Making Word Documents Accessible
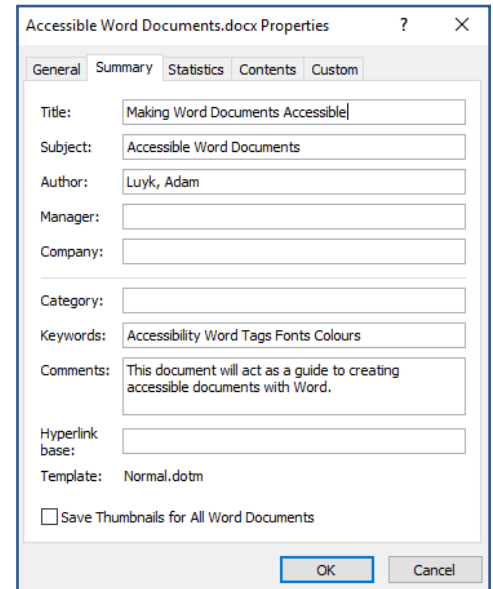## Metadata and the Accessibility Checker

Metadata

Metadata is "data about data". In the context of Word, it's supporting information added to a file that describes the document's content. Assistive technology will read this data to give the user information about what is found in that document.

- Metadata is broken into several categories
- Metadata exports with the file when converting to PDF.

To add metadata for your document:

1. Open the document and go to the **File** tab
2. While in the **Info** menu, click the **Properties** heading
3. Click **Advanced Properties** to see all the metadata available
4. Fill out each field as needed and then click **Ok**
- The **Title**, **Subject**, and **Author** fields should be filled out.
- Enter keywords related to the document in the **Keywords** field, each separated by a space.
  - Keywords are used by search engines or a computer to help search for your document.
- The rest of the fields are up to you if you want to fill out.

Accessibility Checker

The Accessibility Checker in Word will examine your document for accessibility issues.

The Accessibility Checker does not check every aspect of accessibility, so it's important that you do your own reviews to make sure they are meeting all requirements.

- The Checker looks at: alt-text, styles usage, alignment of objects and text, table structure and labels, hyperlinks, heading style structure, blank lines, and videos.
- The Checker **does not look** at: colour contrast, captions, metadata, or font formatting.
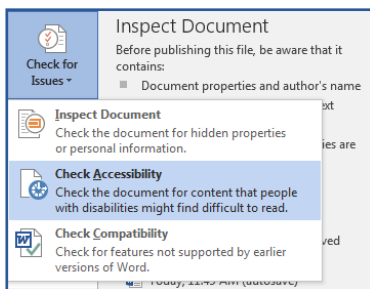
To use the Accessibility Checker in Word:

1. Open the document and go to the **File** tab
2. While in the **Info** menu, click **Check for Issues**
3. Click **Check Accessibility**
4. You are returned to your document with a new pane open on the right-hand side of the document that outlines any issues.

The Accessibility Checker breaks down any issues into one of three categories:

- **Error** - Content that is difficult or impossible for persons with disabilities to read or understand. It is **critical** to correct all of these errors.
- **Warning** - Content that is usually (in most cases) difficult for persons with disabilities to read or understand . It is **critical** to correct all of these warnings.
- **Tip** - Content that people with disabilities can understand, but could be set up in a different way. There are optional and depend on your specific content.