1.3 Adaptable

Definition

"Create content that can be presented in different ways (for example simpler layout) without losing information"" - World Wide Web Consortium.

What's that mean?

Simply put, your content should be adaptable for a variety of different mediums. Whether you have colors to differentiate content, or you use audio cues, your differentiation should be adaptable so everyone can understand the content as it was meant to be. This is especially true for those who rely on screen readers.

Why?

As mentioned above, this criterion is especially important for screen reader users. Though it may make sense to sighted users to differentiate sections by larger, bolder text because screen readers do not pick up on styling such as color or weight.. The content to a screen reader user would be understood differently than those who could differentiate the sections.

Types

The following are three criterion under the Adaptable guideline. While there is no cookie-cutter solution for every situation, each item below addresses a different issue. For more information on a particular criterion under the Adaptable guideline, please refer to section 1.3 of WCAG.
- Info and Relationships
- Meaningful Sequence
- Sensory Characteristics

Example

An example would be a form (i.e. registration, contact, etc.) with fields that are required in order to submit the information. A common way to signify a required field, is to place the text in red. The issue with this is that screen reader users won't ever know that that information is in red. The screen reader will not pick up on styling such as color or weight. This does not create a great, accessible experience for the user. One way to meet this guideline would be to place an asterisk(*) after the required fields and then, at the beginning of the form, explain that an asterisk represents a required field. The screen reader will read off the asterisk and because of the explanation at the beginning, a user will understand that that means it's required.