MOPD
Mayor's Office For
People With Disabilities

# Accessible Social Media Guide

**What is accessibility?**

Accessibility refers to the design of an experience that can be enjoyed by all people. Something that is not accessible disregards a select population of people that are left out of the experience entirely. Typically, this is thought of in terms of physical spaces (ramps, elevators, etc.), but this also applies to digital ones as well.

**Digital accessibility**

People with disabilities use assistive technology to interact with computers, tablets and smartphones. A person from the blind community can use a screen reader to have the contents of the screen read out loud to them. In order for the screen reader to operate properly, the digital material they are attempting to interact with needs to be prepared in a certain way. If a social media profile does not have content that is digitally accessible, then the screen reader user is less likely to get anything meaningful from the social media account and posts.

**How can someone make social media accessible?**

Include a written description for any images or photos.

Images add flair to social media posts, making them more attractive, attention grabbing and simpler to understand.

Without an image description a person using a screenreader cannot extract any meaning from the content.

**Image Description**: Photo of large colorful fireworks lighting up the sky above the downtown Chicago skyline with a reflection in Lake Michigan.

**Writing Image Descriptions**

Ask the following questions and combine your answers for the description.



**Where is the photo being taken?**
A street of Chicago

**Who is in the photo?**
Hundreds of runners

**What are they doing?**
Running in the Chicago Marathon

**Why is this photo being taken?** To show the spectacle of the Marathon

Image Description: Photo of hundreds of Chicago Marathon Runners running in the same direction down a street closed to vehicles in downtown Chicago.

**Adding Image Descriptions to Social Media Posts**



Descriptions are added with alt-text, invisible text written onto the image. Twitter, Facebook and Instagram all support alt-text but they are added in different ways.

**Twitter** - First, enable alt-text within your account settings under "accessibility." Then, before tweeting an image you will receive a prompt that says "add description."

**Facebook** - When posting an image, tap "edit photo" and then "add alt-text."

**Instagram** - When posting, go to "advanced settings" and then "Write alt-text."