

Accessibility in HTML Email

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Why is email in such a bad state?

- Email does not follow the same rules as the web
- Email rendering is much more complex

Every email that marketers send has approximately

15,000

Potential renderings (and that's using conservative maths).

Chad White - Litmus.

15,000 potential renderings

2 ESP's (Email Service Providers)

x 15 operating systems

x 50 email clients

x 5 screen sizes

x 2 image states

= 15,000

Text

- Yahoo and Outlook, set default margins on `<h>` and `<p>` elements to 0
- Don't use `` `<div>` or `<td>` in place of text elements
- Add an inline margin for consistent rendering

```
<p style="margin:1em 0">  
  Paragraph of text  
</p>
```

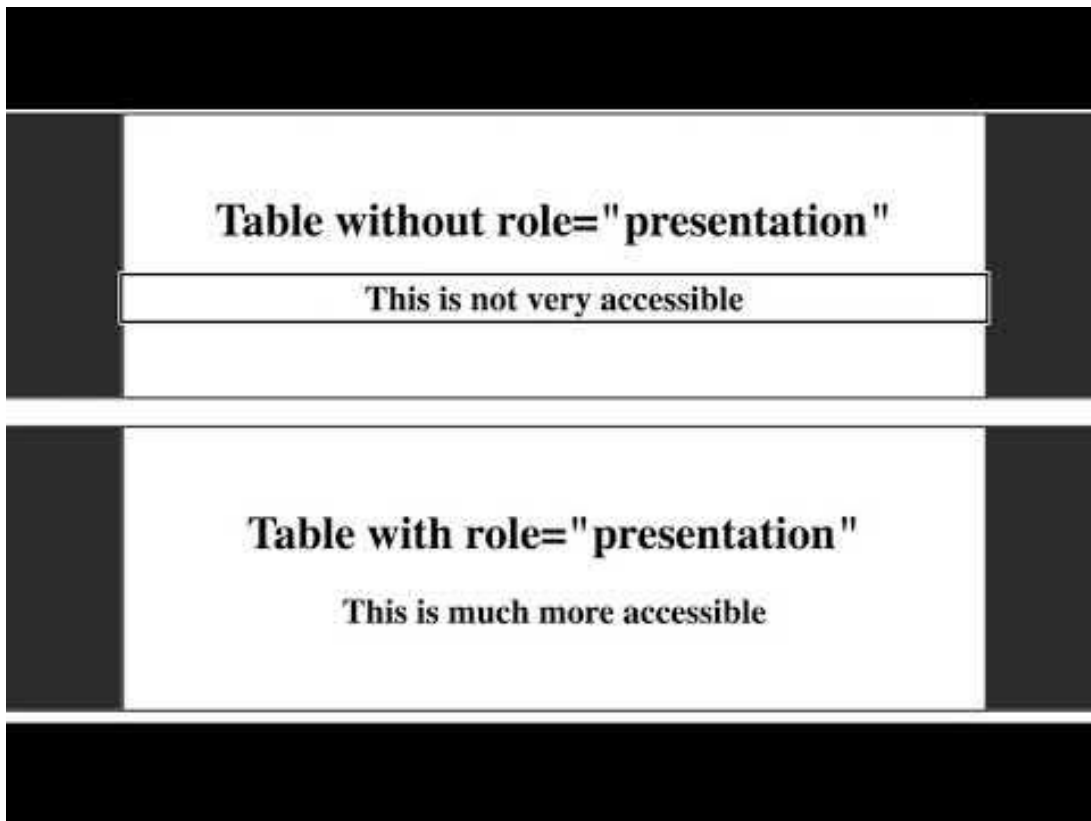
Tables

- Outlook desktop and Windows mail, don't use a HTML & CSS rendering engine. Instead they use Microsoft Word.
- If you don't want text to spread across the whole screen you need to use a table

Tables

Tables are bad for screen readers.

We can change this by adding a role



```
<table role="presentation">
```

Tables

Some email clients actively strip out Role's and ARIA attributes!!!

- Outlook.com
- Outlook 365
- AOL
- Yahoo
- GMX
- Web.de

Tables

Ghost tables

```
<table role="presentation" width="600"
align="center" cellpadding="0"
cellspacing="0" border="0">
  <tr>
    <td>
      <!-- content -->
    </td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

```
<!--[if (mso)]>
<table role="presentation" width="600"
align="center" cellpadding="0"
cellspacing="0" border="0">
  <tr>
    <td>
<![endif]-->
<div style="max-width:600px;margin:0
auto">
  <!-- content -->
</div>
<!--[if (mso)]>
  </td>
</tr>
</table>
<![endif]-->
```


Lists

If you add `list-style:disc inside;`
`mso-special-format:bullet;`
it won't break it.

```
<ul style="margin:10px">  
  <li style="list-style:disc inside; mso-special-format:bullet;">  
    unordered list  
  </li>  
</ul>
```

Auto linking

- Phone numbers
 - Order numbers, reference numbers
- Addresses
 - Exile on Main St.
- Dates
 - 10/11/12
- Websites
 - New virus found on example.com
- Films
 - Visit the Rocky mountains
- Music
 - New Suede jackets

Auto linking

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Auto linking

It's a compromise, best to judge per use case

```
#body a{  
  font:inherit;  
  color:inherit;  
  text-decoration:none;  
  /* pointer-events:none; */  
}
```

```
mark&zwj;@&zwj;gorebel&zwj;.com
```

```
<a href="tel:1234567890"  
  style="color:white;">  
  1234-567-890  
</a>
```

Alt text

Alt text best practice

- Describe the image
- If you have to have text as an image, simply copy the text into the alt.
- Don't repeat yourself
- Don't be afraid of blank alt text

Alt text

Up to 60% off + further reductions on your favourite brands

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Up to 60% off + further reductions on your favourite brands

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Alt text

Women's Bestsellers

Display images to show real-time content

Shop Women's

Men's Bestsellers

Display images to show real-time content

Shop Men's

Kids' Bestsellers

Display images to show

Display images to show real-time content

Display images to show real-time content

Display images to show real-time content

Display images to show real-time content

Display images to show

Display images to show

65% OFF

more amazing deals

more amazing deals

Shop Top Picks >

Shop Top Picks >

BIBA

[SHOP WOMEN'S >](#)

Men's Bestsellers

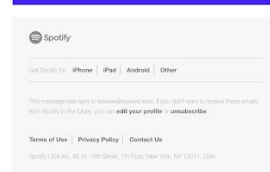
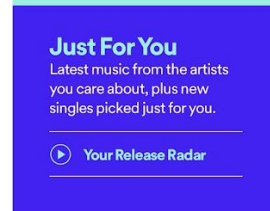
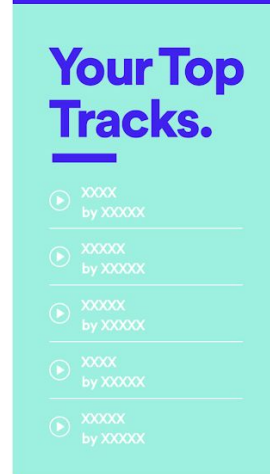
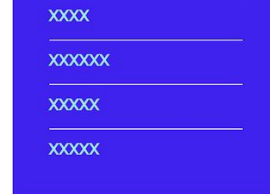
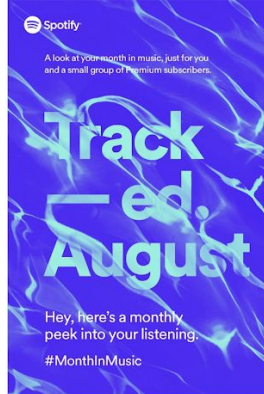
50% OFF	[mi_percenta	54% OFF
672 Views	[mi_clicks] views	799 Views
		

Tommy Hilfiger [mi_brand_name]

Skopes

Alt text

- All text done as images
- Distorted text
- Poor contrast
- No alt text



Interactive email




“An action in an email that triggers an event within the same email.”

Interactive email

Shopping cart

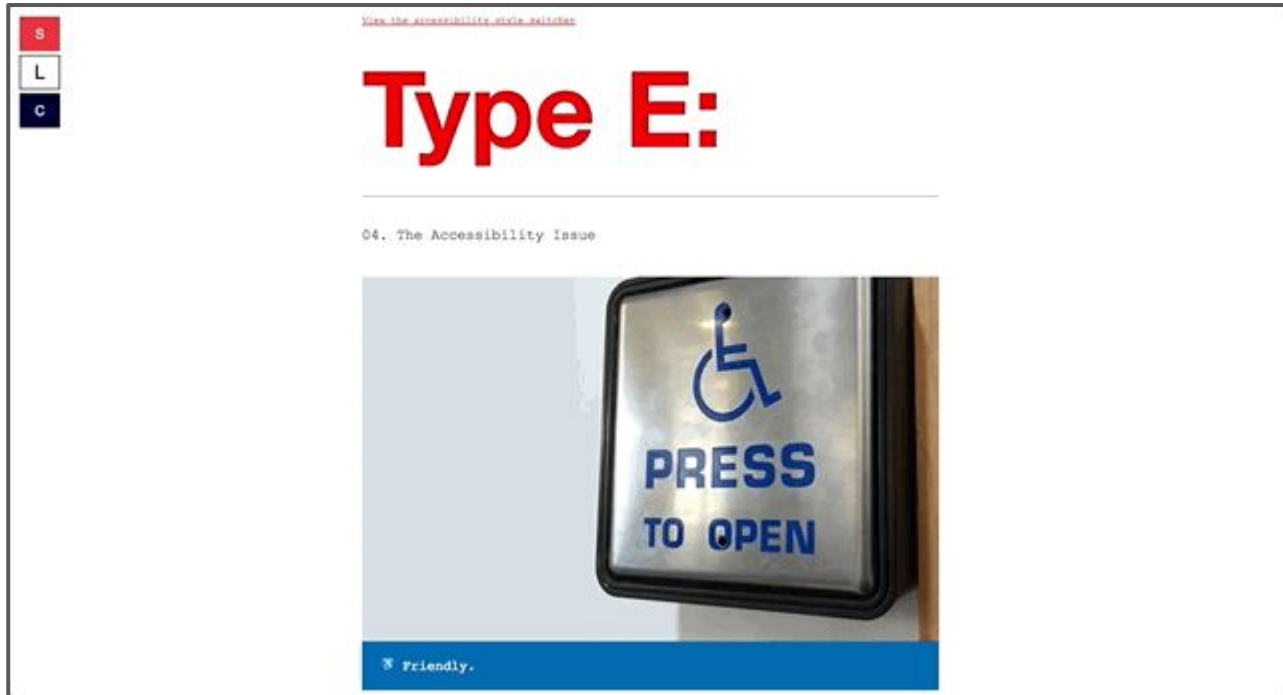
Reclaim Your Gear + Get 10% Off!

You left these items in your cart. Purchase these items in the next 24 hours to grab your discount.

ITEM	QTY	TOTAL
 Goodale Norwood Corduroy Pant \$350.18 \$249.00 Color: Tan Size: 32 Edit Remove	X 1 +	Sale \$249.00
 Retrofit Aztec Raglan Hoodie \$58.00 Color: Dk Char Hea Size: M Edit Remove	- 2 +	\$116.00
 Of All Threads Bull Dogs & Birds \$12.00 Edit Remove	X 1 +	\$12.00
		Subtotal: \$377.00
		Tax: \$18.85
		10% Discount: \$39.59
		Total Price: \$395.85

[Checkout Now](#) [Confirm Payment](#)

Interactive email



Credit - Paul Airy (@Paul_Airy)

Interactive email

Interactive CSS isn't accessible by default.

- A `<label>` isn't focusable or clickable without a mouse.
- There is no context for screen readers to announce what is happening.
- This is normally fixed with JavaScript but that doesn't work in email.

Interactive email

Interactive CSS accessibility

No added accessibility

I like CSS

With CSS accessibility

I like CSS

Interactive email

```
<label aria-live="polite">
  <input type="checkbox" style="display:none">

  <div class="faux-checkbox" role="button" tabindex="0" aria-label="tick box"
aria-describedby="checkbox-label status"></div>

  <span id="checkbox-label">I like CSS</span>

  <div class="visually-hidden" id="status">
    <span class="checked">checked</span>
    <span class="unchecked">unchecked</span>
  </div>
</label>
```

View it online: https://codepen.io/M_J_Robbins/pen/aVJBXd

More resources

- The accessibility channel on [email geeks slack](#)
- Twitter [#emailgeeks](#)
- Wilbert Heinen - [collection of articles](#) on github

But we still have a long way to go...

Thank you

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