

Make every email accessible

A practical guide to ADA, WCAG, and Section 508 compliance for email signatures.



Every email carries a
signature.

Ensure every
recipient can read it.



Why accessibility is no longer optional

- ✓ **The legal baseline is already set.**
WCAG 2.1, ADA Title III, and Section 508 apply to digital communications, including email.
- ✓ **Non-compliance carries real risk.**
Organizations may face legal action and reputational damage for inaccessible customer-facing communications.
- ✓ **Unmanaged signatures fail screen readers.**
Without alt text, logos read as filenames, banners go unannounced, and key information disappears entirely.
- ✓ **Centralized control makes compliance scalable.**
Exclaimer enables teams to ensure accessibility and compliance automatically across every user and device.

Disclaimer for accessible email signatures: Best practices

Disclaimer's signature designer and Brand Kits give IT and brand teams the controls needed to easily build signatures that are readable, inclusive, and accessible to every recipient—including those using assistive technologies.

Include alt text on every image

Alt text fields can be defined for all images, within either the signature designer or Brand Kit menu.

- ✓ **Logo & icon (Brand Kit):** Alt text provided for each image upload.
- ✓ **Banner:** Alt Text field for every banner.
- ✓ **Social media icons:** Alt text for each linked social media icon.

Best practice

Describe image function or purpose, not just appearance. For example, "Join our webinar on April 25", not "Banner."

Accessible font & color choices

Fonts and colors can be defined in the Signature Designer or Brand Kits and applied across every deployed signature.

- ✓ **Font selector:** Choose from our web-safe fonts. Recommended for legibility: Arial, Calibri, Georgia, Tahoma, Trebuchet MS, and Verdana.
- ✓ **Font size:** Body text 12pt (16px) minimum; disclaimer text 9pt (12px) minimum.
- ✓ **Contrast:** Test each hex value against WCAG 4.5:1 ratio before saving.

Best practice

Avoid light grey text on white backgrounds. While this is a popular signature choice, it may be difficult for some to read.

Padding & layout controls

Padding can be configured for each element in the signature designer, giving precise control over spacing and formatting.

Best practice

Adequate padding around text improves legibility for all users, especially on mobile clients where rendering can vary.



Email signature accessibility checklist

ALT TEXT & IMAGES

Images & icons

- ✓ **Social media icons:** Alt text filled in for every icon in the designer panel.
- ✓ **Logo & icon:** Alt text field completed alongside image upload.
- ✓ **Banner:** Alt text describes the CTA or offer
- ✓ **Decorative images:** Alt attribute left empty.
- ✓ **Text prioritized:** No critical info (contact details, legal text) embedded in image only.

PADDING & LAYOUT

Spacing & structure

- ✓ **Adequate padding applied:** No cramped, hard-to-read layouts or text elements.
- ✓ **Reading order logical:** Name → Title → Contact Details → Banners/Links.
- ✓ **Legal disclaimer is plain text:** Not image-based, with sufficient padding.
- ✓ **"All the same" toggle :** Uniform padding and spacing across similar elements.

FONTS & COLOR

Typography & contrast

- ✓ **Web-safe font** from Exclaimer's font library. *(Recommended fonts include Arial, Calibri, Georgia, Tahoma, Trebuchet MS, or Verdana)*
- ✓ **Font size:** Body text 12pt (16px) minimum; disclaimer text 9pt (12px) minimum.
- ✓ **Font color hex value:** Tested against WCAG 4.5:1 contrast ratio.
- ✓ **Color not the only indicator:** Links underlined or otherwise distinguished.

LINKS & COPY

Hyperlinks & content

- ✓ **All hyperlinks** use descriptive anchor text, not just "Click Here."
- ✓ **Social icon links** include corresponding alt text.
- ✓ **Banner CTAs** supported by text copy where possible, not images only.
- ✓ **Contact info present as text:** Contact info not fully reliant on embedded images.

DEPLOYMENT & GOVERNANCE

Pre-publish review

- ✓ **Server-side deployment** used for compliance-critical signatures.
- ✓ **Template edit access:** Restricted to accessibility-trained staff via Role-Based Access Controls.
- ✓ **Banner accessibility:** Reviewed each time new campaign banners are activated.