REBECCA KLEIN: We are so excited to have you here today for the presentation, Wells Fargo's guide to social media accessibility. I'm Rebecca from 3Play Media, and I'll be moderating today. I'm joined by Laurie Merryman, AVP of Consumer Digital Accessibility at Wells Fargo, and Lauren Harbury, Senior Manager of Social Media at Nielsen. And with that, I'll hand it off to Laurie and Lauren who have a wonderful presentation prepared for you all.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: Thank you, Rebecca. Hi, everybody, and welcome to our presentation on social media accessibility. First of all, thank you to Rebecca, and Sofia, and 3Play Media for this opportunity to share.

This presentation is the presentation that was supposed to happen in March of 2020 at CSUN, but obviously due to COVID, it didn't take place. But my colleague, Lauren Harbury, and I are really excited to be sharing out this information and sharing with all of you, the findings and the things that we learned when we dug into how can we make social content as accessible as possible to all of our customers and potential customers at Wells Fargo.

Before we dive into the content of the presentation, just a little bit about Lauren and myself. So again, my name's Laurie Merryman, and I have worked in the web accessibility/digital accessibility space for over 25 years now. I really fell into it shortly after college. And I'm very passionate about the work, love the idea that everybody should have independent access to information.

My introduction to web accessibility was when I took a job in the government sector with the Iowa Department for the Blind under a grant, called Project Assist with Windows. Maybe there's some people on this call that remember that. It goes back many years.

But in that grant, we were developing tutorials that would teach a blind person how to use Windows and Windows-based applications in conjunction with screen-reading software. And as part of the requirements of the grant, we had to have a website to disseminate the information. And we didn't have a website at that time. So that was my introduction to web accessibility. My colleague and myself created the website from scratch in Notepad, raw HTML, and wanted to make sure that it was as accessible as possible, due to the audience that we were serving.

From the government sector, I went on to work for Target Corporation on their digital accessibility team and was fundamentally part of a team of wonderful people that turned the story around in regard to Target and accessibility. A lot of people know the backstory there. And then I came to Wells Fargo and have been part of Wells Fargo now for five years within their marketing organization.

I'll turn it over to Lauren to talk a little bit about herself.

LAUREN HARBURY: Thank you. I'm Lauren. As you can see here, I'm currently at Nielsen as a senior manager in social media, but I spent about six years at Wells Fargo. And doing this work with Laurie to make sure that our channels on social were accessible is really my proudest work to date.

My background is really in public relations, communications, and marketing, but I have been involved in the accessibility space, really, since I was young. I have a close family member who is deaf and navigated well into her adult life without the use of any assistive technology solely on reading lips, including college and jobs. And it's been a big part of my life. And then getting to dive into technology that she was using with her has really informed my work in social, and it's something that I care very deeply about.

So all of that to say I'm incredibly proud to be here and very excited to share this work with you all. And I'm really proud of what we were able to do for Wells Fargo. So, Laurie, back to you.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: All right. So really, one of the things that we want to talk about to kick off the presentation is, it's 2021, and your website is upside down. And what we mean by that is, it's no longer the case, generally speaking, where a customer, a potential customer, or maybe a student, depending on what type of organization that you're coming from, they're not generally going to your website to start with. They're learning about your organization, or your company, or your products, or your services, through other means, through other channels.

This used to be the case that they would land on your website to begin with. Maybe they'd start on the homepage. They'd drill down into some particular topic that they were interested in, until they were at what they were looking for, which might actually be a call to action, like an apply, or a purchase, or something of that nature.

But the reality is, today, we're so involved in the social aspect and all the different social platforms out there via searches and all of the different channels that are available that, generally speaking, a new customer, a new student, whatever the case might be, is learning about who you are, your organization, your company, through these other channels, through these social channels. And then maybe they're going to land on your website eventually to get more information.

So that's kind of the importance around, yeah, we've learned for many years that it's important to make your websites fully accessible, your mobile apps, all of those kinds of things, but let's think about what people are doing today. And that is they're using a lot of social content to get information about who you are, and what services, and what products you provide. So how can we make that social content meet WCAG and meet all of those accessibility requirements as best as possible?

I'll talk a little bit here, and then I'm going to turn it over to Lauren. But essentially what we're saying is, social media is the new front door to your company or organization. People are learning about you through Facebook, or Instagram, or LinkedIn, or Twitter, or even YouTube. And it may not be that they're seeing posts specifically about your company or organization, but they might be seeing posts that some of their friends or connections made in reference to your company or organization. There are even companies that are utilizing TikTok and Snapchat as a way to reach a whole 'nother demographic and a whole 'nother generation of potential customers, or students, or whoever your audience is.

And I'll just kind of pause here and see if Lauren has anything to add to this, but we recognize the relevance of social content and reaching the widest audiences possible. We recognized that within Wells Fargo a good three, four years ago and wanted to do something about it to make sure that that content was going to be meeting accessibility requirements as best as we could. Lauren, I'll let you add to that.

LAUREN HARBURY: Yeah, I think you covered that perfectly. Like you said, something that we recognized at Wells Fargo is that we are reaching potential customers or friends and family of customers every day on social media. And whether that's seeing posts from a friend or being driven directly to our social channels, there was and is a huge opportunity there. And we want to make sure that that content is as accessible as possible.

And even since this deck has come together, there's more and more social channels popping up every day and different users on them and different trends. And I think the opportunity continues to exist, no matter what the top platform of the moment is. And so this is something that we look at across the board and obviously would encourage everyone to look at across all channels.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: Definitely. It's an evolving space, that's for sure, evolving every day.

So just a little bit about when we started the work. We started with what we call our social media accessibility task force is what the group was called within Wells Fargo. It exists still today, but we started it back at the end of 2018. And it became more formally established in 2019.

And really, the goal was communication, and education, and awareness, making sure that all of the marketing social media partners, all of the folks within Wells Fargo marketing that were creating social media content, understood that we have an enterprise policy around digital accessibility, and that social content falls within that policy, knowing that we do have some limitations and some restrictions when it comes to making social content fully accessible. And we'll talk a little bit more about that as we progress through the deck and the presentation.

But really, how can we educate our social media partners within Wells Fargo to ensure that we're doing as best as possible in ensuring that that content is as accessible as possible? And just wanting, again, to reach the widest audience, wanting all of our customers or potential customers to utilize that content. Go on to the next slide.

I kind of stated it already. Ultimately, the goal here is like any goal when it comes to accessibility-- independent access to information, reaching the widest audience. Information is key to reaching all of your customers or potential customers. And I use that term, because that's what we use at Wells Fargo. But apply that to your organization as whatever terminology makes sense. Independent access to information, everyone should have that right. And so that is ultimately the goal here, regardless of how that information is delivered.

Lauren, I'm going to give this slide to you.

LAUREN HARBURY: Perfect. So this is just an example of really context and how you may not want to receive a car-insurance ad when you're laying in bed scrolling on your phone, right? So this is just a funny example of right person, right message, wrong time, which is something that we think about on social as well. And then just a little call-out that there's always work to do. And this is, I think, just kind of a funny example. Yeah.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: OK. [CHUCKLES]

LAUREN HARBURY: So when we initially used that example, the thought was, more broadly in social, you really need to be thinking about your targeting, and your message, and where it's going to be appearing. Like, we all receive inappropriate ads or poorly timed ads or content across channels. And so something that we built into our program as well is really thinking about how and when customers-- or apply that to your org-- are receiving the message and making sure that you're being very thoughtful about that as well.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: Yep. And here we just talk about, within Wells Fargo, within our marketing organization, our social media team vision, which is, as stated here, just to create authentic, innovative social experiences that activate our communities, drive business, and improve perceptions for the Wells Fargo brand. So OK.

I'm going to give Lauren this slide, because she can talk a little bit better about this. But essentially, probably the biggest message here is that it's Wells Fargo, but that doesn't mean there's just one Wells Fargo Facebook channel, or just one Wells Fargo Instagram channel, or LinkedIn, or Twitter. We actually have multiple channels within the organization, due to the various businesses. And they each have their own respective channels. And Lauren, I'll kick it over to you to go into more depth on that.

LAUREN HARBURY: Yeah, I mean, that's a perfect recap. So really, what we have laid out here is our social media organization and how it interacts with different groups within Wells Fargo. So whether that is an internal brand team, our home lending program, corporate communications, we're working with partners inside the organization to translate what they're working on into social and do it well.

So we do that for internal partners, as you can see here. And we do it for external partners as well. So essentially what we're looking at is a flow chart, and the social media team is the hub of the wheel. And then the partners that we work with are sort of the spokes there-- so whether that, like I said, is a brand team, a lending team, an external marketing agency, or any of our other partners.

And then something else that we're seeing here is just a graph of all the different social channels that we use. So we have Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and YouTube. And like we mentioned earlier, this is an always-evolving organization of channels. So you may have a Clubhouse, you may be using TikTok, but these are the main ones that we stick to at Wells Fargo.

Like Laurie mentioned, we have multiple accounts on many of these channels that speak to different groups within the organization or different partnerships that we're doing. So that is something that we keep in mind as well when creating content and also gives us a great opportunity to educate and bring along partners when it comes to creating accessible content. So over the past few years, we've worked with a myriad of groups, and agencies, and partners, to educate them on how to create accessible content for everyone.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: Yeah. So let me talk a little bit about how my team interjected with the social team, if it hasn't already been conveyed. Again, I sit within the marketing organization at Wells Fargo, specifically on the marketing digital accessibility team. It's a team that formed about six years ago. I joined it a little over five years ago. And it's been an evolution, if you will, to make sure that we're engaged with all of our marketing partners within the organization and make sure that all of those marketing partners understand the policy around digital accessibility and the requirements around ensuring that everything that marketing is delivering in terms of digital content is funneled through the team that I sit in to ensure that it meets the accessibility requirements and meets policy.

So this is how we became engaged with the social media content work. But in terms of what my team does, again, we review everything digital that our marketing teams are putting out to our customers. And that can range from anything from full websites, to microsites, to landing pages, to email campaigns, to surveys, PDFs, lots of video-- it just kind of goes on from there-- and social media posts, social media content.

And on the previous slide, we talked about how we are using those various social platforms, but even have multiple channels within the various social platforms-- upwards of around 17 Wells Fargo channels today that are delivering social content on the daily. So we needed a mechanism in place to ensure that that content was meeting policy and, given some of the restrictions with the platforms and even some of the restrictions that we'll talk about with publishing tools that we utilize within marketing for creating that content, doing our due diligence to make sure that that social content is as accessible as possible.

So let me speak to that a little bit more here, before I get into this checklist of what to keep in mind are some of our findings. And now, we're getting into the meat of what we learned and what we've been sharing out with our social media teams.

So in an organization the size of Wells Fargo-- and this might very well be the case for the company that you work for, the university, or whatever entity you're coming from-- we do not create the bulk of our social content natively within those platforms. And what I mean by that is the social media teams, they're not jumping into Facebook, or Instagram, or Twitter, or LinkedIn, and creating the post there, kind of as an individual, we might.

Instead, they're creating that content in a publishing tool that is approved by Wells Fargo. It meets all of our legal and compliance requirements. It meets all of our brand standard compliance-- all the assets that are within that publishing tool are up to snuff, if you will. So they're creating the social content and the social posts within this publishing tool, and then they're essentially dumping those posts into the respective platforms-- into Facebook, into Instagram, into Twitter, and LinkedIn, and so on.

One of the big challenges that we faced in terms of how we're creating that content is that those publishing tools are not in full support of accessibility yet. That's one of the evolutions, or that's one of the challenges that we faced, and that's one of the things that we're still working on.

Whereas, your Facebook, and your LinkedIn, and your Twitter, and those platforms, they've been really ramping up their support for accessibility, especially in the last three, four years. They're making improvements to those platforms all the time. And if, in fact, within your company or organization you are creating your social posts natively within those platforms, you've got a great set of tools right now to essentially create pretty accessible social content. But again, in our organization, our social media teams are creating probably a good 90% of that content within these publishing tools.

But regardless, if you're creating it natively in the platform, or you're using a publishing tool like we are, this checklist applies as far as just what are some things to keep in mind. And those of you who have worked in the digital accessibility or web accessibility space for any length of time will probably look through this list and go, this is all pretty straightforward stuff in terms of accessibility, even when you think about traditional web experiences.

So the first one just talks about color contrast. And what we mean specifically there is, when you're creating a post, and the post is going to have an image, and if there's going to be text overlays on top of that imagery, just making sure that the text overlays meet color-contrast compliance, so that that text is very readable on top of that imagery.

With hashtags, it's always a best practice for accessibility to capitalize. Use what's called camel case, and capitalize the first letter of each word. That makes it easier for some people to read the hash tags and also for screen readers to read the hash tags.

We talk about putting hash tags and at mentions at the end of your post copy content, like the actual text of the post, whenever possible. I think that's one of the things that there's a little bit more flexibility today on that than there was, say, maybe three or four years ago, as this all evolves.

The next one, pretty simple. Avoid "click here" types of calls to action. Always try to be more descriptive. Leverage alt text capabilities where you have them. And that's one of our biggest challenges in our publishing tools is lack of that support for alt text. But many of the platforms themselves natively support alt.text, or the implementation of alt text, so you definitely want to utilize that.

Captioning of videos-- one of the findings and one of the requirements that came out of our work is that any video that we put out on social has burned-in captioning, captions that are there burned into the video because, within those social platforms, you don't really have that option to turn captions on or off. So we just require that those captions be burned into the video.

We talk a little bit about charts and graphs in a post, in a social post, and just making sure that high-level message of that chart or that graph is incorporated into the post copy itself, the post copy text. Really, my partners that I work with have heard me say this many, many times-- assume someone cannot see the imagery of the post itself, and they're going to rely on just the copy and just the CTA above and below that imagery. And ensure that all the critical information, all the critical messaging, has been incorporated into those two areas, and you're not relying on the user to be able to see or utilize that imagery or that video that's part of the post. We talk a little bit there about, also, if the post links to a video or PDF, it's kind of nice to indicate that at the end of the copy with the word "VIDEO" or "PDF" in the brackets.

So yes, the challenge-- lack of accessibility support in the various social platforms and also the publishing tools. I've alluded to this already. This was certainly our biggest challenge because, again, the bulk of our social content is not being created natively in those social platforms. It's being created somewhere else that's an approved tool through Wells Fargo marketing, approved with legal and compliance and also brand standards. And we're limited, in some cases, to what support we have in those tools. But that's one of the things we're working on, in terms of improvements in education and awareness.

Lauren, I'm going to let you talk about this chart. She did a ton of work and a ton of homework to build this. I've highlighted that one line that talks about Sprinklr, because Sprinklr is, in fact, the publishing tool that our social media marketing teams are using. And you see, there's kind of a lot of red Xs, nos, going on on that [INAUDIBLE]--

LAUREN HARBURY: There are.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: --in terms of support. But this also is kind of handy, because it talks about the other platforms and what type of accessibility support is available natively. So, Lauren, I'll let you dig into this a little bit more.

LAUREN HARBURY:	Sounds good. So like Laurie mentioned, this is a chart that is breaking down the options that we have for accessibility across the major social media channels that we're using at Wells Fargo and also taking into account our publishing tool, Sprinklr, which is used by a wide variety of large enterprise businesses as well. So this is a tool that I use as well at Nielsen, so it's a good one for us to be thinking about just in terms of spanning organizations.

And what we see here is that, like Laurie mentioned, a lot of our social channels have native support. So you can see right off the bat that Facebook and Instagram both automatically add alt text to images within the platform. This is if you are uploading directly to those channels as a user. And you can also add and edit that alt text on Facebook and Instagram. You can add and edit it on Twitter and LinkedIn as well. So that is good support that we are seeing now, and that didn't exist a few years ago.

So we are seeing a lot of steps being made by our channel partners, and it's something that we've been advocating for on the Wells Fargo side, and that I know that they're hearing from other organizations as well in terms of, we really want more tools, and we want the platforms to have more support. So that is something that they are continuing to work on over time.

The big callout here is on our Sprinklr line. Like Laurie mentioned, it's a lot of red Xs here. And this is work that we're continuing to do with our Sprinklr partners as well. They know that this is a key priority for Wells Fargo in social and that we are far from alone in that.

Over the past six months or so, they have been making platform improvements. They've been working on adding alt text capabilities to more channels. Unfortunately, a lot of what we run into is API restrictions from our social media partners. So even though Sprinklr's able to integrate in, and we can use it to publish our content, we just aren't able to access all of the tools that the channels themselves have.

So I anticipate that, over the next few years, we'll see support continuing to increase there. But as you can see right now, it's really very limited. Twitter is our best channel in terms of accessibility from within Sprinklr, and the others have quite a way to go.

LAURIE MERRYMAN:	Yeah. So definitely some opportunity for improvement there, but it's something that, like Lauren said, we're working on. And we're communicating that back to our Sprinklr partners to build that education and awareness. And like she mentioned, we're talking about a dependency with the APIs. Like the Facebook API to Sprinklr doesn't support the full immersion of an alt text capability, the API for Instagram to Sprinklr. So it really is that those platforms need to get together with the publishing tool to work on that and fix that issue so that we, as folks who are creating that social content within that publishing tool, have the best possible tools available for meeting accessibility.

Hopefully, those conversations are happening as we speak, and things are being done around that. Certainly, the fact that we can do that with Twitter when working in Sprinklr is a good sign that more to come, more improvements to come.

All right, we're going to show you some social post examples where we may have done some things well in terms of accessibility, but we also had some things that we could have done better. And these are older posts, I'm just going to say, because I feel like I can honestly and authentically say that, today, our social media partners within Wells Fargo marketing understand the best practices and requirements and are following those very, very well.

So here, probably the biggest takeaway in terms of what we failed to do is that, again, talking about that imagery in the post itself-- you have to think in terms of that imagery might be lost for somebody. Again, if this post was created in Sprinklr, and this is-- well, this is a Twitter, so we can add alt text. But let's say, for example, this was on Facebook. We didn't have the capability within Sprinklr to add that alt text to the image.

So what we really are doing and communicating with our partners is, make sure that the key critical information from the imagery is repeated in the post copy, so the text above that you're seeing above the imagery. And we didn't do that here. We didn't quote those statistics around what percentage of millennials and Gen Xers would like help with retirement decisions from their employer. That messaging was not conveyed in the post copy text, therefore, there are some users that would never fully get the context of what this post was conveying.

We also could have done better with the hashtag in this case. But some of the things we did do well is ensuring that the text overlays, the white text that you're seeing on top of that imagery, meet color-contrast compliance. We do have a direct call to action in the post copy, kind of like the "learn more" or "where can you go to get more information?" Those are some of the wins here.

Lauren, did you have anything to add to this one?

LAUREN HARBURY: No, that recaps it perfectly. We did great in some areas, and not so great in others. But like you said, this is a post from very early on in our work. So I think if we look at our channels today, we can see a big improvement.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: Yeah, definitely. Here's another example of an epic fail. When I saw this post come through-- and this is actually for a video-- one of the big callouts that I stated-- and I really kind of conveyed this to my social media partners to say, probably one of the most critical pieces of information here is, what is the 800 number to reach out to a Financial Health Banker if, in fact, I want to do that as a customer or potential customer? That 800 number is not included in the post copy text.

And additionally, that is only displayed on the very last frame of the video. So we were kind of assuming that people could, one, see the video or utilize the video content, but, two, that they were going to watch it til the end. And I think that's a big assumption.

So again, the takeaway here is, anything that's key or critical information that's in the imagery or the video content must, in fact, be incorporated into the post copy text so that all users get that critical information. So that was the big, epic fail from this one that we learned better from.

So all of this is to say that, this task force, we worked through social posts. We worked with our partners. We learned where we weren't doing so great, where we could make improvements. And then we outlined requirements and best practices for our social media teams, for them to follow in their work.

I've highlighted what those are in the next three slides. I won't go into, probably, all of this in detail. I think a lot of this will feel pretty common or pretty commonplace, I guess, in terms of those of you who are far in depth and embedded into WCAG requirements. But we do talk specifically about some things in terms of social content here, like hashtags and at mentions, and things like that.

Here, we get into a few more requirements and best practices around images. And I want to kind of convey that this is what we outlined for our partners, given the situation that we're creating the bulk of those social posts within that Sprinklr publishing tool. But again, there's a lot, I think, that can be gleaned here in general that you could utilize in your own company or organization, or just kind of take away from it and apply it as needed.

So again, I'm probably not going to drill into each one of these. If there are questions, I want to save some time here for questions at the end, if we do have some more specific questions.

The next example or the next slide shows a much improved post, due to the work of the task force and due to Lauren and my efforts for the last three years working on this with our partners. And here's an example where the statistic that's provided in the imagery of the cat and dog on the couch, and 41% of Americans feel space for their pets in their dream home is more important than space for their kids. That was the key messaging, and that was then repeated or incorporated into the post copy text.

So again, thinking in terms of, if somebody can't see that imagery, if their assistive technology does not have access to that imagery, how do we make sure that the key messaging is being still delivered so that that user gets the information that they need and also the call to action to go to a landing-page experience where they're going to get far more detail than the social post provides here? So this is a win. This is an example of a win, in terms of a post that's as accessible as we can make it, due to our publishing-tool limitations and dependencies.

Again, video requirements-- the list that we have here is going to look pretty common, if you've worked with video on web and traditional WCAG requirements for video. Again, with our partners in social, we just said, all video on social is required to have captions that are burned in, meaning they just appear for everybody. They're there. And that way, we can make sure that that content is as accessible as possible due to the fact, that within platforms, you don't have a button to turn captions on or off. So that's what we've done as an organization is required that all video and social posts have burned-in captions.

I understand, originally coming from the government sector and then moving into the private sector, sometimes you maybe don't have the resources, or the tools, or the budget for that. And I understand that concern or that dependency. This is what we were able to do within Wells Fargo. And again, because we do have an enterprise policy around digital accessibility, which is probably one of the most important things at an organization our size, it's not a nonnegotiable. What gets outlined is required and expected to meet that policy.

LAUREN HARBURY:	One quick interjection there on video. Just something that has happened recently that I think is an exciting callout is that we're starting to see more of our social channels really integrating captioning into their videos. This really only applies to working within the channels themselves, but it's still exciting.
	So if you are going to livestream on Instagram, or you're going to record a video for Instagram stories, there's now a function that you just hit that says Captions. And it will put captions over the whole video, which is something that has only rolled out in the past six months or so that, in my opinion, is a big step forward and is something that I hope to see applied to other channels as well. So just an extra piece of information.
LAURIE MERRYMAN:	Yeah. No, and that is really good. And it shows a lot of potential because even if-- let's say, for example, those captions are using voice recognition and maybe not getting completely accurate-- assuming if that's how they're creating those captions-- it's still a step in the right direction and shows a lot of potential for what could even become better within that channel around accurate captioning.

So to me, for somebody who has worked in this space as many years as I have, there's always something new that comes out that may not be quite right yet and may need some tweaking or may need some improvements, but it's the potential that's there to make it even better that is the exciting part, certainly.

What's next for our task force? Well, sadly, Lauren has abandoned me. [LAUGHS] No, it's all good.

LAUREN HARBURY: Never! [LAUGHS]

LAURIE MERRYMAN: It's all good. I have other partners within Wells Fargo that are now working with me on the social media accessibility front. Again, lots of great work that I attribute to Lauren and myself together. So we continue to engage with those social teams.

I will fess up and say, we're still trying to figure out a best way to review content. We can't just trust that our partners are doing this all the time, although we've done a lot of work for the last three, four years to make sure that they understand the requirements and best practices. But we all know that you still need to check. You still need to check.

And I don't have the bandwidth-- nobody has the bandwidth to look at every social post that's going out, since we have 17 channels and content that's being delivered every day, multiple times during the day. So we're working on what would make sense as a recurrence to review that social content. And right now, we're kind of reviewing it more on a quarterly basis. We're going to various social channels and just checking in to make sure that they're still meeting those requirements and best practices.

We talked about Sprinklr and just continuing to educate and make them aware of the restrictions that we have for meeting accessibility, especially around alt text6 support, and then also looking at how can we do better in terms of Facebook and Instagram stories. How can we make those as accessible as possible? So those are kind of the things that we're looking at to continue with this work. Maybe that will be a CSUN 2022 presentation. I don't know, we'll see.

LAUREN HARBURY: Bring it on.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: Bring it on. [LAUGHS]

So that is really kind of where we come to the end of our content and our presentation. Certainly, want to open it up to questions. I think we've got a little bit of time here, about 15 minutes, to take on questions that may have been raised during the presentation. So Rebecca or Sofia, I'll turn it back over to you.

REBECCA KLEIN: Hi, everyone. Thank you, Laurie and Lauren, for a great presentation. We've had a lot of questions come in already, but I encourage everyone to keep asking. And then, we'll try to get to as many as possible. So the first question is, how do you prioritize which platforms to use and to devote accessibility resources to?

LAUREN HARBURY: I can start.

LAURIE MERRYMAN:	Yeah, she's great with that.
LAUREN HARBURY:	Yeah, I can start. So I would say all of our channels, we wouldn't pick a channel to lean into more as Wells Fargo. It's our responsibility to be on all of them. But what we do do is make sure that we are using every tool and resource available to us on each channel to make our content as accessible as possible.
LAURIE MERRYMAN:	Yeah. And I think I'll just add there, I think maybe the question is, how do you decide? Would you go with Facebook before you do Twitter, before you do LinkedIn? I mean, is there some kind of hierarchy that could be used as a guide?

And I think, to what Lauren said, in an organization our size, there really isn't a decision tree around that. Maybe there would be for a different type of organization, or a different type of company, or somebody who's potentially a smaller organization that doesn't have the resources and the people, but we don't have that decision tree. Like she said, we have to be relevant in all the platforms that we've decided to have channels within. |
REBECCA KLEIN:	OK, great. And then the second question is, is your social media decentralized? And if so, how do you control or manage the accessibility from a central level?
LAUREN HARBURY:	So our organization has worked both ways. We've had a centralized and decentralized model for social. Currently, all social media content is published by the social media team and is created in partnership with the social media team, which has made that significantly easier. Laurie, anything to add there?
LAURIE MERRYMAN:	I don't. I mean, I think that's driven more by the social teams. And then in terms of where I sit within marketing and supporting all of that digital content from an accessibility perspective, whether it's centralized or decentralized, it still has to be funneled through us to ensure that it's meeting requirements and best practices for accessibility. So I guess that aspect of it doesn't impact myself and my team quite as much as it would impact Lauren and the social teams on how they're structured.
REBECCA KLEIN:	Got it. And the third question is, do you provide audio description for your videos? And if so, do you provide them for all of your videos? If not, why?
LAURIE MERRYMAN:	Yeah, I'll take that question. And let me take that question, maybe, a little bit out of context of social for just a moment. And then we can apply it to social. First question, do we require audio description for all of our video? No, we do not.

We do have somewhat of a decision tree. And I'm talking video that is on web, on our landing pages, on our websites. Those ultimately end up on our YouTube channels, but they might begin on, say, a landing page or a website that's Wells Fargo branded.

The obvious things are required, in terms of video accessibility. They must have captions. They must have a detailed text transcript that incorporates everything that's spoken in the voiceover, and all of the on-screen text, and all of the URLs, and disclosures, and calls to action, and just anything that's being presented in there. Sometimes, the video also is going to require in the text transcript some descriptions about action and activity, if it's key to the messaging or even the emotion of the video. |

So those are the requirements. And then we take a look at video that may be required to have audio description. Audio description, because it is a separate track and it is a separate cost involved, we don't require it for all video as of yet. I think, as an enterprise, we're reviewing that all the time. But there is some video that is an obvious yes when it comes to audio description. Here's an example.

I work on all the large campaigns and brand campaigns that Wells Fargo does. Anything high risk, highly public cross my desk for accessibility. This would have been our holiday campaign two years ago, or three years ago. It's kind of all running together. And especially in the pandemic, everything seems to be kind of mashed together.

But we had a video that was on commercial. It was on TV, but it was also going to land on the digital side, on landing pages, on our website, and ultimately our YouTube channel. And the video was all set to music. Not a great win for accessibility, I fully recognize that.

But the video was the stagecoach delivering meals during the holiday season. It was this big partnership with Feeding America. And it was all set to music. And all of the messaging, and all of the emotion, and anything that was being conveyed through that video was visual, was all through the imagery, and the action, and activity. There was no voiceover, whatsoever.

This video absolutely was required to have an audio-described version. And ultimately what happened is, we worked with a partner, Tylie-- I'll mention their name, I'm going to give them a little callout-- they're a partner that we work with. They do amazing work in terms of audio description. They supported us for that video where it was going to land on TV, so that it had the SAPI support there. And then they also created the audio-described version for digital so that, when it landed on our YouTube channel, there were really two versions that landed on our YouTube channel-- the audio-described version, and the one that was not audio described.

Now, how that connects to social-- I mean, that particular video did not land on a Facebook, or an Instagram, or any post like that. It was just in our YouTube channel. I can't think of any video that we've done yet on social, as of yet, that we've done audio description that ultimately landed on, say, Instagram or Facebook. But it's not out of the norm, and it's not out of the realm to do so.

I think long story short, whether we're talking about web or social-- because a lot of times, things that land on our website and on our landing pages ultimately may trickle down to a social post or a YouTube channel-- if in fact that video we discern that that needs audio description on the website, that's going to carry through and be delivered that way on the social side too.

We evaluate that all the time-- all the time. But the answer is, no, we don't require audio description on all video.

REBECCA KLEIN: OK. So the next question is, does Wells Fargo have accessibility requirements baked into your third-party partners' and apps' contracts? And more importantly, how do you enforce it?

LAURIE MERRYMAN: I can speak to that too. Absolutely, yes. Again, we have a policy around digital accessibility. That policy has been in place now for-- well, it was there before I joined the team. I want to say it was in place in like, 2008 or 2009, so it's been in place for several years.

What that means is that when we go into those vendor contracts, there's language in those contracts that talks about accessibility and requirements for accessibility. If, in fact, it was a partnership or a contract that was established, let's say, 20 years ago, it's essentially now a new requirement, if that partner wants to continue working with us, if they want to continue to support Wells Fargo and do work for us. So yeah, there's language. There's requirements in those contracts.

I work with a lot of third-party vendors. Within marketing, there's a lot of internal marketing partners that I work with that are Wells Fargo team members. And then we also do work with some external marketing firms. And again, it's education and awareness and them understanding the requirements around our expectation that our content meet the WCAG 2.1 AA. That's where we're at right now, as far as what we follow-- WCAG 2.1 AA. Although, we're looking at 2.2 and the things that are coming out with that. I think it will be a little bit of time before we switch to 2.2. But yeah, we definitely are engaged with those partners and make sure that they understand those requirements.

REBECCA KLEIN:	Got it. And then, how do you convince leadership and partners to invest in resources to make your social media more accessible?
LAURIE MERRYMAN:	Yeah, go ahead.
LAUREN HARBURY:	I was just going to say, I think the great thing about our team is that all of our partners are on board. And our leadership is on board. And where there's opportunities for us to make decisions or have partners that support that, the support is generally there. I wouldn't say that it was an uphill battle. I think it's just specific to social. And like for me with Sprinklr, it's just hoping and advocating for some partners to increase their support levels.
LAURIE MERRYMAN:	Yeah, and I'll just add to that. I'll talk a little bit more broadly in terms of I've been in an organization where we didn't have that senior leadership support, initially, didn't even have a policy around digital accessibility. And I get that conundrum, I get that battle.

And I don't have any novel ideas or solutions other than-- and I'll say, when I joined the Target Digital Accessibility team, we didn't have an enterprise policy around digital accessibility. So we did get pushback from our partners within dot com and mobile, within the product teams. Like, oh, do I really have to do this? Do I really have to make these changes for accessibility?

We did a ton of education and awareness. And probably one of the key things that we implemented while I was part of that team-- and that happened pretty early on after I joined, thank goodness, there had been others that had been working on it prior to my arrival-- but getting that policy in place. Because if you have that policy in place within your organization, it's a nonnegotiable at this point. It's expected.

But even if you do have the policy, there's work to be done with senior leadership and your leaders to get them to embrace it and understand it. And that just takes a lot of building relationships, and education, and awareness, and communication.

I worked directly with the leader of our dot com and mobile. I met with him personally within Target, did education and awareness events with him, so that he fully understood what it meant to ensure that everything was meeting accessibility requirements and who's impacted, and what is the value gained from this. So really working with those senior leaders to help them understand and understand the market that they are ultimately not tapping into if they don't think about it.

So it's a challenge, for sure. I understand the challenge, but a policy is certainly a good first step, and then working on that senior-leadership support, and then just having a great team of digital accessibility experts, a very solid, diverse team. I highly recommend that it be a team of people coming from various backgrounds and a team that have people on that team who live and breathe accessibility 24/7, because they use assistive technologies. They have a disability. They live and breathe this every day of their life. That's absolutely a value add to any digital accessibility team.

REBECCA KLEIN: Great. So I think we have time for one or two more questions. The next one is, could you give some examples of describing action steps beyond "click here"?

LAUREN HARBURY: Yeah. So we would call this a CTA, right? And on social, you're oftentimes choosing from a dropdown of different calls to actions, but this could be things like "Download Our Report." For a product-based business, it could be like, "Add To Cart." Really, any action that you want the viewer to be taking on the content, just spelling that out more specifically.

LAURIE MERRYMAN: Yeah. On social, one of the things we also see quite a bit in lieu of a "Click Here"-- and it's slightly better, but there's some scrutiny around a "Learn More" type CTA. "Learn More"-- not super descriptive, obviously, but it also speaks to, does the context just before the "Learn More" give you the information that you need about what is it that you're going to be going to if you activate that call to action? And that's pretty commonplace on the web too, in addition to social.

And I think that's one of the areas within WCAG where we've seen a little bit more flexibility. I mean, it's always, always, always, always a good practice to have descriptive links when read out of context, wherever possible. But it's also deemed as acceptable if, in fact, the context right by that CTA, right by that link, gives the context that's going to give them a better understanding of, what is it that I'm going to learn if I choose this "Learn More" link?

REBECCA KLEIN: So I think that that's all we have time for today. Thank you, everyone, for joining. And thank you, Laurie and Lauren, for a wonderful presentation.