



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH &  
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**HEALTH &**  
**SENIOR SERVICES**

# **Accessibility Tips & Tricks**

Adobe InDesign and Acrobat

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**Sami Jo Freeman and Andy Schepers**

Office of Public Information



# Andy Schepers

Public Relations Coordinator

## About me

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Andy graduated with a real graphic design degree from the University of Central Missouri prior helping build the Central Bank brand for more than 15 years. He helped his dad restore classic cars growing up and is known as the department's drone operator. Andy and his wife Nicole have a doggo named Lucy and all three are team members at Fleet Feet. They also travel together to support Nicole's global marathon-running adventures.



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# Sami Jo Freeman

Deputy Communications Director

## About me

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Sami Jo finally figured out how to be a graphic designer after stumbling through YouTube videos. She's been with the state for more than 13 years, working closely with ITSD and OA State Printing as a designer. Sami Jo was recently a soccer coach at Fatima High School, which helps her relive a mostly unsuccessful attempt to be a professional soccer player.



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# Spenser Bartholomew

Social Media and Public Relations Coordinator

## About me

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Spenser is the funny and clever one creating engaging content for the DHSS social media platforms. She's a Missouri State University alum, graduating with a degree in Computer Animation. Spenser loves her two cats and her fiancé Tom. They are getting married in May 2026!



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**Resource to look up later**

**IAAP**

**International Association  
of Accessibility Professionals**

# What gives a document structure?

Good question.



## Paragraph Styles

Tells assistive technology how to identify headings, paragraphs, bullets, etc.

(Controlled in Para Styles)



## Reading Order

Assistive technology uses reading order to help navigate a document.

(Controlled in Layers)



## Accessibility Tags

Accessibility tags help determine a reading order and also identify the styles

(Controlled in Articles)

+ Document Information



**InDesign – Section 1**  
**Andy**  
**Schepers**

# Review Time: InDesign - Section 1



Don't forget these tips!

- Ensure **workspace** is ready for accessibility
- **Document info** is required
  - Title
  - Author
  - Description
  - Keywords
  - Language

# Review Time: InDesign - Section 1



Don't forget these tips!

- **Paragraph styles set structure**
  - Simple names, no special characters
  - Map styles to export tags
  - Use “Edit all export tags”
  - H tags appear in sequential order
- **Object export options**
  - Alternate text needed → custom, then text
  - No alternate text → mark decorative



**InDesign – Section 2**  
**Sami Jo**  
**Freeman**

# Review Time: InDesign - Section 2



Don't forget these tips!

- **Layers** panel controls **reading order**
  - Order from bottom to top
  - We use: Artifacts, then Reading Order
- **Articles** panel controls **accessibility tags**
  - “All or nothing” tool – excluded is artifacted
  - Order from top to bottom
  - Organize content within separate articles
  - Threaded boxes will read as one box

# Review Time: InDesign - Section 2



Don't forget these tips!

- Create links using **hyperlinks panel**
  - Avoid “shared destination” links
  - Avoid multi-line links
  - Add alternate text to links
- **Tables**
  - Designate data cells and header cells
  - Designate column headers
  - Merged cells export correctly

# Review Time: InDesign - Section 2



Don't forget these tips!

- Tables
  - Define header rows
    - Further define scope of header rows as either column or row header
  - Everything else is a data cell
  - Regularity error → caused by merged cells
    - Set row and column spans to fix

# Review Time: InDesign Forms



Don't forget these tips!

- Buttons and forms allows fields to be added
  - Must add description (a.k.a. tooltip)
- Form fields
  - Shouldn't be named the same
    - Radio buttons are the exception
  - Anchor into position
- Tab order: Object > Interactive > Set Tab Order
- Export using Interactive PDF



# Review Time: Acrobat

Don't forget these tips!

- Set workspace for accessibility
  - Bookmarks → needed for docs 10+ pages
  - Content → adjust reading order
  - Order → reading order
  - Tags → sets order and structure
- Document info (a.k.a. Document Properties)
  - Display title → Initial View
  - Language verification → Advanced



# Review Time: Acrobat

Don't forget these tips!

- Accessibility Checker
- Alternate Text → helps check or add alt-text
- Reading Order Panel → tags content if needed
  - Don't use auto-tag option
  - Invisible tags can be used for instruction
- Bookmarks needed for documents 10+ pages
  - Set automatically or manually

# Review Time: Acrobat Forms



Don't forget these tips!

- Fields can be added manually or automatically
  - Manual fields need to be tagged using Fix Reading Order Panel
  - Manual fields also need to be moved within the correct tag
  - Use Find Element in tags to search all
- Tab order can be changed → Prepare a Form



# Team Decisions

Things to think about...

- Icons
- Logos
- Naming convention
  - Document author
  - File extension for ADA
- Brand colors



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# QUESTIONS?



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