



Comparing Accessibility in Learning Design Tools

As technology has progressed, the opportunity for learning and design application has also skyrocketed. Users with disabilities have unique needs when it comes to benefiting from technology. This infographic compares three popular learning design tools commonly used to create presentations, infographics, and other visual learning aids through the lens of accessibility.

1

PowerPoint

PowerPoint is the workhorse of learning tools. Most often used for presentations, it is easy to make both visually impactful and accessible presentations. Powerpoint has a limited number of design templates, and is more known for functionality than a design tool.

2

Canva

Canva is an internet-based software used to design layout, presentations, and now edit video. With a growing database of templates, illustrations, gifs, graphics, and other design assets, Canva makes it easy to add creative flair to your designs. Canva has a free version and a paid premium version.

3

Piktochart

Piktochart is an internet-based software used to design layout for infographics, flowcharts, presentations, and other static designs. Its functions are similar to Canva's, but with a more limited database of design assets. Piktochart has a free version and paid premium version.

Accessibility

Accessible designs function for users with disabilities like low-vision and hearing impairment, and also who use assistive technologies like screen-readers and magnifiers. As you will see, some tools are better rated for accessibility, both in the tools themselves as well as the capability to create accessible designs using them.

PowerPoint



Rating: 4.5 out of 5 stars

PowerPoint is beyond most learning tools in its accessibility, both in using the tool and in creating presentations. Some features of Powerpoint include an accessibility checker, the ability to select reading order, templates with defined elements built-in, and defining alternative text. All of these features help create presentations that accommodate learners with disabilities. Unfortunately, powerpoint isn't the best tool for designing layout for other formats, such as infographics.

Canva



Rating: 1 out of 5 stars

Canva is a popular tool because of its aesthetically pleasing templates and ready-to-use content library. Unfortunately, they have no accessibility tools, and exporting to accessible formats takes extra work.

They also have no statements about accessibility on their website, or any training resources among their many other mini-courses. This is a disappointing missed opportunity from a company with such a large platform to educators and designers.

Piktochart



Rating: 2 out of 5 stars

Piktochart has some of the same issues as Canva as far as no built in accessibility tools. From a designing standpoint, Piktochart is more limited than Canva, especially in their options available for free.

However, Piktochart does have a public statement about accessibility and a guide for making your designs inclusive with their software.

[Accessibility Statement](#)

Design Considerations

You don't have to be an expert to begin designing for accessibility. Here are some best practices and helpful tips to keep in mind as you design with these tools.

PowerPoint

- Use built-in templates and layouts.
- Give each slide a unique title.
- Add alternative text descriptions to images.
- Use bulleted and numbered lists.
- Avoid the use of text boxes (use content placeholders on template layouts instead).
- Tab through each slide to ensure correct reading order.
- Don't use a font size smaller than 28pt

[PowerPoint Accessibility Toolkit](#)

Canva

- Use a sans serif font whenever possible
- Check your design's color contrast with [WebAIM](#)
- Don't use font size smaller than 14pt
- If posting to social media, use the "add alt text" option for graphics with text
- If posting online, open your design in Adobe Acrobat and open the Accessibility Toolbox. Go through the steps to ensure an accessible document.

[Canva Design Guidelines](#)

Piktochart

- In addition to the recommendations for the Canva platform, you can also embed Piktochart into a Wordpress website and add alt text. To see the instructions step by step, use the link below.

[Piktochart Guidelines](#)