TECHNOLOGY ACCESSIBILITY REPORT 2024 TruEarth

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DEFINING ACCESSIBILITY

For this report, accessibility is defined as the extent to which hardware and software are user-friendly and accommodating, particularly to individuals with disabilities. This includes the **prevention of physical and digital barriers** and the addition of **inclusive design features** for everyone. This definition does not encompass common technological issues such as networking connectivity problems, extended loading times, or application crashes.

Four types of disabilities have been considered within this report, each requiring its own distinct accessibility needs in relation to hardware and software. These include:

1 Auditory Impairment

This type of disability involves complete or partial loss of hearing which can impact an individual's ability to understand spoken content and audio, requiring the need for features that incorporate transcriptions and visual queues as notifiers.

2 Cognitive Disability

Cognitive disabilities are recognized in this report in relation to user interfaces. Although cognitive disabilities vary across types and severity, considerations can be made to eliminate complex interfaces and content overload.

3 Motor Impairment

While motor impairment incorporates various disability types, this report focuses on dexterity which refers to one's ability to perform activities or tasks using their hands. This can involve tasks such as typing on a keyboard. Motor impairments consider a need for ergonomic features and customizable hardware.

4 Visual Impairment

Visual disabilities encompass varying degrees of vision loss, including blindness and colour blindness, that cannot be fully corrected with lenses. Individuals with such disabilities may struggle with issues like poor text formatting, insufficient colour contrasts, and a lack of screen readers.

REPORT OVERVIEW

This document is a hardware and software accessibility report designed to provide an overview of the accessibility features offered within the current hardware and software used by Tru Earth, as well as offer recommendations for alternative devices and software to better accommodate individuals with disabilities across four defined categories.

To gather insights, Beta Consulting conducted two surveys for Tru Earth employees. The first was an exploratory survey aimed at collecting data and opinions on the current hardware and technology usage within the company, including any accessibility challenges that arise with them. These results were discussed with project sponsors for better insight. The second survey focused on gathering preferences and needs regarding accessibility features and hardware researched by the team.

Upon completing the surveys, the following core challenges were discovered to be faced by Tru Earth employees:

Hardware

1. **Ergonomic Challenges**
2. **Visual Difficulties**

Software

1. **Complex User Interfaces**
2. **Visual Difficulties**

To address potential accessibility needs not captured by the survey results, Beta Consulting also conducted external research focusing on all four disabilities outlined in this report.

CONT...

The research findings indicated that additional hardware add-ons and alternative device types could effectively address ergonomic, visual, and dexterity-related challenges. Moreover, many of the current software applications possess build-in accessibility features that can be utilized. However, some software were found to have shortcomings with their accessibility.

Based on an assessment of both surveys and additional external research, the following features and recommendations were identified for specific hardware and software:

Hardware

- **Keyboards**: Incorporate accessible features such as backlit and RGB keys for visual challenges, or consider ergonomic keyboards for improved dexterity.

- **Monitors**: Use adjustable monitors or alternative curved or large print high contrast monitors for better visibility across screens.

- **Laptops**: While laptops themselves lack specific accessibility features, software adjustments through Windows 10 can improve user interface. See below.

Software

- **Windows 10**: Utilize built-in features for auditory, motor, cognitive, and visual impairments, including features such as toggle and filter keys and focus assist.

- **Microsoft Teams**: Provides various accessibility features including closed captioning, high contrast mode, and keyboard navigation to accommodate auditory, visual, and motor needs.

- **Microsoft Outlook**: Most compatible across majority mailing platforms and includes various features like keyboard navigation and customizable display settings.

- **Word, PPT, & Excel**: Microsoft offers accessible templates which streamline content creation, ensuring materials are easily navigated and understood by recipients with diverse accessibility needs.

CONT...

- **Adobe Acrobat**: Opt for the pro version for improved accessibility of PDFs. It includes an accessible menu and systematically improves textual accessibility.

- **Adobe Photoshop**: Enhance visual accommodations with features like external screen readers and high contrast mode.

- **Zoom**: Offers tailored accessibility features for auditory impairments such as reading options and addresses visual user interface challenges with adjustments for colour contrasts and text.

- **Trello**: While compatible with screen reading software and allowing contrast adjustments, its interface complexity may pose challenges for users with cognitive or visual disabilities.

- **Criterion**: Information regarding its accessibility features is limited; however, Oracle Fusion Cloud HCM is an alternative, allowing for initial testing functions to validate accessible features on pages and customizable menus and UIs.

- **Slack**: Includes visual accommodation such as simple text, keyboard shortcuts, and screen reading. However, it is missing a black theme which may be important to some users.

By presenting a comprehensive overview and suggestions, this report aims to foster an inclusive and accessible technological environment for all Tru Earth employees.

This document is a hardware and software accessibility report developed by the Beta Consulting project team from Simon Fraser University's BUS 361 course, specifically for Tru Earth.
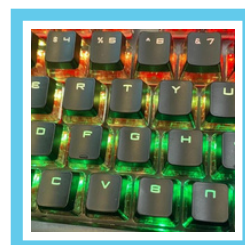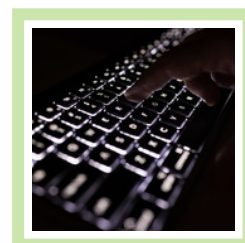
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Consulting

KEYBOARDS

Keyboards play a crucial role in accessibility for individuals with diverse needs, offering various designs, including large-key keyboards, keyboards with tactile feedback, customizable key layouts, and other accessibility features.

Accessibility Features on Keyboards

Features for individuals with visual impairments that often struggle with low contrast and poor visibility, especially in dimly lit environments:
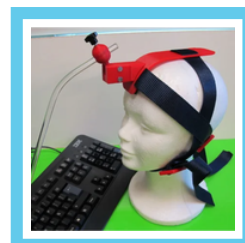
- **Backlit keys:** Improves visibility, especially in low-light environments, making it it easier for users to see and type in dimly lit rooms or during night time. Backlighting is also offered in different colours, providing additional customization choices.

- **RGB (Red, Green, Blue) keys:** Allows users to customize the backlighting of individual keys or key zones with a range of colours and lighting effects. Users can colour-code keys for different applications, save custom lighting profiles, and synchronize lighting effects with other compatible peripherals.
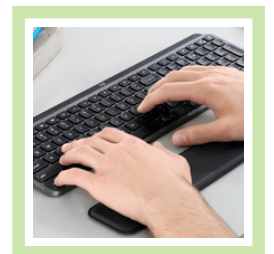

Add-On Features

These features can provide additional functionalities or customization options that cater to specific needs of users with disabilities or diverse requirements.

- **Adjustable height stand or legs:** These stands allow users to raise or lower their keyboard to their preferred height, providing ergonomic benefits for comfortable typing. It enables users to achieve a comfortable typing posture, reducing the risk of strain or discomfort during extended typing sessions. (Cost range: CAD $20 -$100)

- **Customizable head pointers:** Used by individuals with limited hand or arm control to interact with a physical keyboard or a capacitive computer/tablet touchscreen. It can also be used to manipulate objects like turning pages in a book. (Cost range: CAD $100 - $500)
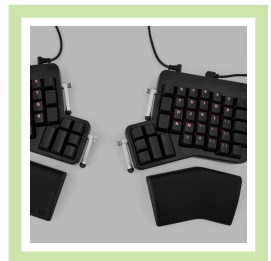
CONT...

- **Keyguards:** Physical barriers designed to fit over a keyboard, covering the keys and preventing accidental key presses. Useful for individuals with motor control difficulties, such as tremors, who may inadvertently press multiple keys while typing. They can be customized to fit specific keyboard layouts and are often removable for easy cleaning. (Cost range: CAD $50 - $150)

- **Large print keys:** Features letters and symbols that are significantly larger compared to standard keyboard keys. Beneficial for individuals with visual impairments or those who have difficulty distinguishing smaller characters. These make it easier for users to locate the correct keys, especially in in low-light environments or for users with aging eyesight. (Cost range: CAD $10 - $30)

- **NVDA (NonVisual Desktop Access):** A free, open-source screen reader available for Windows. It allows users to navigate the keyboard while the screen reader reads aloud the text on the screen, providing auditory feedback and enabling access to computer functions and applications. Here's a guide on how to get NVDA and use it. (Cost range: Free)

- **Programmable keys:** Allows users to customize specific keys according to their preferences or needs. Beneficial for individuals with disabilities or special requirements, as they can tailor the keyboard layout to better suit their workflow. Here's a tutorial on how to reassign keyboard keys. (Cost range: CAD $50 - $200)

- **Wrist rests:** Either built-in or detachable with keyboards, wrist rests are designed to provide support and cushioning for the wrists during typing. They promote a more ergonomic typing posture by keeping the wrists in a neutral position and minimizing strain during long typing sessions. (Cost range: CAD $10 - $50)

Types of Keyboards

- **Braille keyboards:** Designed with Braille input capabilities or integrated with Braille display devices. Users who have visual impairments or low vision can input text using Braille characters directly on the keyboard or receive tactile feedback from a connected Braille display while typing. This integration enhances accessibility for individuals with visual impairments, enabling them to interact with computers more effectively. (Cost range: CAD $300 – $1000)

- **Customizable split mechanical keyboards:** Tailored to accommodate various ergonomic needs, offering adjustable positioning and switch options to suit individual preferences. It allows users to split the keyboard into two separate halves and promotes a more natural hand position by reducing strain on the wrists and arms during extended typing sessions. (Cost range: CAD $100 – $500)

- **Ergonomic split keyboards:** Feature a divided design that conforms to the natural positioning of the hands, aiming to minimize strain on the wrists and arms during typing sessions. It allows users to position their hands in a more relaxed and neutral posture and can help prevent repetitive strain injuries and alleviate discomfort associated with prolonged typing. (Cost range: CAD $50 – $300)

- **Flat keyboards with quiet keys:** Provide a more comfortable typing experience, reducing strain on the wrists and hands, which can benefit users with motor disabilities or repetitive strain injuries. It also contributes to a more uniform typing surface, making it easier for individuals with limited dexterity or coordination to navigate the keys smoothly. (Cost range: CAD $20 – $200)

CONT...

- Large print high contrast keyboards: Designed with oversized and bold fonts printed on its key, significantly improving visibility for users, especially those with visual impairments or low vision. The ennlarged characters make it easier for individuals to locate and identify keys, reducing the likelihood of typing errors and enhancing typing speed and accuracy. (Cost range: CAD $30 - $100)

- Wave keyboards: Designed to gently guide the hands and wrists into a more ergonomic position while typing, reducing strain and discomfort associated with prolonged keyboard use. It encourages a more ergonomic hand position and can alleviate common issues such as wrist pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, and repetitive strain injuries. (Cost range: CAD $50 - $200)

- Wireless keyboards: Allow users to position the keyboard more freely, enabling them to find a comfortable typing position without being restricted by cables. This feature enhances accessibility and convenience by providing flexibility in workspace arrangement and accommodating various ergonomic needs, such as wrist comfort and posture. (Cost range: CAD $20 - $200)

Cost Tiers

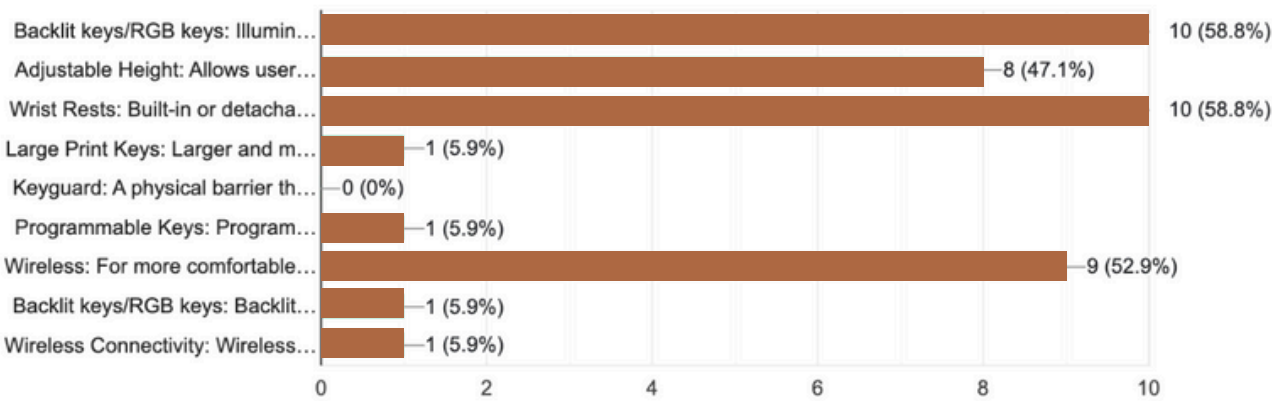| Tier	Items
1 ($10 - $100)	Adjustable Height Stands, Flat Keyboards, Keyguards, Large Print Keys, Large Print High Contrast Keyboards, NVDA, Wireless Keyboards, & Wrist Rests
2 ($100 - $500)	Customizable Split Mechanical Keyboards Customizable Head Pointer, Ergonomic Split Keyboards, Programmable Keys, & Wave Keyboards
3 ($300 - $1000)	Braille Keyboards

Recommended Add-On Features for Keyboards From Survey:

Adjustable height stands or legs and wrist rests

Please select each box that you believe will help increase accessibility through keyboards.

□ Copy

17 responses

Feature	Responses
Backlit keys/RGB keys: Illumin...	10 (58.8%)
Adjustable Height: Allows user...	8 (47.1%)
Wrist Rests: Built-in or detacha...	10 (58.8%)
Large Print Keys: Larger and m...	1 (5.9%)
Keyguard: A physical barrier th...	0 (0%)
Programmable Keys: Program...	1 (5.9%)
Wireless: For more comfortable...	9 (52.9%)
Backlit keys/RGB keys: Backlit...	1 (5.9%)
Wireless Connectivity: Wireless...	1 (5.9%)

Note: Not all keyboard add-on feature recommendations were included in this survey. This recommendation is based only on those that were included.
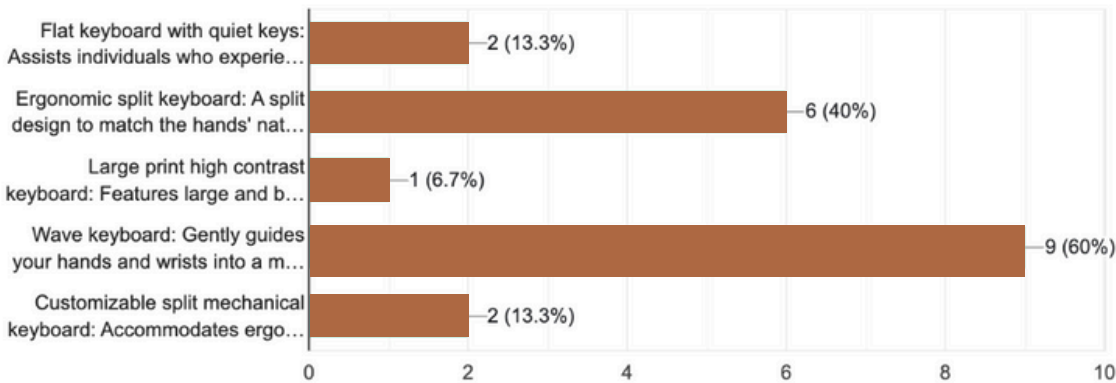
Recommended Keyboards From Survey:

Ergonomic split keyboard, wave keyboard, and wireless keyboard

Select the following keyboard(s) that you believe will help meet an accessibility need that isn't already met through your current keyboard.

□ Copy

15 responses

Keyboard	Responses
Flat keyboard with quiet keys: Assists individuals who experie...	2 (13.3%)
Ergonomic split keyboard: A split design to match the hands' nat...	6 (40%)
Large print high contrast keyboard: Features large and b...	1 (6.7%)
Wave keyboard: Gently guides your hands and wrists into a m...	9 (60%)
Customizable split mechanical keyboard: Accommodates ergo...	2 (13.3%)

Note: Not all keyboard recommendations were included in this survey. This recommendation is based only on those that were included.

LAPTOPS
WINDOWS 10

All Tru Earth-provided laptops, run on Windows 10 Business. Windows 10 offers customizable settings to accommodate common accessibility needs, which can be accessed through the Ease of Access menu under All Settings by clicking on the Windows Icon/Start Menu. These settings are conveniently sorted by category.

Visual Accessibility Settings

Adjusting Sizes:

- **Make Text Bigger:** Increase the size of text within the menu, icons, and select applications. Text in non-Microsoft applications may not be affected.

- **Make Everything Bigger:** Increase the size of text within all applications, including images, icons, and apps.

- **Magnifier**: a tool that enlarges the screen for clearer viewing of words and images. It can magnify either the entire screen or specific parts, allowing you to move the magnifier to your preferred location on the desktop.

- **Adjust Pointer Size:** Modify the size of your cursor for improved visibility.

Adjusting Colours and Contrast:

- **Change Pointer Colour:** Allows you to select from multiple colour options to make your cursor more visible in backgrounds.

- **Dark Mode:** Dark mode switches the usual light background and dark text to a dark background with light text. This can make text easier to read for some people and may reduce eye strain.

- **High Contrast:** For users with low vision, light sensitivity, or difficulty seeing contrasts. It's also helpful for people working in dimly lit environments.

- **Night Light:** Night Light decreases the blue light from the computer screen. This can help reduce eye strain, especially in darker settings.

Instructions:

- Make Text Bigger
- Make Everything Bigger
- Magnifier
- Adjust Pointer Size
- Change Pointer Colour
- Dark Mode
- High Contrast
- Night Light

Audio Accessibility Settings

- **Mono Audio**: Enhances listening for people who hear better in one ear by merging the sound from both left and right audio channels into a single channel.

- **Closed Captions**: Allows individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to read words that are in a video. Options include adjusting the colour, size, style, and how the caption text and background are presented.

Motor Accessibility Settings

- **Dictation**: Turns spoken words into written text using speech recognition.

- **Toggle Keys:** Produce a sound whenever the Caps Lock or Num Lock keys are pressed.

- **Filter Keys**: Helps ignore quick or repeated keystrokes, which can be helpful for those who struggle to hit keys accurately or have hand tremors. Includes three settings:
  - Bounce Keys: Makes the keyboard wait before accepting more keystrokes if the same key is pressed more than once.
  - Slow Keys: Makes the keyboard wait before accepting more keystrokes.
  - Repeat Keys: Delays the keyboard's key repeat function when a key is held down.

Cognitive Accessibility Settings

- **Focus Assist:** Mutes most notification sounds and pop-up alerts. Able to schedule it and choose which specific apps apply by customizing the priority app list in the settings.

- **Typing Suggestions:** When turned on, this feature provides text suggestions whenever you're using the keyboard.

Instructions:

- Mono Audio
- Closed Captions
- Dictation
- Toggle Keys
- Filter Keys
- Focus Assist
- Typing Suggestions

MONITORS

Monitors play a crucial role in accessibility for individuals with diverse needs, offering various features and designs to enhance user experience. Many monitors allow height, tilt, swivel, and pivot adjustments, offering customizable viewing angles to accommodate individual preferences and ergonomic requirements.

Types of Monitors

- **Adjustable monitors:** Offer height, tilt, swivel, and pivot adjustments, allowing users to customize viewing angles for comfort and ergonomic support. (Cost range: CAD $200-$1500)

- **Curved monitors:** Provide a wider field of view and reduce glare, providing a more immersive and comfortable viewing experience, especially for users with peripheral vision impairments. (Cost range: CAD $400-$3000)

- **Large print high contrast monitors:** Feature large and bold fonts with high contrast, enhance visibility for users with visual impairments or those who benefit from clearer text and graphics. (Cost range: CAD $400-$1000)

- **Touchscreen monitors:** Provide an intuitive interface for users with limited dexterity or mobility, allowing interaction via touch gestures instead of traditional input devices. (Cost range: CAD $200-$3000)

- **Ultra-wide monitors:** Offer a wider aspect ratio, providing more screen real estate for multitasking and viewing multiple applications simultaneously, benefitting users who require increased productivity or accessibility features. (Cost range: CAD $500-$2500)

Cost Tiers

1 ($200 - $500)	Adjustable Monitor
2 ($500 - $1500)	Large Print High Contrast Monitors, Ultra-Wide Monitors, Touchscreen Monitors
3 ($1500 - $3000)	Curved Monitor

ADOBE ACROBAT

Adobe Acrobat is a software tool designed for handling PDF files. It offers a range of features including viewing, creating, editing, and managing PDF documents. The Adobe Acrobat family includes Acrobat Reader, which is free for viewing PDFs, Acrobat Standard for basic editing tasks like creating and modifying PDFs, and Acrobat Pro, offering more advanced features.

Standard Version
$19.99/month per employee

- **Searchable text:** Enabling assistive software to read and extract words, empowering users to select, edit, and manipulate text within the document.

- **Reading Order Control:** Users can manually adjust the reading order to ensure that content is presented in a logical sequence for screen reader users.

Pro Version
$30.99/month per employee [7.5% off every 5 licenses]

- **Accessible PDF:** Pre-defined accessibility templates that help users create PDF documents with built-in accessibility features. These templates ensure that documents comply with accessibility standards from the outset, saving time and effort in the remediation process.

- **Text-to-Speech:** The "Read Out Loud" feature is a built-in Text-to-Speech (TTS) tool within Acrobat Reader. It reads the text content of PDF documents aloud, covering not only the main body text but also comments, alternate text descriptions for images, and fillable form fields.

- **Alternate text descriptions:** Crucial for accessibility, as screen readers depend on them to interpret images and interactive form fields. Enhanced descriptions can benefit users with learning disabilities by providing more meaningful information.

Considerations Before Upgrading

- Tru Earth must carefully evaluate whether upgrading to the Pro version, with its enhanced accessibility tools, is necessary to comply with strict standards, considering both potential workflow improvements and the cost-effectiveness of the upgrade, including additional training expenses.

Instructions:
- Acrobat accessibility, Overview, New Features, and FAQ

ADOBE PHOTOSHOP

Adobe Photoshop is a graphics editing software developed and published by Adobe Inc. It can be used by designers at Tru Earth for various purposes such as photo editing, image manipulation, graphic design, digital painting, and much more.

Visual Impairment

Adjusting Colours and Contrast:

- **External Screen Readers:** Adobe Photoshop is compatible with screen reader software such as JAWS on Windows, allowing visually impaired users to navigate the interface and access tools and features.

- **Dark Mode**: Replaces the system with a dark background with light text which can make text and buttons easier to read and may reduce eyestrain.

- **High Contrast Mode**: Photoshop allows users to switch to a high-contrast interface mode, making it easier for users with low vision to distinguish between interface elements.

- **Simulate Color Blindness:** Simulate colour blindness by selecting View > Proof Setup > Colour Blindness - Protanopia-type or Deuteranopia-type. This process aids designers and creators in understanding how their work might appear such individuals, enabling them to make necessary adjustments to ensure visible accessibility for this audience

- **Zoom & Magnification:** Zooming in allows users to see finer details of their work, making it easier to edit images or create designs with precision. This is particularly beneficial for users with low vision who may struggle to see small details at regular zoom levels.

Magnifying Texts:

- **Customizable Font Size**: Photoshop contains preferences allowing text to be resized up to 400% without assistive technology. It makes text easier to read, reducing eye strain and fatigue, especially for users with vision impairments or reading challenges such as dyslexia.

- **Customizable Font Color:** Can change colors of text and bold to increase visibility.

Instructions:

- <u>Dark Mode</u>
- <u>General Accessibility Document</u>
- <u>Job Access With Speech (JAWS) Instructions Sheet</u>

CRITERION

Criterion HCM is designed to streamline and automate various aspects of human resource management. It offers tools and features to assist HR professionals in managing employee data, payroll, benefits administration, talent acquisition, performance management, and other HR-related processes.

Accessibility Features:

- It was noted that Criterion's accessibility support appears to be somewhat limited, as specific features or accommodations for users with disabilities were not readily evident or extensively detailed within the available documentation.

Considerations for Alternatives:

- Although transitioning to a new HCM software presents challenges due to Criterion's effective integration within Tru Earth, it remains feasible for Tru Earth to explore other options, with more robust accessibility support.
    - An example of such an alternative is Oracle Fusion Cloud HCM, offering customizable interfaces for a personalized experience that aligns with Tru-Earth's accessibility requirements.

Examples of Oracle Tools for Customization:

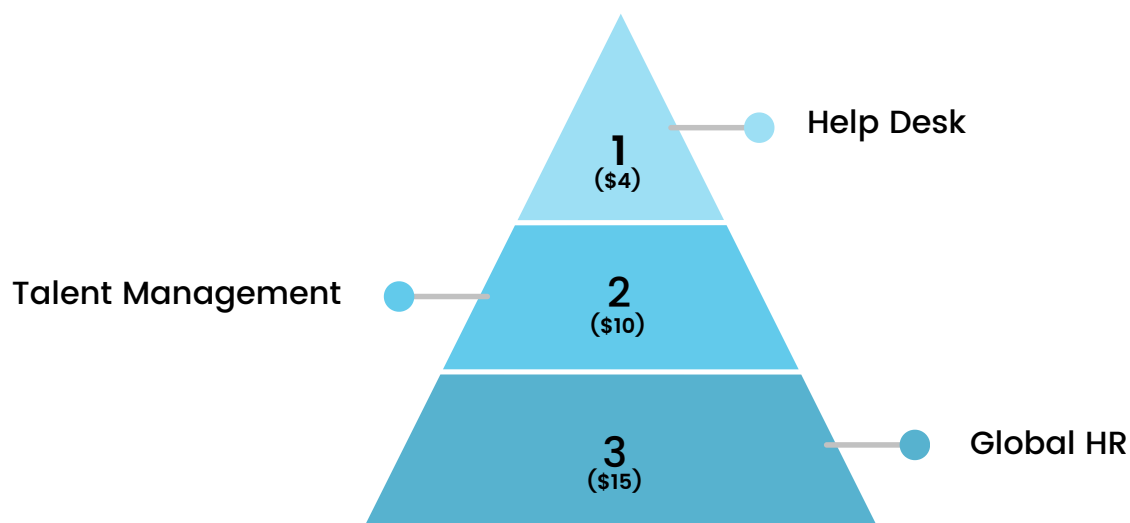| Customization/ Extension	Tool	Type of User	MDS?	Where to Find Information
Add, move, delete, show, or hide components on a page.	Page Composer	Business Analyst	Yes	"Page Customization Tasks" section in the
Change a page layout.	Page Composer	Business Analyst	Yes	"Page Customization Tasks" section in the
Create a site-level search for all users.	Page Composer	Business Analyst	Yes	"Customizing Pages" chapter in the
Customize a page title.	Page Composer	Business Analyst	Yes	"Customizing Pages" chapter in the
Customize a task list menu.	Page Composer	Business Analyst	Yes	"Customizing Pages" chapter in the
Customize dialog box window content.	Page Composer	Business Analyst	Yes	"Customizing Pages" chapter in the
Add fields, buttons, links, to a standard page ().	Application Composer	Business Analyst	Yes	"Application Composer: Using the Application Composer" chapter in the *Oracle Cloud Extending Sales*
Customize attributes for a flexfield on a page.	Page Composer	Business Analyst	Yes	For information about implementing your specific product family, do the following:

CRITERION (CONT)

Oracle Accessibility Features:

- **Sandbox:** A testing environment that isolates changes and modifications so that you can validate them before publishing them to a full test environment. This allows testing and validation of accessibility improvements before they are deployed to the main system, ensuring that the changes effectively meet the needs of disabled users without risking any disruption to the overall functionality of the software.

- **Page composer:** Customize a task list menu, page layout, UI, and create a site-level search for all users.

Cost Tier (Per Employee Per Month)

1
($4) — Help Desk

Talent Management — 2
($10)

3
($15) — Global HR

Instructions:

- Sandbox and Customizing Oracle

MICROSOFT OUTLOOK
OFFICE 365

Microsoft Outlook is one of the foremost personal information managers and email applications. At its core, Outlook is a multifaceted hub for managing various facets of digital communication and organization. Foremost among its functionalities is its robust email management system, which empowers users to send, receive, and organize emails with efficiency and ease.

Visual Impairment Features

- **Dark Mode**: Replaces the system with a dark background with light text which makes text and buttons easier to read and may reduce eyestrain.

- **High Contrast Mode**: Lets users use a high-contrast interface mode, making it easier for people with low vision to distinguish between interface elements and, in some cases, ease the strain on their eyes.

- **Zoom & Magnification:** Zooming in allows users to see the finer details of their work, making it easier to edit images or create designs with precision. This is particularly beneficial for users with low vision who may struggle to see small details at regular zoom levels.

- **Customizable fonts and display settings:** Customizable fonts and display settings are related to accessibility for people with eye disabilities as they allow users to adjust the font size, style, and contrast to improve readability and accommodate visual impairments.

Auditory Impairment Features

- **Closed captioning and subtitles**: This serves as a very important feature for people who might be hard of hearing or might not be well-versed in the language.

Motor Impairment Features

- **Keyboard navigations and shortcuts**: Users can increase their speed and efficiency by not having to constantly switch between the mouse and keyboard, and also makes constant hand movements less strenuous.

MICROSOFT OUTLOOK
OFFICE 365 (CONT)

Should Tru Earth keep using Microsoft Outlook?

Yes, Microsoft Outlook should be kept as:

- It is compatible with and supports the largest number of platforms in comparison to its main competitors Thunderbird and Mailbird.

- It has the highest average rating of 4.7 in terms of ease, user interface, price, and features.

Instructions:

- <u>Dark Mode</u>
- <u>High Contrast Mode</u>
- <u>Zoom and Magnification</u>
- <u>Customizable Fonts and Displays</u>
- <u>Captioning and Transcription</u>
- <u>Keyboard Navigations and Shortcuts</u>

MICROSOFT TEAMS
OFFICE 365

Microsoft Teams is a collaboration platform that serves as a central hub for communication, teamwork, and productivity among many organizations. At its core, Teams facilitates communication through various channels, including instant messaging, voice calls, video conferencing, etc. Moreover, Teams is available across a range of devices and platforms.

Visual Impairment Features

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- **Keyboard navigations and shortcuts**: Users can increase their speed and efficiency by not having to constantly switch between the mouse and keyboard, and also makes constant hand movements less strenuous.

STAR Feature

- **Check Accessibility**: Employees responsible for sharing text documents can utilize the "Check Accessibility" feature found in the "Review" pane. This tool provides access to resources for reviewing the document for non-accessible elements and offering suggestions for improvement.

Should Tru Earth keep using Microsoft Teams?

Yes, Microsoft Teams should be kept if:

- Tru Earth already uses many Microsoft Products as it leads to a seamless integration. Its alternative Slack is more suitable for smaller and non-Microsoft dependent firms.

- Tru Earth wants to save more money as Teams' Premium version is available at $5.40 per user/month compared to Slack's Premium version available in the price ranges of $7.25 to $12.50 per user/month.

Overall, both the software are great when it comes to internal communication with software offering slight nuances.

Instructions:

- Dark Mode
- High Contrast Mode
- Zoom and Magnification
- Customizable Fonts and Display Settings
- Closed Captioning and Subtitles
- Keyboard Navigations and Shortcuts
- Accessibility Checker

OFFICE 365
MICROSOFT WORD, POWERPOINT, & EXCEL

Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel are integral components of Office 365, serving as useful tools for creating documents, presentations, and spreadsheets. Each software is equipped with various accessibility features designed to cater to the diverse needs of both the content creators and readers alike.

Word:

- **Speech to Text**: This feature allows users to convert spoken words into written text, assisting those with dyslexia or limited typing ability. Not only can users dictate text but also can use voice commands to insert special characters. Moreover, this feature supports multiple languages, ensuring inclusivity across diverse users.

- **Read Aloud:** Designed to assist users who encounter difficulties processing written text or have visual impairments, this feature provides an option to have text narrated audibly.

- **Immersive Reader:** To enhance text processing capabilities, users can use this feature to adjust their background colour, text colour and size, and spacing between individual text. These personalized settings promote improved reliability and comprehension for all users according to their needs.

- **Check Accessibility:** Employees responsible for sharing text documents can utilize the "Check Accessibility" feature found in the "Review" pane. This tool provides access to resources for reviewing the document for non-accessible elements and offering suggestions for improvement. This feature also applies to the majority 365 applications.

PowerPoint & Excel:

- **Subtitles**: During PowerPoint presentations, subtitles can be displayed to assist individuals with hearing difficulties. Additionally, language settings can be adjusted to display subtitles in different languages while the presenter speaks in English.

- **Alternative Text**: In Excel, creators can incorporate alternative text for images, SmartArt, PivotCharts, and other graphical elements. It provides descriptive information about the content of the images and graphs, allowing recipients with visual disabilities to understand the context.
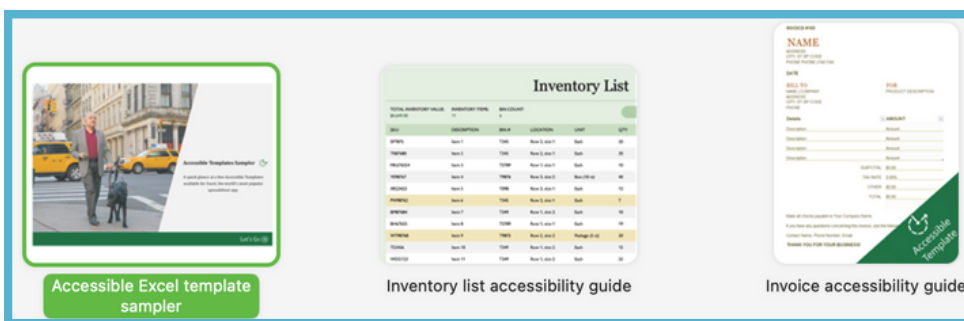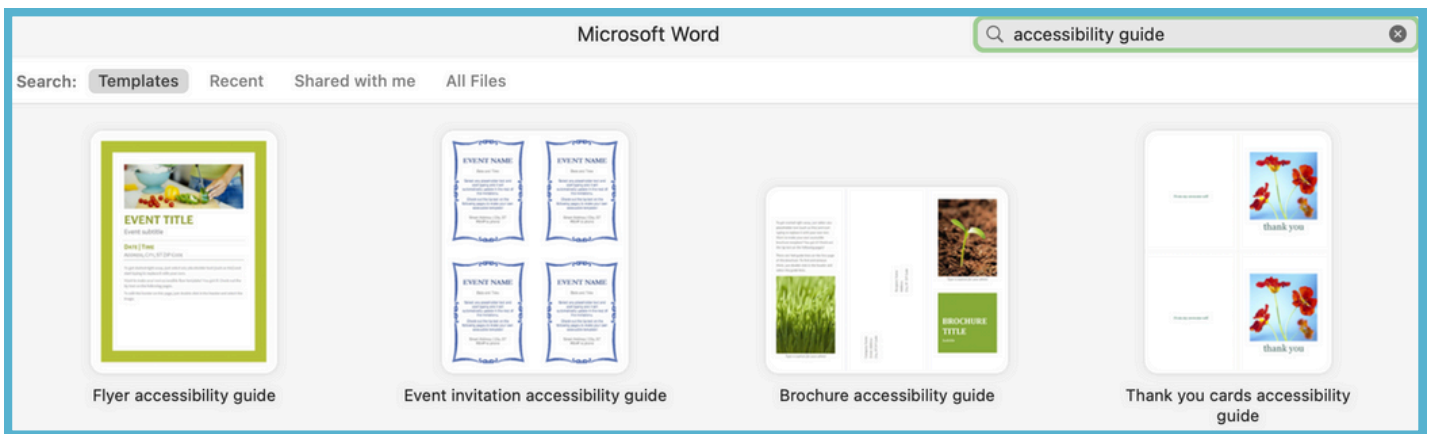
OFFICE 365
MICROSOFT WORD, POWERPOINT, & EXCEL (CONT)

Documents, Slides, & Spreadsheets

- **Accessible Templates**: Microsoft offers a variety of accessible templates for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. These templates prioritize inclusivity by providing better colour contrasts, descriptive alternative text for images, simplified tables and charts, larger font sizes, and messages compatible with screen readers.

WORD

Flyer accessibility guide

Event invitation accessibility guide

Brochure accessibility guide

Thank you cards accessibility guide

EXCEL

Accessible Excel template sampler

Inventory list accessibility guide

Invoice accessibility guide

POWERPOINT

Accessibility guide

Instructions:

- [Speech to Text](#)
- [Read Aloud](#)
- [Immersive Reader](#)
- [Check Accessibility](#)
- [Subtitles](#)
- [Alternative Text](#)
- [Accessible Templates](#)

SLACK

Slack is an alternative to Microsoft teams that is primarily used for internal communication. Slack also offers file sharing, multiple channels and integrations with other tools and services. It enables employees to collaborate and communicate efficiently. Slack is especially well suited for companies that are not using the microsoft software suite. Accessibility features include keyboard shortcuts, adjustable themes, screen reader support, accessible message formatting, and documentation and support resources.

Visual Impairment Features

- **Simple text**: Supports markdown formatting which is a widely available formatting standard. Users can also change the text size and fonts.

- **Keyboard Shortcuts**: Has a wide variety of shortcuts for quick navigation which could assist individuals who rely on a keyboard.

- **High Contrast Mode**: Slack can be set to high contrast mode which modifies colours, contrast, bolds text and slightly adjusts the style of content

- **Screen Reading Support**: Compatible and tested to work with NVDA and JAWS screen reading software for Windows and VoiceOver on IOS.

- **Forward facing**: Has a clear and easily accessible accessibility team

Shortcomings:

- **Color Palette Limitations:** Only offers a few colour palettes, it is missing a black theme which can be of great importance to some users.

- **Limited Contrast Settings:** Does not allow users to manually adjust the contrast ratio

Recommendation:

- Slack is a leading software in terms of accessibility, they have taken consistent efforts to ensure Slack can be used by all.

- Slack's minimal and small accessibility shortcomings mean that it should be retained.

Resources:

- Official Guide
- 3rd party review

TRELLO

Trello is a project management tool that uses a card-based system for effective team collaboration. Users can create boards for different projects, each with lists representing project stages. Its drag-and-drop interface, customizable boards, and app integrations make it ideal for planning, tracking, and managing work in a visual and organized manner.

Visual Impairment Features

- **Custom labels and descriptions**: Contains specific colours, descriptions, labels, and categories which can simplify and sort information

- **Screen Reading Software Integration:** Compatible and tested to work with NVDA and JAWS screen reading software for Windows and VoiceOver on Safari.

- **Keyboard Shortcuts:** Wide variety of shortcuts for quick navigation which could assist individuals who rely on a keyboard

- **High Contrast mode:** Boards can be set to high contrast mode which modifies colours, contrast, bolds text and slightly adjusts the style of content

- Accessibility testing performed to the US ICT 508 and 255 Guidelines

Shortcomings:

- Accessibility features and testing have only been implemented for the desktop experience, meaning limited mobile accessibility support

- Partial conformance for people with limited language, cognitive and learning abilities

- Heavy, sometimes cluttered UI design which can challenge visually impaired users

- Card design requires consideration for accessibility by users due to high customizability

Recommendation:

- Trello has given consideration to users with accessibility issues, but still has progress to be made. Tru Earth should exercise caution when requiring users with visual impairment to use Trello.

Resources:

- Trello Voluntary Product Accessibility Template 2022
- Trello Accessibility Support
- 3rd Party Review

ZOOM

Zoom is widely-used video conferencing platform for external clients and internal team members. It allows users at Tru-Earth to have virtual meetings, conferences, webinars, and other collaborative sessions over the internet. It offers features such as video and audio conferencing, screen sharing, chat, recording, and more.

Hearing Impairment

- **Captioning & Transcription Options**: Provides live captioning. This feature significantly enhances accessibility for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- **Recorded Meetings:** Live captioning is available for recorded meetings. Participants with hearing impairments may benefit from reviewing spoken content with captioning later.

Visual Impairment

Adjusting Colours and Contrast:

- **External Screen Readers:** Converts text and graphical information into speech. Screen readers can navigate through Zoom's user interface, including menus, buttons, and options, and read aloud the information to users. We recommend using Microsoft Narrator, that can be used seamlessly with Zoom.

- **Dark Mode**: Replaces the system with a dark background with light text which can make text easier to read and may reduce eyestrain.

- **Reader Alerts**: Screen reader alerts allow you to hear custom announcements using your screen reader whenever specific actions are performed in Zoom, such as when closed captioning is available, or when you have received a chat message.

Magnifying Texts:

- **Customizable Font Size**: Customize font size to be larger for Zoom chat and captions. Makes text easier to read, reducing eye strain and fatigue, especially for users with vision impairments or reading difficulties such as dyslexia.

- **Customizable Font Colour:** Can change colours of text and bold to increase visibility.

Instructions:

- Dark Mode
- Captioning & Transcription
- Customize Fonts
- Microsoft Narrator
- Reader Alerts
- Editing Font Color

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