eForms Accessibility Option Software
Create Electronic Forms for Persons that are Visually Impaired

Accessibility and Electronic Forms

Access to information is necessary for all aspects of modern life. Computers and other electronic systems are increasingly used as the primary interface for professional, social, political, and recreational activities. *Section 508 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998* requires that Federal agencies' electronic and information technology be accessible to people with disabilities, including employees and members of the public.

To help simplify the production of Section 508 compliant fillable PDF forms, Amgraf developed the OneForm Designer Plus Accessibility Option. OneForm Designer Plus automatically creates the elemental tagging structures prescribed for accessible PDF forms. Accessible PDF forms produced with OneForm Designer Plus are compatible with Adobe Acrobat Versions 5.0.5 or higher, editable with Adobe Forms Access 1.0, and directly usable with the JAWS® for Windows screen reading software from Freedom Scientific.

Accessible Form Creation Overview

Accessible PDF forms are similar to standard PDF forms. The primary difference is the addition of an elemental tagging structure within the form file to control the screen reading software's behavior. The tags include descriptive information for the content and the fill-in fields on the form, and navigational pointers to help the user move through sections of the form in the correct sequences.

OneForm Designer Plus already has many features and functions to simplify the design and development of PDF forms, and the Accessibility features are identified in the accessible form creation enhancement overview as follows:

1. Draw or Import Form
2. Set Content Reading Order (Accessibility Feature)
3. Designate Form Sections
4. Add Form Fields
5. Set Field Tab Order
6. Auto Tagging Function (Accessibility Feature)
7. Edit Accessibility Tags (Accessibility Feature)
8. Perform Tag Check (Accessibility Feature)
9. Save Form and Fields as PDF
10. Verify Form by Opening/Saving PDF File within Adobe Acrobat
11. Test screen reading of PDF File in JAWS for Windows (Accessibility Verification)
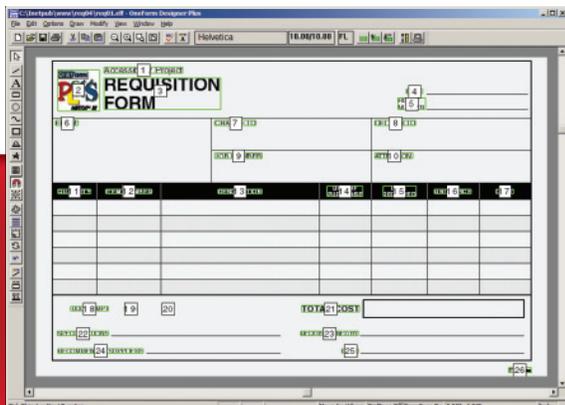
Automatically Initialize Accessibility Tags of Form Elements

Use the Auto Tagging function to create the internal tagging structure within the form source file and to initialize accessibility tags for elements such as Document, Page, Artifacts, Sections, Content, and Fields. The software automatically assigns tags to every element that has been identified in the prior steps. An attempt is made to automatically connect content and fields so that they are clustered together in the resulting tag structure.

Form fill-in fields already have a "short description" container used for tooltip help messages, that is also spoken by the screen reading software. Page, Section, Text, and Image content elements can also be given alternate text descriptions.
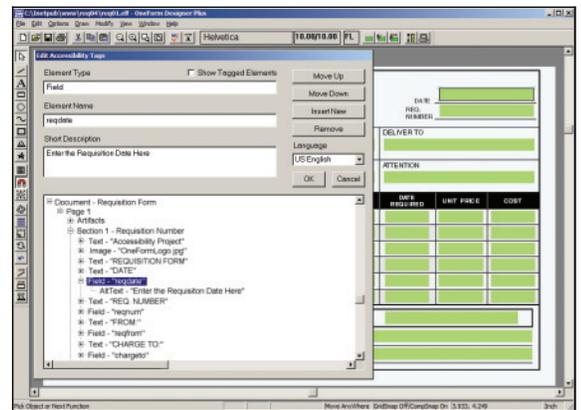
Editing an eForms's Accessibility Tags

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Amgraf recommends that the accessible PDF file be opened, tested, and resaved using the Adobe PDF Forms Access 1.0 software. You may also use the Accessibility Check function within Adobe Acrobat Professional Version 8.0 or higher. If there are any PDF compatibility problems they will be detected by the standard Acrobat software. The "Read Out Loud" feature within Acrobat can be used to verify that the spoken descriptions are properly interpreted. The final test is to fill out the form using the JAWS for Windows screen reading software.

Detected Elements Identified and Numbered