

Survey for Evaluating A Museum's Website Accessibility

Created by Art Beyond Sight and WebAIM

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Web Accessibility is evaluated under four main principles that are supported by national and international legislation: ADA, IDEA, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504 and Section 508) among others. Those principles are: **Perceivable:** Content is available to the senses (vision and hearing primarily) either through the browser or through assistive technologies (e.g. screen readers, screen enlargers, etc.) **Operable:** Users can interact with all controls and interactive elements using the mouse, keyboard, or an assistive device. **Understandable:** Content is clear and limits confusion and ambiguity. **Robust:** Content supports a wide range of technologies (including old and new user agents and assistive technology).

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) has developed guidelines to ensure that Web resources are optimally accessible. However those guidelines tend to be theoretical and lack tie-ins to the needs of specific audiences, such as people who are partially sighted. To maximize their benefits, we have analyzed aspects of Web design and writing for the Web that are specific to museums and cultural institution, and to people with a variety of disabilities.

The following survey can be used to develop Web Accessibility recommendations for museum's Websites designers to better respond to the wide diversity of needs of people with disabilities.

Survey for evaluating a museum's Website accessibility

1. Finding Information

Home Page

-- Is the name of the museum on the page title (bar at the top of the Web browser) and clearly stated at the top of the home page?

Visitor Information and Direction

-- Could you find visitors' information, such as museum address, hours, and location?

- Was it easy to find?
- How many steps/clicks are required to find this information (how many pages

- did you have to open)?
- Were the directions helpful to you?
- What information was missing from the given directions?
- Were you able to find information on accessible services or entrances?
- If yes, was it listing under Visitor Information/Visit/Plan a Visit/Accessibility or Educational/Access programs or others?
- Was there a link to access programs?

Current Exhibition and What's On View

-- Could you find information on current exhibition(s)?

- Using a tool such as WAVE (<http://wave.webaim.org>), evaluate the alternative text for images on the exhibit page. Was alternative text present for images? If so, was it provided for images from the exhibition?
- Did the alternative text provide accurate, useful information?
- Using this information, could you make a decision about visiting this exhibit? If not, what would enable you to make such decision?
- Was the language describing the exhibit clear, simple and understandable?
- Did you have difficulty with terminology? What words and concepts were not clear?

-- Would you like to visit the museum if you had an opportunity?

- Why?
- List one to three things you are interested in learning more about at the museum.

Event Calendar

-- Could you find information on today's program or a program that could be of interest, i.e., family programs? Please note if the terminology was not clear to you. When finding the program page, did any links not work or open in new windows unexpectedly?

Accessibility Information

-- Could you find information on programs for people who are blind? Where did you find it? Was it listed on Visitor Information/Accessibility or Educational Programs?

-- Could you find museum contacts and get in touch with a staff person who deals with access or visitor services to ask questions?

-- Was all accessibility information (entrances, programs, contact) listed on the same page?

2. Navigation and Presentation

-- Was the content well presented and organized logically?

- Was navigation from one page to another logical?
- When using a screen reader did you know where you were as you navigated from one page to another? Explain.
- Please elaborate on the site navigation in general as experienced through the screen reader. Point to difficulties in navigation, especially if they happened repeatedly.

-- Was a "Skip navigation," "Skip to main content," or similar link provided on the Web pages?

-- Was there a site map? Was it helpful?

-- Was there a search function? Could you use it?

-- Did you find any data tables that were difficult to understand with a screen reader? If yes, please give example(s).

-- Did all form elements have associated form labels?

-- Did you experience any unexpected pop-up windows? If yes, please describe.

-- Did you find anything that you could not access using only the keyboard (for example: a feature that required the use of a mouse)?

-- Did the page contain a logical heading structure -- an h1 for the document title and subheadings (h2, h3, etc.) for section headings?

-- Did you find other parts of the Website that were difficult to access?

3. Understandability

-- Were links descriptive?

- If you listened to links in a screen reader link list, did they make sense out of context (for example, "click here" heard out of context does not provide any detail about what the link does)?

-- Was text clearly written and easily understandable?

- Did you come across text that was hard to interpret, either because it used art terms and visual language or because the terminology was unclear? Please give concrete examples.
- Was the contrast between the background color and the text color appropriate to your needs?
- Were the Web pages designed so that all information conveyed with color was also available without color?

-- Was the default font size adequate? Was any text on the screen too small to adequately read? When font size is increased, does the page remain readable?

-- Did the site offer language translation?

-- Was visual/audio and non---html content comprehensible?

- Was there a text/audio equivalent for every/main visual elements?
- Were there transcripts/captions for audio/video?
- Was sign language provided for video?

-- Did you find any inaccessible PDFs, PowerPoint, Flash or other non---html content?

-- Are error recovery mechanisms provided for forms? Try submitting an empty form – are error details clearly available and accessible?

4. Is the Website compatible with JAWS or other screen readers?