

Reasons to Consider the Accessibility of Your Website

There are many reasons why it is very important to consider not only how your website looks and operates, but also how easily it can be accessed by those with a disability.

Firstly there is the legal responsibility embodied in the Disability Discrimination Act that increasingly requires that disabled individuals have effective access to services and information. Failure in this regard may well lead to embarrassing high-profile legal proceedings such as those experienced by the International Olympic Committee as a result of the inaccessibility of their website for the 2000 Olympic Games.

Then there is the obvious business case. There are 8.5 million people with disabilities in the UK at present, who have a cumulative disposable income of over £50 billion. How many organisations would knowingly disregard such a considerable sector of their potential customer base?

But probably most significantly, the effective implementation of good practice in the design of a website benefits every visitor to your site - whether they have special requirements of access or not. This is because good web design is concerned with the best implementation of a wide range of elements including colour, graphics, text, multi-media, frames, and dynamic elements, as well as browser, resolution and download speed independence. It addresses the many inconsistencies that can arise in the overall experience of each visitor.

When such an holistic approach is applied the result is a site that is easy to use for all - regardless of what technology, specialist or otherwise, is being used to access it.

The widely recognised W3C or "Bobby Approved" logos could then be displayed to demonstrate your commitment to accessible web design.

What Services Do We Offer?

AbilityNet has a comprehensive knowledge of good practice in web design, of the hardware and software used by those with a disability, and broad practical experience of the particular issues they encounter when using the internet.

AbilityNet offers a wide range of services that can address the access issues of any existing internet or intranet site, or one that is still in development.

Website Design Service

AbilityNet offers a complete design service at a price that reflects our charitable ethos.

We have worked hard to produce a range of designs that can be tailored to your particular requirements and as a result can produce a website that not only looks professional and is easy to use, but which is totally accessible for all your visitors. Here's an example:



All our sites comply with the highest level of accessibility (conformant to the W3C AAA standard) - a valuable feature that is achieved at no extra cost.

You cannot afford to have an inaccessible website, so ask us for more details.

Website Auditing Services

AbilityNet also offers a range of services concerning accessibility and usability testing of any existing internet or intranet site, or one that is still in development. These include:

- An in-house presentation covering the concepts of accessible web design (including examples of good and bad practice), and the specialist software used by disabled individuals.

- A comprehensive review of any amount of existing content or a new project under development - ensuring compliance with Bobby and the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative guidelines.
- An "Accessibility Snapshot" comprising a thorough, but more targeted, review of a selection of pages that provides an indication of site-wide conformance to Bobby and the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative guidelines.
- Periodic reviewing of content to ensure on-going accessibility.
- Usability testing, including the use of specialist access software and specialist browsers.
- More in-depth consultancy with designers on the issues of accessible web design, or the implementation of recommendations arising from the review.

A full costed breakdown of our services is available on request.

Web accessibility Key Info Pack

As a guide to organizations seeking to make their websites more accessible to disabled people, AbilityNet has now produced a special information pack sponsored by Abbey national.



Our “Web Accessibility Key Info Pack” contains:

- A new CD-ROM filled with a wealth of information including detailed guides, hints and tips, testing tools and a host of useful links.
- A 48 page booklet, “Accessible Website Design - A Practical and Strategic Guide” produced by the Employers’ Forum on Disability
- A 32 page booklet “Making Websites Accessible” produced by the Scottish Accessible Information Forum
- Further information about AbilityNet and its services

As this pack was developed with the help of funding from Abbey National we are able to bring it to you at the low cost of just £80.

Our Customers

Customers of AbilityNet's web accessibility services include:

- Microsoft
- British Airways
- HSBC
- Lloyds TSB
- Cable & Wireless
- Shell
- smile on-line bank
- University for Industry
- Cabinet Office
- Health & Safety Executive
- Department of Health
- Medical Research Council
- Citizen’s Advice
- Help the Aged
- Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund
- Various local authorities

Contact Us for More Information

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