ADA WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

WHAT IS ADA WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY?

The [Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)](#) requires businesses to make accommodations for people with disabilities. Online content (websites, emails, social media, etc.) should be accessible to the visually or hearing impaired and those who must navigate by voice, screen readers, or other assistive technologies.

WHAT IS WCAG 2.1?

While the Department of Justice (DOJ) has yet to create "official" guidelines, they have recognized the [web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG)](#) created by the [World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)](#) as a baseline for understanding, standardizing, and ruling on ADA compliance cases. The most recently updated version, [WCAG 2.1](#), was realized mid-2018 with some minor updates, building upon its previously designated conformance efforts.

WCAG 2.1 LEVELS OF CONFORMANCE

Before getting started, it's important to consult with your internal legal team and/or compliance officer. Oftentimes, making changes to compliance may impact operations at every level, so ensuring that everyone in your organization is on the same page is key. The technical requirements are grouped under three levels: A, AA, and AAA. These three levels were designed to provide flexibility for different scenarios within your business, and each level has an increasingly higher standard of accessibility.

LEVEL A requires minimal effort, but also provides minimal impact. This is the baseline you should strive for. Even though Level A allows screen readers to more effectively scan a site, it may not make your site compliant to the current standards of the DOJ. Successful compliance of this level requires conformance to all items provided in the Level A guidelines below.

LEVEL AA is the happy medium that most businesses currently strive for. Level AA conformance satisfies all Level A criteria, building upon the base-level updates while still allowing for more flexible design choices. Successful compliance at this level requires conformance to all Level A and Level AA guidelines below.

LEVEL AAA captures all conformance factors at the highest level. While this is the most comprehensive level of website conformance, it is also the most restrictive on key interactive elements that can contribute to design and functionality of your website. Successful compliance at this level requires conformance to all Level A, Level AA and Level AAA guidelines below.

PERCEIVABLE COMPLIANCE

What is perceivable compliance? Website and informational components must be presented to users in ways they can perceive. This means that users must be able to recognize the information being presented to them (it can not be invisible to their senses).

WEBSITE FEATURE	LEVEL A	LEVEL AA	LEVEL AAA
Provide text alternatives for any non-text content	●	●	●
Provide text alternatives for video-only and audio-only content	●	●	●
Add captions to all videos that have sound	●	●	●
Describe movements or animations that provide extra information in prerecorded video that are not audibly explained	●	●	●
Live video includes caption		●	●
Provide sign language translations			●
Record alternative video with extended audio description			●
Provide a transcript for all video and audio content			●
Include closed captions with live audio			●
All content has intuitive page structure and formatting	●	●	●
Use meaningful sequencing of content	●	●	●
Provide instructions through more than one of the five senses	●	●	●
Do not rely only on color to convey information	●	●	●
Ensure the end user has control of audio volume	●	●	●
Use minimum color contrasts AA: Normal text 4.5:1, AA: Large text 3:1; AAA: Normal text 7:1, AAA: Large text 4.5:1		●	●
Ability to resize the text up to 200%		●	●
Limit text on embedded images		●	●
Remove background noise and limit audio content on the website			●
Users should be able to customize their view (foreground and background colors, etc.)			●
Restrict all embedded text on images			●
Content cannot be restricted to a single orientation (portrait or landscape)		●	●
Input fields for collecting data about a user can be programmatically completed with assistive technology tools		●	●
When using markup languages, content, icons and regions must be readable with assistive technology tools			●
Content can be presented with vertical and horizontal scroll without loss of information or functionality		●	●
Visual interface components used to convey function or active states must have a contrast ratio of 3:1		●	●

OPERABLE COMPLIANCE

What is operable compliance? Website components and navigation must be functional. This means that users must be able to operate the website components with ease (cannot require an action that a user is unable to perform).

WEBSITE FEATURE	LEVEL A	LEVEL AA	LEVEL AAA
Text Spacing • Line height: equal to or greater than 1.5x font size • Paragraph spacing: equal to or greater than 2x the font size • Letter spacing: equal to or greater than 0.12x font size • Word spacing: equal to or greater than 0.16x font size		•	•
Dismissible, hoverable, and persistent content has a hover or focus element	•	•	•
All parts of the website must be keyboard-accessible (tab, enter, arrows, etc.)	•	•	•
Allow keyboard use to navigate away from all parts within the site	•	•	•
Ability to turn off/on character key shortcuts	•	•	•
Time limits are user-adjustable (animations, etc.)	•	•	•
Moving, blinking, scrolling, or auto updating can be paused, stopped, or hidden by the user	•	•	•
No time limits are enforced (countdowns, etc.)	•	•	•
Ensure no interruptions of content consumption (pop-ups, ads, etc.)			•
If re-authentication is necessary, data that was entered is saved			•
Limit content that may flash more than three times in a second	•	•	•
No content may flash more than three times in a second, no exceptions			•
Provide skip-to-content links to bypass repeated content	•	•	•
Page titles and headings must be descriptive	•	•	•
Sequentially navigated pages must be logical and intuitive		•	•
Every link is descriptive with a clear purpose, removing URLs from page copy	•	•	•
Ensure content pieces with multiple pages or chapters have more than one way to navigate		•	•
Headings and labels describe the topic or purpose		•	•
Clear keyboard focus indicator on keyboard-operable content		•	•
Ensure the user always knows their location on the website			•
Every link's purpose is clear even when using out of context			•
Every new topic has a heading			•

WEBSITE FEATURE	LEVEL A	LEVEL AA	LEVEL AAA
If the website uses a keyboard shortcut using only a letter, number or symbol, then one of the following must be true: • A mechanism is available to turn the shortcut off • A mechanism is available to change the shortcut to use non-printable keyboard characters (Ctrl, Alt, etc.) • The keyboard shortcut is only active when that component has focus	•	•	•
Users are warned of the duration of any user inactivity that could cause data loss unless the data is preserved for 20+ hours			•
Animation triggered by interaction can be disabled unless the animation is essential to the information being conveyed			•
Use a single pointer whenever possible	•	•	•
For functions that are operated using a single pointer, at least one of the following is true: • The down-event of the pointer is not used to execute any function • The pointer up-event is available to abort the function before completion or to undo the function after completion • The up-event can reverse any down-event • Completing the function on the down-event is essential	•	•	•
If any user interface components, such as icons or logos, contain text, that text must be included in the image title field	•	•	•
Functions that can be operated by device movement or user motion can also be operated by single interface components, and responding to the motion can be disabled to prevent accidental actuation, except: • When motion is used to operate functionality through an accessibility-supported interface • When motion is essential for the function and doing so would invalidate the activity	•	•	•
The size of the target for a user to click on is at least 44 by 44 CSS pixels except when: • The target is available through an equivalent link or control on the same page that is at least 44 by 44 CSS pixels • The target is in a sentence or block of text • The size of the target is determined by the user agent and is not modified by the author • A particular presentation of the target is essential to the information being conveyed			•
Web content should be accessible and interactive with all pointer-style input devices whenever possible. Do not require additional or different input devices unless it is otherwise essential to do so.			•

UNDERSTANDABLE COMPLIANCE

What is understandable compliance? The information and operation of the website must be easily understandable. This means that the content and functionality of the website cannot be beyond a user's understanding.

WEBSITE FEATURE	LEVEL A	LEVEL AA	LEVEL AAA
Every page has a defined language	•	•	•
Language changes on a page are clearly communicated		•	•
Explain all unusual words and abbreviations			•
Write for a reading level of 9th grade or lower			•
Explain words that the screen reader will have trouble pronouncing			•
Content does not change on focus	•	•	•
Content does not change on input	•	•	•
Menu usage is consistent across the entire site		•	•
Icons and buttons are clearly identifiable as icons and buttons		•	•
Elements on the site do not change unless the end user asks for the change			•
Clearly call out web form input errors	•	•	•
Provide clear web form input instructions and labels	•	•	•
Clearly describe web form input errors and how to fix them		•	•
Validate input and allow input to be changed on web forms	•	•	•
Provide instructions for completing tasks, especially forms			•
Validate input and allow input to be changed without exception			•
Provide context-sensitive help to the user			•

ROBUST COMPLIANCE

What is robust compliance? Content must be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of tools, including assistive technologies. This means that content should remain accessible as technologies and user agents evolve.

WEBSITE FEATURE	LEVEL A	LEVEL AA	LEVEL AAA
Validate the HTML for proper formatting	•	•	•
All content generated by scripts must be fully accessible	•	•	•
Content that uses markup languages should be implemented in a way that they do not cause assistive technologies to refocus or present them as interactive content		•	•

TWO RIVERS

M A R K E T I N G

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