Making Websites Accessible

Making It Accessible: Dec 1, 2022
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Understand the WHY

It’s the law: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Lawsuits are COSTLY and impact the University’s REPUTATION
Understand the WHY

“But...people with disabilities make up such a small portion of our website audience. We can’t afford to focus on such a small group.”
According to the CDC...

1 IN 4 adults in the United States has a disability

Understand the WHY

Better Inclusivity

Better usability for all

Better Search Rankings
Understand the TYPES of Disabilities

- Visual
- Auditory
- Motor
- Cognitive
- Seizure & Vestibular Disorders
Understand HTML Markup

- Use CSS for styling, not HTML
- Think about the meaning of the tags
- Ex: Headings vs paragraphs
- Ex: Logical heading levels
  - <h1>
  - <h2>
  - <h3>
Understand Colors & Contrast

- Impacts readability
- 4.5% of the population is color-blind
- Problematic color combinations
- Use high contrast
- Use a contrast checker
Understand WCAG

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

• Published by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)

• Aim for WCAG 2.0 Level AA

• Most recent version = 2.1

• WCAG Quick Reference
WCAG Highlights

- Alt text for videos, audio, non-decorative images
- Color contrast
- Logical heading structures
- Tab order
- Pausable elements
- Text shouldn’t be an image
- No blinking
- Descriptive links
  - no “click here”s
- Visible hover and focus states
- Bypass mechanism for repeated information
- No context change with hover

Note: This not an exhaustive list. Please refer to the WCAG quick reference.
Testing for Website Accessibility
Navigate without a mouse

- Use the tab key to navigate through the page
- Look for mechanisms to skip to the main content
- Make sure you can interact with the page the same way anyone else would.
- Make sure you can get to all visually hidden content
Use a Screen Reader

- Learn how to use it in different modes
- Make sure you can understand the content
- Windows = NVDA or JAWS
- Mac = Apple VoiceOver
Automated Tools

- WAVE browser extension
- Monitoring tools: Siteimprove, Monsido, DubBot
- **Do not rely** solely on automated tools, they only uncover a fraction of problems
Tips for Success

Build in accessibility at the very beginning

- Design with “Accessibility in Mind” (WebAIM)
- It’s much more difficult to retrofit afterwards
Beware of quick fixes and shortcuts

- Steer clear of “accessibility overlays”
- The key is to give a comparable experience for everyone
- [https://overlaysdontwork.com](https://overlaysdontwork.com)
Resources

- Accessibility Resources for University Webmasters
- WebAIM
- WAVE Web Accessibility Evaluation Tools
- WCAG Quick Reference
- Contrast Checker
THANK YOU!!!