

STANDARD LIFE

Standard Life and Digital Media Access Group
Web Accessibility – Presentation and Demonstration
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Topics we'll cover



- Introduction to web accessibility
- Benefits of having an accessible website
- An emerging culture of accessible design
- Accessibility goes beyond guidelines
- The importance of usability for disabled people
- Demonstrations
- Questions

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Introduction to web accessibility



- Technology, the environment and disability can affect the way in which you access the web
 - **Accessible design isn't about 'them'...it's about 'you'!**
- Technology – browsers, dial up, broadband, PCs, mobile phones, PDAs, digital/interactive TV, kiosks, cars
- Environment – office, home, cafes, train, airport, on foot
- Disability – eyesight, hearing, mobility, cognitive

Web accessibility is for everyone

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Benefits of having an accessible website



- Increase in market share – ageing population, people with disabilities, quicker and easier for everyone ensuring the largest potential audience
- Reduce costs – web development, web maintenance, operations
- Good PR – brand, reputation, customer loyalty

“There is an assumption that blind people can’t use the Internet. I suppose that’s understandable – but much more needs to be made of its power for us, and the freedom it gives us – and about what a big potential market we are.”

“I have come across so many sites that are utterly useless. The trouble is I just don’t remember any of them. I only remember the good ones.”

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A developing culture of accessible design



There are clear signs of a new culture of accessibility:

- Improved authoring tools, testing tools and resources for learning and sharing knowledge
 - A new and improved (?) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
- The phenomenon of Web accessibility and standards compliance
 - *A List Apart*; *Designing with Web Standards*; CSS Zen Garden, Guild of Accessible Web Designers...
- Organisations more aware of responsibilities, particularly public sector, education and blue chips
- Less tolerance/higher profile of web sites with poor accessibility?

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Accessibility and guidelines



- Many widely publicised accessibility guidelines in existence – WCAG most prominent and thorough
- A very useful resource, but debates seem to rage over:
 - Single A versus Double A compliance?
 - Which testing tool to use – Bobby or LIFT or...?
 - What access keys do I use?
- But the WCAG often requires subjective interpretation:
 - Is this alternative text an *equivalent* alternative?
 - Do my users really want/need default placeholder text...?
 - “Flash? Or that ever so well supported(!) W3C technology SVG?”

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Accessibility? Or usability for disabled people?



- Accessibility is not an exact science or a recipe to be followed:
 - Accessibility of what? Accessible to whom? Accessible under what circumstances?
- And when does accessibility become *usability for disabled people*?
- Guidelines help...but the requirements of the UK Disability Discrimination Act are not prescriptive for organisations providing a web site, other than they must not:
 - fail to provide a service...or
 - provide a *less favourable* service
- So does this mean the DDA requires sites to go beyond “accessible” and be **usable** by disabled people?

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Beyond Accessibility



- The Disability Rights Commission thinks so:

“Compliance with the Guidelines published by the W3C...is a necessary but not sufficient condition for ensuring that sites are practically accessible and usable by disabled people. As many as 45% of the problems experienced by the user group were not a violation of any checkpoint, and would not have been detected without user testing.”

Disability Rights Commission (2004)

Formal Investigation: The Web - Access and Inclusion for Disabled People

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Involving people with a variety of specific access needs is an important and rewarding step towards truly inclusive design.

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Demonstrations



Jamie Marshall
Home Page Reader

www.easyjet.com

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Demonstrations



Joy Croft
Zoom Text

www.msn.com

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Demonstrations



David Dalgety
Dragon Naturally Speaking

www.mytravel.co.uk

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Demonstrations



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Questions?



Open floor time...

Please ask the panel any questions you have about website accessibility.

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