Making Accessible PDF Tables - Part 2 - How to Remediate a Simple Table

TEXAS Health and Human Services

Civil Rights Office

Presented by the Civil Rights Office of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission

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Introduction

In Part 1 of this series, you learned about things to **consider** and things to **avoid** in a Microsoft Word document with tables to make is easier to remediate WHEN you convert it to an Adobe PDF file.

If you've followed the steps in Part 1, you will only need to do a few verifications and minor changes to ensure your PDF can be read by anyone using assistive technology. These verifications and changes are referred to as Accessibility Remediation.

There are three types of table that you can remediate in Adobe Acrobat Pro:

- **Simple** Table
- **Complex** Table
- **Corrupted** Table

In this tutorial, we will discuss how to make a **simple table** accessible in Adobe Acrobat Pro. How to make a Complex and Corrupted Table will be discussed in Part 3 and Part 4 of this training module.

If a simple table from a **source** document like Microsoft Word is formatted correctly, it typically will convert correctly within Adobe Acrobat Pro (See **PART 1: Things to consider before you begin**). However, there are times when a document does not convert correctly for various reasons—for example, poor grid structure or excessive text in cells.

As a result, the table will have to be fixed inside of Adobe Acrobat Pro by ensuring that it has **correct header information**.

Who's at the Head of the Table

Tables must have **headers** in order for them to be read correctly by both sighted users and those who use assistive technologies like JAWS.

Before we get started, let's explain **WHY** headers are so important.

Looking at the table below:

If I were to say **"$1.45/lb."** by itself, that would not mean anything to anyone.

Item	HEB	Randall's	Costco	Whole Foods
Pears	1.29/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.19/lb.	2.79/lb.
Peaches	1.89/lb.	1.93/lb.	1.87/lb.	2.43/lb.
Bananas	1.45/lb.	1.62/lb.	1.43/lb.	2.05/lb.
Apples	1.15/lb.	1.30/lb.	1.10/lb.	1.89/lb.

However, if I were to say **"$1.45/lb. for bananas"** that would be more meaningful but it still would not give us the **complete picture** of the content in that cell for that table.

Item	HEB	Randall's	Costco	Whole Foods
Pears	1.29/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.19/lb.	2.79/lb.
Peaches	1.89/lb.	1.93/lb.	1.87/lb.	2.43/lb.
Bananas	1.45/lb.	1.62/lb.	1.43/lb.	2.05/lb.
Apples	1.15/lb.	1.30/lb.	1.10/lb.	1.89/lb.

However, if I were to say **"$1.45/lb. for bananas from HEB"** that would give us the **complete picture** of the content in that cell.

Item	HEB	Randall's	Costco	Whole Foods
Pears	1.29/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.19/lb.	2.79/lb.
Peaches	1.89/lb.	1.93/lb.	1.87/lb.	2.43/lb.
Bananas	1.45/lb.	1.62/lb.	1.43/lb.	2.05/lb.
Apples	1.15/lb.	1.30/lb.	1.10/lb.	1.89/lb.

This is why table headers are so important to a table because it gives the "complete

picture" of what's in a given cell. Moreover, assistive technology like JAWS uses this information to "connect the dots" and read the data in a meaningful way.

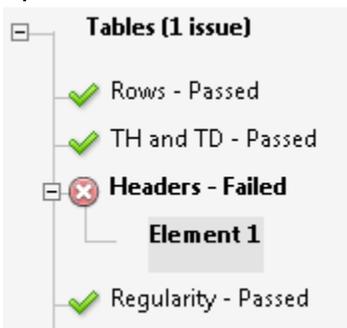| Item	HEB	Randall's	Costco	Whole Foods
Pears	1.29/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.19/lb.	2.79/lb.
Peaches	1.89/lb.	1.93/lb.	1.87/lb.	2.43/lb.
Bananas	1.45/lb.	1.62/lb.	1.43/lb.	2.05/lb.
Apples	1.15/lb.	1.30/lb.	1.10/lb.	1.89/lb.

Mind Your Table Manners

Now that we know the important of headers, let's see how to "correct our table manners" with the same table that was NOT given any headers by design before it was converted to a PDF file.

With the table mentioned earlier that contains a table that does not have any header rows or header columns defined from the source document (let's say a Microsoft Word document).

On the right side of the screen, select the **Full Check link** and in the **Accessibility Checker Options dialog box** that appears, click on the **Start Checking button**.

In the **Accessibility Checker panel** that opens on the left side of the screen, click on **the plus sign (+)** next to Tables to expand it.

While the TH and TD passed because **one of them** is used in the table, the Headers option failed because the table does not have any headers **defined**.

Click on the **small triangle** on the left side of the screen to open up the **Tools panel**.

Click on **Tags icon** to view the Tag Tree.

In the **Tag Tree**, **click** on the **Tags, <Sect>, <Table>** and the **FIRST <TR>** (or table row) tags as needed to expand the table element so that you can see the series of **<TD> tags** for the FIRST row.
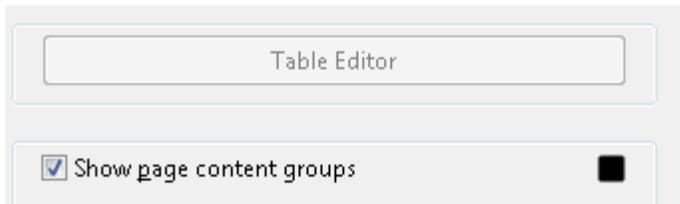

Highlighted in yellow in the screenshot, notice that these tags are <TD> tags instead of <TH> or table header tags as they should be. They should correspond to the **header row** in the table.

Table For Two

Let's see how we can set the table for two: table header and table row.

1. Click on the **Accessibility button** and then click on the **Read Order button** to open the **Touch Up Reading Order (TURO) dialog box**.
2. Click on the **Show page content groups checkbox** below the Table Editor button.
3. Notice that the **Table Editor button** is **DISABLED** because no table is currently selected.

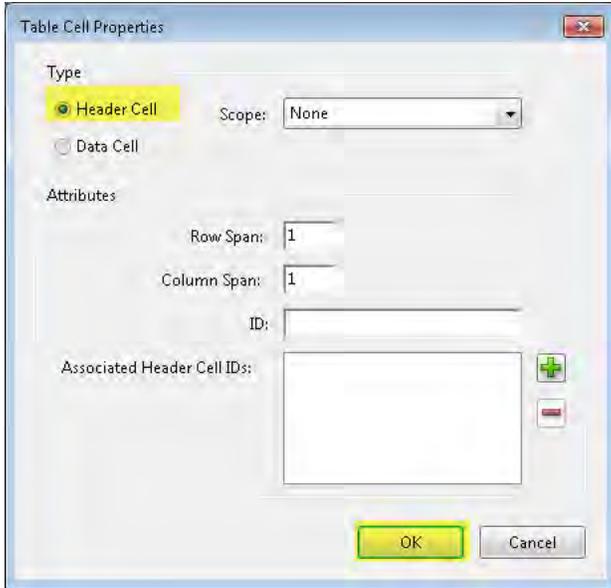4. Also, you should see the table on the page gets assigned reading order tag numbers.

5. Click on any one of these reader order tag numbers and you should see the **Table Editor button** gets **ENABLED**.

6. Click on the **Table Editor button** and you should see a **red grid** overlaid on top of the table that corresponds to the underlying table structure.

Item	HEB	Randall's	Costco	Whole Foods
Pears	1.29/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.19/lb.	2.79/lb.
Peaches	1.89/lb.	1.93/lb.	1.87/lb.	2.43/lb.
Bananas	1.45/lb.	1.62/lb.	1.43/lb.	2.05/lb.
Apples	1.15/lb.	1.30/lb.	1.10/lb.	1.89/lb.

You may notice that the overlying red grid does not exactly match the visual gridlines of the original table. Don't let this bother you. It is an Adobe feature.

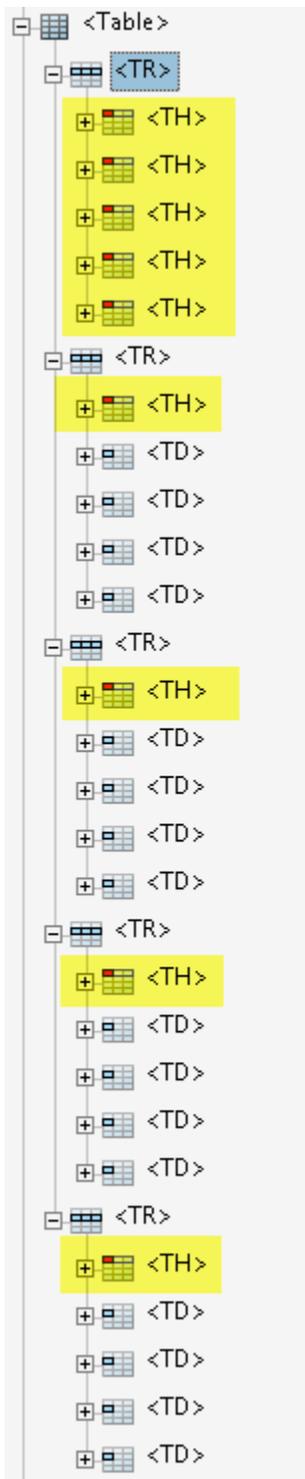7. **Select all of the cells** on the top row, either by:

a. **drawing a lasso** in the middle and across all of the rows with the mouse
b. **holding down the SHIFT key and clicking on each of the cells in the top row**

8. Right click on any one of the highlighted cells and select **Table Cell Properties…** to open its dialog box.
9. Select the **Header Cell radio button** and then click the **OK button**.

10. Notice that a faint red highlight appears on the top row to let you know that this row has been converted to table headers—this is <TH> tags in the Tags tree.

Item	HEB	Randall's	Costco	Whole Foods
Pears	1.29/lb.	1.49/lb.	1.19/lb.	2.79/lb.
Peaches	1.89/lb.	1.93/lb.	1.87/lb.	2.43/lb.
Bananas	1.45/lb.	1.62/lb.	1.43/lb.	2.05/lb.
Apples	1.15/lb.	1.30/lb.	1.10/lb.	1.89/lb.

11. Repeat the previous steps for the first column cells for header rows (Pears, Peaches, Bananas, and Apples).
12. Now, if you look at the Tags Tree this time, you will see the corresponding header rows and header columns <TD> tags are replaced with <TH> tags.

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Also, notice the **small red cell** in the <TH> tags denoting that they are **header cells** and not **data cells**.

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13. Now, click on the **Full Check link** to open the Accessibility Checker Options dialog box and then click the **Start Checking button** at the bottom of the dialog box.
14. On the left side of the screen you should see the Accessibility Checker panel opens. Click on the plus sign (+) next to Table to expand its content.
15. You should see that the table properties pass.

Setting the Table with a Little Magic

TIP FOR ADVANCED USERS ONLY: If you are proficient with table tags and their structure in HTML, you can skip **ALL** of the steps above and simple type in the Tags Tree to replace the correct <TD> tags with <TH> tags. But be very careful, a <TH> tag in the wrong cell may crash your table. You will also need to use the table editor to set the scope.

Summary

In this module you learned how to remediate a simple table in Adobe Acrobat Pro by ensuring both the row header and column header were properly tagged. In the upcoming modules you will learn how to remediate a complex and a corrupted table inside of Adobe Acrobat Pro.

This concludes our overview of Making Accessible PDF Tables, PART 2 – How to remediate a simple table.