Alternate Format:

It’s Not Just Handing a Student a Publisher PDF

Your Presenters

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Today’s Agenda

- Introduction to alternate format production
- Administrative processes
- Break for lunch
- Production Process
  - File manipulation
  - OCR
  - Editing
  - Output

Introduction

Who Uses Alternate Format?

- Visual disabilities (low vision, blindness, colorblindness)
- Mobility impairment (paralysis, tremors, weakness)
- Learning disabilities (processing disorders, dyslexia, learning disorders, severe ADHD)

Two Types of Format

- Electronic
  - Word
  - PDF
  - BRF (Braille Ready Files)
- Tactile
  - Braille
  - Tactile Graphics

How Do Students Access Their Electronic Alternate Format?

- Screen readers (Jaws, NVDA, WindowEyes)
- Screen enlargers (Zoomtext)
- Text to Speech software:
  - Kurzweil
  - Read and Write Gold
  - Mac Speech

A Word About Sticky Wickets

- Copyright
  - We are legally allowed to break copyright/DRM
  - We are legally mandated to provide alternate format for students with print disabilities, regardless of the disability or presenting impacts
- Removing DRM/Permissions/Passwords from PDFs
- Universal Design/ADA Compliance vs. Accessible
  - While great in theory, “Universal Design” doesn’t actually exist
  - There are too many exceptions, too many “special cases”

Student Responsibilities

- Students need to know the following:
  - Copyright requirements (must own copy of book)
  - No file-sharing of the files they receive from us
  - They can buy a used, new, or rental book, we provide alternate format regardless.
  - Students can buy their book from any vendor – Amazon, the bookstore, half.com, the local Goodwill.
  - Notify us of changes to their needs.
  - Notify us of books needed for the next semester as soon as they know what they are (law requires that campuses provide textbook information when students register for classes)

Alternate Format Provider Responsibilities

- Help the student understand that alternate format production takes time and they will rarely get their files the same day.
- Keep the student informed if the production or acquisition of materials is taking longer than usual.
- Don’t make promises you can’t keep – don’t promise a book with MathType equations within a two-week timeframe. Understand your production potential and be honest with the student about what can be done and what can’t.
- Be ready for changes! They happen frequently.

Administrative Process

Student Request Process

- Student-driven
- Email, in person, through ticketing system, etc.
- Create request (form). Collect the following information:
  - Type of alternate format requested
  - Title, author, and ISBN of book
  - Research publisher, copyright, and edition information (Amazon)
  - Look for publisher contact info (if needed) from publisherlookup.org
- Request files from:
  - AccessText Network
  - Bookshare
  - Learning Ally (paid subscription only)
  - Bibliovault ($8 per text received)
  - Publishers
  - Other campuses/colleagues
- Add request to tracking system

How to Talk to Publishers

- Typical request language.
- Bump requests up the line if needed.
- Explain that you follow copyright law, and that what you are doing is legal and actually mandated by the ADA.
- Remember that you do NOT have to have publisher permission to scan or otherwise produce a book in alternate format for a student with a print disability.
- For a reluctant publisher, offer to return a good PDF copy of the book if they will send you a hard copy of the book for scanning.
- Don’t waste too much time arguing with a publisher. Spend your time producing files.

What if Files Are Not Available? Why Would a File Not be Available?

- Book is too old – pre-2006 published texts are often not available as electronic text from the publisher.
- Book is from a small publisher and they do not hold the PDFs.
- Book is a POD (Print on Demand) text and there is no one in charge of providing files.
- Publisher is stupid (aka, publisher does not comply with requests for their own reasons)

What Then?

- Use the student's book for scanning
- Acquire a desk copy of the book from the professor for scanning
- Negotiate with the bookstore to get a used/rental copy of the book that can be used for scanning
- Note: scanning of textbooks won't be the majority of what you do. Most of the time we have good luck getting files from publishers

Yay, the Publisher Sent Me Files! Or, I Received a Hard Copy of a Book!

- Winner Winner Chicken Dinner!
- Check the files to be sure they are the right ones.
- If hard copy text, remove binding, prepare, and scan.
- Check against your assessment of what the student needs. Do the files fit?
- Schedule for production as needed
  - Break into chapters
  - Rename
  - Re-tag/fix reading order
  - Convert to Word
  - Convert to PDF
  - Create tactiles or Braille

Once Production is Complete:

- Perform quality check that files are the way they need to be (QC)
- Zip up files to give/send to student
- Mark form completed
- Update tracking system
- File request form

A Word About File Storage

- Pick a naming convention and stick with it.
- Be consistent about folder names and folder construction.
- Store external to your computer (server-based).

Lunch!

Go eat and get some fresh air!

Production Processes

Minimum Equipment Requirements

- Updated PC (less than 2 years old)
- At least 16 mb of ram, 32 preferred
- 1 TB hard drive for swap space
- Dual monitors
- External (server-based) storage for completed files
- High speed duplexing OCR scanner

Minimum Software Requirements

- Microsoft Office
- Omnipage or Abbyy FineReader
- Adobe Acrobat Professional

Scanning

- Cutting the binding
- Scanning
- File Output

Files From the Publisher

- Most publishers send PDF files
- These files are usually text-based and “readable”
- “Readable” does not always mean “accessible”
- Files usually need some correction, but usually just file names or breaking a large file into smaller files

For Students Getting PDFs Not Needing Extensive Support

- Adobe Acrobat Professional
  - Check for readability
  - Fix reading order
  - Correct text

For Students Getting Word, OR if PDF Is in Poor Shape

- Why would a student need Word instead of a readable PDF?
  - More intense LD or other processing-type disability
  - Blind/Low vision
  - Original PDF is in poor shape and doesn’t read well
- Word files will NOT look exactly like the original PDF. While images and etc. can be added back in, the overall look will not be the same.

Turning PDFs into Word files

- Run OCR on scanned text or files received from publisher
  - Omnipage
  - Abbyy Finereader
  - Kurzweil
- Output to Word or Text
- Edit resulting file to fix formatting issues (using styles, etc.) or missing text
  - Microsoft Word
  - OpenOffice

Text Editing

- Text editing is hard work! It is time-consuming and takes attention to detail.
- There are tricks to making it easier
  - Omnipage quick-convert PDF to .txt file (version 18 or newer)
  - OCR to a Word file, open Word file, save as to .txt (ASCII), close and reopen the .txt file
  - Apply styles to .txt document
  - Windows Snipping tool to bring in graphics that will have been lost during OCR process.

(continued)

Text Editing

- Apply styles to heading levels (up to level 6)
- Reapply page breaks (keep page the same as the original)
- Add in page numbering (header/footer, or inline)
- Correct improperly recognized text
- Add back graphics as needed
- Alt-text all graphics
- Save as:
  - Word
  - PDF (accessible)
- Understand that the resulting Word or text-based file will not look like the original PDF.

What About Bookshare Files?

- Bookshare is DAISY.
- Some students don’t want to read a DAISY book or do not have an easy way to do so.
- Convert to PDF.
  - Open .xml file in browser
  - Print to PDF
  - Crop out resulting headers before sending to student

What About Math?

- In order for math to be read properly (operators in the right order)
- MathType
- Scientific Notebook
- How to read equations
- Screen reader (Jaws, WindowEyes, NVDA
- CAR Reader (Central Access Reader)

Braille and Tactiles

- Braille is a specialized format and requires specialized hardware and software
  - Duxbury Braille Translator
  - Braille embosser
- Tactiles are tactile representations of graphical material, and require special expertise, hardware, and software
  - Adobe Illustrator
  - Tactile embosser

Thanks. Questions?

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