Adobe Acrobat X Pro

Introduction

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 state that the federal government's electronic information must be accessible to people with disabilities. In this context, "accessible" means that the document does not rely on a single sense or ability of the user, such as vision or hearing.

This document explains:

- Filling in document properties
- Adding alternate (Alt) text
- Creating hyperlinks for URLs and e-mail addresses
- Using the accessibility checker

Filling in Document Properties

Populating certain document properties (Title, Author*, Subject, and Keywords) and setting the language are required to make an electronic file 508 compliant.

Step 1. Select FILE, then PROPERTIES. Click on the DESCRIPTION tab in the Document Properties window and fill in the required fields.

Step 2. To select a language, click on the ADVANCED tab, select a language from the Language drop-down menu, select OK.

Author should always be "NIH," but you may add more information, such as IC, program name and/or laboratory.
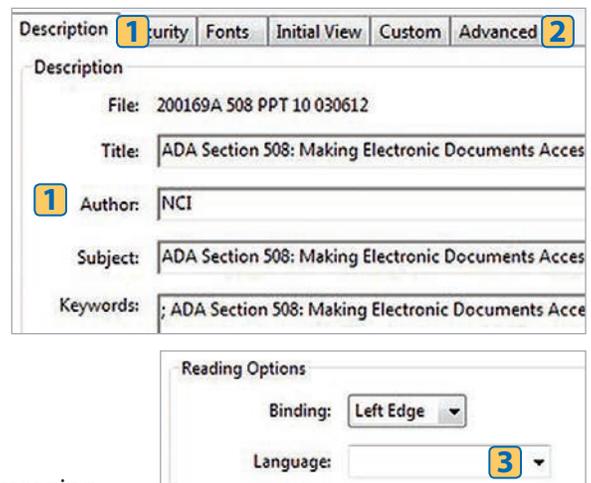
Writing Alternate Text

Alt text is a text equivalent of a non-text element. It should convey the meaning of an image or element to the visually impaired. See the "Writing Alternate (Alt) Text" document for help with writing Alt text.

Adding Alternate Text

Tags are essential for PDF accessibility. Tags contain Alt text for non-text elements in the PDF document and establish the order in which text is read aloud by a screen reader. Find non-text elements and add Alt text to them.
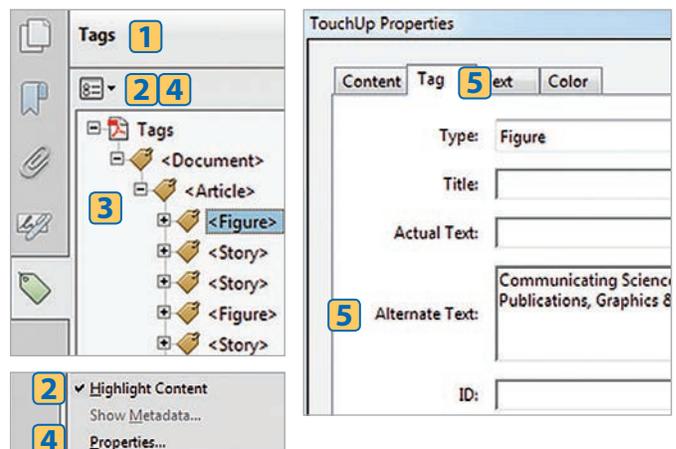
Step 1. Select VIEW, then SHOW/HIDE, NAVIGATION PANES, and TAGS.

Step 2. Go to the OPTIONS drop-down menu and make sure Highlight Content is checked to highlight the area in the document that corresponds to the tag.

Step 3. Expand the logical structure tree by clicking the plus (+) sign next to Tags to find and select the <Figure> tag for the image.

Step 4. Select PROPERTIES from the OPTIONS drop-down menu.

Step 5. In the TOUCHUP PROPERTIES dialog box, click the TAG tab. Type the text in the Alternate Text box, then select CLOSE.

Creating Hyperlinks for URLs and E-mail Addresses

A hyperlink connects users to web pages, documents, or specific parts of a document. The most frequently used hyperlinks are Uniform Resource Locators (URLs). URLs are e-mail addresses and addresses of resources on the web (for example, http://www. google.com or so-and-so@mail.nih.gov). Other types of hyperlinks in electronic documents allow you to move to different parts of the text (text anchor), from page to page (document page), and from one document to another.

If a hyperlink is not automatically generated, follow these instructions:

Step 1. Select the TOOLS PANE, then CONTENT, and click on LINK.

Step 2. Highlight the area where you want to create a link.

Step 3. In the CREATE LINK dialog box, select the options you want in the Link Appearance section and choose one of the options in the Link Action section; select NEXT.

Step 4. Follow further instructions (such as entering a URL or adding an action) to finish creating a link.
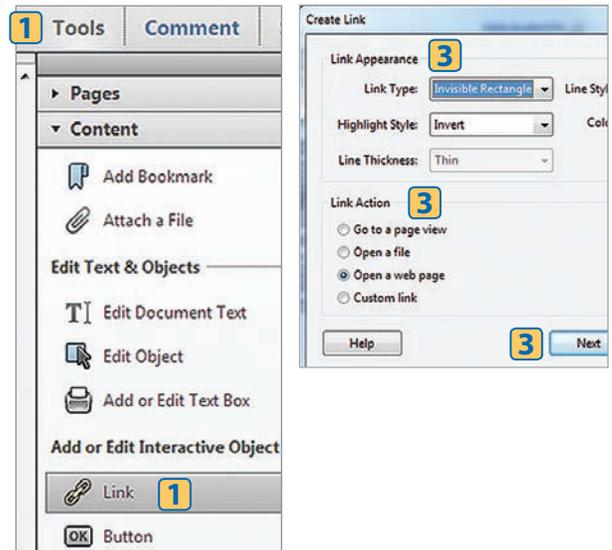
Using the Accessibility Checker

The Accessibility Checker alerts you to certain accessibility issues in your file that might keep someone with a disability from accessing your content.

Step 1. Select the TOOLS PANE, then ACCESSIBILITY, and click on FULL CHECK. (If you do not see ACCESSIBILITY under the TOOLS PANE, go to VIEW, TOOLS, and click on ACCESSIBILITY.)

Step 2. Make sure that "Adobe PDF" is selected from the Name drop-down menu and that all of the boxes are checked in the Checking Options section. Click on Start Checking button.

Step 3. If the Adobe Acrobat window says, "The checker found no problems in this document," the PDF is now 508 compliant. If you get an error message, fix the problem and repeat the accessibility process.

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