Social Media: Hashtags

What is it for?

Imagine trying to read a sentence where all the spaces have been removed. It would look like a jumble of letters that takes real effort to decipher. That is exactly what a screen reader encounters when it reads a hashtag written entirely in lowercase.

If you write #superbowl, a screen reader might read it as "Superb Owl" rather than "Super Bowl". By capitalising the first letter of each word, we give the technology a clear signal of where one word ends and the next begins. This ensures the hashtag is pronounced correctly and is easier for everyone to read visually.

How to support it

This technique is often called CamelCase or PascalCase. The rule is simple: always capitalise the first letter of every word within the hashtag.

- Do: #SocialMediaMarketing
- Don’t: #socialmediamarketing

It's a small habit change that makes a massive difference to clarity.

However, while capitalisation solves the pronunciation issue, it does not solve the issue of length. A hashtag that consists of ten different words is still difficult to process, even with capital letters.

Additionally, placing hashtags in the middle of a sentence can disrupt the reading flow for assistive technology users. It is generally best practice to group your hashtags at the very end of your post or caption.

Useful links

- Accessible Social
- RNIB - How to make your social media accessible
- Hootsuite - Inclusive Design for Social Media