



Northwestern State University
Office of Marketing & Branding

ADA SOCIAL MEDIA CHEAT SHEET

Compliance

- All NSU social media accounts must comply with ADA accessibility standards
- Social media = public-facing university communication
- Accessibility ensures all users can engage with content
- Failure to comply may result in account forfeiture

What is ADA for Social Media?

- Making content accessible to people with disabilities
- Includes users of:
 - Screen readers
 - Voice navigation
 - Captioning tools

Core Accessibility Requirements

- Add alt text to images
- Use CamelCase for hashtags (#NSUDemons)
- Avoid text-heavy graphics
- Ensure high color contrast
- Caption all videos
- Avoid excessive emoji use
- Avoid “click here” language
- Use descriptive link context

Platform Basics

Facebook

Alt Text

1. Upload image
2. Click “Edit”
3. Select “Alternative Text”
4. Write description
5. Save

Video Captions

1. Upload video
2. Click “Edit Video”
3. Select “Captions”
4. Upload SRT or use auto captions
5. Edit for accuracy
6. Save

Instagram

Alt Text

1. Upload photo → Next
2. Advanced Settings
3. Write Alt Text
4. Share

Reels

- Use caption tool
- Edit auto captions
- Don’t place text over captions

Stories

- Use caption sticker for video

- Edit captions
- Keep text readable (high contrast, large)
- Avoid covering key visuals
- Add context if needed

X (Twitter)

1. Upload image
2. Click “Add description”
3. Add alt text (before posting)

LinkedIn

Images

- Upload → Add alt text → Save

Videos

- Upload → Edit → Upload SRT captions

TikTok

- Use auto captions
- Edit carefully
- No manual alt text → captions must be clear

YouTube

Option 1: Auto Captions

- Upload → YouTube Studio → Subtitles

Option 2: Edit Captions (Recommended)

- Edit auto captions → fix accuracy → publish

Option 3: Upload File

- Upload .srt or .vtt

Option 4: Manual

- Type captions while syncing video

Graphics Accessibility

- Add alt text (include dates, times, locations)
- Don't put critical info only in graphics
- Use high contrast (recommended 4.5:1)

Design Tips

- Use sans-serif fonts (Arial, Helvetica, Open Sans)
- Minimum readable size (~16–18 pt equivalent)
- Avoid all caps paragraphs
- Don't rely on color alone
- Keep graphics simple (headline only)

Writing Alt Text

Good Alt Text

- Clear, specific, descriptive
- Includes context
- Concise

Bad Alt Text

- “Students”
- “Event photo”
- “NSU post”

Better Example

- “NSU students cheering in the football stadium during a home game.”

Things to Avoid

- Flashing/strobing (max 3 flashes per second)

- Rapid cuts or fast editing
- Excessive motion (zooming, spinning, moving backgrounds)
- Flickering or moving text
- Relying on users to adjust settings

Caption Visibility Note

- If captions aren't visible:
 - They may not be turned on in device/app settings
 - Check accessibility or caption settings
 - Always verify captions are enabled when reviewing videos

Account Expectations

- Maintain accessibility compliance
- Attend required training
- Train future account managers
- Follow NSU branding standards
- Register account with Marketing & Branding