



Email Accessibility Best Practices

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Center
part of the Bob Murphy Access Center (BMAC)

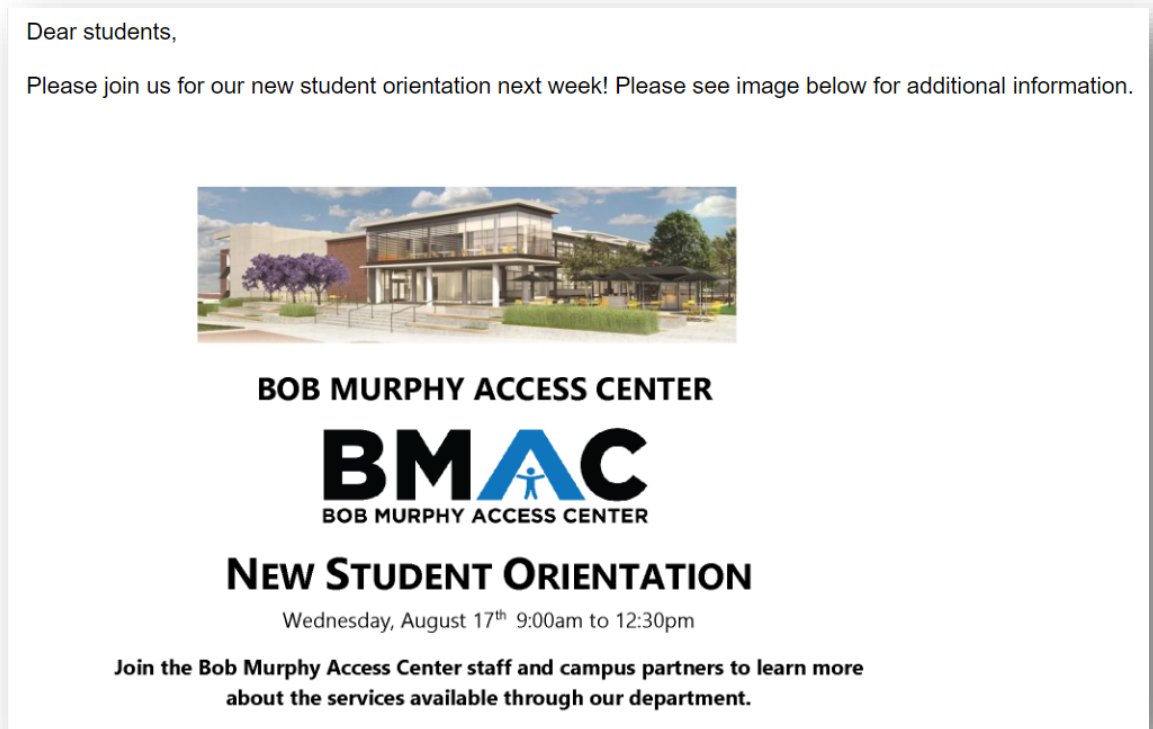
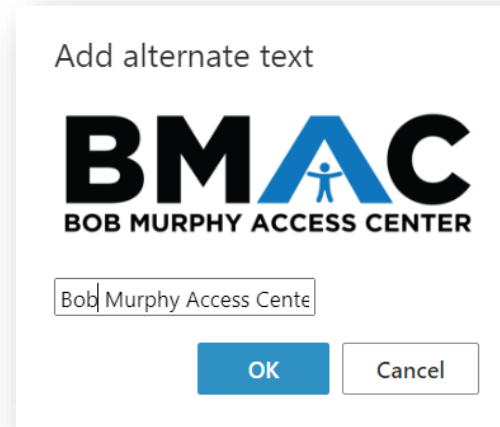


Overview

- Alternative Text
- Descriptive Links
- Color and Font
- Layout
- Email Marketing Applications
- Accessible Attachments
- Checking for Accessibility
- Resources

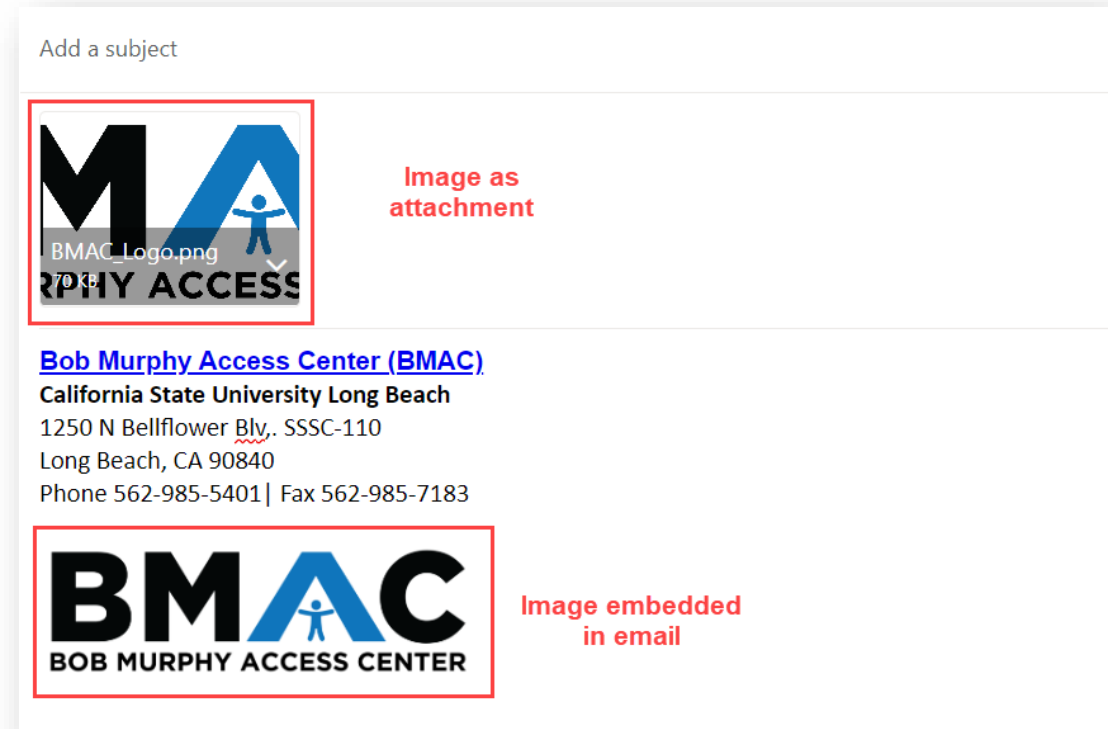
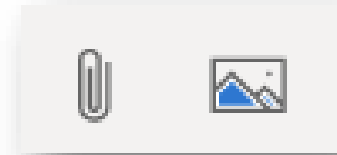
Alternative Text (Alt Text)

- Alt text is a brief description (140 characters max) of what the image is conveying.
 - Alt text is interpreted by assistive technology to let the non-visual users know the image's purpose.
- All images must have alternative text, including images on email signatures.
- Avoid using images of text or "screenshots"
 - They are not screen reader accessible
 - Alt text may not be sufficient to describe the image
 - Create an accessible alternative (e.g., PDF, embedding text within the body of email.)



Alternative Text (Cont.)

- Only inline images (embedded/inserted) on emails have alternative text feature.
 - Images sent as attachments don't have alt text capabilities, therefore are inaccessible assistive technology users.
 - Assign logical names to image files
 - "IMG481890"
 - "BMAC_logo"



Descriptive Links

- Link text must be unique and describe the intent or function of the link.
- Assistive technology users often navigate or search through links. Therefore, links must be descriptive and meaningful out of context.
- Avoid:
 - “Click here”
 - “Read more”
 - Displaying URLs
 - Long link text sentences
- **Tip:** Regularly check email signature links are not broken.

For more information please visit:
<https://www.csulb.edu/student-affairs/bob-murphy-access-center>

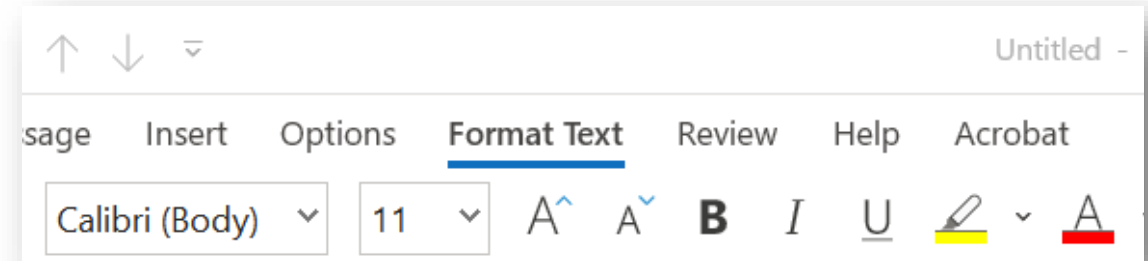
For more information please visit: [Bob Murphy Access Center](#)

Links List

<https://www.csulb.edu/student-affairs/accessible-instructional-materials-center>
Click here
[AIM Center Student Open Lab](#)

Color and Font

- Use bold, italicized, and large font styles to emphasize content and provide visual structure.
 - Reserve underlines for links.
- Don't rely on color alone to convey meaning.
 - Time Sensitive
 - Time Sensitive
- Ensure there is high color contrast between background and foreground colors.
- Recommend using sans serif fonts:
 - Arial
 - Calibri
 - Segoe UI



Layout

- It may be difficult to achieve complex email layouts using Outlook alone.
 - Use the “align” settings to align text left, right, or centered, rather than using “tab.”
 - Email marketing platforms (Constant Contact Mail Chimp, etc.) offer templates and customized layouts.
 - Avoid using tables for layout only.
- Create plenty of white space in emails for better readability.
- Use descriptive subject lines.
- Ensure that your emails have a logical reading structure.
- For longer emails, use headings.

Email Marketing Applications

- Mail Chimp, Campaign Monitor, and Constant Contact.
- More creative freedom and personalization.
- Mailing list management
- Majority of email marketing applications are subscription based.
 - Ideal for departments and programs with listservs.



▶ Campaign Monitor

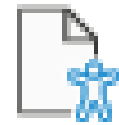


Attaching Accessible Files

- Ensure that the files attached on emails (Word, PowerPoint, PDF, etc.) are accessible.
- Images sent as file attachments are not accessible.
- CSULB campus partners sending digital materials to CSULB students can submit their documents to the AIM Center (aimc@csulb.edu) for an accessibility check or remediation. Visit [AIM Center Remediation Services](#).
- The file attachment names must be clear and describe the file.
 - 00_Final%%_Draft_Email_Accessibility_Handout.pdf
 - Email_Accessibility_Handout.pdf
- If videos are embedded, ensure the captions are accurate. **Automatic captions are not accessible!**

Check for Accessibility

- **Accessibility Checker**
 - Outlook has built-in accessibility checker.
 - Before sending email, run the accessibility checker to ensure accessibility errors are not present.
- **Immersive Reader**
 - Built-in text to speech tool
 - Read the email with the Immersive Tool to ensure the content is read correctly.



Check Accessibility



Immersive
Reader

Resources

- [AIM Center: Accessibility Resources](#)
- [AIM Center - BeachBoard ATI Accessibility Courses Enrollment](#)
- [Outlook: Make your Outlook email accessible to people with disabilities](#)
- [Outlook: Improve email accessibility](#)
- [University of Alabama: Creating Accessible Emails \(Webinar\)](#)
- [Campaign Monitor: Accessibility and Email Campaign](#)
- [Constant Contact: Creating accessible emails](#)
- [MailChimp: Accessibility in Email Marketing](#)



AIM CENTER

ACCESSIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER

Contact

- Main Office: 562.985.1663
- Location: AS-116
- Hours: Monday to Friday 8:00am - 12:30pm, 1:30pm - 4:30pm
- Email: aimc@csulb.edu
- Website: csulb.edu/aimc