

Section 508 Guidelines for RoboHelp Authors

Section 508 Standard in Plain English	Helpful RoboHelp X3/X4 Hints
<p>Images: a.) Supply accurate, adequately descriptive, and succinct alt text for all images, image map areas, and images used as form input elements, so that images can be described by assistive technology. When alt text exceeds 150 characters, use the LONGDESC attribute in addition to the ALT attribute.</p>	<p>RoboHelp topics for entering alt text/screen tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Adding image buttons” • “Creating image maps” • “Displaying text labels”
<p>Multimedia: b.) If an audio or video file is present, ensure that captioning is provided for video content and that a transcript is provided for audio content, to enable people with vision and hearing disabilities to gain access.</p>	<p>RoboDemo supports text captioning and audio.</p>
<p>Color: c.) Do not use color alone to convey information. Use other formatting elements, such as bold, so that people with visual color deficiencies will understand the information being conveyed.</p>	<p>RoboHelp topic for formatting elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Formatting using the toolbar” <p>RoboHelp topics for controlling color:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Changing background color for topics and templates” • “Changing font colors” <p>Suggestion: Use colors for text and background that provide maximum contrast, so that people with low-vision can read the screen more easily.</p>
<p>Style sheets: d.) Use external style sheets so that documents are readable in case the style sheet is not available, or in case the user wants to replace it with a user-defined style sheet.</p>	<p>RoboHelp topic for using style sheets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Creating new external style sheets”
<p>Client-side vs. server-side image maps: e.) Convert server-side image maps into client-side image maps, or create redundant text links elsewhere in the document that duplicate the functionality of the server-side image map so that the image maps can be read properly using assistive technology.</p>	<p>RoboHelp uses only client-side image maps.</p>
<p>Client-side vs. server-side image maps: f.) If a client-side image map is present, ensure that the image map AND the hotspots all have alt text, and that the linearized reading order/tab order of the hotspots is correct, so that the image maps can be read properly using assistive technology.</p>	<p>RoboHelp uses only client-side image maps.</p>
<p>Tables: g.) Identify rows and column headers for data tables. Doing so facilitates table, row, and column identification and navigation when using assistive technology. Layout tables simply add formatting to a page. Avoid using tables for layout. If you must use layout tables, eliminate all header cells.</p>	<p>To provide navigation cues for data tables Use RoboHelp’s True Code tab.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarize table contents (choose one): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce table in surrounding text • Use CAPTION element, or • Use SUMMARY attribute of TABLE element 2. Add labels to table columns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use SCOPE attribute of TH element <p>[See the separate page for an explanation of these labeling solutions using HTML coding.]</p>
<p>Tables: h.) Make sure that the linearized reading order of data tables that have two or more logical levels of row and column headers matches your intended reading order so that the table can be read properly by assistive devices.</p>	<p>[See the separate page for an explanation of these labeling solutions using HTML coding.]</p>

Section 508 Standard in Plain English	Helpful RoboHelp X3/X4 Hints
<p>Frames: i.) If a frame does not have a title attribute, or has one that is hard to decipher, provide a frame title with one that clearly explains the purpose of the frame. If a frame title is present make sure that it is accurate, adequately descriptive, and succinct. Doing so facilitates frame identification and navigation when using assistive technology.</p>	<p>RoboHelp topic for adding a frame title:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “About frames and framesets”
<p>Flicker: j.) When at all possible, do not use flicker, because it can cause seizures in people with photosensitive epilepsy.</p>	<p>RoboHelp does not support the use of flicker.</p>
<p>Text: k.) Organize pages so that they make sense in text-only browsers, and with style sheets turned off in visual browsers.</p> <p>Suggestion: Use relative (instead of absolute) font sizes for all text so that text can be enlarged or reduced using the Text Size option available in visual browsers.</p>	<p>To simulate a text-only browser: Highlight all elements on a page. Copy and paste these elements into Notepad. What you see in Notepad is comparable to what a text-only browser will display, and is what a screen reader will read.</p> <p>To use relative font sizes in RoboHelp:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type the relative size (percentage, em, and so on) over the existing font size, or • Select a relative size (xxsmall-xxlarge) from the font size drop down menu.
<p>Scripting languages: l.) When using scripting languages to display content, identify the information provided by the script with functional text that can be read by assistive technology.</p>	<p>RoboHelp topic for entering alt text/screen tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Adding visual multimedia to topics”
<p>Applets: m.) When a web page requires an applet, or a plug-in, include a link to the location where users can download an applet viewer, such as Adobe Acrobat Reader, to view an applet, such as a PDF file.</p>	<p>RoboHelp topic for linking to applets: “Linking to Intranets and web sites”</p>
<p>Forms: n.) Add alt text to all form elements, including buttons, text lines, radio buttons, and checkboxes, so that they can be read by assistive technology.</p>	<p>RoboHelp topics for entering alt text/screen tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Adding image buttons” • “Creating image maps” • “Displaying text labels” • “Adding buttons to forms”
<p>Links: o.) If a linked image is present and it allows users to skip over sections of the Web content, if possible, remove the image and replace it with text that reads “skip navigation” so that users with assistive technology do not have to hear navigation information repeatedly every time they select a page.</p> <p>Suggestion: Make sure that link text is descriptive of its destination so that it makes sense when read out of context with the rest of the document.</p>	<p>To allow section skipping in RoboHelp:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a bookmark where the main topic content begins. 2. At the top of the page, insert a single pixel image. Make the image a hyperlink and link it to the bookmark at the start of the main topic content. <p>Sighted users will not notice the single pixel image. Those using assistive devices can jump directly to the main content.</p> <p>RoboHelp topic for adding descriptive links: “Navigation Strategies”</p>
<p>Timed Responses: p.) Make sure that you leave enough time for a timed response. You may want to allow as much as 15 minutes for a timed response, to aid people who are using assistive technology that is difficult to navigate, such as magnifiers.</p>	<p>RoboHelp does not use timed responses.</p>

Questions and comments:

Multimedia:

Are we going to be using multimedia in our Help system?

Tables:

Further explanation on how to label tables for Section 508 compliancy:

In the HTML code that appears below, you see the summary attribute of the TABLE element and the CAPTION element in use.

Also, you see the SCOPE attribute being used to relate the column headers in tables to the data in those tables.

```
<TABLE border="1"
      summary="This table charts the number of cups of
      coffee consumed by each senator, the type of coffee
      (decaf or regular), and whether taken with sugar.">
  <CAPTION>Cups of coffee consumed by each senator</CAPTION>
  <TR>
    <TH scope="col">Name</TH>
    <TH scope="col">Cups</TH>
    <TH scope="col" abbr="Type">Type of Coffee</TH>
    <TH scope="col">Sugar?</TH>
  <TR>
    <TD>T. Sexton</TD> <TD>10</TD>
    <TD>Espresso</TD> <TD>No</TD>
  <TR>
    <TD>J. Dinnen</TD> <TD>5</TD>
    <TD>Decaf</TD> <TD>Yes</TD>
</TABLE>
```

A speech synthesizer (or screen reader) might render this tables as follows:

Caption: Cups of coffee consumed by each senator

Summary: This table charts the number of cups of coffee consumed by each senator, the type of coffee (decaf or regular), and whether taken with sugar.

Name: T. Sexton, Cups: 10, Type: Espresso, Sugar: No

Name: J. Dinnen, Cups: 5, Type: Decaf, Sugar: Yes