Center on Technology and Disability
www.CTDinstitute.org

Accessibility Tools and Resources
Getting Started With Accessibility

October 2016

AIR
AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH®

Accessibility Tools and Resources
Getting Started With Accessibility

American Institutes for Research

OCTOBER 2016

Accessibility Tools and Resources

Digital accessibility is an important issue that needs to be front and center for educators across the country. However, implementing a comprehensive accessibility initiative throughout an entire agency or institution can seem like an overwhelming task. Fortunately, there are actions you can take in the short term (even today!) to help get you started. The Center on Technology and Disability has identified a number of high-quality, useful resources to address issues of accessibility in several key areas: developing an accessibility statement, conducting an accessibility audit, procuring accessible technology, and building professional development and training resources on accessibility for your staff.

Developing an Accessibility Statement

No matter where your organization stands regarding progress toward improving digital accessibility, an accessibility statement is critical to success. Your statement informs your users that (1) accessibility is a priority; (2) steps have been, or are being, taken to address accessibility; and (3) specific contacts are available to provide assistance and are open to receive feedback.

Disability.gov Accessibility Statement
This example statement demonstrates how an organization can address accessibility, continuously assess its own website, decide which accessibility standards are relevant, and provide solutions to users who are trying to access specific documents.
https://www.disability.gov/accessibility-statement/

Gov.UK Accessibility Statement
The language on this page is simple and easy to understand. It provides clear guidance on which assistive technology tools are compatible with the gov.UK site, explains how to obtain alternate versions of materials, and allows users to provide feedback to the Web team.
https://www.gov.uk/help/accessibility

Accessibility Statement Generator
This simple tool generates a basic accessibility statement based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0). Users enter information about their website and complete an accessibility checklist; then the site generates a basic accessibility statement that can be posted to your organization's website.
http://www.accessibilitystatementgenerator.com/

Developing Organizational Policies on Web Accessibility
This guide helps you develop a policy for creating, managing, and delivering accessible websites.
https://www.w3.org/WAI/impl/pol

How to Create an Accessibility Plan and Policy
A resource from the Ontario Government provides a step-by-step process for creating accessibility plans and policies for organizations.
https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-create-accessibility-plan-and-policy

Conducting an Accessibility Audit

Although the ideal accessibility audit includes actual users to evaluate the accessibility of your resources, in conjunction with the use of accessibility tracking software, a number of excellent, free resources are available that can help you identify high-priority items, gaps in your accessibility efforts, and related issues.

How to Conduct a Basic Accessibility Audit on Your Site
This blog post from Adobe describes several simple ways to audit the accessibility of your website.
http://blogs.adobe.com/dreamweaver/2016/05/how-to-conduct-a-basic-accessibility-audit-on-your-site.html

How to Meet WCAG 2.0
This customizable, quick reference on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 outlines requirements and techniques for developers and technology staff.
https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/

IT Accessibility Risk Statements and Evidence
This document was created by the EDUCAUSE IT (http://www.educause.edu/) Accessibility Constituent Group to help identify accessibility risks that IT leaders should consider in their risk management process.
https://library.educause.edu/resources/2015/7/it-accessibility-risk-statements-and-evidence

WebAIM's WCAG 2.0 Checklist
This simple checklist offers recommendations for meeting Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 guidelines.
http://webaim.org/standards/wcag/checklist

Accessibility Color Wheel
This free tool allows users to see how colors and color combinations appear to someone with visual impairments. Choose color combinations at the site to determine whether the colors promote accessibility.
http://gmazzocato.altervista.org/colorwheel/wheel.php

Web Accessibility Checker
Plug any uniform resource locator (URL) into the accessibility checker, and you will see a list of accessibility issues plus suggestions on how to fix noncompliant website components.
http://achecker.ca/checker/index.php

Procuring Accessible Technology

When purchasing technology, it's imperative to work with contractors and vendors to determine whether their products or devices are accessible. When working with vendors, it is recommended that you use an accessibility template and ensure that all contracts include language on the accessibility of the items under consideration.

Guidance for SEA and LEA Purchasing Agents
This guide offers purchasing language for print and digital materials. It also includes information on how to address accessibility issues with materials and open educational resources developed by teachers and other local and national sources.
Word document: http://aem.cast.org/binaries/content/assets/aem/navigating-aem/palm/aim_palm_contract_language_draft3.20.14.doc

Guidance for Purchasers
This document outlines the steps necessary to ensure that accessible learning materials are secured from the beginning of the acquisition process. This guide includes sample contract language that can, and should, be added to any contracts you sign moving forward.
Word document: http://aem.cast.org/binaries/content/assets/aem/navigating-aem/palm/4_guidance_for_purchasers-5.19.15.docx

Accessible Purchasing Overview
This Web page presents an overview of criteria for prioritizing decision making related to accessibility and purchasing of technology tools, resources, and materials.
http://purchasing.cita.uiuc.edu/

Purchasing Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Quick Reference Guide
This quick reference guide outlines considerations for purchasing accessible materials as well as action steps that districts can take to ensure that purchased materials are accessible.
http://www.texasat.net/Assets/quick-ref-guide-purchasing-aim-5-30-13.pdf

Building Professional Development and Training Resources for Your Staff

A critical component of accessibility is securing buy-in from all of your stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, and other staff in your school, district, or institution. Get started by offering training and support to inform your team about the legal mandates for providing accessible digital content, resources, and devices to meet the needs of all students.

Simply Said: Understanding Accessibility in Digital Learning Materials
This brief video provides a synopsis of accessibility features to consider when developing digital learning materials and an excellent introduction for those who are unfamiliar with accessibility issues.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzE5dj1WTSo

Make Technology Work for Everyone: Introducing Digital Accessibility

This short, introductory animated video presents 15 tips to help make your technology usable and inclusive. It also provides information on why digital inclusion is an important educational issue.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ik_LHmZx8Y

Section 508 Compliancy and Microsoft Word/PowerPoint

These quick tutorial videos show how to make Word and PowerPoint documents compliant with the laws related to accessibility. This information is especially important for teachers and others who are developing their own learning materials.
Word: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQD1skbTM5g
PowerPoint: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2BZt-xmP4A

Do-It-Yourself Workflows for Captioning and Transcription

This webinar from the Ohio State University Web Accessibility Center presents an easy-to-follow, step-by-step guide to Do It Yourself (DIY) captioning, an essential accessibility feature for video content.
http://www.3playmedia.com/resources/webinars/diy-07-23-2015/

The Long Road From Reactive To Proactive: Developing an Accessibility Strategy

This webinar discusses tools for moving your accessibility processes from reactive to proactive. Although the video content is geared toward higher education, it can be applied to all levels of the education system.
http://www.3playmedia.com/resources/webinars/reactive-proactive-03-19-2015/

Visit the CTD website for more information on accessibility at www.ctdinstitute.org.