

WECO  
WEBINAR  
OCTOBER 10, 2018

TYPEWELL TRANSCRIPTION PROVIDED BY:  
CAPTION ACCESS

[contact@captionaccess.com](mailto:contact@captionaccess.com)

[www.captionaccess.com](http://www.captionaccess.com)

I'd like to welcome everyone to getting started in accessibility. We do have a presentation that we'll share. If you are plugged in through your computer, you should receive a prompt to accept my screen share in just a moment. You do not have to have access to the presentation to understand the principles we'll cover in training today.

This is a class that we really love to teach here at WECO, getting started in digital accessibility because it provides a background for how people that live with a variety of disabilities interact with digital venues. My name is Lynn Waremen [sp?] I am president and founder of WECO Accessibility Services. I know when I got started in digital accessibility it was by happenstance. I was at that time a federal program coordinator. I did web work on the side as I have a communications degree.

All of a sudden, my agency was embroiled in an ADA transition plan that involved three potential lawsuits. They needed somebody who could build a webpage for the effort and they needed somebody who could build accessible meeting agendas for the advisory board that was largely staffed with individuals who lived with disabilities. I kind of had a trial by fire in my entry into accessibility. What we're trying to do with this class is make it easier for you to understand where people with a variety of disabilities are coming from, and why they need slight differences in how you communicate with them digitally.

Just a little bit about us. WECO Accessibility Services is a for profit organization but we are mission based. Our goal is to make the world more accessible to everyone. To put you in touch with subject matter experts who live with disabilities. And also provide a professional employment path to what is known as the largest minority group in the United States and in the world and one that experiences about an 80% unemployment and under employment rate in the United States as professionals

who live with disabilities. We have a dual mission which creates a win-win.

Today you'll get a backdrop for digital associability, find out how it impacts users and get some practical next steps, so you can move ahead. Why don't we start out with talking about what digital accessibility is? It's an opportunity for you to include more people into your communications. We try to help people see that digital accessibility is an opportunity and not a responsibility necessarily that you have to shoulder but a way for you to include more people in what you're communicating.

Digital accessibility means that people who live with disabilities need to be able to access information found on websites, mobile applications and software programs. This may or may not include using devices to do that. That's an important thing. When I started working on accessible websites, for me it became all about making my websites accessible to people who are blind. I became fixated on that. I had a mentor from the Great Lakes ADA Center who said this isn't just about people who are blind, it includes all kinds of disabilities.

It's important to note that digital accessibility isn't always involving a device. Sometimes people live with different disabilities have unique design needs, but they don't use devices. We'll talk about that shortly.

What makes information technology or websites inaccessible? Inaccessible or improperly identified HTML is a bit part of this. If you develop pages in the way that you're taught using the cascading model that will get you far ahead. There are other issues that stem from the needs of people with disabilities not being considered in design and management chances. You'll see more about that as we move on. It's basics things like is the choice of words or terms over people's heads. Is it difficult for someone with a cognitive disability to understand? Is the font difficult to read for someone with low vision? For someone who's handshakes, is it difficult to select one of these links on the side? We'll talk about that more as we move forward.

Digital inaccessibility effects users living with disabilities in ways that make information be difficult to find or understand. When websites or software and mobile apps aren't accessible, people are just left out. I observed this when I worked with the committee and state government. The people I worked with on the transition plan were frustrated because it's difficult to get news or to find jobs or are be a part of social media and to experience the same opportunities that we do.

When you're working on making a website accessible you're not building it, you're building inclusion. It's more than just building a website. It's an opportunity to include people. It's an immense power that you have as someone who blades a website or mobile app because it's a chance to include more people in the use of your product and include more people participating in daily life.

How big of a deal is digital accessibility? Right now, about 19% of Americans live with disabilities according to the last census data that we have. According to an intern

project that's a bit dated they estimated that 54% of adults living with disabilities go online. That number is probably higher today, but the trough is that the number of us who live with disabilities will grow as the population ages. Now we're facing the retirement of the bulk of the baby boom population here in the United States. That means that getting information digitally is important to that generation of people. So digital accessibility is going to become more important as time goes on.

The bottom line is that what we see with business trends and the aging population is that if your website isn't accessible or your business isn't accessible you probably not going to be in business for long. It's going to be the way we receive information going into the future.

Let's talk about the laws and governances that foster accessibility. I think it's important because I have a government background that whenever I start a program I read the laws and governances about it. Why do we need this? It's easy to hear that you're supposed to be doing this but what are the laws? We like to break this down for people.

Making software accessible has been a part of the United States law. We have two laws on the books that deal with this. Mobile applications are not a part of this law at this point. They are something we know will be soon.

The ADA applies to everybody, business, government or church or even a neighborhood watch website. If you're putting something out for then it needs to be accessible. Section 508 was designed specifically for governments to tell them what to do to make websites accessible. Even though it applied to the government many other groups followed it. Also, non-government groups that wanted to sell to the government had to follow it because they need everything purchased to follow this section.

The ADA applies to everyone and 508 applies to the government. In July of 2010 the department of justice issued governances about web access. We didn't have anything within the ADA that spelled out what that meant. Those regulations were released in 2018 but in 2017 all regulations were withdrawn. That has nothing to do with the regulations not being valid or a bad idea.

As governments change and this administration does not focus on accessibility or rights for people living with disabilities. It wasn't a shock to us. Do we not need to adhere to the ADA? It still matters because accessibility is viewed in enforcement regulation agencies as a civil right. A lot of lawsuits that were filed with the DOJ are now with other offices. One thing that happens is you can roll back regulations, but you have precedence. Courts have ruled on ADA websites for a while, so they continue. The frequency of lawsuits has shot up because there's so little clarity about the law.

The answer is that the train has left the station. It's difficult to give up civil rights. Most of us don't want to be viewed as that kind of business anyway. We learned from the access board, we use a standard called web content accessibility guidelines. They're

designed by the world wide web consortium.

I'm checking on everything now.

We're just getting back to the presentation. If anybody is having trouble hearing or seeing anything you can use that text box on the right or just speak up. I'm sharing my screen again. I want to make sure everything is okay.

The world wide web consortium is volunteers. It's not a law. It's a guideline and that's a suggestion. WCAG has been applied to different laws across the world. It's a point of agreement between different countries and groups. At WECO it's made our lives easier. We have a lot of clients that want us to test so it's included in our standards.

There are three levels but two are applied to law. Within each level is level A, AA and AAA. The higher the letter, the harder the standard is. It's considered the best form of standards now.

We have 2.1 released in June. It's a part of WECO standards. We see governments and large companies moving towards this. We've seen differences that make 2.1 more clear about how people interact with websites. There's more information about how people with hearing impairments can interact.

It's up to your organization if they want to adhere to 2.1 now. The United States access court and the European union is at 2.0 AA.

We know that the United States access board and the European union has adopted that. The United States DOT airline industry has adopted this with a caveat that people who live with disabilities test the products. It's also applied to the refresh of section 508 last year. We're certain that the new ADA web rules look like 2.0 ADA.

Our own testing covers 2.0. It will start to cover 2.1 at the end of this year. We also have a few standards of our own that we think the law has missed. They're practical things.

Right now we'll give you a crash course about people living with disabilities and how they encounter websites and software. There are four major groups recognized by the federal government. There's mobility, cognitive that impacts how someone perceives information, hearing and sight. At WECO we train testers for all of those classifications. It's not uncommon for testers to cover more than one. We'll give you some cameos about the people on our team.

This is Chad. He helps us teach classes. He has limited fine motor skills due to paralysis. He has a hard time typing. He uses speech activated software called Dragon. He will also use a pointer stick. This is his homemade painter stick that he attaches a pencil to it. He will use sticky keys for keyboard navigation.

Chad will also bring in a windows tablet with a large touch screen which makes it easier for him. The types of devices that are typical for people with fine motor skill impairment have eye tracking software which they can type using their eyes. They have specialized mouse's and pointers. You'll see a trackball that allows someone to move their mouse. And altered keyboards. This shows a metal key guard so that someone who has difficulty typing can type one key at a time.

Not everyone chooses to use a device. They may choose to type slowly or perhaps their hands are freer so don't use speech recognition software.

I'm going to mute everyone.

The biggest problems are that mouse to keyboard travel and be difficult. We all struggle with airline reservation website or job applications if they're timed. If it takes someone longer they can time out before finishing. Sites that are mouse dependent might be fun for people without challenges to fine motor skills. It can be exhausting for someone with those issues.

Next, we'll introduce you to Chelsea. She has an intellectual disability. We learned a lot when she worked with us. We were fascinated by the fact that she didn't own a computer. She tested everything on an iPhone or an iPad. Her dream was to work in an Apple store. She loved their products. We realized that she found mobile devices easier to use because the text was simple, and the graphics were limited. She loves to bring her devices with her. She was fun to work with and we learned a lot.

That speaks to an age group and what it's like living with an intellect disability being attracted to that simplified environment. A lot of developers could recreate in that environment. It might not be a good idea because of these questions. It's a huge category covering dyslexia, or mental illnesses. That can make cognition difficult. ADD or brain injuries also. We have a lot of things to consider when accommodating cognitive disabilities.

They could become overwhelmed or easily distracted. Pages with a certain clicker could trigger seizures. Many people in my family live with epilepsy. Or if website is not intuitive and it's difficult to understand what they're telling us.

A good example can be when we often hear that educates websites such as Moodle are difficult for people with ADHD difficult to follow. One teacher said she had a student with ADD and she couldn't get her assignments off of Moodle because she was overwhelmed so the teacher got that information for her. Sometimes sites can exclude people with this disability.

Kate lives with a hearing disability. Hearing disabilities are not an all or nothing thing. People are not either deaf or hearing. There're gray areas in between. Kate for instance can hear music but spoken words are more difficult. Kate uses two hearing aids. In this picture she's using a device to listen in on meetings. There are a lot of

people in this category that do not use devices at all. A lot of people don't view their hearing as a disability.

It can creep up on someone and we'll see more of this as the population ages. They may not understand all of the things they're missing. This category of people might not use a device or recognize the problem. We have issues whenever sound equates access. If the only way to get information is to hear that can be a problem.

I'm old enough to remember when websites started. We would have people complete forms and the success criteria was a chime sound. We don't use that anymore. Just remember if you're having anything on audio like a video, it needs to be captioned. If there's music that gives meaning there needs to be a way to access it.

If people are acknowledged and use a device such as a cochlear implant which you may not see. People do use hearing aids and also sign language. Some individuals are fluent in American Sign Language. If that is their first language it may not be easy to understand spoken English. ASL does not follow English grammar.

I encountered that when I worked on ADA pages and I heard from someone using ASL and their sentence structure and different, so it took time for me to understand them. We essentially spoke different languages.

Finally, sight related disabilities. This is Niña, another tester. She's been with us for a long time. She uses screen reader software that reads the page out loud for her. She may also use a braille display. She can feel the words on the webpage. It will go over each page and convey it to her. Some people prefer to print it in braille. People with sight related disabilities sometimes prefer that. We have someone on our team who prefers to read in braille.

Some types of devices used for people with sight related disabilities are such as an enlarged screen or reader software. We have a specialist who switches back and forth depending on his comfort level. Some issues and these seem daunting to people because many of us that are sighted work on websites and this is foreign to us. Making things accessible for someone with a sight related disability is not that difficult if you stick to what you know about basic design and coding.

If we create headings on pages, just make them look visually but we do not use the cascading style sheet to indicate them. The reading software uses that as a navigation point. If there's only one way to receive information or if there's automatic movement such as refreshing that can cause the screen reader to find difficulties.

We'll look at a film about how a screen reader works. I'll give you the link and have you view it after the class. We find when we're doing this via the web it doesn't sync up correctly. It's an older video that we used from the Trace center at the university of Wisconsin. It shows how a screen reader works. It's only a few minutes so I recommend that you look at that after class.

Let's talk about meeting people's needs digitally and some solid steps. We'll open up the microphone, so you can ask questions or share experiences with everybody in the room. I love this quote, "accessibility is a process. It is not a feature."

When WECO opened its doors, nobody had heard about people testing websites for disability access. We entered this field with our foot firmly implanted in automation. In the last 8 years we've yet to see software that changes a webpage or document magically transform into something completely accessible.

It's important that you realize this is a skill that has to be learned and can be learned. You can integrate them into your processes. We recommend that you develop accessibility awareness like classes such as these. We always give free classes and we have more in-depth classes also. It's important that people understand the buy in works best across the board. We also include people like customer service people and sales people in the training.

You need to agree to the process. It will save you time and money if it's just a natural part of development. Moving into implementation is how do we maintain this and train new people, so they understand our accessibility processes and can engage in.

It's important to think about who needs to know. Coming from a state organization I understand how easy it is to get information. If your resources are limited, then think about how interacts with the public or a client. Do they make something that a client or the public is use? Do they make decisions that will affect the public or our clients? That's crucial because accessibility needs to be a part of that.

If your accessibility policy and limited and it's not unusual for us to hear that they don't employ people with a disability. The world is changing. Chances are you work with someone who has a disability, but you don't know it. Some vendors may live with disabilities also. It's something more than just public facing.

We encourage people to think about accessibility as leverage to boost your mission. Think about the impacts. It's risk management. You have legal requirements. There's a market reach also. People living with disabilities are the largest unrecognized market. A lot of folks with disabilities are on-line dependent. Especially if their ability to travel and limited. The way they access sources on-line.

It will improve the image of our company in the process. We can view accessibility as an opportunity.

Accessibility does come to life when it's integrated into your company's process. It's easy and cost effective when it's just something that you do. We offer free tools such as accessibility assessment that we can do on your homepage or your mobile application. It gives you a baseline for accessibility. There's a button on our website that you can click for this.

We have a free accessibility library found under our resources tab. Bookmark it. We have a lot of information about making a case for accessibility and there are links for free testing tools for things like color contrast and other things that are not easy for you to test on your own.

You can sign up for our accessibility blog. You can go to our website or give me the information and we can have our team sign you up for that.

When we do this in person we give away a checklist card. If you'd like one let me know and we can get that out to you in the mail. It's a nice glossy card that you can post. We have free tools for people because we're mission based. You can connect with us anytime. Our website is [theweco.com](http://theweco.com). We're on Twitter and Facebook as well.

I'm going to unmute everyone and see if there are questions anyone has.

I have an email question. Is WCAG what I should follow if I work for a large corporation? It's a good standard that's universal but it depends on what your company does. If your corporation sells to the government, you'll need to look at section 508 and you may need to complete a section 508 voluntary product accessibility template. Look at what your company does and what it's selling and to whom.

At this point most of our clients look at WCAG 2.1 but that depends on where your product is.

Can I test my website myself? Do I need to hire someone to do that for me? That depends on where you're at. And the resources that you have. It's possible to do a great deal of accessibility testing on your own. If you go to the WECO resource, we have a section with links to free tools developed by United States tax dollars. We find that our clients that test themselves and then come to us for final testing, their websites test out fairly clean. These tools do a good job.

There might be nuances that impact people with disabilities that are missed. The software advertises as being accurate on only 25%. The rest has to be done by a human being. Testing by someone with a disability is more powerful.

Are there any more questions from today's assembled group?

We're nearly at time. We'll end for today, but I want to let you know that if you have any questions I'll type this on our chat feature. You can email us at [accessinfo@weco.com](mailto:accessinfo@weco.com). On our webpage is a link for us to test your website. We're staffed by people with disabilities.

Thank you everyone.

[End of webinar.]

This transcript is being provided in a rough-draft format and reflects the transcriber's best effort to express the full meaning intended by the speakers. It is not a verbatim transcript.