Making Handwritten Notes Accessible

Hello everyone, welcome to the eSAIL workshop, Making Handwritten Notes Accessible Using MathPix. The first thing we're going to do is navigate to the TAMU eSAIL website. This is that workshop, Making Handwritten Lecture Notes Accessible. We're gonna go and work through that today. If you do not have a free trial MathPix account, go ahead and work through step one to create that.

I'm now going to work through steps two through four.

Once you log into your MathPix account, this is the homepage that should show up. The first thing we're going to do is click the blue Launch app button.

This is what should load after that. Next, we're going to click the pink PDF button.

Then select your PDF, Open, and Upload.

The document will take a while to convert, as you can see in the left hand side. So just give it a minute until that loads.

Once it has loaded, you can go ahead and Open PDF.

Here's that document. Now go to the top right hand corner and click the Export As button and save as a DOCX.

Once that is saved, you can open the Microsoft Word document.

Once your document has loaded, you can notice that the handwriting has turned into machine readable text, as well as the math equations, and the diagram has been copied and pasted over. To edit for accuracy, I recommend splitting your screen into two, one with the original handwritten document and one with this text editor.

Now that I have done that, you can now go line by line and edit for accuracy. One thing I notice off the bat is that this word fluid is not spelled correctly, so just go ahead and fix that. Editing text is easy, just click right into the text and edit as you would in Microsoft Word. For equation editor, you can click into the equation,

go up to this Equation button in the top ribbon, and that's how you will edit equations. Something I notice is that this p value over here should be rho, in the handwriting. So I'm just go ahead and delete p and insert a rho from the Symbols section. I recommend you go through the entire document and continue checking for accuracy.

I won't do that for the sake of time.

After editing for accuracy, we now need to edit for accessibility. We will do that by going to the Review tab in the top ribbon, then clicking that Check Accessibility button. As you can see, the only issue it's giving us is the alt text button, so go ahead and click that and then enter an alt text.

An alt text should be less than 120 characters. If you have a drawing that requires more than 120 characters, I recommend that you navigate to our eSAIL workshop, long Descriptions. Now you can save that alt text and the accessibility is now good.

One more thing we need to fix for this document is the headings in it. You can go up to the search bar at the top and type in navigation and we will Open the Navigation Pane.

On the left hand side you can see that there are no headings in this document. This makes it very difficult for screen readers to navigate your document. So we're going to go to this top ribbon, Home, and now you will highlight this title,

Bernoulli's Equation Example. Then right click on this Heading One, update Heading One to Match Selection, and that's that. So as you can see, the font and the style has stayed the same, but it has still come up on the left hand side as a header.

Last thing we need to do for this document is to add a title. We'll do that by going to the File tab, then Info, then Properties, then Advanced Properties. Here is where you'll add that Title. A title should not be a file name. This is what the screen reader will refer to your document as. So it should be specific enough that the student will recognize the name.

So in this case, I'll just be writing Bernoulli's Equation Example. After that, go ahead and press OK.

And now we have a fully functioning document. You can save that in whatever form you'd like, whether that's Microsoft Word or PDF. I will save it as a PDF for this example. And here it is, our fully accessible document that you can now upload into Canvas or any other website you'd like.

To finish up, I'll be going over some MathPix Tips. MathPix reads left to right, top to bottom, so it has a very hard time with columns. When writing your lecture notes, I would recommend straying away from columns. MathPix also has a hard time with cursive, loopy letters. I recommend when you're writing your lecture notes, try to make it distinct print. Thank you for watching.