

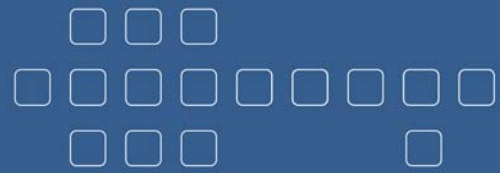
Hacking Away at Discrimination:

Section 508 and Accessibility Guidelines

“The power of the Web is in its universality.

Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect.”

— **Tim Berners-Lee**, *Creator of the World Wide Web*



1998 Amendment to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act

- Section 508 of the rehabilitation act (29 U.S.C. 794d), as amended by the workforce investment act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220), august 7, 1998.
 - Each federal agency shall ensure that the electronic and information technology allows individuals with disabilities who are federal employees to have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access to and use of the information and data by federal employees who are not individuals with disabilities.
 - Each federal agency shall ensure that the electronic and information technology allows individuals with disabilities who are members of the public seeking information or services from a federal department or agency to have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access to and use of the information and data by such members of the public who are not individuals with disabilities.

In Plain English...

- Updated section of the rehabilitation act of 1973.
- It's purpose is to end discrimination against people with disabilities.
- Provide equal **access** to information...and also to provide equal **quality** of information.
- Creates enforceable standards and complaint process.
- Right now, it only applies to federal agencies and their contractors...but I doubt that is the final word.

Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

- The ADA has been described as the 'emancipation proclamation' for the disability community.
- The world's first comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities.
- TITLE III - prohibits private entities from discriminating on the basis of disability in places of public accommodation.
- Guarantees equal opportunities.

Sec. 302. Prohibition Of Discrimination By Public Accommodations

- (A) GENERAL RULE- no individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation.

A Case Against Physical Structures

- “By including ‘travel service’ among the list of services considered ‘public accommodations,’ congress clearly contemplated that ‘service establishments’ include providers of services which do not require a person to physically enter an actual physical structure.”
- “Many travel services conduct business by telephone or correspondence without requiring their customers to enter an office in order to obtain their services.”
- “... It would be irrational to conclude that persons who enter an office to purchase services are protected by the ADA, but persons who purchase the same services over the telephone or by mail are not. Congress could not have intended such an absurd result.”

Carparts distribution center, inc. V. Automotive wholesaler's Ass'n of new England, inc., 37 f.3d 12, 19 (1st cir. 1994).

Kinds of Disabilities

- Physical/Motor impaired
 - Not necessarily fully impaired.
- Vision
 - Blind / Low Vision / Color Blindness
- Hearing
 - Deaf / Hard-of-Hearing
- Cognitive
 - Memory Problems / Learning Disability / Dyslexia

It's Too Difficult. (Whine)

- It is quite simple.
- Yes, you can still use tables.
- All you have to do is try.

*“The **true** reason to design for accessibility is **GREED**”.*
— **Joe Clark**, *Building Accessible Websites*

Who's Making the Move?

- ESPN.Com
- Wired.Com
- Inc magazine (inc.Com)
- Cingular wireless (cingular.Com)
- PGA.Com

Who's Afraid of Accessibility?

- Fear of disabilities themselves.
- Fear of change.
- Fear of learning something new.
 - Unlearning to design with tables.

How to Become Compliant

- Use alternative text for images (ALL images)
``
- Closed captions in multimedia
 - Transcripts for audio
 - Synchronized audio/multimedia for visuals
- "Skip" buttons
- Name your frames
- Summarize your tables
- Use style sheets

Resources Online

- Cynthia says
<http://www.contentquality.com/>
- LIFT (free accessibility test)
<http://www.usablenet.com/>
- Bobby (free accessibility checker)
<http://bobby.watchfire.com>
- JAWS® for windows (screen reader)
freedomscientific.Com/fs_products/software_jaws.Asp
- Technical assistance project (activities of the states regarding current and planned section 508 activities)
128.104.192.129/taproject/policy/initiatives/508/508stateactions.htm

Resources Online

- The access board
<http://www.access-board.gov/>
- Web accessibility initiative (WAI)
<http://www.w3.org/WAI/>
- ADA
<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>
- Lynx viewer
<http://www.delorie.com/web/lynxview.html>
- IBM home page reader
http://www-3.ibm.com/able/solution_offerings/hpr.html
- Magpie (media access generator)
<http://ncam.wgbh.org/webaccess/magpie/index.html>

Takeaways

- A 1000 mile journey begins with the first step.
- Our choice today, but may be compulsory tomorrow.
- Demonstrate social responsibility.
- Reduce legal liabilities.

The Web must allow equal access to those in different economic and political situations; those who have physical or cognitive disabilities; those of different cultures; and those who use different languages with different characters that read in different directions across a page.

— Tim Berners-Lee, **Creator of the World Wide Web**