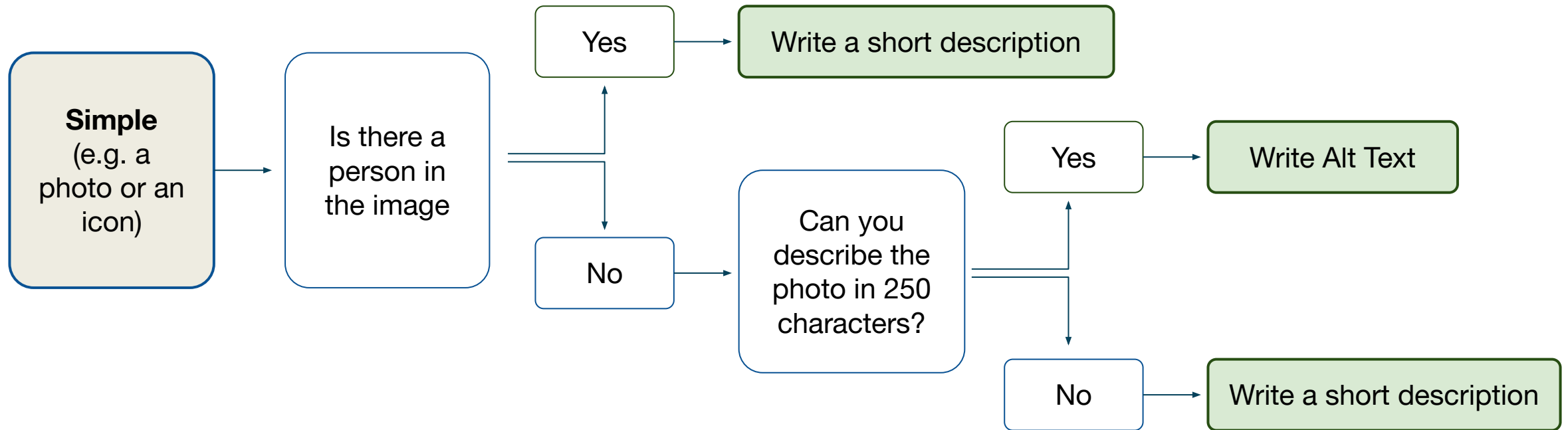


```
 == $0
```

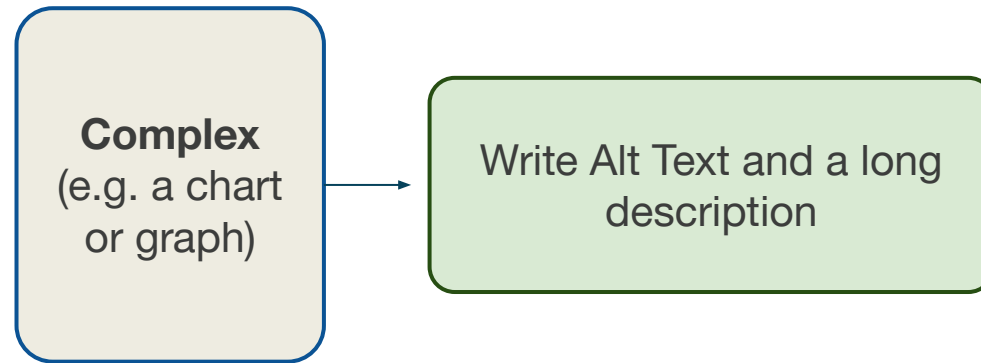
QUESTION: HOW DO I KNOW WHICH TYPE OF ALT TEXT TO USE?

Start by answering the question,
“Is my image simple or complex?”

For Simple Images:



For Complex Images:



TAKEAWAY

- * All images need to have alt text, and you can use the target keyword when it makes sense

5 Text-heavy images need an HTML equivalent

We see all sorts of text-heavy images, like...

- **Event Banners:** Images with event date, time, and location information
- **Logo Collages:** Many sponsor or supporter logos on a single canvas
- **Hero Images:** Banners at the top of overview pages, but with headline text on top
- **Infographics:** In-depth graphic meant to help explain or visualize a lot of data
- ...and many more

HTML Event Information

Live text version of all event information:

- ✓ Title
- ✓ Date
- ✓ Location

[Home](#) > [Events](#) > 2024 ACG Nebraska | April Breakfast Meeting with Nikki Osborn

2024 ACG Nebraska | April Breakfast Meeting with Nikki Osborn

Share:



The banner features a blue background with a white grid pattern. On the left is a portrait of Nikki Osborn, a woman with long brown hair wearing a pink top. To the right of the portrait, the text reads: 'April Breakfast Meeting' in large white font, 'Nikki Osborn' in large white font, 'Founder, Meridian Clinical Research' in white italicized font, and 'Thursday, April 25 2024' in white font. At the bottom right is the ACG Nebraska logo, which consists of the letters 'ACG' in a bold sans-serif font with a green triangle above the 'A', followed by the word 'Nebraska' in a smaller sans-serif font.

Event Details

When:
April 25, 2024 7 AM - 9 AM CDT

Where:
Happy Hollow Country Club
1701 South 105th Street
Omaha, NE 68124
[United States](#)

[ADD TO CALENDAR](#)

Logo Collages

Official Sponsor of GrowthSM

Make logo collages accessible

- ✓ Upload individual logos
- ✓ Alt text for each logo
- ✓ Link to sponsor websites

FORV/S

 **GF DATA**
AN ACG COMPANY

 **Insperity**
HR that Makes a Difference™

Endorsed Partners

 **abacode**
Cybersecurity & Compliance

 **Grata**

 **Insperity**
HR that Makes a Difference™

Growth Leader

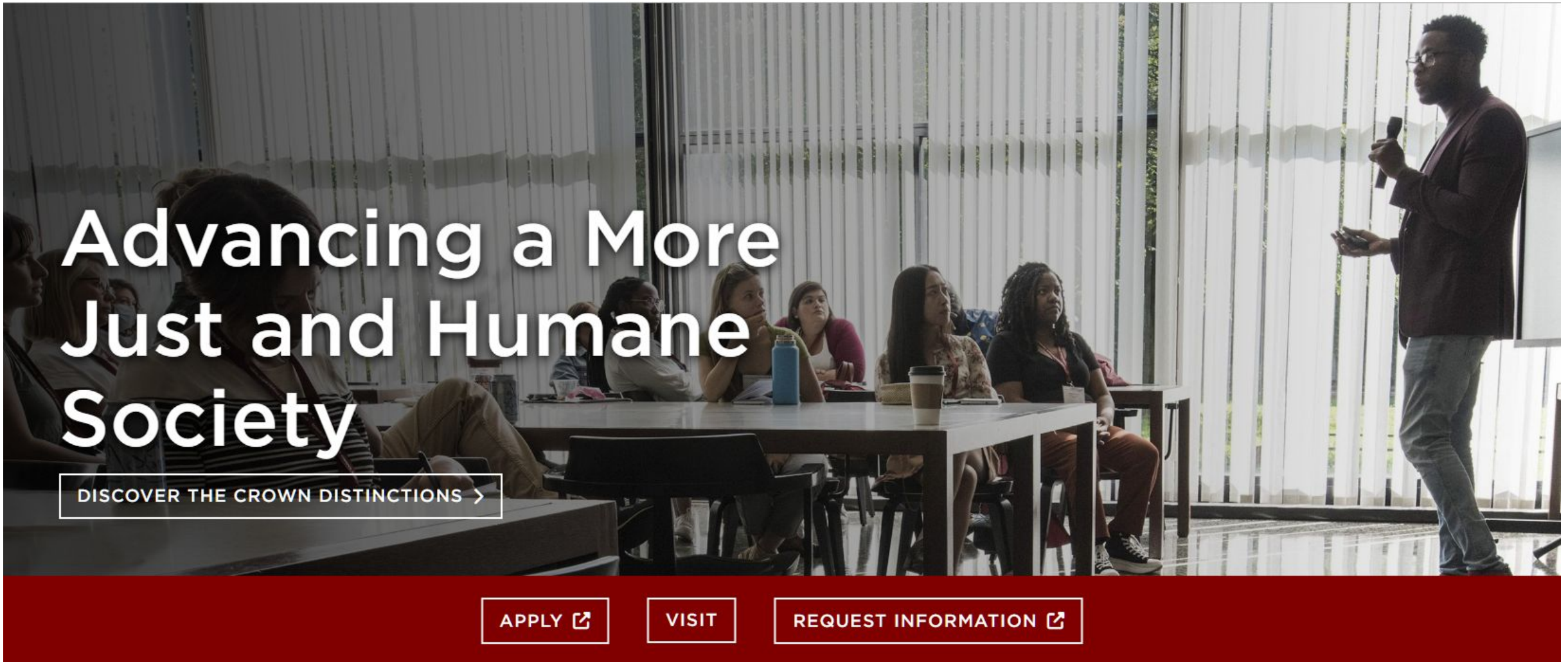
 **bakertilly**

 **G-P**
Global Made Possible

 **PitchBook**

 **Sourcscrub**

Hero Banners

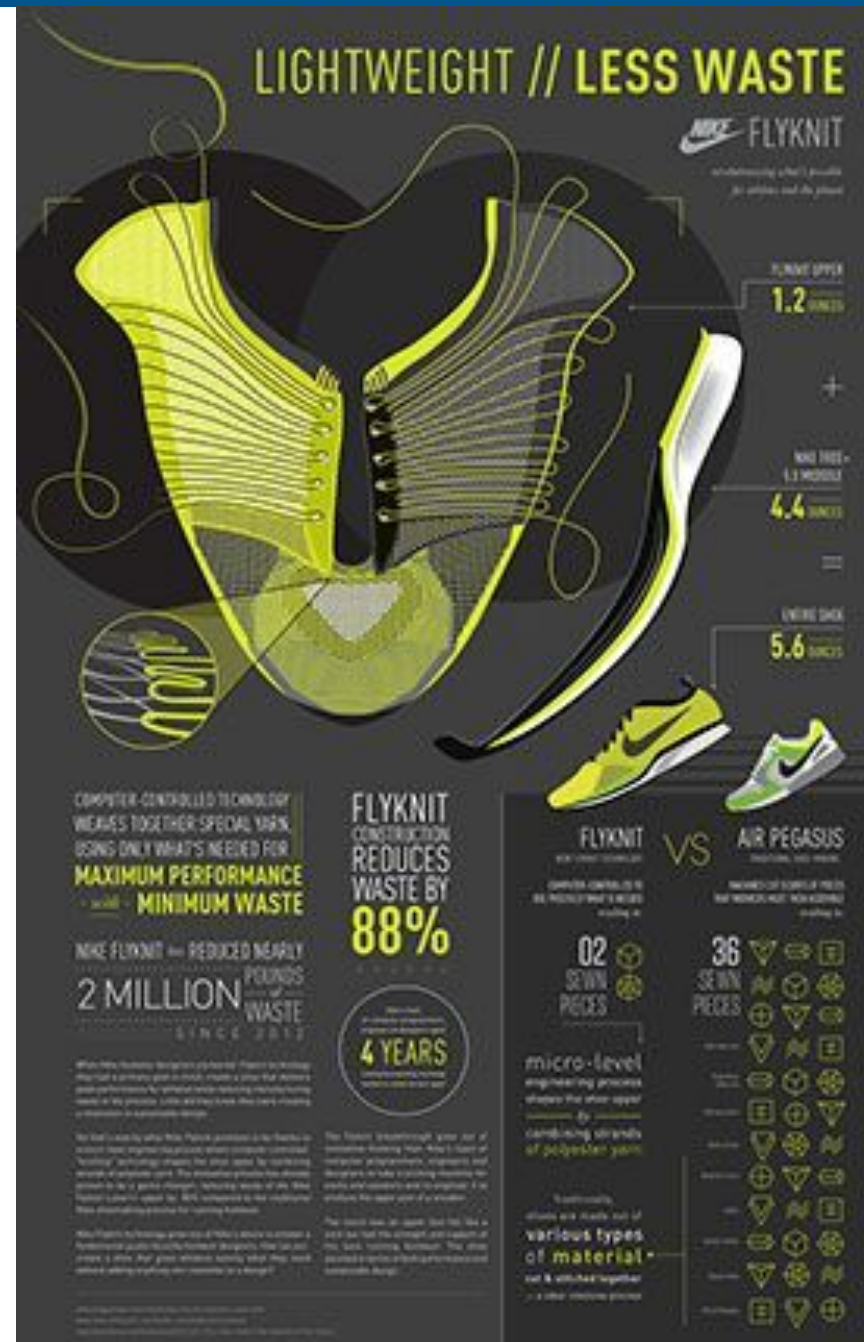


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sandstorm®

Infographics

Infographics are a prime opportunity to make use of a **long description, which allows for HTML markup**, visible on the page to all users.





Like calcium, magnesium is found abundantly in the human body and is vital for our health and well-being.*



Image *

[Why Magnesium Infographic.jpg](#) (964.26 KB)

Remove



Alternative text *

colorful infographic why take magnesium

Short description of the image used by screen readers and displayed when the image is not loaded. This is important for accessibility.

Alt Type *

Long Description (Screen Reader Only) ▾

Like calcium, magnesium is found abundantly in the human body and is vital for our health and well-being.

SO Magnificent!

- Vital Mineral Nutrient
- Cofactor in 300+ Metabolic Processes*
- Works with Calcium to Maintain Bone Health*
- Supports Healthy Blood Glucose Management*
- Supports Energy Production*
- Promotes Restful Sleep*

Did You Know?

Although magnesium is found abundantly in our body with a healthy diet, recent research has shown that magnesium deficiency is becoming increasingly common, with one study showing that more than 50% of the U.S. population does not meet the U.S. recommended daily intake (RDI) for dietary intake of magnesium.

TAKEAWAY

- * Leverage HTML content wherever you can, as it is accessible and easier for search engines to index

6 Keyword stuffing doesn't help anyone

What is
keyword
stuffing?



Keyword stuffing is a tactic where a writer forces keywords unnaturally into their content to rank better for SEO.

Here's an example...

What time would it be 18 hours after 11:30 PM?

Here we have calculated **what time it will be 18 hours from 11am**. In other words, what is **11am plus 18 hours**? It does not matter if it is 11am today or any other day from the past or future.

To clarify, when we say **18 hours from 11am** we mean **18 hours after 11am or 18 hours forward from 11am**.

We of course took into account that there are twenty-four hours in a day, which include twelve hours in the am and twelve hours in the pm. **18 hours from 11am:**

5 AM

TIP:

Choose one primary keyword for your page and find other naturally occurring keywords to highlight as you go.

Keyword Stuffing

What is Keyword Stuffing?

Keyword stuffing refers to the excessive use of a target keyword in on-page content with the intention of ranking for that keyword. Google considers keyword stuffing as a spam technique and lists it in its spam policies.

Examples of today's keyword stuffing include adding lists of phone numbers without added value, blocks of text that list cities and regions that a web page is trying to rank for, or repeating the same words or phrases so often that it sounds unnatural.

Also, keyword stuffing can be used in [anchor texts](#) and URLs.

Keyword stuffing used to be effective in the past when search engines relied on simpler methods and algorithms to find relevant content. Today keyword stuffing does not work that well.

- ✓ Use the keyword phrase, keyword stuffing, liberally in the content, but **because it is the primary topic, this makes it seem very natural.**

[Source: Ahrefs](#)

TAKEAWAY



For every 100 words you write, use your target keyword 1 time

7 Link text needs to be clear and descriptive



More information
[here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Fill in this [form](#) by
the end of the day.

Check the security
policy by this [link](#).

A user in the den of bad links

Good text links are good UX and good accessibility

As for assistive technology:

- Screen readers can be **programmed to only read links**
- Speech recognition tools can be **programmed to open a link** after a specific voice command



This “Learn more” link is ambiguous, and doesn’t tell you where you’d go if removed from context.



Links for “education,” “publications,” “books,” “courses” and “webinars” are good - short and descriptive.

Group Affiliation Program

Get all the Advantages for a Lower Rate

[All Group Program Application \(Firm\)](#)

JOIN NOW! Make a total commitment to professionalism!

Appraisal Institute Benefits Include:

- Discounts on [education](#) and [publications](#), including [books](#), [courses](#), seminars and [webinars](#)
- 24/7 online access to the Appraisal Institute's Y.T. and Louise Lee [Lum Library](#), which carries thousands of articles, research reports—and more
- Free guidance on professional practice issues through the Appraisal Institute Ethics & Counseling area

[Learn more](#) about the vast array of benefits that can sharpen your competitive edge.



1 Visit <http://www.kent.edu/webteam/drupal-training-manual> for more information.



1 Visit the [Web and Social Media Services website](#) for more information.



2 To learn about accessibility guidelines and web standards, [click here](#).



2 Learn more about [accessibility guidelines and web standards](#).



3 Information for Current [Students](#). Information for New [Students](#).



3 Information for [Current Students](#). Information for [New Students](#).

<https://www.kent.edu/web-standards/accessibility-examples-correct-and-incorrect-use>

Good text links
are good UX
and
good accessibility

- **Use unique text link language**
 - **AVOID** click here and read more
- **Buttonize special links**
- **Group links together**
- Download links need inform about **the file format and size**

TAKEAWAY



Make sure your links don't just say 'read more' or 'click here'

8 Links need predictable behavior

Links need to do
what a user
expects them to.
For example...

- **Buttons** inherently imply a user is taking an action.
- **External links** need an indicator so users know they're leaving.
- **Files** need to be identified, so users know a download will begin.
- **Crosslinking** between pages on the site

Register for CTPF's Spring Town Hall Webinar

News | April 29, 2024

CTPF will offer a quarterly Town Hall webinar hosted by Executive Director Carlton W. Lenoir, Sr. on May 9, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. The webinar will offer a general overview of Fund operations and offer reminders for the spring. The webinar is expected to last about 40 minutes.

[Register in advance for this webinar](#) 

Watch this webinar about mastering skills and technology that can help track down those hard-to-find deals, and pave your way to a more successful career.

[WATCH NOW](#)

[Download the Deck](#) 

SALE



Spike Lavender Oil

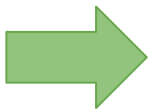
1 fl. oz.

\$11.24

Reg. \$14.99

[Add to Cart](#)

External
Link



Document



Button

When guiding a user to a new page, one of the following should apply:

- Access pages that are the **next level down**
- Go to the page that **comes next in the navigation**
- **Use tools** to execute what you've just discussed
- Find ways to **contact, purchase or share** on social networks

TIP:

When removing old content, ensure you have a redirect strategy in place.

TAKEAWAY



Clearly label buttons and links as PDFs, external links, automatic downloads, and so on

9 Colors need to have appropriate contrast ratios

Why is good
color contrast
important?



Some users have **trouble discerning color**.

Ensuring appropriate contrast means the are able to easily consume the content on your website.

Contrast Checker

[Home](#) > [Resources](#) > Contrast Checker

Foreground Color

#757575



Lightness



Background Color

#FFFFFF



Lightness



Contrast Ratio

4.6:1

[permalink](#)



Related Resources

- [Contrast and Color Accessibility](#)
- [Quick Reference: Testing Web Content for Accessibility](#)
- [Web Accessibility for Designers](#)
- [Link Contrast Checker](#)

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**



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

GOOD NEWS:

Most colors are set by the default styles of your website and aren't easily changed....

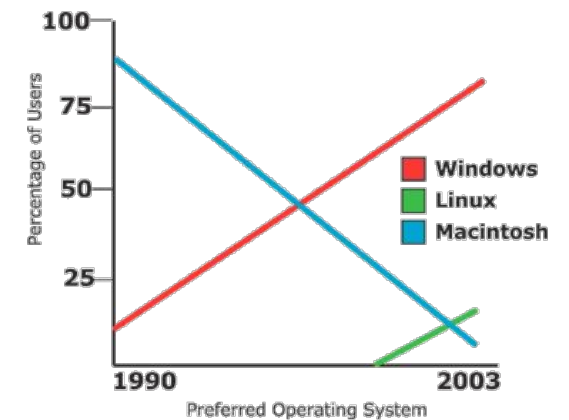
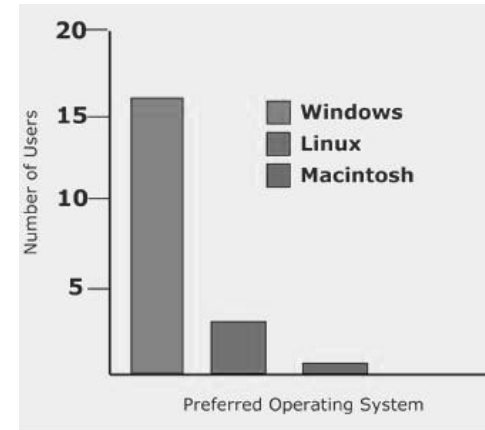
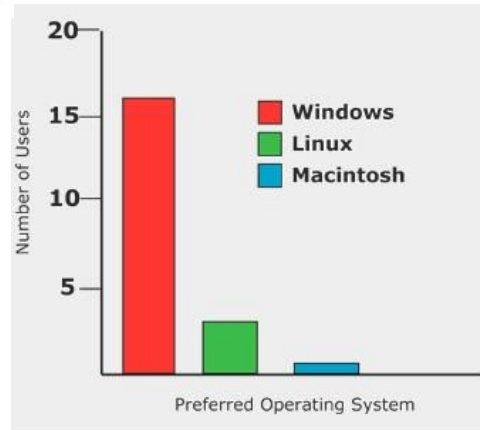
...but when it comes to images, charts, and so on, content admins still have impact.

ORTHOPAEDIC TRAUMA ASSOCIATION

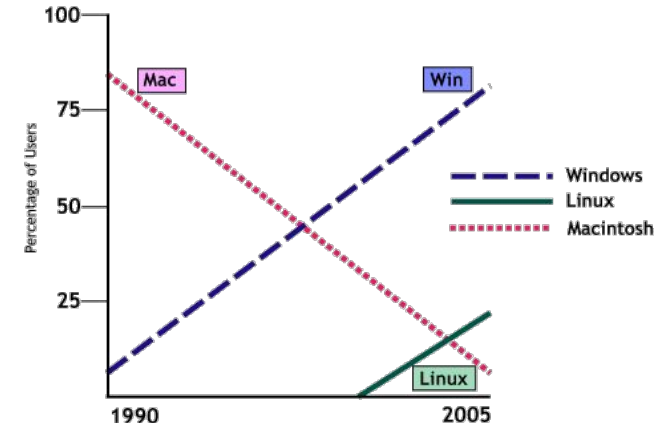
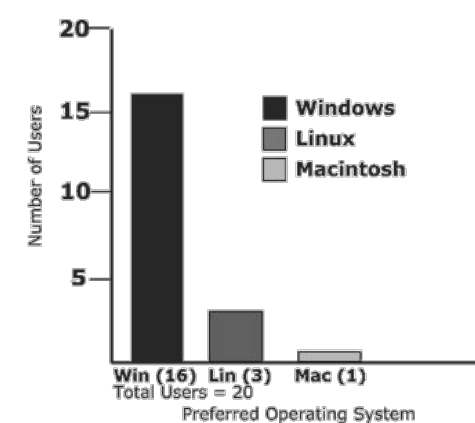
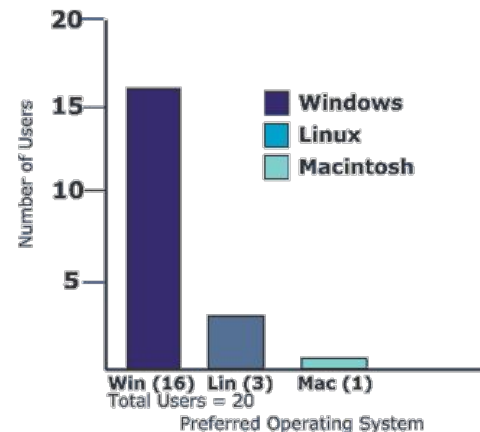
PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN ORTHOPAEDIC TRAUMA EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND ADVOCACY

For graphs,
accessibility
goes beyond
just color

X Inaccessible



✓ Accessible



TAKEAWAY



Check to make sure your colors are easily legible for all users

10

Regular review and
maintenance is crucial

Your SEO and
accessibility work
is ongoing.

Period.

- Continuously **develop new content** for your website
- **Update, optimize, or prune** old content
- Regularly **scan and audit your website** for accessibility issues

For SEO,
monitor metrics
like...

- Landing Pages / Exit Pages
- Keywords
- Impressions
- Clicks
- Rankings
- Site search queries
- Broken Links

For accessibility,
check or scan
for...

- Color contrast issues
- Inappropriate markup
- Missing alt text
- Unnecessary PDFs
- Inaccurate aria labels
- Unusual link behavior
- Keyboard operability

TAKEAWAY



Neither your SEO nor your accessibility efforts are “one and done”

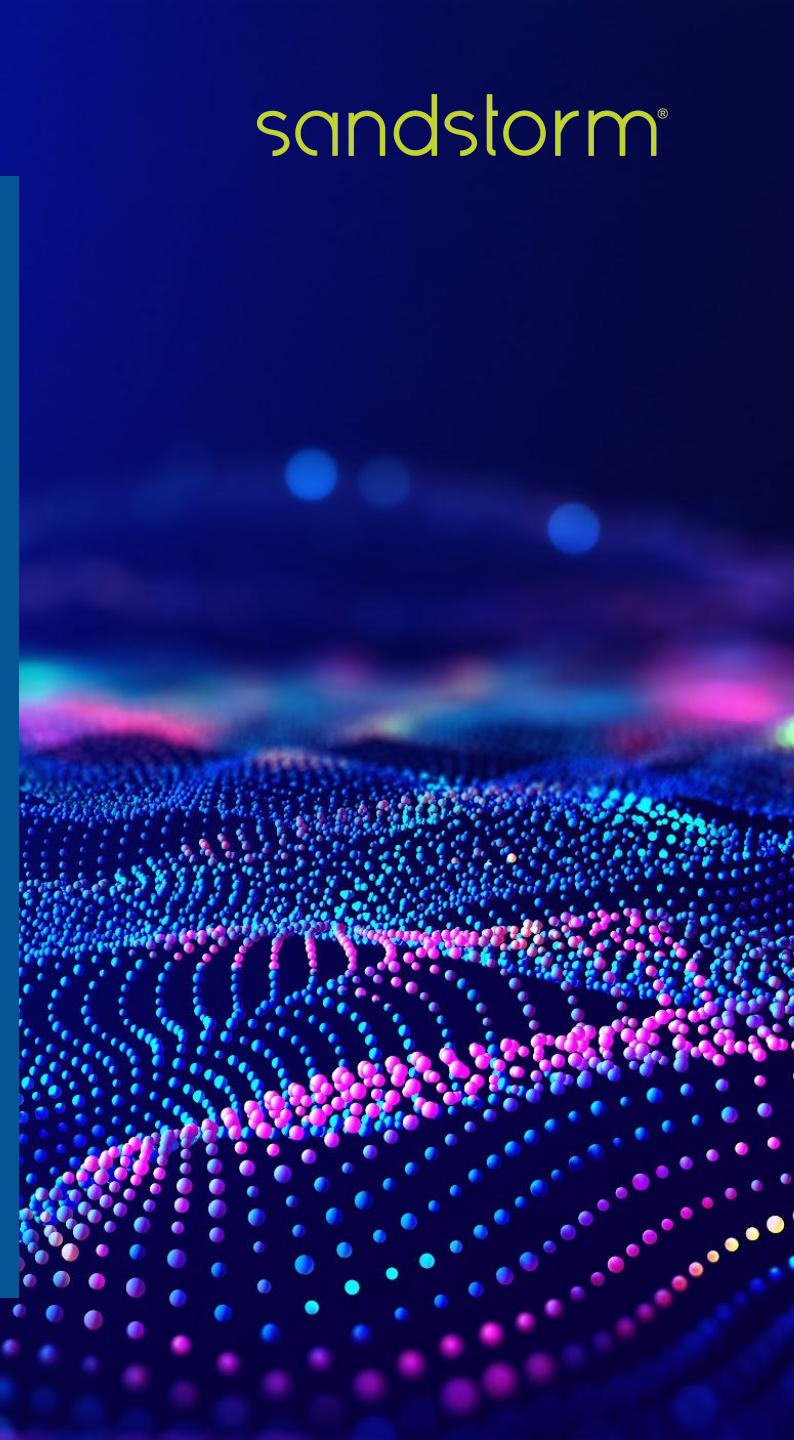
10 Takeaways



1. Keep your content scannable with short, easy-to-read paragraphs
2. Good headings provide a scannable roadmap
3. Page titles, meta descriptions, and page addresses orient users
4. All images need to have alt text
5. Leverage HTML content wherever you can
6. For every 100 words you write, use your target keyword 1 time
7. Don't title links 'read more' or 'click here'
8. Clearly label buttons and links based on their behavior
9. Make sure your colors are easily legible for all users
10. Neither your SEO nor your accessibility efforts are "one and done"

REMEMBER

Good usability
is good accessibility.



Let's connect!



Syd Hunsinger (they/them)

Product Owner, DEIB Specialist

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sjhunsinger/>

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**Download the presentation and
other resources here:**

sandstormdesign.com/pnw-summit



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