


The title is set against a background of overlapping geometric shapes in shades of blue and green. The text is in a bold, white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST: TRUE INCLUSION IN LEGAL MARKETING

A stylized illustration in shades of blue and green. On the left, an eye is depicted with a hand-like shape inside it. On the right, an ear is shown with sound waves emanating from it. The background is a dark blue with lighter blue and green geometric shapes.

The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) has published a helpful list of “Easy Checks”. This list is a good place to start checking if your website meets basic accessibility guidelines. Below is a brief summary of the WAI’s recommendations.

Page title

- Check that there is a title that describes the content of the page.
- Check that the title is different from other pages on the website.

Alt Text

Alt text describes the content of an image, a picture, illustration, chart, etc. This allows people with impaired vision to use screen readers, which will read the alt text out. As well, Google and other search engines will “read” alt text, so implementing correct formatting can also help improve your site’s SEO.

- If an image conveys information useful for interacting with or understanding the web page content, then it needs alternative text.
- If an image is just decorative or background and people don’t need to know about the image, then it should have null alt (alt=“ ”).
- Alt text is contextual. The easiest way to think about it is to ask: how would I describe this image to someone who couldn’t view the page?

Headings

Headings are generally displayed visually on a page. Ensuring that headings are properly tagged (H1-H6) will allow people using screen readers to make sense of the hierarchy of information. It also affects the way that Google and other search engines “read” a web page.

Check to see that:

- The page has a heading. Almost all pages should have at least one heading.
- All text that looks like a heading is properly tagged (H1 - H6).
- All text that is marked up as a heading is really a conceptual section heading.
- The heading hierarchy is meaningful. Ideally the page starts with an “h1” – which is usually similar to the page title – and does not skip levels; however, these are not absolute requirements.

Contrast Ratio

Some people will have difficulty reading text that lacks sufficient contrast, for instance, light gray text on a pale gray background. Aging can decrease sensitivity to contrast, while other visual impairments can make it difficult to view text that is too bright on a screen. Make sure that there is a good amount of contrast between different elements such as the text and site background.

Text Size

As well, some users need to alter the size of text, or increase the space between lines, to make the text legible. Most web browsers allow people to change text size through text only sizing, text zoom or page zoom.

Ensure that:

- Altering the browser text settings does not make the web page unreadable.**
- Buttons, charts, fields, and other interactive elements are still useable with different text settings.**

Keyboard navigation

Some people cannot use a mouse and will need to rely on a keyboard to interact with the internet.

Ensure that:

- A user can move around your website and operate all the elements using only their keyboard (such as the space bar, arrows, and tab button).**

Forms and labels

The Web Accessibility Initiative lists criteria to ensure interactive elements like forms, drop-down boxes, and checkboxes are made accessible to people with a range of abilities.

Flashing and blinking content

Be mindful that bright, rapidly flashing lights can trigger seizures in some people with epilepsy.

Moving content

This can prove distracting to some users. Best practice is to give users the ability to pause or hide scrolling newsfeeds, movies, etc.

Video and audio

Is video content made accessible to people who can't view it (e.g. through audio description)? And is audio content available to people who have hearing impairments (e.g. through captions and transcripts)?

Structure

For a basic structure check, you should look at the web page without images, styles, and layout. Doing so makes it possible to identify accessibility barriers for people relying on a screen reader or reading it from a Braille display.

Additional Resources:

The above is only a preliminary checklist. Additional accessibility resources can be found through:

- The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) published by WAI through the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), the international standards body for the internet.
- WebAim: (webaim.org), a non-profit organization based at the Center for Persons with Disabilities at Utah State University.



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