



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH &  
SENIOR SERVICES**

**Health.Mo.Gov**



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

# **Navigating Document Accessibility**

---

**Sami Jo Freeman**  
Office of Public Information

# Today's Agenda



## Step 1

### Document Structure

What gives a document structure?

---

## Step 2

### Microsoft Word

Styles, alt-text, links and more!

---

## Step 3

### Microsoft PowerPoint

Slide titles, accessibility checker and more!

---

## Step 4

### Microsoft Excel

Formatting tables, instruction for calculated fields and more!

---

## Step 5

### Adobe Acrobat

Accessibility checker, reading order, tags and more!

# Resources to look up later

Equidox and Accessibility  
On-Demand Remediation



NVDA, Colour Contrast  
Analyser and PAC Checker



Preflight Panel and  
Accessibility Setup Assistant  
in Adobe Acrobat



Minnesota's Office of  
Accessibility



International Association of  
Accessibility Professionals



# What gives a document structure?

Good question.



## Styles

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



## Reading Order

Assistive technology uses reading order to help navigate a document.



## Accessibility Tags

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

+ Document Information



**Microsoft  
Word**



# Microsoft Office

Let's Review



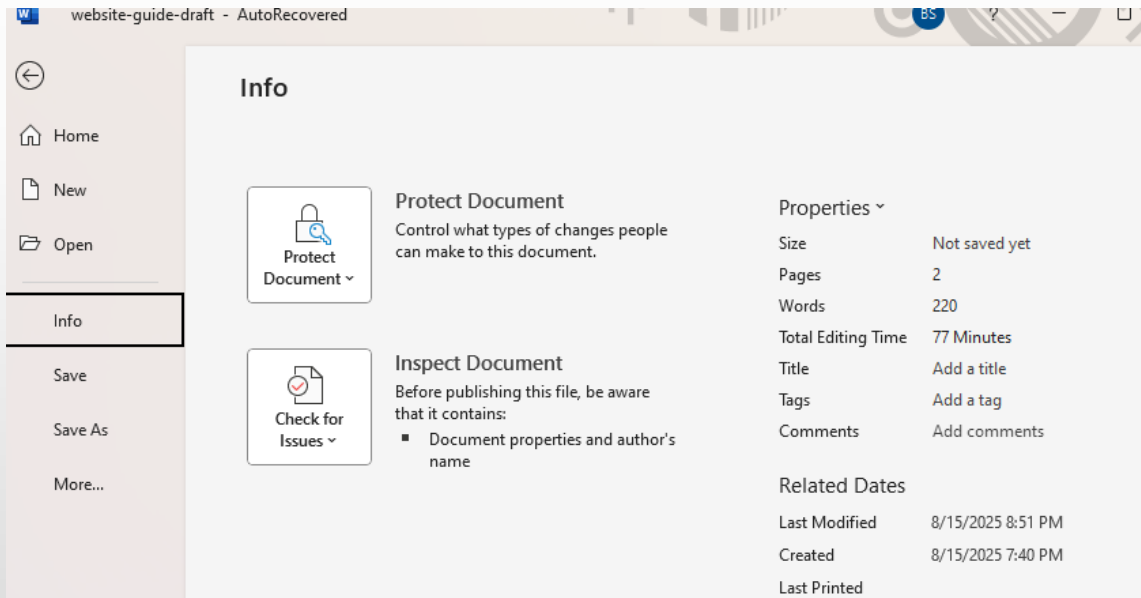
1. Enter the Document Properties (Title, Author, Language)
2. Use document styles
3. Use short headings
4. Name hyperlinks appropriately
5. Use simple table structure
6. Add alt text to images and objects
7. Align images with text
8. Check color contrast
9. Avoid using repeated blank characters
10. Use the Accessibility Checker tool
11. Use Acrobat's Create PDF tool (Not "Save As" )



# Accessible Document Title

## Documents need a title, author and language for organization and accessibility.

This is an important part of document creation to make sure your file is indexed (cataloged by the website) and is included in SEO (Search Engine Optimization.) The bottom line is this is how people will be able to “find” program files on the internet.



**Identification:** a unique descriptive title makes it easier to locate.

**Searchability:** document titles are a primary source of keywords and search engines.

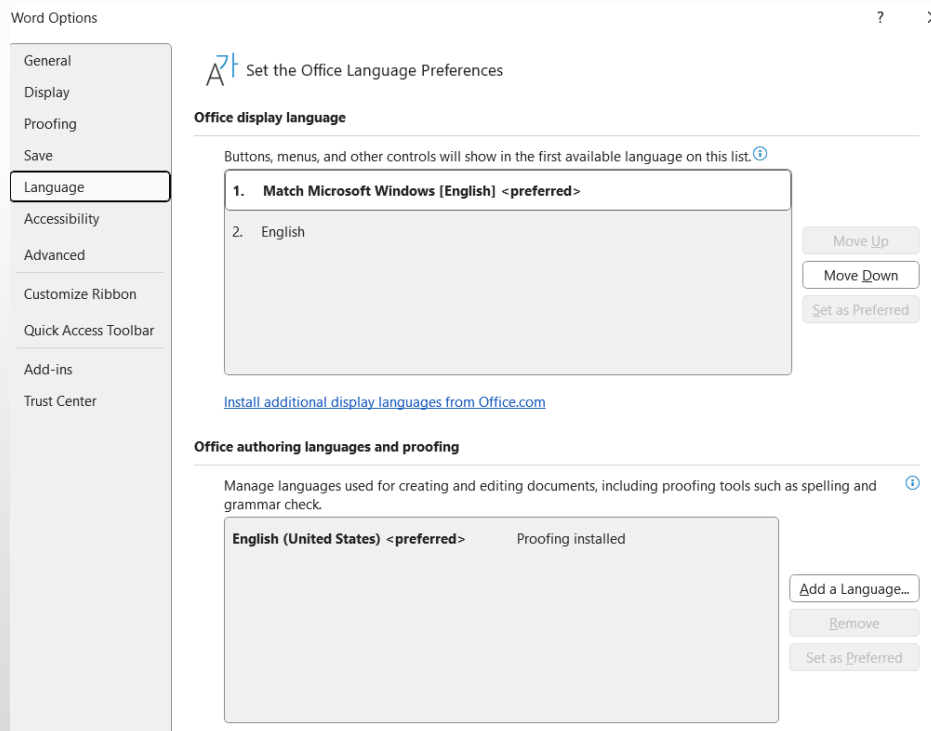
**Accessibility:** users of assistive technology, like screen readers, will hear the title announced first.

# Document Author and Language



## Document Author and Language.

In a Word document the author is automatically assigned with your state enterprise license. Later, we will explore when you export your word document to a PDF how you can edit the title to “Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.”



**Author:** This may be set automatically, but we can override it.

**Language:** Microsoft Office 365 will likely automatically set for “English”.



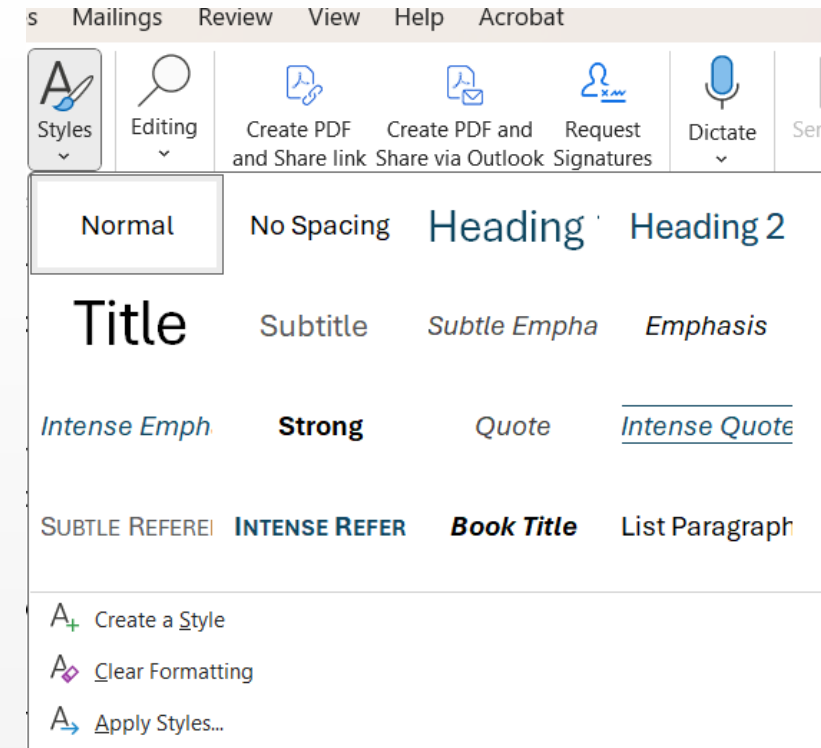
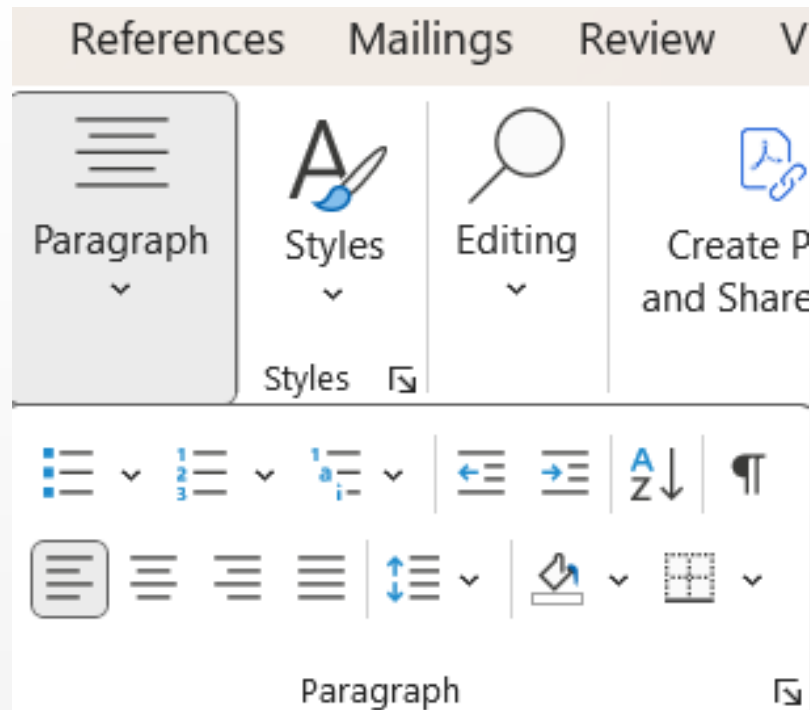
# Let's Review: Heading Styles

## Microsoft Word Heading Styles

1. Use styles
2. Plan ahead
3. Don't skip heading levels
4. Make your styles at least 2 point different
5. Use bold and non-bold variations in addition to point sizes
6. Use Outline mode to check quickly
7. Remember to check color contrast

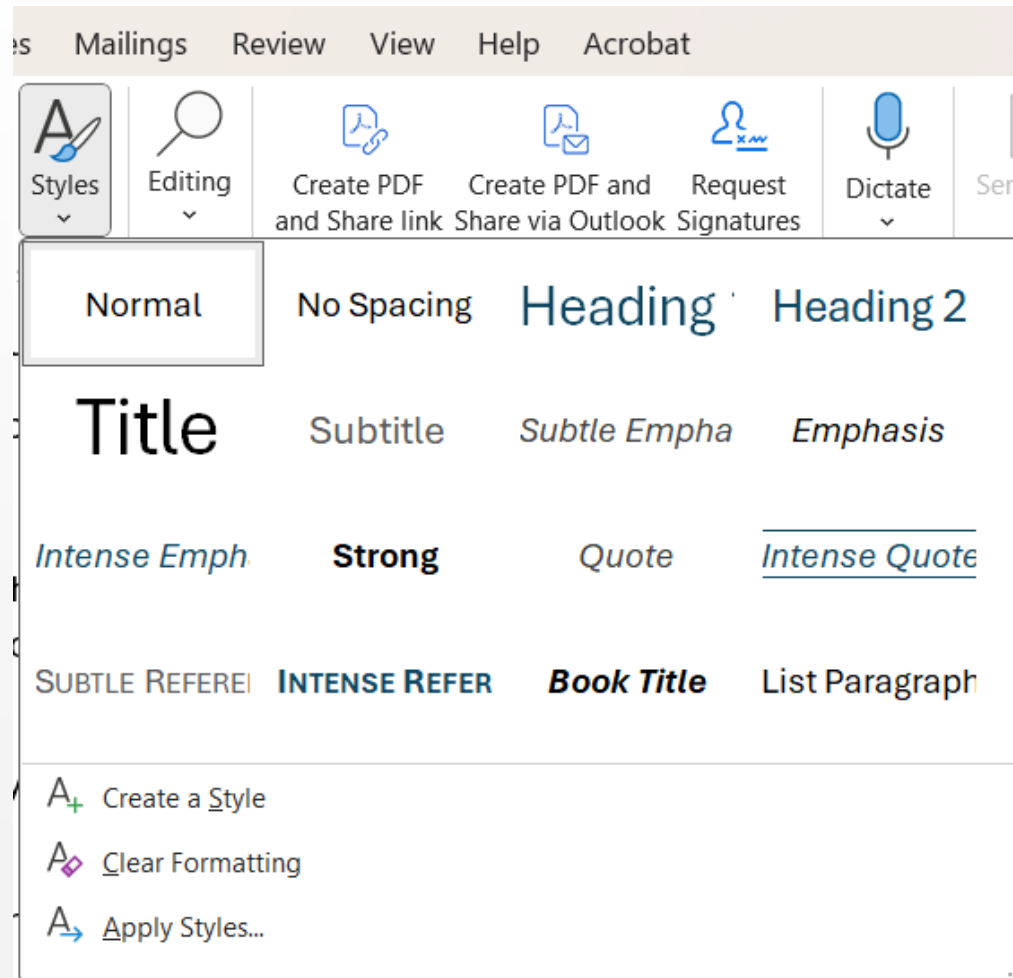


# Why Styles Are Important



The two features in Microsoft Word we care about most are the Paragraphs and Styles tools.

# Styles Convey Meaning



Almost every desktop publishing program available today allows you to create styles in some way, shape or form.

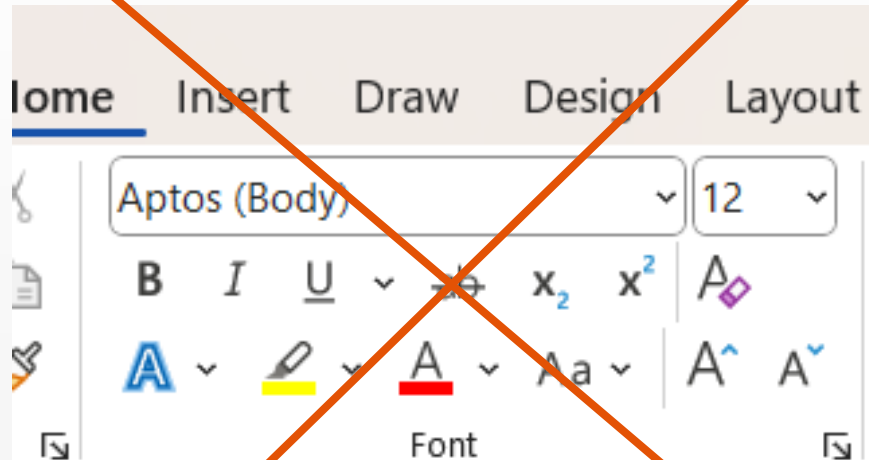
That WCAG guideline related to information and relationships is accomplished through Styles.

Styles use heading structure and convey meaning to assistive technology like screen readers.



# Avoid Manual Formatting

Number one change to your workflow.



Avoid using manual formatting. This feature allows you to assign a piece of text a bold or narrow weight, font change or even color. Resist!

This provides visual changes only and will not convey meaning to screen readers.

Avoid the font panel. Use the styles panel to make sure fonts and spacing are appropriate.

# Heading Level Example



## Heading Level 1

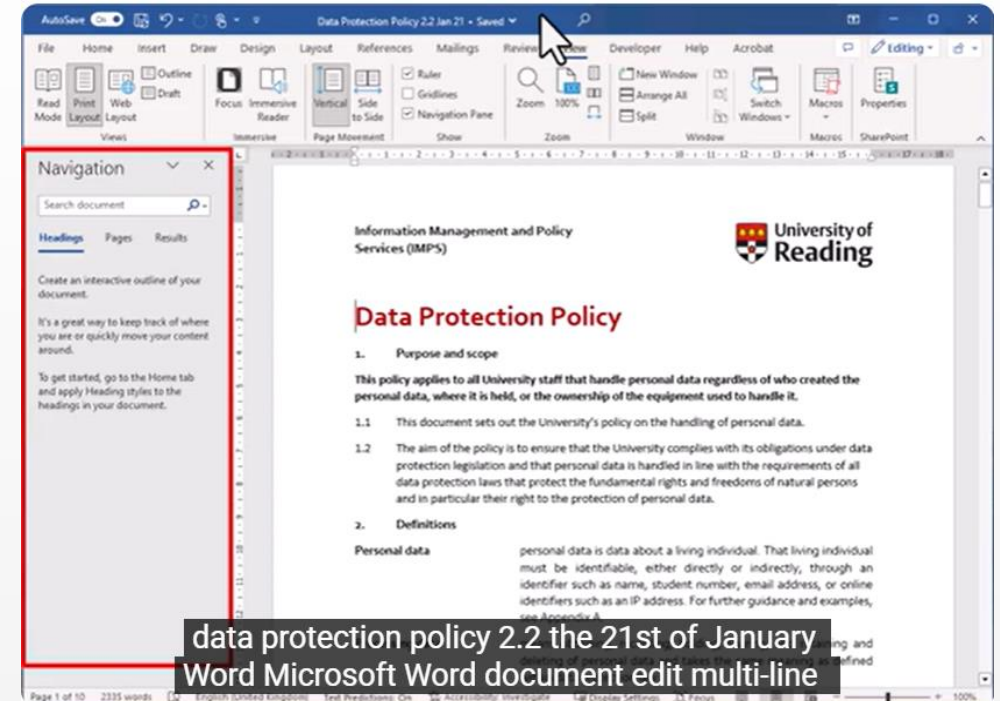
## Heading Level 2

## Heading Level 3

Headings and styles are used to provide information in a visual hierarchy.

Heading Level 2  
Paragraph Style  
List

Use heading styles in order (H1, H2, etc.)



[YouTube Video demonstrating headings](#)



# Heading Hierachy

**Heading Level 1** = Document title

Heading Level 2 = Main topics

Heading Level 3 = Subtopic of Heading 2

Heading Level 4 = Subtopic of Heading 3

Heading Level 5 = Subtopic of Heading 4

Heading Level 6 = Subtopic of Heading 5

Don't use more than this, screen readers do not typically process more than 6. Don't skip heading levels, for example, do not go from Heading Level 1 to Heading Level 3

Don't choose heading levels based on its "look." Each level represents part of the document structure.



# Alternative Text for Images

Alternative or ALT text is how visual objects like images, charts and graphs are described to people who cannot see them. You can rely on subject matter experts within your programs to help you use the correct descriptive words if it is complex.

Alt text puts an image's appearance and purpose into words. This text is then read aloud by screen readers, braille displays and used in place of any graphic that doesn't download.



# Alternative Text Tips

1. Keep it short – less than 150 characters. If you need a longer description, consider adding it to the document content.
2. Be unique. Don't just repeat the information found in the image caption, title or body text.
3. Don't use extra words like "A picture of.." A screen reader already knows it is an image and will announce "image" or "graphic" before reading your alt text. Exceptions are when you want to include the image type, such as a screenshot or bar chart.
4. Don't include a hyperlink.
5. Mark the image as decorative when it offers no information to the reader. Examples of decorative images include divider lines, borders, decorative elements.

**Alt-texting like a boss!**



# Hyperlinks Tips

Create document hyperlinks by embedding the link in descriptive text instead of the entire URL. This allows the information to be read by a screen reader and the screen reader will identify that there is a hyperlink.

**Do:** For more digital accessibility information visit [Missouri Assistive Technology](#).

**Don't:** For more digital accessibility information visit: <https://at.mo.gov/it-access/>

Good link text:

- Is meaningful when read out of context. Screen reader users may navigate from link to link and not read the surrounding text.
- Helps users know something about the destination. "Click here" doesn't let the reader know where they are headed.



# Accessible Hyperlinks

The principles of accessible hyperlinks applies to all digital content.

## Inaccessible link text

Download the annual report "**click here**"

"**Read More**" about our new policy

To submit your application, **go here**

Our accessibility standards are detailed in this document. **(PDF)**

We have open positions. **Apply now.**

For help with your account, **info.**

We welcome feedback. **Provide feedback.**

## Accessible link text

Download the **2025 Accessibility Report**

Read the **full details about our new accessibility policy.**

**Submit your professional development application.**

Read our **web accessibility standards PDF.**

We are currently hiring. **View all open positions and apply.**

Get help with your **account login and password.**

We welcome feedback on this document via our **online submission form.**

## WCAG Guideline:

Success criteria 2.4.4: link purpose, in context is a level A requirement, and it states the purpose of each link can be determined from the link text alone or from the link text together with its programmatically determined link context, except where the purpose of the link would be ambiguous to the user in general.



**Microsoft  
PowerPoint**



# PowerPoint

Let's Review

1. Use content placeholders.
2. Check slide reading order.
3. Give each slide a unique title.
4. Add alt text to images and object.
5. Name hyperlinks appropriately.
6. Use simple table structure.
7. Include captions and audio descriptions.
8. Use high-contrast colors.
9. Enter document properties.
10. Use the Accessibility Checker tool.
11. Consider alternate formats when sharing presentations.



**Microsoft  
Excel**



# Microsoft Excel

## Let's Review

1. Always set a meaningful Title to your document.
2. Avoid default sheet names.
3. Remove blank sheets and hide blank cells.
4. The A1 cell can contain instructions, table title or other important information for the user.
5. Define your tables and label them.
6. Tables should always have heading cells.
7. Apply alt-text to your charts and graphs.
8. Use good color contrast for headings and cell data.
9. Avoid colors in cells to indicate properties.
10. Run the Accessibility Checker.





# Microsoft Excel

Let's Review





# **Tables, Charts and Graphs**

# Accessible Tables

Insert your awesome subtitle here



## Table Title

|          | Column Header | Column Header | Column Header |
|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |

## Table Title

|          | Column Header | Column Header | Column Header |
|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Total    | <b>Total</b>  | <b>Total</b>  | <b>Total</b>  |

# Accessible Tables

Insert your awesome subtitle here



## Table Title

|          | Column Header | Column Header | Column Header |
|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name | Text          | Text          | Text          |

## Table Title

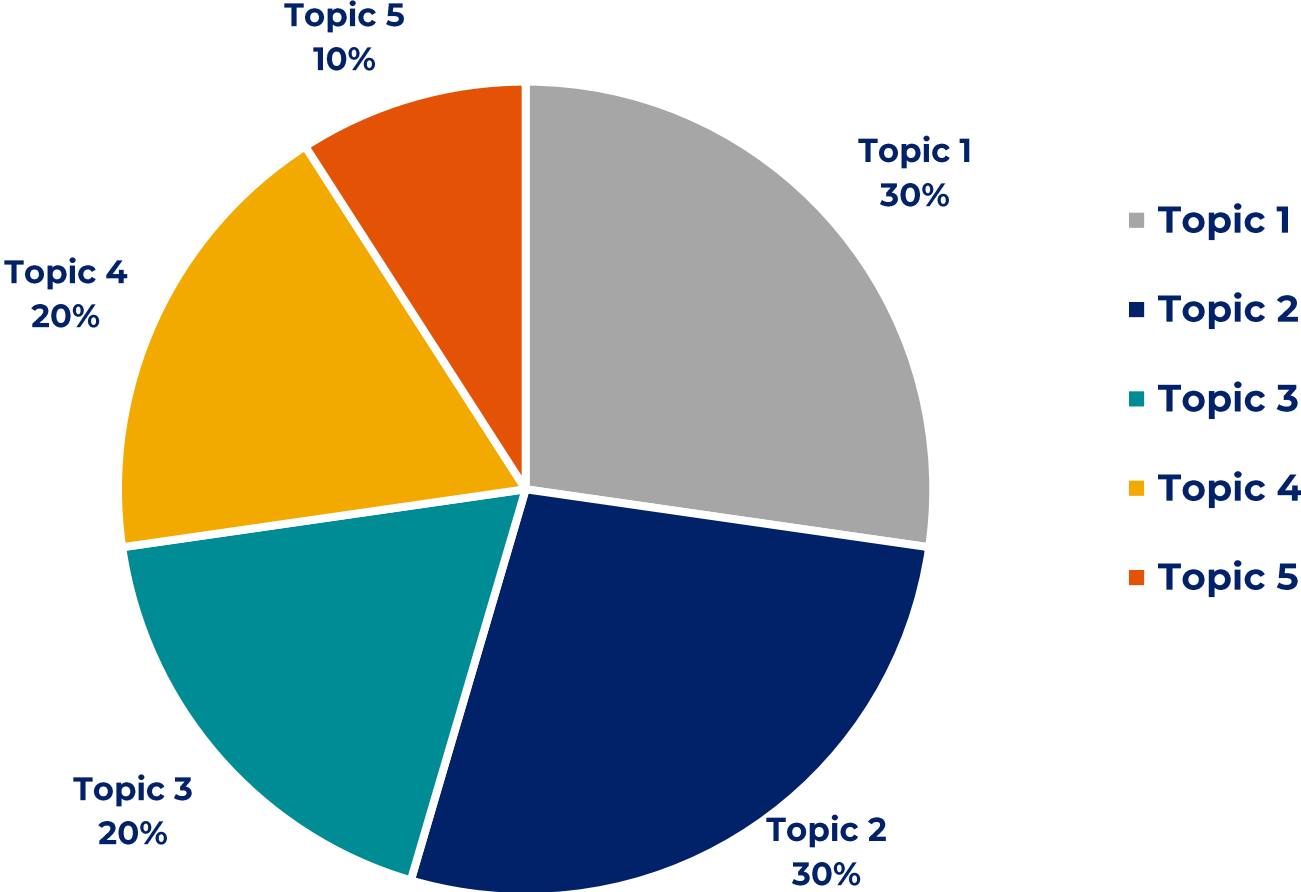
|              | Column Header | Column Header | Column Header |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Row Name     | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name     | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name     | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| Row Name     | Text          | Text          | Text          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>Total</b>  | <b>Total</b>  | <b>Total</b>  |

# Accessible Pie Chart



Insert your awesome subtitle here

## Pie Chart Title

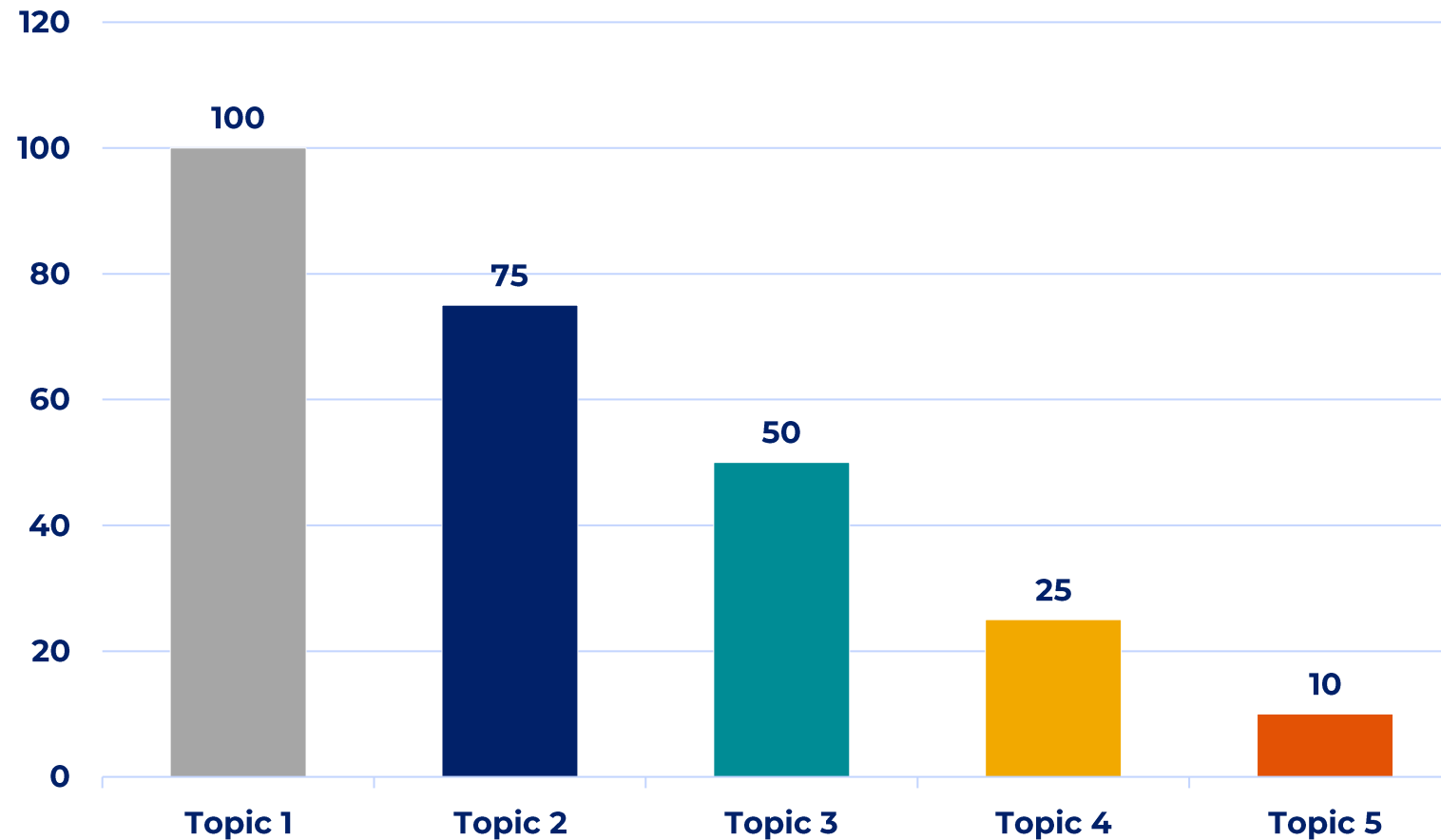


# Accessible Column Chart



Insert your awesome subtitle here

## Column Chart Title

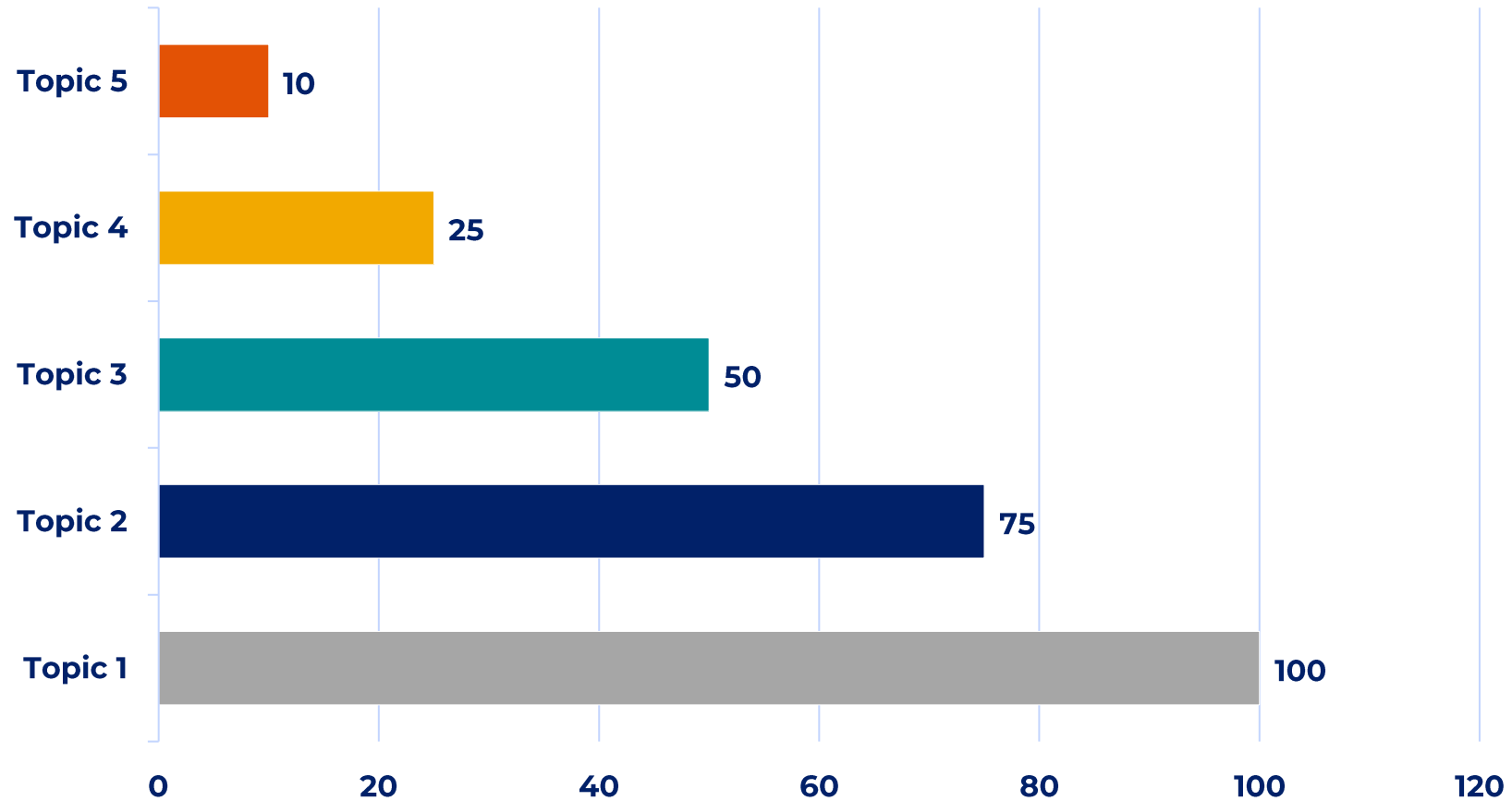


# Accessible Bar Chart

Insert your awesome subtitle here



## Bar Chart Title



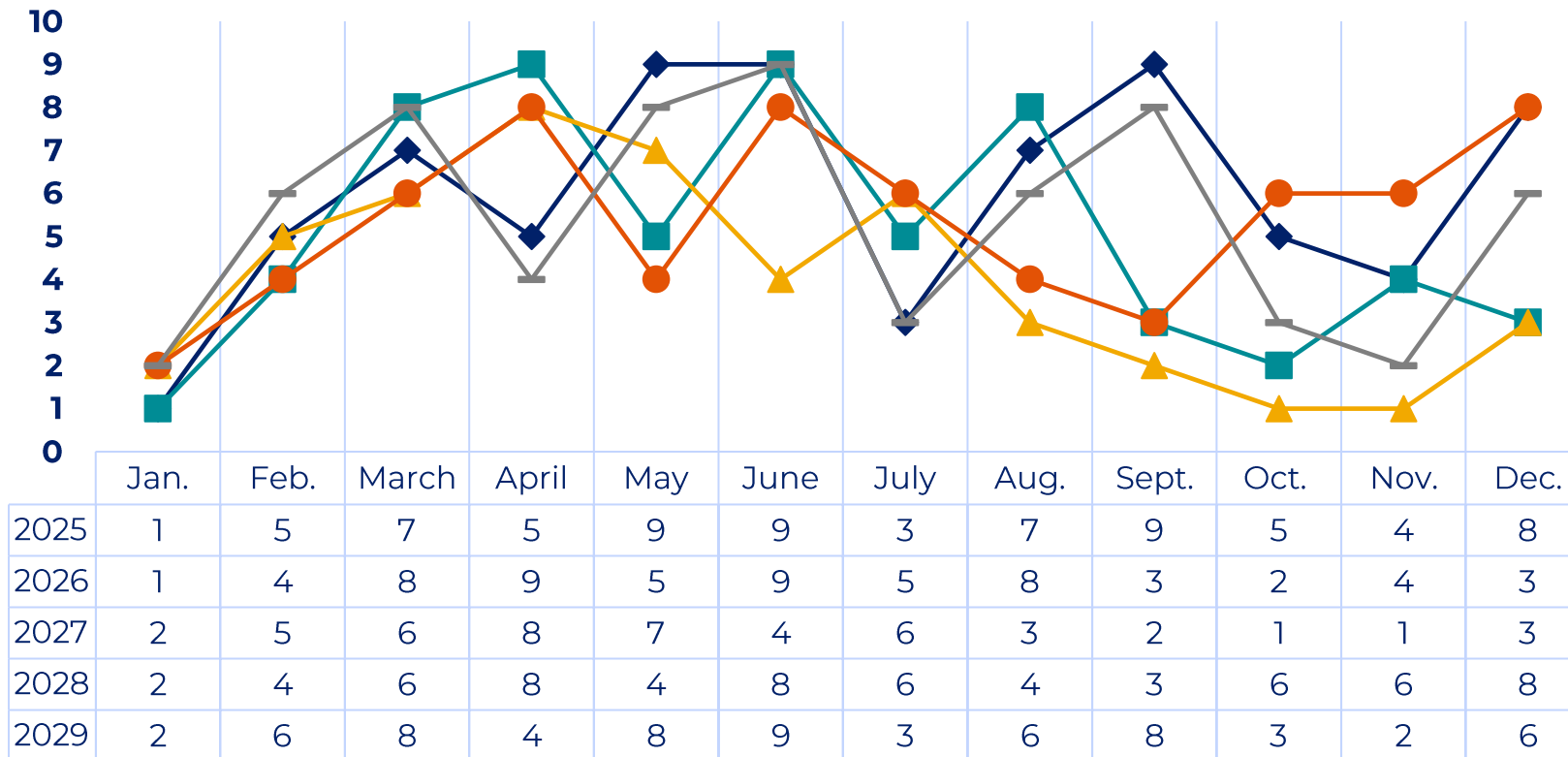
# Accessible Line Chart



Insert your awesome subtitle here

## Line Chart Title

◆ 2025 ■ 2026 ▲ 2027 ● 2028 — 2029

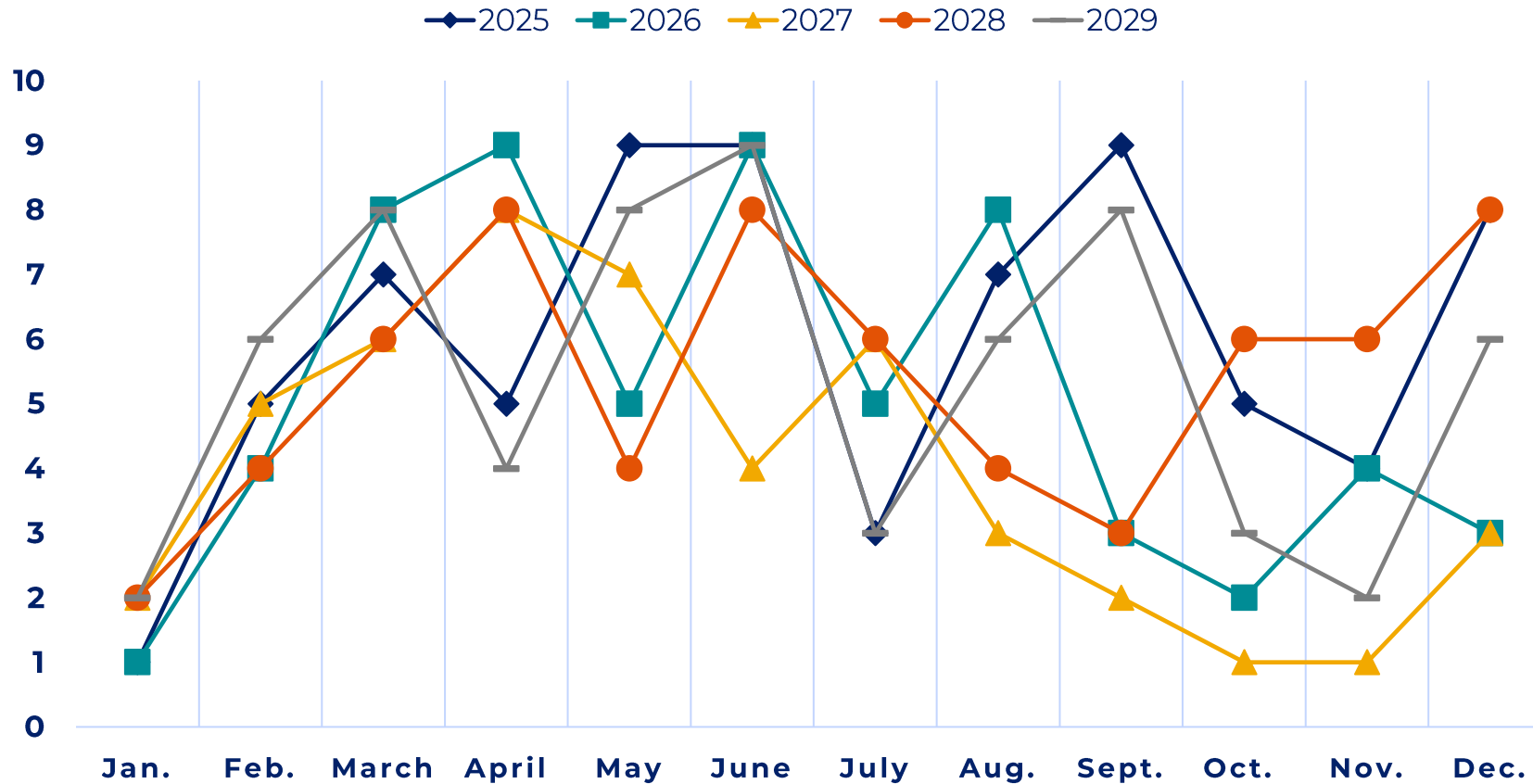


# Accessible Line Chart



Insert your awesome subtitle here

## Line Chart Title





**Adobe**  
**Acrobat**

# Adobe Acrobat

Let's Review



1. Add Accessibility Tools to Quick Access: Bookmarks, Content, Reading Order and Tags
2. Add Document Properties: Title, Author, Subject, Language and Keywords
3. Accessibility Checker: Red X – Failed, Blue Question Mark - Manual Check, Yellow Sign – Skipped
4. Review Reading Order and fix using Content Panel
5. Use Reading Order Tool to view structure types and tag content (if needed)
6. Walk the tag tree and simplify as much as possible
7. Fix by adding new tags, changing existing tags and deleting empty tags
8. Add alt-text or mark images as decorative



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

**PROMOTING HEALTH AND SAFETY**