Facilitator's Guide: Ensuring Section 508 Compliance in eLearning

Target Audience: Instructional Designers and eLearning Developers

Learning Objectives:
1. Select the key components of Section 508 compliance.
2. Discriminate the benefits of Section 508 compliance for both learners and organizations, including improved accessibility, legal compliance, and enhanced brand reputation.
3. Apply Section 508 compliance principles to eLearning development by brainstorming strategies to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities and integrating accessibility features into training modules.

Training Purpose: Provide necessary information for Instructional Designers to create Section 508 compliant eLearning modules.

Materials / Equipment:
- Computer with high speed internet access
- iSpring Training Center and response tools
- Google Jamboard
- PowerPoint slide deck

Total Time: 60 minutes

Link to Presentation Slide Deck: Hobson Section 508 Compliance VILT.pptx

Producer: Pre-Work	Actions
	1. At the start of the session manage the waiting room and allow participants to enter. Continue to watch the waiting room throughout the session. 2. Launch the Poll on slide 2. Monitor participants that raise their hands and unmute to allow a few comments. You may also need to read a few questions or comments from the chat. 3. Use predetermined breakout rooms, launch the breakout rooms and have participants return after 2 minutes. Allow one or two participants to share their discussion. 4. Launch poll for Identify the Challenge activity and show results. 5. Launch the Jamboard activity. 6. Monitor hands being raised during the Share a Story activity. Allow 2-3 people to unmute and share, and/or read a few examples from the chat.
	Notes
	● Note that depending on the audience, the facilitator may be presenting the content for half of this session. Please confer with the facilitator to ensure you know if this is the entire course a phase of the course, if it is a phase of the course, confer if it is the first or second phase.

Facilitator: Pre-Work	Actions
	1. Use Mintimeter to poll to ask participants on slide 2, How familiar are you with Section 508 Compliance on a scale of 1-5? 2.
	Notes
	● This guide was developed for the purposes of delivering this course via iSpring Training Center, but it can also be used for classroom training with the following considerations: ● Breakout rooms will be adapted to meet the classroom environment. ● Questions will be made directly to learners, rather than by using iSpring response tools.
	● This session contains a breakout room activity, where participants will need to be divided into 4 groups. Collaborate with the Producer about whether you feel those groups would be formed a certain way or if the Producer can make them at random.
	● Open the PowerPoint file associated with this guide.
	● Share the PowerPoint file associated with this guide.

	• Some key talking points and questions are included in this guide but be prepared to add your own commentary and questions as well.
	• Aim towards generating a response from the learners every five minutes: this will keep learners engaged and will encourage them to follow along closely. There are built in activities to promote discussion with questions and comments.
	• Ensure you are familiar with the content and have reviewed the slides and handouts before the session.
	• Be prepared to share real-life examples and experiences to illustrust points,
	• Be sensitive and inclusive in discussions, recognizing the diverse experiences and perspectives of participants.

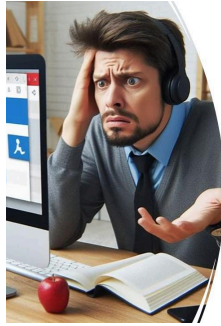| Training Outline: Session Number 1		
Slide(s)	**Approx. Time**	**Topic / Activity**
1-3	8 min	Welcome and learning objectives
4-6	10 min	Understanding Section 508 Compliance
7-8	10 min	Key components of Section 508 Compliance
9-11	12 min	Benefits of Section 508 Compliance
12-13	8 min	Common Challenges of Achieving 508 Compliance
14-16	10 min	Testing and Validation of Accessibility
17-18	8 min	Conclusion and Next Steps
19-20	2 min	Thank you & Contact Info
Total Time	**60 minutes**	

Detailed Guide			
Slide Details	**Slide Thumbnail**	**Facilitator Notes**	**Producer Notes**
Slide 1 (__ min) Welcome	Introduction Ensuring Section 508 Compliance in eLearning Welcome! We are so glad you have joined us today. Please tell us in the chat where you are from and what you hope to learn today.	**SAY:** ● Welcome everyone. Today, we'll dive into the critical topic of Section 508 Compliance and why it matters. My name is, ____, from ____ and I am happy to be here with you today. ● This is my colleague, ____ from ____ is also here with me as the course producer. She will monitor the chat, facilitate break out rooms, and help us all feel at home during our course today. ● Please tell us your names and where you are from in the chat. ● Welcome individuals as you see names appear and mention locations. **DO:** ● Look at chat and say hello by name.	**DO:** ● Allow participants to enter the room (continue to monitor the waiting room throughout the course) ● Remind participants to silence their microphones.

Slide 2 Explain Ground Rules	Ground Rules 1. You will be placed on mute when not speaking. 2. Participate actively by engaging in discussions, ask questions, and contribute to activities. 3. The chat will be available. Use the chat for relevant questions and comments in a professional manner. 4. Limit distractions.		**DO** ● Read the ground rules from the slide. **SAY:** ● By following these ground rules, we can create a respectful, engaging, and productive virtual learning environment for everyone involved.
Slide 3 Understanding Section 508	Learning Objectives: 1. Select the key components of Section 508 compliance in eLearning materials. 2. Discriminate the benefits of Section 508 compliance for learners and organizations. 3. Choose Section 508 compliance principles during eLearning development. Understanding Section 508	**SAY:** ● Section 508 is a federal law that mandates all electronic and information technology (EIT) used by federal agencies must be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The purpose is to ensure equal access to government information and services provided electronically, promoting inclusivity and removing barriers for people with disabilities. ● For eLearning developers, this means mandatory compliance if you're working with federal agencies or any organizations receiving federal funding or contracts. Non-compliance can result in legal repercussions, reputational damage, and loss of contracts or funding. But beyond legalities, accessibility is about equal access, enhancing user experience, and demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity.	**DO:** ● Launch the poll in the webinar software. ● Allow 2-3 participants to unmute to share their thoughts and/or read a few questions or comments from the chat.

		DO: ● Take a quick poll. How familiar are you with Section 508 compliance on a scale of 1-5? 1 having no knowledge and 5 having strong knowledge. **SAY:** ● Great! I see a range of familiarity. Let's take a moment to discuss any initial thoughts or questions you have about Section 508. ● You can use the hand raise icon or place your question or comment in the chat.	

Slide 3 Definition and Purpose of Section 508 Compliance	Definition and Purpose of Section
	
	• Definition
	  • Section 508 is a federal law mandating that all federal agencies' electronic and information technology must be accessible to individuals with disabilities
	• Purpose
	  • Ensures equal access to government information and services provided electronically, promoting inclusivity and removing barriers for people with disabilities
		SAY:
		● Section 508 Compliance is federal law mandating that all federal agencies' electronic and information technology must be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Section 508 applies to all federal agencies and any organization receiving federal funding.
		● The purpose of Section 508 is to ensure equal access to government information and services provided electronically, promoting inclusivity and removing barriers for people with disabilities.	

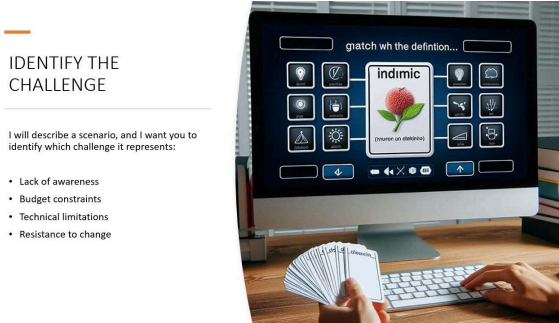|			

Slide 5 Importance of Section 508 Compliance	Importance of Accessibility in Digital Content
	
	• Equal Access
	  • Ensures all individuals, including those with disabilities, have equal access to digital information and services
	• Enhanced User Experience
	  • Improves usability for everyone by promoting clear navigation and interaction
	• Inclusivity
	  • Reflects a commitment to social responsibility and diversity, enhancing the organization's image and appeal
	
		SAY:
		● Complying with Section 508 has numerous benefits. It improves accessibility for all learners through universal design principles, enhancing the learning experience for everyone. Legally, it reduces the risk of lawsuits and demonstrates a commitment to legal and ethical standards.
		● An enhanced user experience not only benefits those with disabilities but also reflects an organization's commitment to social responsibility, potentially boosting its reputation and market reach.	

Slide 6 Breakout Room	BREAKOUT ROOMS What do you think is the most significant benefit of Section 508 compliance and why? We will share the highlights in 3 minutes. 	**DO:** ● Host breakout rooms **SAY:** ● I want to discuss in small groups: What do you think is the most significant benefit of Section 508 compliance and why? ● We'll spend three minutes discussing, and then we'll share highlights.	**DO:** ● Create breakout rooms and assign participants to groups. ● Bring everyone back and allow 1-2 groups to share a key point.

| Slide 7 Common Challenges in Achieving Compliance | | **SAY:**
● Achieving compliance can be challenging. One major issue is the lack of awareness and understanding among developers about Section 508 requirements. Addressing this through targeted training and awareness programs is essential.
● Budget and resource constraints are another common hurdle. Implementing accessibility features requires investment. Highlighting the legal, ethical, and business benefits can help justify this expenditure.
● Technical limitations and compatibility issues, along with resistance to change and misconceptions about accessibility, can also pose significant challenges. Education and advocacy are key to overcoming these barriers. | |

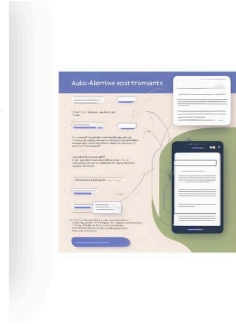| Slide 8 Identify the Challenge | | **DO:**
● Host and activity called: Identify the Challenge
SAY:
● I'll describe a scenario, and I want you to identify which challenge it represents:
   ○ Lack of awareness
   ○ Budget constraints
   ○ Technical limitations
   ○ Resistance to change

● Read scenarios
● (After results are shown) Excellent! These scenarios help us better understand the challenges we face. | **DO:**
● Display the scenarios on a slide
● Launch poll
● Show poll results in chat |
| Slide 9 Strategies for Achieving Compliance | | **SAY:**
● To achieve compliance, conducting regular accessibility audits and assessments to identify and address barriers is crucial. Implement accessible design principles from the start, using best practices like WCAG guidelines.
● Choosing authoring tools with built-in accessibility features can streamline the creation of accessible content. Providing continuous training and resources for developers ensures they stay informed about best practices. | |

Slide 10 Accessibility of Multimedia Content	Accessibility of Multimedia Content
	
	• Captions and Transcripts
	  • Captions for videos and transcripts for audio files to assist users with hearing impairments
	• Audio Descriptions
	  • Providing audio descriptions for visual content to assist users with visual impairments
		SAY:
		● 4 Key Elements of Compliance
		  1. Text equivalents for non-text content
		  2. Keyboard navigability
		  3. Accessible multimedia
		  4. Clear and consistent layout
		  5. Compatibility with assistive technologies	

Slide 11 Jamboard Interaction	JAMBOARD COLLABORATION Based on our discussion and your own experiences, brainstorm some steps you can take in your current projects to ensure compliance. We will share the highlights in 2 minutes.	**DO:** ● Use a collaborative tool like Jamboard **SAY:** ● Let's brainstorm some strategies. Based on what we've discussed, what steps can you take in your current projects to ensure compliance?	**DO:** ● Launch the Jamboard activity and display the collected responses and highlight key strategies.

Slide 11 Testing and Validation of Accessibility	Conducting Accessibility Audits and Assessments
	
	• Identify Barriers
	  • Regularly audit eLearning materials to identify accessibility issues
	• Action Plans
	  • Develop and implement plans to address these issues
		SAY:
		● Testing for accessibility compliance is crucial. Automated tools like WAVE, Axe, or Lighthouse can identify issues, but manual testing and user testing with individuals with disabilities provide deeper insights.
		● Accessibility is an ongoing process requiring continuous testing and refinement, with user-centered design at its core.	

Slide 13 Demonstration	TESTING TOOL DEMO Let's take a quick look at the testing tools mentions. • WAVE • Axe We will share the highlights in 2 minutes.	**DO:** ● Testing tool demo **SAY:** ● Let's take a quick look at the testing tools mentioned, like WAVE or Axe. I'll give a brief demo. ● Here's how the tool works. Now, let's see what issues it identifies on a sample webpage.	**DO:** ● Share the screen to demonstrate using a selected accessibility testing tool.
Slide 14 Utilize Authoring Tools	Utilizing Authoring Tools with Built-in Accessibility Features • Tool Selection 　• Choose eLearning authoring tools that include robust accessibility features • Streamlining 　• Simplify the creation of accessible content using these tools	**SAY:** ● Best practice is to integrate accessibility from the beginning of the design process. ● By integrating accessibility early on, we can avoid costly redesigns and ensure a more seamless and user-friendly experience for all users, including those with disabilities. ● Looking ahead, advances in accessibility technology and standards, particularly AI and machine learning, offer exciting possibilities. These technologies can automate testing, create personalized learning experiences, and enhance accessibility. ● Staying updated with these trends ensures that our eLearning materials remain accessible and inclusive.	

Slide 15 Future Trends and Emerging Technologies	Implementing Accessible Design Principles and Guidelines	**SAY:**	

	• Proactive Design
	   • Integrate accessibility from the beginning of the design process
	 • Best Practices
	   • Use WCAG guidelines and other best practices for accessible design
		• As we look at the future of elearning, there are several key trends that are shaping the development of Section 508 compliant courses, ensuring that digital learning environments are accessible to all users.
		 • These tools include:
		 1. AI powered accessibility tools
		 2. Captioning and transcription services
		 3. Immersive technologies include accessibility features like voice navigation
		 4. Consistent access across different platforms
		 5. Advance text-to-speech (TSS) solutions
		 6. Universal design for learning frameworks	

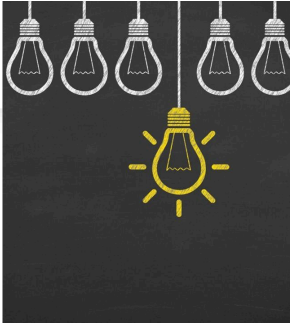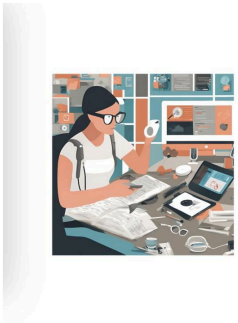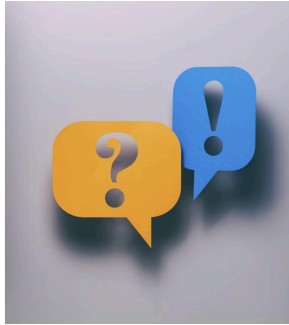| **Slide 16 Share a Story** | | **DO:**
● Host a share time...

SAY:
● Think about a success story from your own experience or something you've heard about accessibility. Share a brief summary with us. Please use the raise hand icon or drop a message in the chat.
● Thank you for sharing these stories. They show that achieving compliance is not only possible but also beneficial.
● What future trends do you foresee being the most impactful? Share your predictions in the chat.
DO:
● Monitor the chat and highlight interesting predictions.
SAY:
● These predictions give us a lot to think about as we look to future-proof our designs. | **DO:**
● Monitor hands raising and allow 2-3 people or unmute, and/or read a few examples from the chat. |

Future Trends and Emerging Technologies

• Continuous Learning
   • Offer ongoing training on accessibility best practices
• Resource Availability
   • Provide access to guidelines, templates, and tools for developers

Slide 17 Conclusion and Next Steps	Conclusions and Next Steps
	
	• Summary
	  • Reiterate the importance of Section 508 compliance, key components, benefits, challenges, and strategies for achieving compliance
	• Key Takeaways
	  • Highlight critical aspects of ensuring digital content is accessible to all
		SAY:
		● To recap, we've covered the importance of Section 508 compliance, key components, benefits, challenges, and strategies for achieving compliance. Remember, prioritizing accessibility in eLearning development is not just a legal obligation but a commitment to inclusivity.
		● Take actionable steps to enhance compliance efforts, utilize the resources and training programs available, and reach out for further assistance if needed.
		● Thank you for your attention. Let's make digital content accessible to everyone.	

Slide 18 Take Action	Create an Actionable Next Step • Write down one actionable step you will take to improve accessibility in your projects. • Share in the chat.	**DO:** ● Final activity: Create an Actionable Step **SAY:** ● For our final activity, I want each of you to write down one actionable step you will take to improve accessibility in your projects. Share it in the chat. ● Thank you for your commitments. Let's keep each other accountable as we strive to make our digital content accessible to all.	**DO:** ● Display chat responses.

Slide 19 Thank you	Thank You!
	
	 • Universal Design
	  • Benefits all users, enhancing navigation and understanding
	 • Enhanced Learning Experience
	  • Cater to various learning needs and preferences, improving the overall experience
		SAY:
		 ● Thank you so much for coming today. I appreciate your engagement.	

Slide 20 Contact Information	Contact Information for Questions and Inquiries • Support • Provide contact details for experts or departments that can offer further assistance and support in achieving and maintaining Section 508 compliance	**SAY:** ● We are here to support you. Please reach out with any questions that may arise. ● I encourage you to apply what you've learned. You will create digital content that is accessible to all.	