

Publicly Available Specification 78: Guide to Good Practice in Commissioning Accessible Websites

RNIB Campaign for Good Web Design

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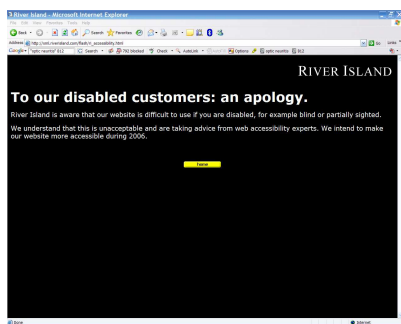
PAS 78:

Clarification, Standardization, Harmonization, Consolidation

This is what we'll cover in the next hour...

- What is PAS 78?
- Why was PAS 78 commissioned?
- How was PAS 78 produced?
- What are the main principles of PAS 78?
- How does PAS 78 compare to other guidance?
- Who is PAS 78 for?
- How do you get a copy of PAS 78 (and why isn't it free)?
- What next?

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What is PAS 78?

- It's a guide to good practice for anyone responsible for commissioning a website
- It's a specification, a *should* not a *must*
- It suggests a process that may be implemented to achieve maximum site usability (and maximum customer reach)
- In the absence of county court case law it's best UK guide to meeting your legal duty to disabled customers online

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Why was PAS 78 commissioned?

- Disability Rights Commission research identified a need for guidance for website commissioners
- BSI standards, codes of practice and specifications are highly respected
- Publicly Available Specifications are quick to produce as they are non-consensus

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Disability Rights Commission 2004 research findings

- High awareness of web accessibility as an important issue
 - 98% of large organizations
 - 69% of small and medium organizations
- Yet 81% of web sites fail the most basic accessibility criteria...

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Disability Rights Commission research findings

- Finding 5: 45% of the problems encountered by disabled users cannot be attributed to explicit violations of WAI checkpoints
- Implementing accessibility guidelines is not enough on its own
- Accessibility and usability are both essential attributes of good design
- Usability testing with disabled people is crucial as a means of detecting and correcting web design problems
- 'The Usability Bonus': testing with disabled people could identify ALL usability issues

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1995 Disability Discrimination Act and the web... a brief history

- October 1999: DDA Section 21 came into effect
 - February 2002: DDA Code of Practice (revised)
 - July 2003: RNIB issued county court proceedings
 - April 2004: Disability Rights Commission Formal Investigation into Web Accessibility report www.drc-gb.org
 - April 2006: PAS 78: Guide to Good Practice in Commissioning Accessible Websites
- Recommended article: Mason, Casserley & Howell 'Web site design and the DDA' in Computers & Law, Dec 01/Jan 02 www.rnib.org.uk/webaccesscentre

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How was PAS 78 produced?

- DRC commissioned BSI to produce PAS 78
- BSI commissioned RNIB (Julie Howell) to be the Technical Author of PAS 78 (to research and write the first draft)
- PAS 78 Steering Group
 - Abilitynet, BBC, Cabinet Office, DRC, IBM, RNIB, UCL, Tesco.com, UPA (+ WAI, Adobe (Macromedia), Mencap)
- PAS 78 Review Panel
 - 120 organisations/individuals
 - 188 pages of comments
- Entire process: 16 months
- PAS 78 will be reviewed in March 2008, at which point it could, in theory, be developed further and become a full British Standard

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What are the main principles of PAS 78?

- Conform to existing web standards
 - WAI: WCAG, ATAG, UAAG
 - Software developer guidelines for Flash, PDF, etc.
- Additional accessibility provisions are optional
- Develop an accessibility policy and publish an accessibility statement
- User test early and frequently, involve disabled people
- That's pretty much it

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How does PAS 78 compare to other guidance?

- It's all about those four words that rhyme:
 - Standardization
 - Harmonization
 - Clarification
 - Consolidation
- PAS 78 points to existing web standards.
- If you are already conversant with web accessibility then you probably DO NOT NEED PAS 78.

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Who is PAS 78 for?

- Website commissioners, who exactly are they:
 - Website owners
 - Businesses that have websites
 - Particularly public-facing sites or employee-facing sites
 - Everyone who is involved in website production at any level will find PAS 78 interesting, however the primary audience is public-facing businesses, especially those who know the law requires them to make their sites accessible to disabled people but they have no idea how to go about it
 - New Media agencies, web developers etc. should familiarise themselves with PAS 78 as it's likely to pop up in design contracts

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How to get a copy of PAS 78 (and why isn't it free)?

- Order PAS 78 from BSI www.bsi-global.com/pas78
- Price £30 + VAT
- Formats: Print, PDF, braille, audio, DAISY, easy-to-read, Welsh
- DRC commissioned BSI to produce the PAS in the knowledge that BSI is a business and sells PASs for profit. However, we successfully negotiated a much reduced price.

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What next?

- In 18 months from now, will the web be more accessible as a result of PAS 78?
- PAS 78 is being road-tested now
- Design curricula
- Getting SMEs to engage
- Training, awareness, supporting documentation

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RNIB Campaign for Good Web Design est. 1999

“Accessible web sites, systems and services are those that can be used by everyone, regardless of ability/disability, technology and circumstance.”

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