



# Making a Business Case for Accessibility

## A Guide and Discussion



Your Instructor:  
Lynn Wehrman  
Founder/President  
WeCo Accessibility Services

---

- Communications background
- Federal program coordination
- Early government digital accessibility specialist
- Digital document accessibility pioneer





# WeCo Accessibility Services

**Not your typical accessibility company:**

As a mission-based company, accessibility isn't simply a "product" we've added to enhance our bottom line.

It's how we live each day.





# **We're Invested**

Your accessibility  
needs are our  
mission





Kate  
Olson  
WeCo

# SME's at your service!

## Our Accessibility Specialists and Certified Test Consultants

- Live with disabilities
- Trained and certified
- Grasp digital needs from the user's perspective



# Today's Webinar

## Making a Business Case for Accessibility

1. How did we get here?  
Accessibility, Human Rights & the Law
  - *Does fear motivate?*
2. A New, Socially Aware Culture
3. The Benefits of Accessibility:  
Quantified ROI and Risk Management
4. Addressing Roadblocks:  
How do we convince others?



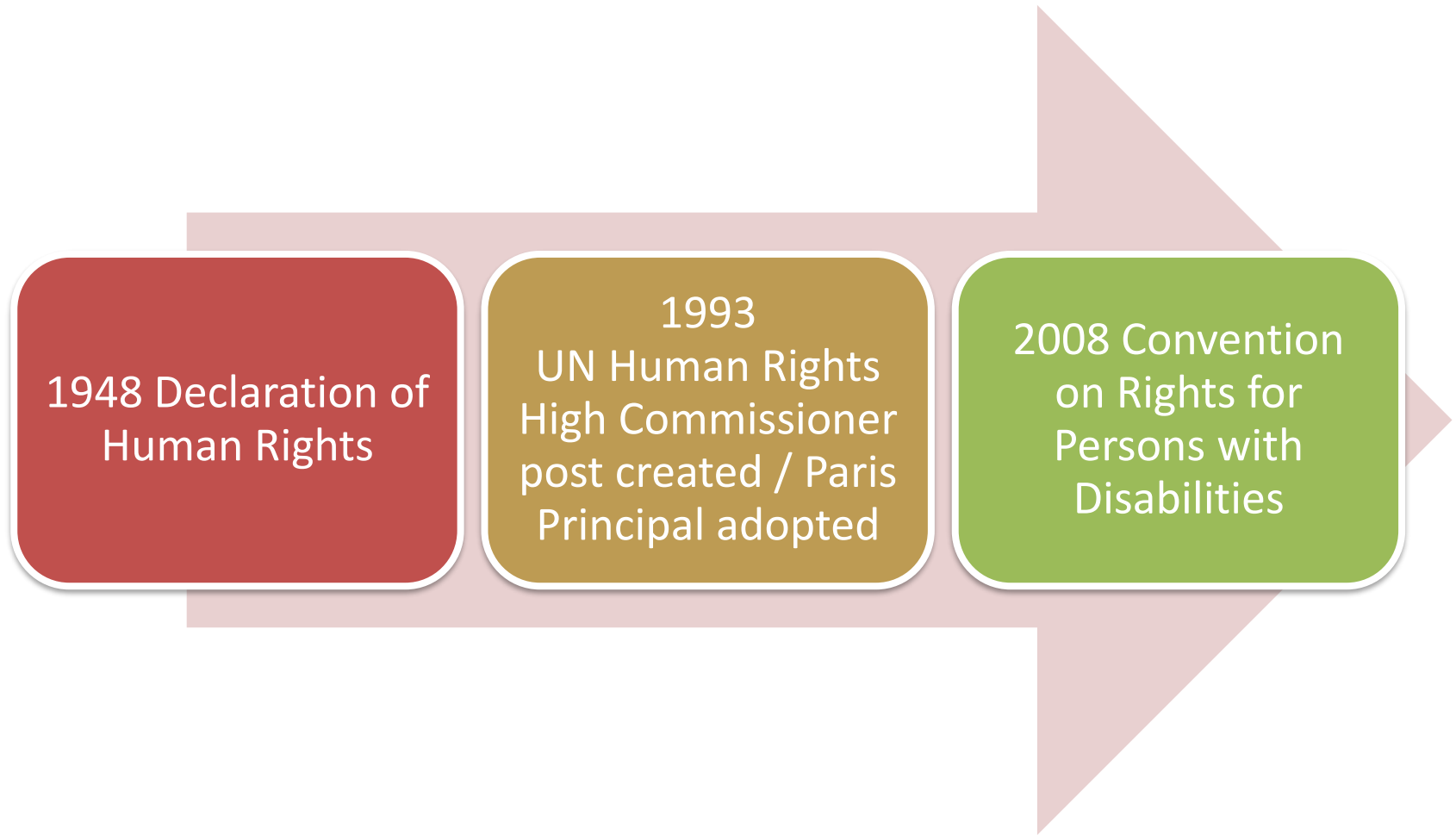


# How Did We Get Here?

Accessibility, Human Rights  
and the Law



# Human Right's Forward Momentum



*SOURCE: United Nations Human Rights Commission*





# Accessibility as a Human Right

“There has been a paradigm shift in the recognition of the human rights of people with disabilities, especially and crucially, their right to effective participation in all spheres of life on an equal basis with others.”

*-United Nations Human Rights  
Office of the High Commissioner*

# Can we put the Genie back in the bottle?

- Is accessibility bad for business?
- Can we roll back requirements?
- What will be the impact?





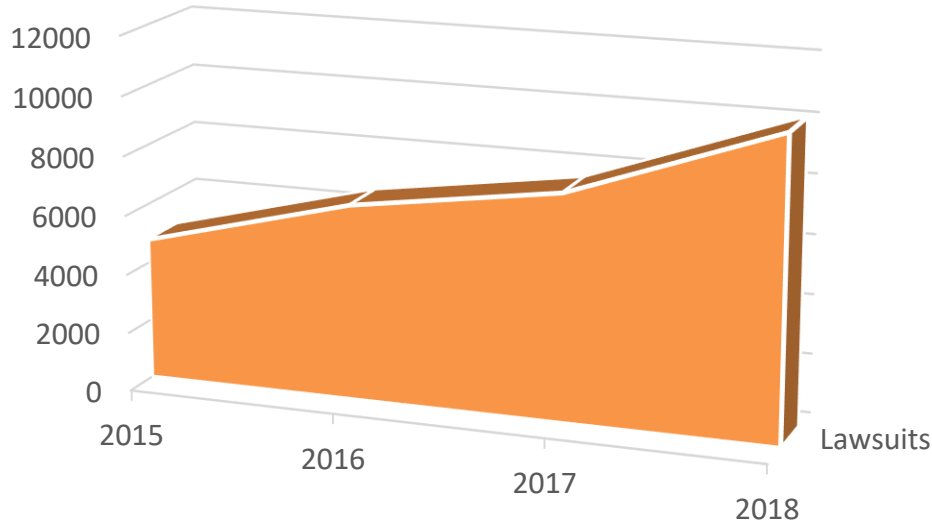
## December 2017: ADA Web Rules Withdrawn

Has the train left the station?

- Strong trend of rulings against defendants
- Lawsuits continue to be filed

# Legal Obscurity and ADA Lawsuits

Lawsuits



■ Lawsuits

- 2015: **4,789**
- 2016: **6,601**
- 2017: **7,633**
- 2018: **10,163**

- 33% increase from 2013
- Figures expected to increase in 2019

*SOURCES: Lainey Feingold and Seyfarth/Shaw findings on website inaccessibility lawsuits*



# A New Socially Aware Culture

What Happens When Human Rights  
and Social Responsibility  
Govern our Choices?





The background of the slide features several thin, curved lines in shades of gray, some solid and some dashed, creating a sense of motion and depth. On the left side, there is a blue graphic element consisting of a horizontal bar and a larger square below it, with a small triangular pointer at the bottom center.

## The Socially Driven Marketplace

“According to a 2013 survey, 2.5 billion consumers worldwide, representing 36.4 percent of the global population, are ‘aspirationals’—they define themselves in part through brands, and yet believe they have a responsibility to purchase products that are good for the environment and society.”

-BBMG *“From Obligation to Desire” study*



## Cause Sponsorship

- \$2.23 billion 2019
- 4.5% increase over 2018

*SOURCE:  
Edelman's 2018 Brand Study*



# The Consumer that Cares

**Chooses to do business with organizations that demonstrate they are:**

- Responsible (86%)
- Caring (85%)
- Advocate for issues (81%)
- Protect the environment (79%)

**SOURCE:**

*"Purpose 2020" Report (Kantar-2018)*





Does Fear  
Motivate?

To a point.

Belief in an initiative yields  
longer term impacts.



# The Benefits of Accessibility

Quantified ROI and Risk Management

Accessible

Aware

Independent





Accessible  
Design is  
More  
Inclusive

# A growing number of us need digital accessibility

- 19% of Americans live with a disabilities (*US Census 2012*)
- 54 % of adults living with a disability go online (*Pew Internet Project 2011*)

**The number of us living with disabilities will grow as our population ages.**



Accessible  
Design is  
Welcoming



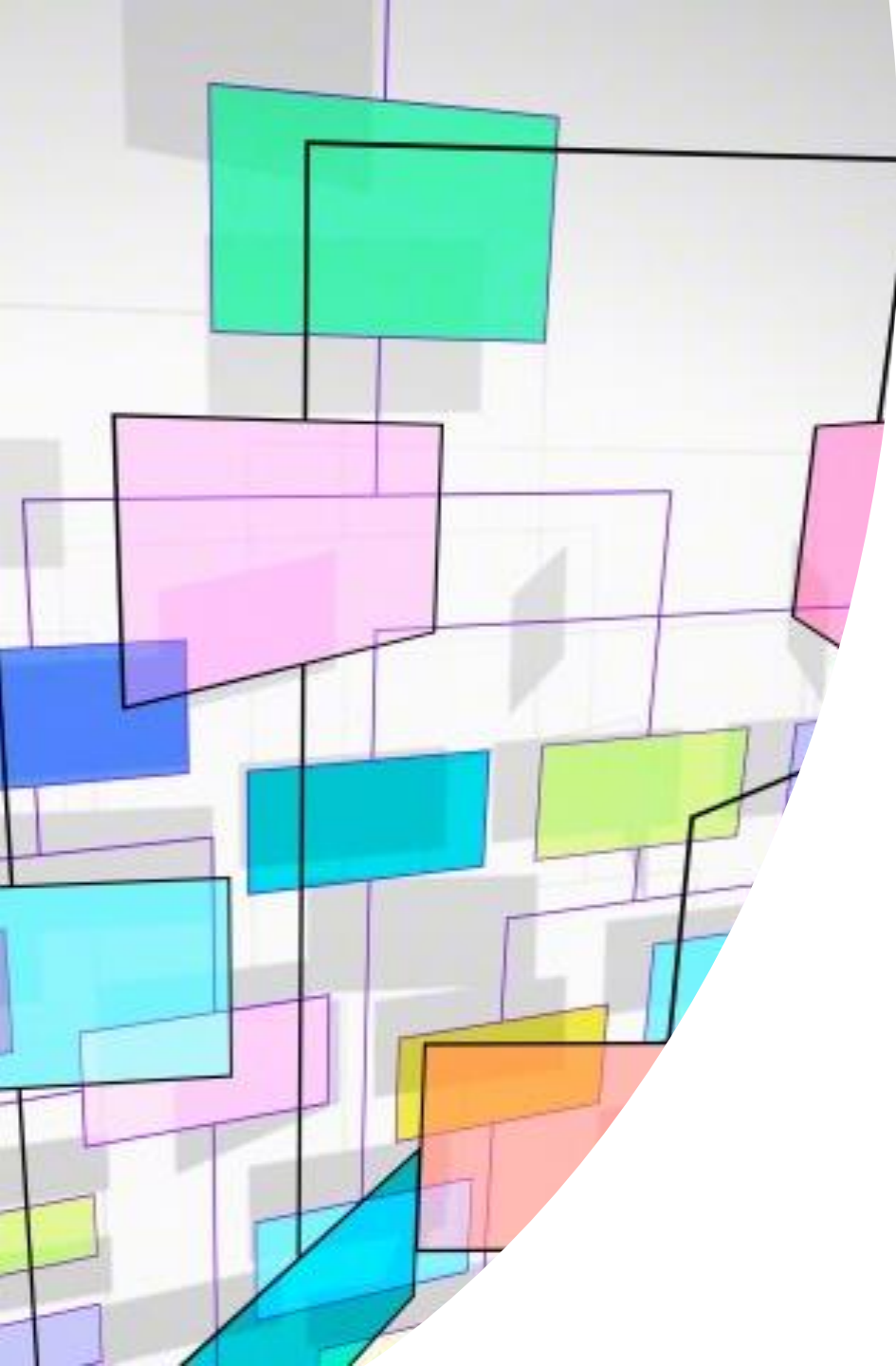
Accessible  
Design  
Improves  
Usability  
for  
Everyone





Accessible  
Design  
Improves  
SEO





# Accessible Design Manages Risk



Accessible  
Design  
Improves  
Your Image



**Accessible Design Inspires  
Innovation**



# Addressing Accessibility Roadblocks

What's holding us back?



# A Culture of Unspoken Nonacceptance

## Observations surrounding disability inclusion:

- Discomfort
  - Responsibility is someone else's
  - It doesn't impact us:
    - We don't hire or do business with this demographic
- = cost cannot be justified



# Disability Demographic Shifts



- Largest minority group in US and globally
- 20% of US population
  - 1 out of 5 potential customers
- Projected to grow exponentially as Baby Boomers retire



# Blindness in the US


“With the youngest of the baby boomers hitting 65 by 2029, the number of people with visual impairment or **blindness** in the **United States** is expected to double to more than 8 million by 2050...”

*-National Institutes of Health / May 2016*



What is holding  
us back?

- Be honest
- Accept what you learn
- Address without judgement

The background features a series of thin, concentric circles in light gray, some solid and some dashed, creating a ripple effect. A thick, dark gray or black curved swoosh enters from the left, partially overlapping the orange circle.

# Bringing Others Onboard

Nothing happens until  
someone sells something.



How do we  
convince?

## Define the terms of the discussion

- Essential with an unfamiliar topic

## Listen to reservations

- Acknowledge/identify
- Ask questions: identify mutual knowledge gaps
- Roadmap and may be a “buying sign”
- Gain their TRUST





# How do we convince?

## **Make a good argument**

- Gather facts
- Look at all sides
- Develop reasoning
- Back up reasoning with facts

## **Make it personal**

- How will it impact their work?
- Who do they know who will be impacted?





# What are the basic facts?

## Making a Business Case for Accessibility

**Broaden** the reach of audiences

**Increase** traffic to the website

**Expand** potential market share

**Increase** search ranking potential

**Improve** the site and increase usability for all visitors

**Generate** positive PR and brand awareness

**Demonstrate** a commitment and care for people with disabilities

**Comply** with legislation to reduce legal liabilities

**Protect** the brand

**Standardize** Web design, build and maintenance

**Cut** overall production costs

.



# How do we demonstrate them?

## FACT

- **Laws**

## BACKUP

- Cautionary legal tales

- **Audience needs**

- Statistics and case studies

- **Economic impacts**

- Spending power and networking capabilities

- Project figures

- **Social impacts**

- Personal stories



The question has  
changed from, “can  
we afford to do it?”  
to  
“can we afford NOT  
to do it?”

Is it good business?



# Finding Information

## Making a Business Case for Accessibility

WeCo's Make a Business Case for Accessibility Resource Page

US Department of Labor

US Census Bureau

US Centers for Disease Control

Pew Research: Internet Focus

Disabled World

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)





# Presenting Information

## SHOW instead of tell

- Device demonstrations
- Personal impact stories

## Bottom Line Awareness

- Accessibility as a way to attract business
- How accessibility secured contracts





# Presenting Information

## Your competitors

- Accessibility work
- Accessibility profile

## Public perception

- Is insensitivity costing us more than money?
- How could that translate into dollars down the road?

An abstract orange watercolor splash on the left side of the slide, with various shades of orange and brown, creating a textured, painterly effect.

Making a  
case  
begins  
with belief

“Accessibility is a  
journey that includes  
much more than  
changes in code.  
It’s the change inside  
of us that is the most  
important one of all.”

*-Lynn Wehrman  
World Information  
Architecture Day-Mpls  
2019*

# Mission-Based Resources

## Free and Low Cost

Making accessibility possible for everyone

- Free Accessibility Library
- Accessibility Blog
- Accessibility QuickTip Learning Emails
  
- Accessibility Twin Cities MeetUp
- Free and affordable “single seat” training classes
- Free public learning events

See our website: **[theweco.com](http://theweco.com)**





Your best  
business case is  
made when people  
understand why

Training makes your business case

- MeetUps
- Free Training
- Low Cost Training
- Lunch and Learn Demonstrations

Training



# Thank you

Making a business case is possible and we are here to help.

Reach out to us anytime. We're here to help.

[accessinfo@theweco.com](mailto:accessinfo@theweco.com)

855-849-5050 x1

theweco.com