

Social Media Accessibility



Questions and Technical Assistance

Please send your questions, concerns and any requests for technical assistance to the NDI Host via the chat box.

Questions will be addressed by the presenter if time allows.

If you would prefer to ask your question in ASL, please raise your hand and wait to be called on by the Host

If your question is not answered during the webinar, you are listening by phone or you are unable to use the chat box, please email ajones@ndi-inc.org.

Please note: This webinar is being recorded and the materials will be available at www.DisabilitySmallBusiness.org on the Past Events page within 1-2 weeks.

What we will Cover Today:

- Accessibility in Social Media
- Accessible Social Media Posts
- Plain Language
- Close Captions
- Alt-text for Images
- Hashtags
- Emoji
- GIF
- Descriptions
- Individual Social Media Platforms

What is Social Media Accessibility?

For the most part, scrolling through social is a no-brainer. We can log on while we watch TV, throughout the day, and even during Zoom meetings (hey, we've all done it.)

But the ease of scrolling through social isn't a universal experience. If you are not blind, hard of hearing or use accessibility aids, you can be taking these things for granted. For them, social media can be a frustrating experience. In other words: without inclusive social media, you risk alienating members of your audience, or missing them entirely. "Logically, the more accessible you make your content, the more people that will be able to access and engage with it,".

Social media accessibility is the practice of designing and developing social media content and posts that provide a smooth, inclusive experience for everyone—

Creating more accessible social content is truly a win-win for everyone involved—from you to your audience.

Why Is The Accessibility of Social Media So Important?



- Over 85 million Americans—or 26 percent of the population live with a disability.
- Over 70% of people in the U.S. use social media.
- 62% of adults with a disability report owning a laptop and 72% use a smartphone.
- More and more organizations are using social media to conduct outreach, marketing, recruit job candidates and encourage workplace productivity.

“Disability is something that touches all of our lives at some point, whether it's family members or friends, or coworkers.

So it's not just for an imaginary other. It could be for your future selves. So it benefits all of us to invest in accessibility”.

-Haben Girma, disability rights advocate

Social Media Platforms



Most if not all social media platforms have provided the toolset to make an accessible post.

They, however, are not included in most tutorials or they are rarely mentioned.

Social media platforms only have the responsibility to provide the tools but they do not control the content that you post nor if you use the tools, so all content you post is your responsibility.

The way you create the post will be defined by the platform you use, and this training will provide you with the basic guidelines for the content of the post.

Accessibility Tools in Social Media



Create accessible Social Media posts

When creating a post try to keep accessibility in mind from the start this includes:

1. Plan the type of images and alt text you want to use
2. Keep in mind the limit for the platform and screen reader users, and keep in mind that screen readers cannot tell the difference between italics or other special characters.
3. Don't rely on color. Keep color and contrast in mind.
4. Always put your main content first
5. Indicate if the post has a link or video. If you're including links in some posts, make sure they are descriptive so that people know where the link will take them. Many screen reader users use links to navigate, and without context a link labeled "click here" is not very informative.
6. Keep color and contrast in mind
7. Avoid content that flashes more than three times per second.
8. Multiple ways/ Multiple posts
9. Provide multiple ways to access information. Make your social media content available through more than one channel, and post on different platforms.
10. Make your contact information available on your social media account page. List multiple ways to contact you; phone, email, etc. Compliment the information on your website, and provide options to sign up for daily/weekly email digests of social media posts.



Use Plain Language



What does plain language mean?

- Plain language (also called plain writing or plain English) is communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it.

Plain language is used in social media to include people with cognitive disabilities and non-native English speakers, avoid jargon and be sure to spell out acronyms on first reference, Light-Emitting Diode (L-E-D)

Light-Emitting Diode (L-E-D)

Context is very important, avoid run-on sentences. Use clear, short sentences and paragraphs.

- Writing in a plain and simple language makes your post understandable for everyone, no matter their background or abilities. Language such as technical terms, slang and jargon should be avoided if possible. You should also make sure to use inclusive language, so no one feels excluded from your posts, e.g. avoiding ableist language and using gender-neutral pronouns.

Closed Captions

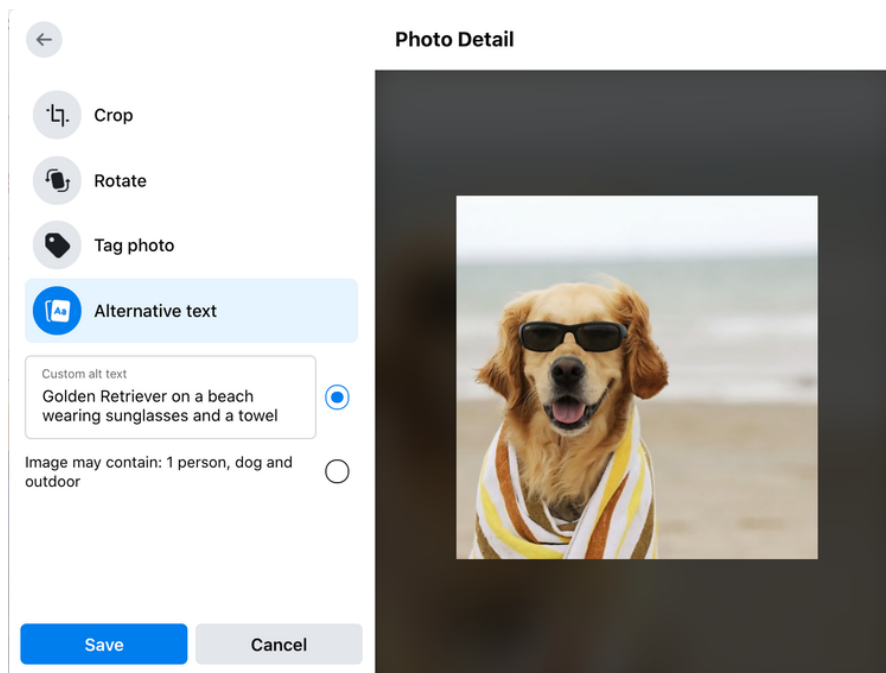
All audiovisual materials should have close captions; we do not recommend embedded captions since there might be an issue with the sizing of the captions being affected by different screen sizes.

In some cases, an audio description might be necessary, there are also captioning apps like Clipomatic or Z subtitles, which generate automated captions.

The YouTube automated captions feature is getting better, however, we always recommend checking the captions to ensure accuracy.



Provide alternative text for Images



Provide alternative text for images and other non-text content (animations, charts, infographics, etc.)

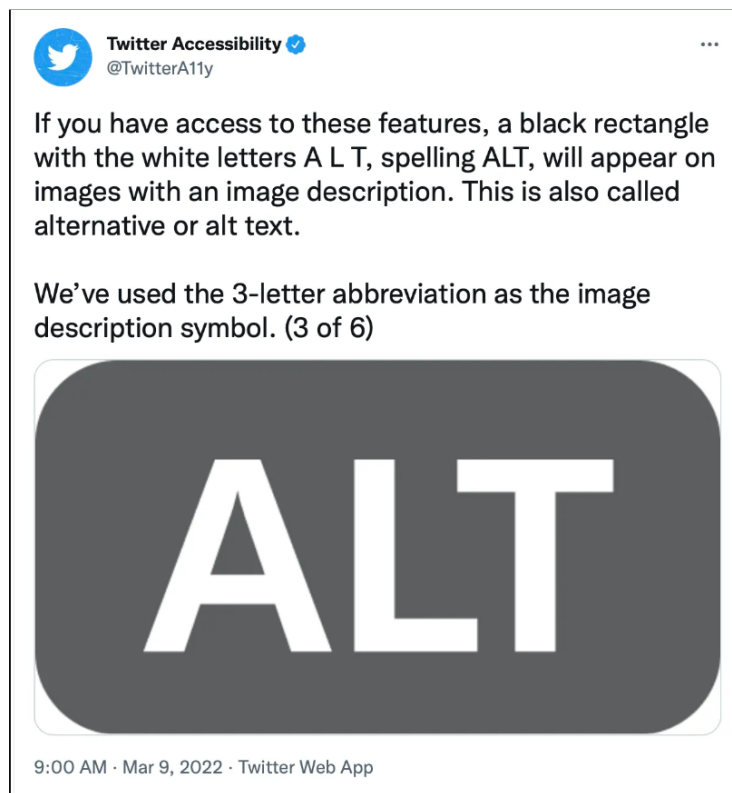
- Describe the image itself within the context of the social media post
- Be concrete
- Don't use "image of..."
- End with a period so the screen reader knows it's the end of a sentence.
- Use dashes for acronyms, the screen reader tries to read the acronym as a word. For example, you might write "USA" as "U-S-A" in the alt text so the screen reader doesn't pronounce it as "usa."

For longer descriptions for infographics or charts, use the caption and then write alt text that complements the caption by enhancing, clarifying, or contextualizing rather than repeating information.

Consider Alt-text

In addition to the previous alt text questions we had in previous courses also consider:

1. Explain the actions
2. Explain emotions and facial expressions
3. Give a source
4. Describe any details that might be important



Use Accessible Hashtags



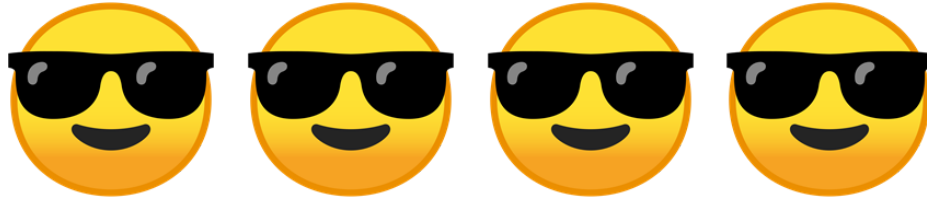
A hashtag—written with a # symbol—is **used to index keywords or topics on Twitter**. This function was created on Twitter, and allows people to easily follow topics they are interested in. Hashtags are commonly used when an organization or individual wants to promote themselves to a specific target audience.

Try to use “camel case” for hashtags, Camel Case means capitalizing the first letter of every word in a hashtag, which makes the hashtag appear to have humps (like a camel’s back). Put the hashtags at the end of the posts to avoid confusion or in some cases reading interruption as sometimes a glitch can happen and screen readers stop reading after hashtags causing people to miss information

#BabesWithMobilityAids

#RedInstead

Use accessible Emoji



smiley face with sunglasses, smiley face with sunglasses,
smiley face with sunglasses,
smiley face with sunglasses

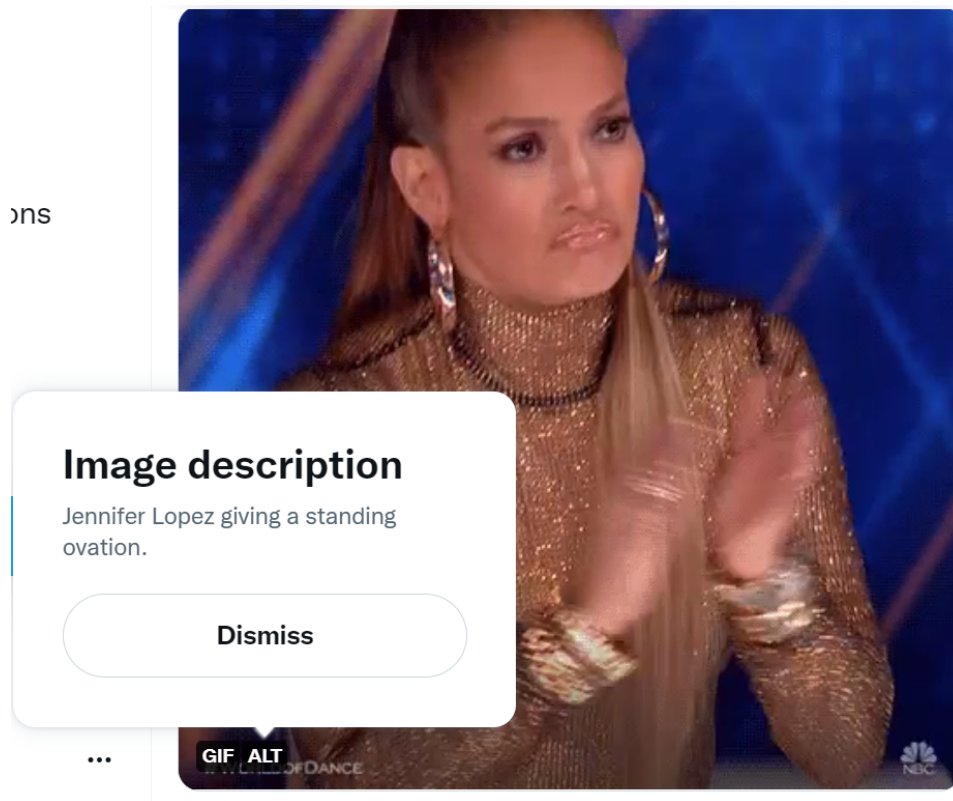
Use emojis sparingly and always add them at the end of a post. One red heart isn't terrible, but having to hear "red heart" repeated 10 times in a row takes a long time and will get unnecessarily repetitive, avoid using emojis in your social profile name since the descriptions of the emoji might not match what you want to convey.

When creating emoticons with text, consider the experience for screen reader users. In this example, this visual experience of “shruggie” `¯_(ツ)_/¯` will be read aloud by a screen reader as:

“Macron, backslash, underline, katakana, underline, slash, macron.”

Emoticons that are created using text are very inaccessible. For example, this shrug `¯_(ツ)_/¯` will be described as: “Macron, backslash, underline, katakana, underline, slash, macron.”

GIF – Graphics Interchange Format



GIF stands for **Graphics Interchange Format** – in social media, GIFs are small animations and video footage. A GIF is commonly used to represent a feeling or action.

On platforms that allow for alternative text descriptions on GIFs, you should provide them in the same manner as for still images.

Note that this alternative text is only available to screen reader users. Many users who do not use screen readers may have trouble reading images of text in a GIF that are low-resolution, low-contrast, distorted or only shown briefly so also consider adding the alt text as a description.

Descriptions

[ID: three gifs from the addams family (1991)

1: a closeup of morticia's face. she has long black hair and light skin. she has pale grey eyeshadow covering her eyes and red lipstick. she is unmoving and appears unconscious or asleep. off screen, gomez is speaking. it is captioned; "Look at her. I would die for her."

2: a shot of gomez from the shoulders up, cast in shadow. it is too dark to see his hair or the details of his clothing. he has light skin and a thin black mustache. he is looking slightly down and speaking. it is captioned; "I would kill for her."

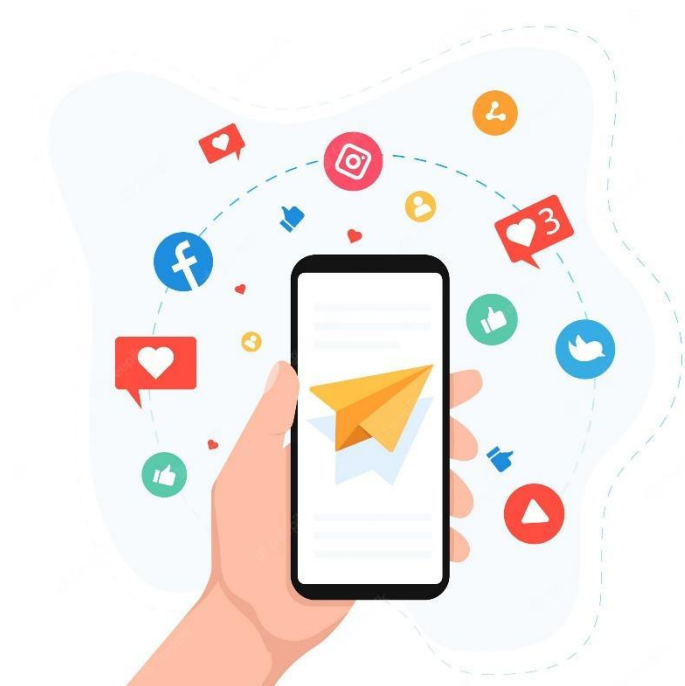
3: another shot of gomez, continuing to speak. he raises his eyebrows and smiles. it is captioned; "Either way, what bliss."

/End ID]

You can describe the content you're linking to or featuring in your social media post (e.g., [PIC], [VIDEO], [AUDIO], [GIF]). Doing so lets users, including those with screen readers or limited data on their mobile devices, know what to expect before clicking a link.

Those distinctions can also be used as part of your post to ease understanding of the intentions or actions displayed in the video or gif.

Accessibility By Social Media Platforms



YouTube



As mentioned, YouTube can create automated captions but the captions may be inaccurate depending on several factors such as audio quality, background noise, number of speakers, common names, etc.

Correct misspellings and remove “like” and “umms” if necessary this will depend on the type of content you are presenting.

Even if making jokes just using the captions can be tempting please keep in mind that those may depend on visual cues to be understood completely.

Ensure that any type of text that may appear on the screen will also appear on the captions.

How to add captions on YouTube?

1. Sign in to YouTube Studio.
2. From the left menu, select Subtitles.
3. Click the video that you'd like to edit.
4. Click ADD LANGUAGE and select your language.
5. Under subtitles, click ADD.

We are also adding the link in the copy of the presentation
<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2734796?hl=en>

Facebook

Facebook uses automated alt text, but you can write your own as always review the text, automation isn't there yet when it comes to accuracy.



On Facebook, you can insert your captions manually on your own, or through private companies that will provide them for both regular and live videos.

If you manage a Facebook business page you can click on the "Subtitles & Captions" button to automatically generate captioning

Video captions can be added by using the SubRip (.srt) file format. Captions can also be added to Facebook Reels or Stories by adding text and typing captions manually.

Add alt-text on Facebook Mobile

1. Go to the post, then tap on the photo.
2. Tap. in the top right or tap and hold.
3. Tap Edit alt text.
4. You'll see the automatically generated alt text in bold starting with Image may contain. Type your alt text in the box, then tap Save.



Add alt-text on Facebook desktop

1. To see and edit alt text for a photo before you post it:
2. Click Photo/Video at the top of your Feed.
3. Select the photo you want to add.
4. Hover over the photo and click Edit.
5. The automatically generated text will be shown on the left side of your photo. Click Override generated alt text to edit it.
6. Write your alt text in the box. To change back to the automatically generated text, click Clear.
7. To save your alt text, click Save in the bottom left.
8. To change the alt text of a photo after you've posted it:
9. Click the photo to open it.
10. Click more in the top right and select Change Alt Text.
11. Click Override generated alt text or change the alt text in the text box. You can also click Clear to change your edited alt text back to the automatically generated text.
12. Click Save.

Facebook has a 100 character limit on alt text

Twitter

Ensure you have good color contrast between the background, avatar, and bio information since it can cause interference or missing information.



Twitter uses prefixes before tweets that have photos, videos, or audio. This allows people using screen readers to know what to expect before it's read out loud. The uppercase formats are for further clarity to sighted users.

- Photos: [PIC]
- Videos: [VIDEO]
- Audio: [AUDIO]

Just like hashtags and emojis place mentions at the end of the tweet. This will allow more clarity for screen reader users.

We are linking the alt text page for twitter:

<https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/picture-descriptions>



To enable image description functionality:

- 1. Navigate to Settings and Privacy.
- 2. Click Accessibility.
- 3. Click the checkbox next to Compose Image Descriptions.

To add alt-text on Twitter

1. Select “+Alt” in the bottom right corner of your attached image in the tweet composer. Add Alt Text in the blank field and hit “Done.”
2. Click the ‘Add Description’ option below your image.
3. Add your ALT text in the text box.
4. Click Done.
5. Save your ALT text and publish your post.
6. There is a 420-character limit in the image description field

Instagram

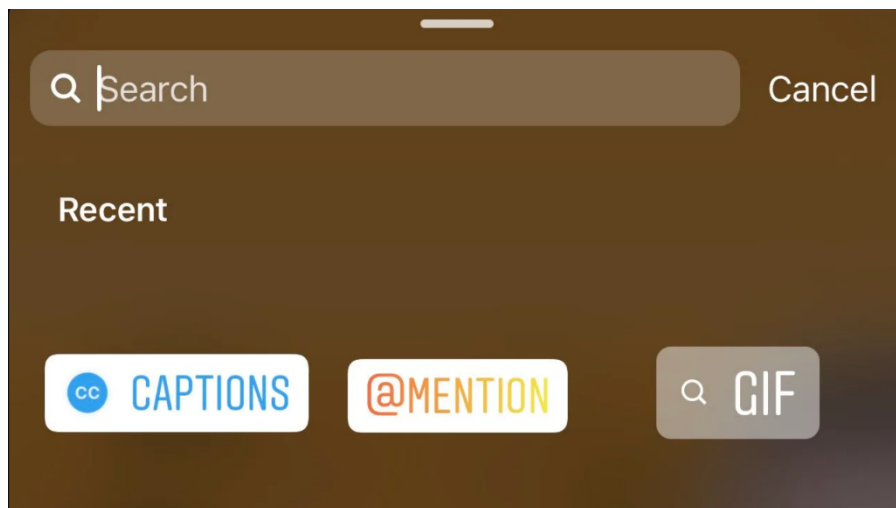
Instagram adds automated alt text but you can create your own. You can even caption your Instagram Stories with Clipomatic with the “caption” button on Instagram Stories. You will need detailed descriptions for images and videos.



It's not recommendable to just use stories without an additional post, since they are timed and easily mixed.

There is no way to add captions, alt text or descriptions to audio tracks.

The page for instagram accessibility is
<https://help.instagram.com/308605337351503>



To add or edit alt text:

1. Tap Advanced Settings.
2. Select Write Alt Text under Accessibility.
3. Write your ALT text and click 'Done'.
4. Click Save.
5. Return to your post and click 'Share'.

Instagram ALT text is only available through the Instagram app.



LinkedIn

- Video captions can be added by using the SubRip (.srt) file format.
- Add descriptions and alternative text.
- Remember to use images that comply with color and contrast rules.
- Descriptions for links to articles.

To add images:

1. Start a new post and select your image(s).
2. Add your image to your post.
3. Click the 'Alternative Text' option below your image - in the bottom right corner of the footer menu.
4. Select "Add alt text –.
5. Add your ALT text in the text box/blank field and hit "Next" to finalize and publish the post.

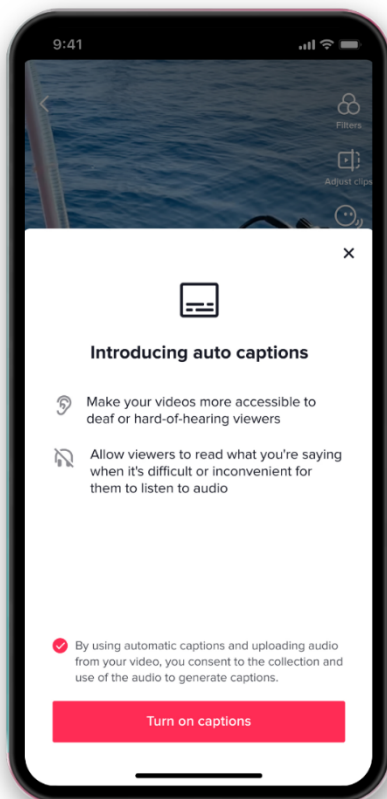
LinkedIn, alt text is limited to 120 characters.

TikTok

TikTok is very similar to Instagram.

Whether you upload an already-recorded video or record directly in TikTok, you can select auto captions from the editing page and then edit the captions for errors, color, and style. TikTok accessibility includes:

- An **animated thumbnail** that replaces animated thumbnails with static images.
- A **creator warning** that notifies creators when they produce videos with effects that could trigger photosensitive epilepsy.
- A **photosensitivity feature** allows users to skip photosensitive content, which can be harmful for people with epilepsy.
- A **text-to-speech** feature which converts text to voice.



To add Captions on TikTok

1. Record a video in-app or upload a saved file from your device
2. Once your video is recorded or uploaded, proceed to the editing page
3. Click on the "Captions" button to the right of the screen
4. TikTok will automatically analyze speech & create captions
5. To edit auto-captions, click the pencil icon to the right of the screen
6. Once you're done, press play to watch a preview & double check your work
7. Ready to post? Touch Done in the upper right corner of the screen.

Upcoming Events

[Pro-Tips Grant Writing Webinar,](#)

Presented by Hello Alice

Wednesday, May 10th, 2:00 – 3:30PM EST

[Business Structure and Business Plan,](#)

Presented by Griffin-Hammis Associates

Wednesday, May 17th, 2:00 – 3:30PM EST

[Creating Accessible PDFs,](#)

Presented by Results One

Wednesday, June 7th, 2:00 – 3:00PM EST

NDI Small Business Hub

- Are you an aspiring entrepreneur or existing business owner with a disability wanting help to START, BUILD and GROW your business? Visit www.disabilitysmallbusiness.org or email rchavez@ndi-inc.org
- Want to join a dynamic learning community focused on key financial health topics for business? For information or to apply for our next series in March, email Caroline Bolas at cbolas@ndi-inc.org
- Visit our Streaming TV channel for informational and motivational content for disability owned small businesses at www.DisabilityOwned.com
- Access training, mentoring, business coaching, and grant opportunities through our new partnership with Verizon Small Business Digital Ready! Register here: [Small Business Training | About Verizon](#)
- Want to “Stay In The Know” about NDI’s small business hub? Join our [mailing list!](#)

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