Designing Websites for Accessibility

Sandra Bradley
Amanda Lojewski

An overview of best practice guidelines

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Web accessibility allows people with any form of reduced abilities to be able to access and use the Web effectively. Every company should strive to incorporate accessibility features on its website. This will benefit the company in several significant ways. Making a website accessible neither requires a large expenditure nor constrains it to be unattractive. This report provides an overview of web accessibility and its importance. It also provides accessibility guidelines, checklists and a list of useful resources to help companies make their website fully accessible.
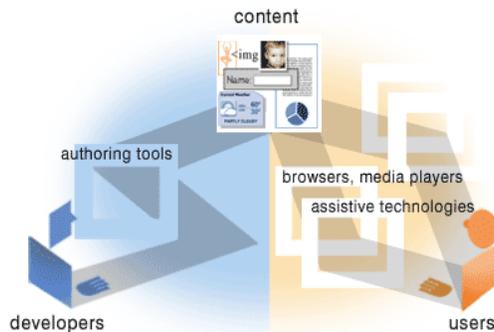

Figure 1: The components of web accessibility

discussed. The report outlines guidelines to be followed in creating an accessible website design. Information on web accessibility assessment procedures, tools and an accessibility compliance checklist is also provided.

Intended audience

The information and recommendations provided in this report are intended to assist **website developers** and **web marketing strategists** in creating and modifying web sites in a manner that provides a high level of accessibility to every type of user.

Two Forms of Web Accessibility

It is important to realize that there are two different approaches to incorporating web accessibility, each having a different scope.

Direct accessibility allows a user to retrieve information from a website by themselves. A website should be designed to provide direct accessibility for those without limitations or with mild limitations, such as the absence of a mouse or the use of a small screen (e.g., on a mobile device) to view the web.

Users with more serious limitations or disabilities should be able to achieve assisted, or indirect, accessibility. This means a website should support any assistive technology or modified hardware to ensure users can access the full amount of information, although it may be presented in a slightly different manner.

Scope of this Report

This report first discusses the definition of web accessibility and the types of users and situations it encompasses. The benefits of accessibility from a business and a social responsibility standpoint are then

CONTENTS