



AS Digital Media Guide

How-to, best practices and more

Accessibility: Alt Text

Alt text is a brief description of an image (if the image is complex, it requires a full image description)

- Include the location of the image description within the alt text
- Some cross-posting platforms, such as Buffer, allow you to add alt text easily to any post

Different apps and websites have different ways to add alt text

Instagram: Can be found under “Advanced Settings” when making a new post

Facebook: Select the photo, then “Edit Photo”, then “Alternative Text”

Twitter: Add an image to your tweet, then select “+ALT” in the lower right corner

Accessibility: Image Description

Image descriptions are objective and use the active voice, communicating the same information as the image being described - nothing more, nothing less

- Simplicity is key: **NO** emojis, opinions, technical terms, foreign expressions or words
- Be concise, clear, and consistent (define unfamiliar acronyms, etc)
- Must be close to the image. If description can't be put close to image, link it immediately before or after the image
- Link must work and go directly to image description of that one particular image
 - Must be a way to go back to the original image

How to describe people

These guidelines apply to how we describe people in the copy of our post, the image description and the alt-text.

People in photos:

- Don't use gendered language (except any pronouns they list on the media release); use names or titles instead when possible.
 - o When it isn't possible, use generic terms like "student" "people" etc.
- If it's a group of people, use **non-gendered language** such as "students", "people", "faculty"
 - o e.g. do not use "women" "men" "girls" etc.

Talking to the audience:

- If you want to direct the audience, use non-gendered language like folks or students or other words that describe your **target audience**

How to describe people cont.

Descriptions in Alt-Text or captions

- *Don't* describe their body type
- *Don't* describe their gender
- *Do* describe their presentation
 - o Ex: clothes or hair color
- *Do* describe the action they're doing
- *Do* describe how they're interacting with the rest of the photo
- *Do* include why they're relevant (if you know)
 - o Ex: are they a student and the post is for midterms? Call them a student

Do ask people how they'd like to be described; When someone's identity or description is relevant to the content, ask them what titles they would like used. This can be done verbally or through [the media release](#).

o Ex: Are they a psychology major? Are they a member of the BSO? Are they a VU Info Desk attendant? Do they prefer their ethnicity or pronouns be included?

Infographics, Engagement and Accessibility

In general, **avoid infographics** and focus on visuals that increase engagement. This is **more accessible** and leads to **better engagement** with your posts! Even better, use a video or a candid photo!

When using an infographic...

Do use a sans serif font, and only use serif for titles or headlines in a large font size.

Don't use any font size smaller than 10 point.

Do put all information in the caption of your post, not on the infographic.

Don't overload your visual with details.

Ex from the Publicity Center: [Sound Block's](#) graphic could have just the title of the event and headliners, with the time and COVID information in the caption. This second post about [Sound Block](#) centers the visual more than the details!

The [Publicity Center](#) is already engaging in some of these practices and will be pushing for these more accessible and engaging visuals. Reach out to them for help on your next post!

Best Practices - Comments and DMs

- Respond to everything, even if it's just a like or emoji.
- Answer genuine questions and concerns to the best of your ability.
 - Address them in a way that is **helpful** and **empathetic**, thank them, and let them know they were heard and that their feedback was shared with administration (if necessary).
- Make your interactions **personal/authentic/honest**.
- Do not delete comments simply because you disagree with the commenter's point of view or because the commenter has reacted negatively.
- If there are people sharing specific comments that are critical of how Western, a club, organization, or group are handling something, if there are a lot of valid concerns, compile them up and share them with administration so folks are aware of the concerns.
- Comments involving harassment or bullying will be addressed to the commenter as a violation of Western's policies.
- Screenshot comments, including the username, before deleting and hiding.
- Hide inappropriate comments. Message the user in regards to why they are being blocked/their comment was removed. This could include:
 - **Profanity**
 - **Trolling**
 - **Pointless ranting**
 - **Violent threats**
- Give each user **two** strikes and block them if they become a repeat offender.

Comments and DMs Cont'd

- Block accounts that comment/DM spam, no two strikes necessary.
 - a. **Sugar daddy requests**
 - b. **Asking for money**
- Answer questions with sensitive information in DMs.
- Respond in a timely manner, **1-2 days**. Time sensitive questions should be responded to within **a day**, if possible.
- Choose a tone and make stylistic choices that fit your AS office branding
 - a. Corresponding emojis that fit your office
 - i. **Example: Plant emojis for Outback** 🌵
 - ii. **Example: Mountain emoji for Outdoor Center** ⚓
 - iii. **Example: Octopus and microphone emojis for ASP** 🦑 🎤
 - b. Refer to **AS Branding Guidelines** for more information
- Tag any relevant people/accounts you are partnering with.
- Avoid jargon, don't be confusing – use language easily understood by your audience.
- Unsend unintended messages.
 - a. If you make a spelling/grammar mistake, resend a corrected message.
- When operating on the University's behalf, do not express biased political opinions.
- Monitor social media accounts or profiles for which you are responsible
 - a. Delete comments that expose the private data of others, contain commercial solicitations, are factually erroneous/libelous, are off-topic, are threatening or abusive, or are obscene.