Limitations of a Screen Reader

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Although the accessibility features are impressive and assist greatly those with visual disabilities, they do still have limitations.

A common misunderstanding with screen readers is the expectation for them to "describe" something. The screen reader doesn't "describe" anything, it looks at written text, translates that to audio for the benefit of the user. Keeping that in mind…

Pictures/Images: A image on the application has a "name". i.e. the file name you would use to recall it from your device directory. The screen reader can only read out the name of the image including any hyphens, comma's, dashes etc. but it can't describe what the image portrays. If the image was a picture of a sunset with the name "picture 1" the screen reader would only read out "picture 1". It would make no reference to the sunset or anything else on the screen.

Icons/Buttons/nodes/sliders: Similar to images, icons/buttons/nodes/sliders are just assets that can appear on the screen in many different ways. They can be large, small, portray a Wi-Fi symbol or a warning sign. The screen reader cannot describe to the user what these look like, it can only state the "name" of the asset to the user which in most cases is simply "button".