

## Tools to Facilitate Accessible Web Design

### Breaking Free: Recreating Your Library Web Site from A-Z Pre-conference Sponsored by LITA ALA / CLA Annual Conference

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- **Online Accessibility Resources**

- W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/>)  
*W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines* issued by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), a part of the W3C, establishes three priority checkpoints for web content developers to meet. There are fourteen guidelines, and each of the three priority levels associated with 64 checkpoints. The guidelines support two themes for accessible design: ensuring graceful transformation and making content understandable and navigable. Bear in mind, these guidelines do not discourage content developers from using images, video, etc., but rather explain how to make multimedia content more accessible to a wide audience.
- Techniques for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 (<http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT-TECHS/>)  
This is a separate document issued by WAI that explains how to implement the checkpoints defined in the basic document. The *Techniques* document discusses each checkpoint in more detail and provides examples using the HTML, Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), Synchronized Multimedia Language (SMIL), etc. Included are techniques for document validation and testing, and an index of HTML elements and attributes (and which techniques use them). The Techniques Document has been designed to track changes in technology and is expected to be updated more frequently than the *Guidelines* document.
- Usability.gov (<http://www.usability.gov>)  
Offers links to information on web accessibility, and resources for building sites that are accessible to all users regardless of ability and disability.
- Accessible Web page design (<http://www.makoa.org/web-desi.htm>)  
Contains collection of accessible-design resources and accessibility links, frequently updated.
- Section 508 (<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/508/508home.html>)  
This is Section 508 official web site created by the Department of Justice.
- Usableweb.com (<http://www.usableweb.com/>)  
Contains web usability resources and a frequently updated list of accessibility articles and links.

- **Accessibility Evaluation Tools**

- BOBBY (<http://bobby.watchfire.com/bobby/html/en/index.jsp>)  
Bobby is a comprehensive web accessibility software tool designed to help expose and repair barriers to accessibility and encourage compliance with existing accessibility guidelines. Bobby tests for compliance with government standards, including the U.S. Government's Section 508. It offers prioritized suggestions based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines provided by the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Access Initiative. Bobby allows developers to test web pages and generate summary reports highlighting critical accessibility issues before posting content to live servers.

Priority one compliance is defined as necessary. A web site must pass all priority one checkpoints to be universally accessible. A word of caution: a "BOBBY Approval" does not necessarily mean that your site is accessible.

- Lynx Viewer (<http://www.delorie.com/web/lynxview.html>)  
The Lynx Viewer generates an HTML page that indicates how much of the content of your page would be available to Lynx, which is a text-only browser. In addition to showing how useful a site would be for a visually-impaired person, it is also a good indicator for anyone with older technology.
- The Wave (<http://wave.webaim.org/index.jsp>)  
The Wave automatically checks for accessibility on a web site, and gives guidance for the necessary human decision-making process. It provides a button you can put into your browser tool bar to check any page on the fly. It has a good tutorial with clear explanations of W3C guidelines.
- Commercial Products for fee that check for Section 508 violations
  - 508compliant.com  
According to its developers, this site evaluates web sites for compliance with Section 508 accessibility standards and fixes any problems it discovers.
  - InSight/InFocus of SSB Technologies Inc.  
(<http://www.ssbtechnologies.com>)  
It lists all suspected violations, groups them by type and sorts them by priority.

- **Online Training Web Sites**

- Webable Services (<http://www.webable.com/>)  
Webable provides useful information about web accessibility technology, consulting, and training including web site and software inspections, and accessibility training. The accessibility training includes topics from legal implication to steps of developing a usability test process that integrates people with disabilities. Topics include legal updates on federal/International guidelines, general introduction to accessibility

problems, overview of accessibility solutions, and suggestions for implementation. Included are examples of accessible, attractive design, and identify the tools used to design accessible web sites.

- Equal Access to Software and Information (EASI) (<http://www.rit.edu/~easi>)  
EASI provides courses about how to make web sites, online courses, and other learning experiences more accessible to those with disabilities. These courses include: barrier-free information technology, beginner and advanced barrier-free web design, barrier-free E-learning, accessible multimedia, accessible adaptive technology for users with learning disabilities, etc.
- **Browser Analyzers**
  - Web Page Backward Compatibility Viewer (<http://www.delorie.com/web/wpbcv.html>)  
You can enter the URL you want to view, and then choose from a list of features you want the Web browser to "see."
  - BrowserSizer (<http://www.applythis.com/browsersizer/default.asp>)  
BrowserSizer is a tool to help Web developers check to see how their web pages look on screen resolutions of 640x480, 800x600, 1024x768 and WebTV. It controls Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator from an unobtrusive application that provides an interface to resize either browser to the standard screen resolutions. This is shareware software.
- **Assistive Technology Devices**
  - JAWS ([http://www.freedomscientific.com/fs\\_products/software\\_jaws.asp](http://www.freedomscientific.com/fs_products/software_jaws.asp))  
Windows screen reader from Henter-Joyce. Stands for Job Access for Windows.
  - Window-Eyes (<http://www.gwmicro.com/windoweyes/windoweyes.htm>)  
Windows screen reader from GWMicro. Exploits IE's accessibility features. It has Braille support.
- **Tools from Vendors**
  - Microsoft has added screen magnifiers and text alternatives to visual elements in its Windows 2000, Office 2000, Internet Explorer 5 and NetMeeting. Microsoft added the features under a product known as "universal design".
  - Adobe ([access.adobe.com](http://access.adobe.com)) offers online tools for converting PDF files to HTML or ASCII.
  - Sun Microsystems Accessibility Program (<http://www.sun.com/access/>)  
Offers information on Java accessibility, and other advances in "enabling technologies".

