

PREPARING ACCESSIBLE MICROSOFT WORD DOCUMENTS

1. Add Structure to Word Documents

Design your documents with styles. Styles add the structure necessary to make your documents usable to people with disabilities.

2. Graphics and Images

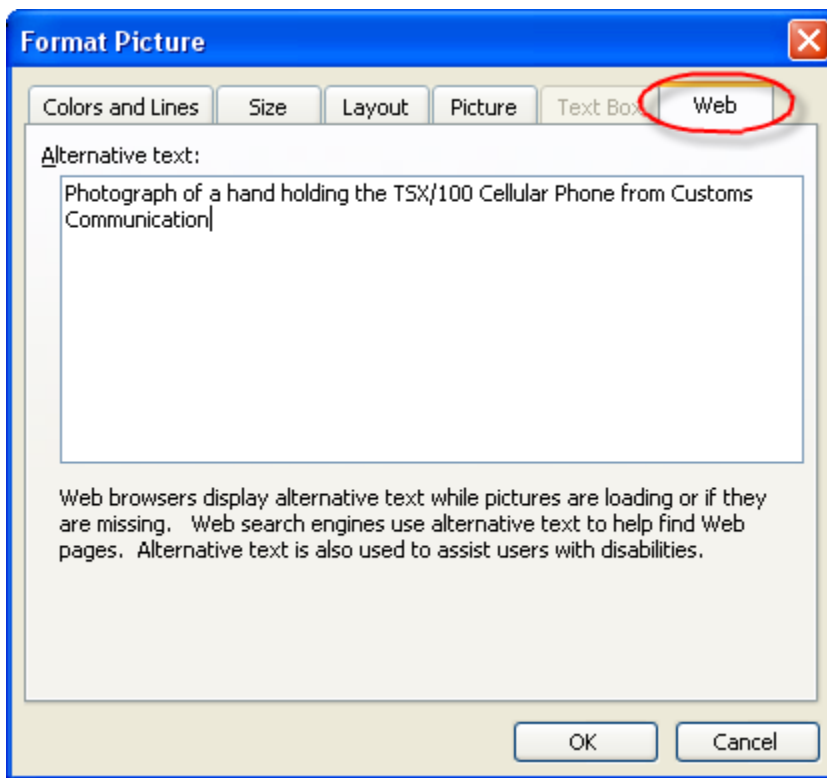
All graphics and images should be provided with alternative text descriptions. Avoid placing graphics too close to text. This can cause problems when converting to PDF. Place white space between text and graphics

3. Alternative Text or Alt Text

Alternative Text or Alt Text refers to text that can be read by a screen reader to describe graphics and images which people with visual disabilities cannot see. Depending upon your version of Microsoft Word, please follow either of instructions i or ii;

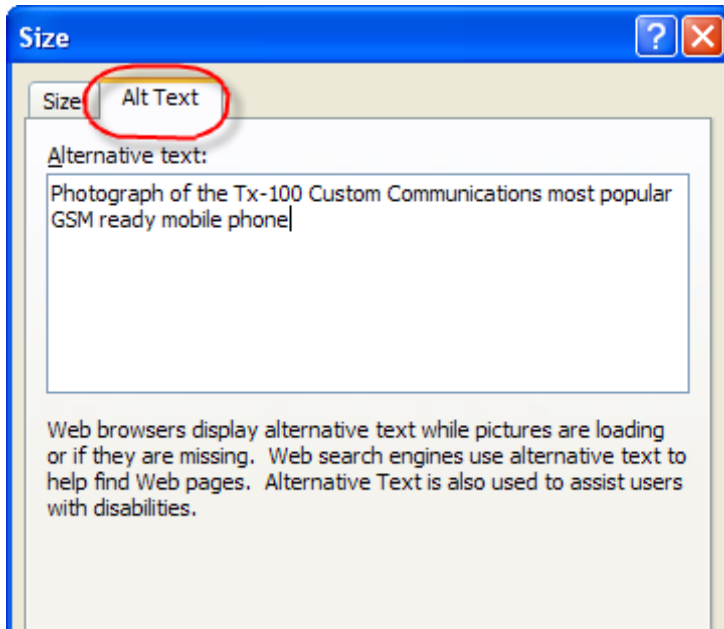
i) Word 2003

- Double click on an image or right click and select the format picture dialog.
- Select the “web” tab and enter the alternative text (description of image)



ii) Word 2007

- Right Click on an image and choose size
- Select the “Alt Text” tab and enter the alternative text



iii) Text

- Text should be at least 12 point type and either Arial or Verdana
- Avoid using Microsoft Word text boxes
- Avoid using Enter to create space between paragraphs. Use the space before and after properties in your styles

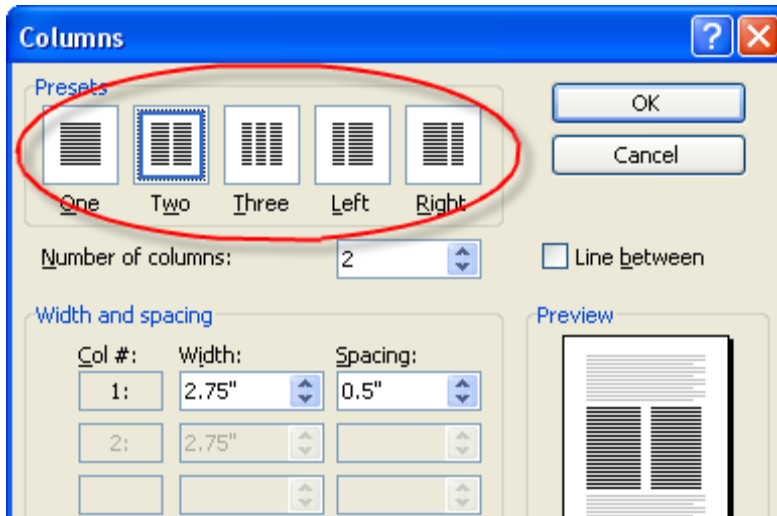
4. Columns

- To create columns, do not use the tab key to make space between text columns or put text in a table. Use Word’s column command

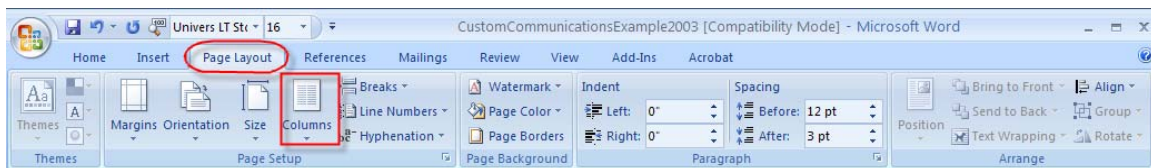
Depending upon your version of Microsoft Word, please follow either of instructions i and ii;

i) Word 2003

- Select “Format” then “columns”
- Or click on the Columns Toolbar



- ii) Word 2007**
- Select Page Layout on the Ribbon and select Columns in the Page Setup group

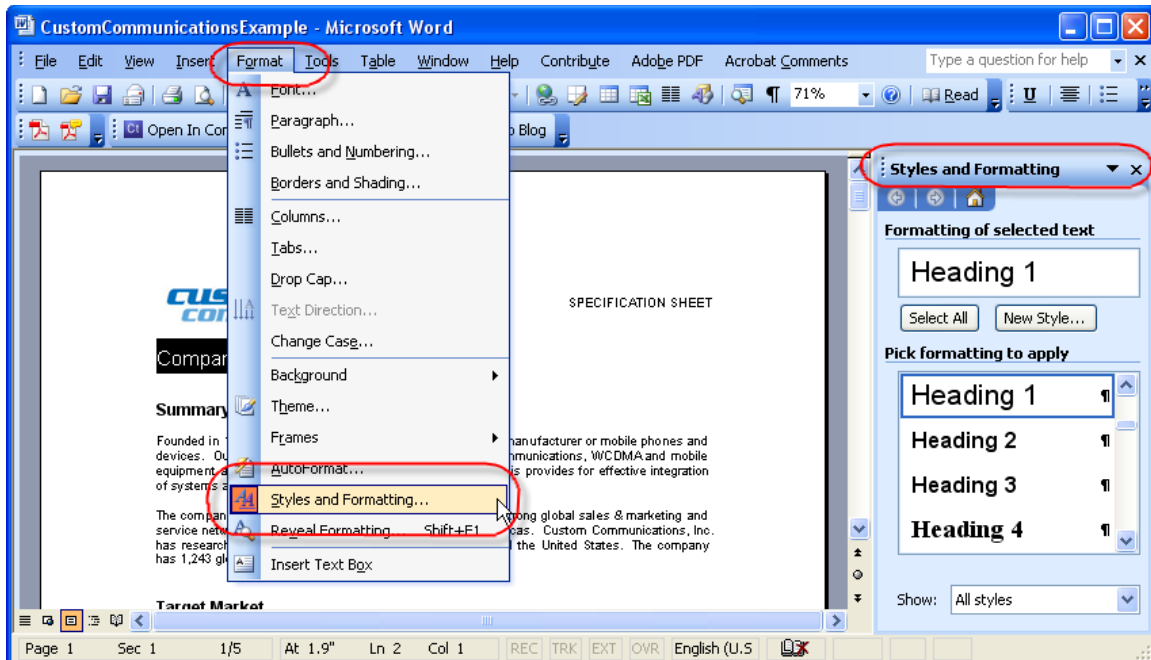


5. Headings

- Use Styles to create heading formats. Title, Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3, etc. Make styles progress in a logical manner – a Heading 2 should come after a Heading 1.

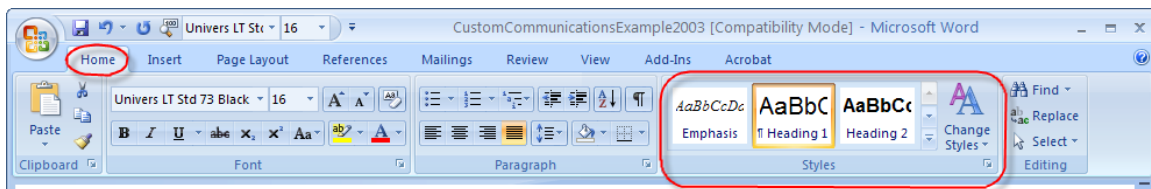
Depending upon your version of Microsoft Word, please follow either of instructions i and ii;

- i) Word 2003**
- Select “Format” then “Styles and Formatting” to reveal the styles and formatting task pane



ii) Word 2007

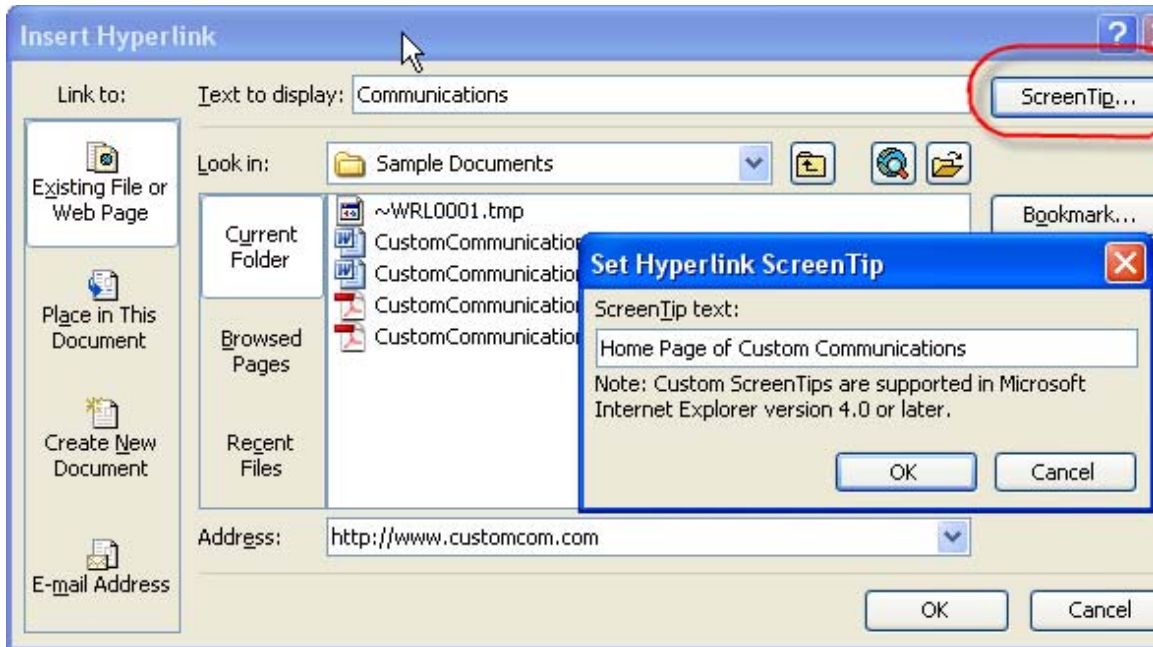
- Select the Home Ribbon in Word 2007 and select the proper heading from the styles group



6. Hyperlinks (Word 2003 & 2007)

Add a meaningful description to hyperlinks. Avoid using "click here"

- Insert Hyperlink (ctrl K)
- Use the screen tip button to add text description

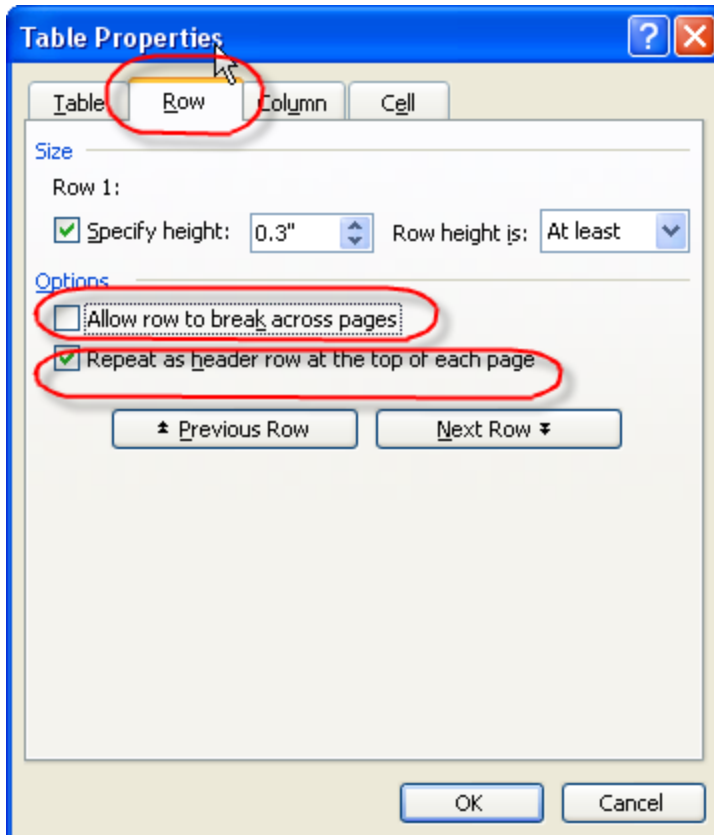


7. Lists

- Use bulleted Lists to emphasize individual points
- Use Numbered Lists to describe the proper order for a series of steps in a sequence

8. Tables

- Do not use tabs and spaces to create tables. Use the Insert Table command
- Avoid letting table rows break across a page
- Tables that go beyond a page should repeat header rows



Depending upon your version of Microsoft Word, please follow either of instructions i and ii;

i) Word 2003

- Use the table properties dialog

ii) Word 2007

- Place the cursor in a table and select the Table Tools tab in the Ribbon

