

Special Projects Accessibility Standards: Defining What Success Means

#A11Y IS CODE FOR “LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR”

In this document, we propose a set of standards for handling accessibility for the different types of projects we work on.

Questions - Success Criteria

What would our process look like if we could fully incorporate accessibility into every project, 100% of the time? What would define success? This is the IDEAL imaginary situation. :)

- Designs and code are fully compliant with [WCAG 2.1](#) AA guidelines. (In the absence of AA detail, level A will suffice.)
- Progressive enhancement on special features. (We can incorporate “fun” features but provide usable fallbacks for those who are unable to use these features.)
- Live user testing where possible. (Especially on high-stakes, high-visibility projects.)

What does success look like for a migration-only project (where we simply move a site to one of our platforms and don’t change the code, design, etc)?

- Do an accessibility audit, and present findings and recommendations. (Implementation, if approved, would be done as a separate project.)

What does success look like for a project where we rewrite the code, but keep the design the same?

- Audit, implement WCAG 2.1 AA code, recommend design tweaks for contrast, link states, hover states, and so on. We may NOT be able to change coloring

much (if bound by brand guidelines) but in those cases we do what we can with contrast, button size, hover, etc. on a case-by-case basis. Also case-by-case, present suggestions for small UX/a11y wins.

What does success look like for a complete site redesign/rebuild?

- Designs and code are fully compliant with [WCAG 2.1](#) AA guidelines. This is our ironclad commitment. (In the absence of AA detail, level A will suffice.)
- Live user testing where possible. (Especially on high-stakes, high-visibility projects.)
- Progressive enhancement on special features. (We can incorporate “fun” features but provide usable fallbacks for those who are unable to use these features.)

What does success look like for site audits and/or consulting?

- As part of our normal performance audit workflow, we would do an accessibility audit against WCAG 2.1 and present recommendations for the site owner’s team to implement as they wish.

What does success look like for sites that need a fast turnaround?

- Quickly customize an existing WordPress theme that is already WCAG-compliant. While customizing, if there’s not an existing mandatory brand color scheme, create a color scheme with colors and contrasts that are WCAG-compliant. If there *is* a brand color scheme, check for sufficient color contrasts, and make changes as needed (with site owner permission).

What specific tools can we incorporate into our accessibility practices? This includes scanners, themes that already meet guidelines, etc.

Part 1 - Tools to be used during the design phase:

- <https://webaim.org/resources/designers/> Nice infographic on design basics..

- <https://inclusivedesignprinciples.org/> Set of principles that are useful when designing interfaces from scratch.
- <https://accessibility.blog.gov.uk/2016/09/02/dos-and-donts-on-designing-for-accessibility/>
- Wherever possible, this WCAG 2.1 checklist should be at the top of mind when approaching a new design project:
<http://accessw3.com/wcag21-accessibility-checklist.html>
- For color-blindness QA, Sim Daltonism is a great little app.
<https://michelf.ca/projects/sim-daltonism/>
- See all the tools at <https://www.uigoodies.com/guides/accessibility-guide.html>
- Userway Accessibility Widget - An external service that adds accessibility features to a website via a widget without needing extra code. Could be useful for those scenarios where we don't have time to build accessibility features into the code ourselves - <https://userway.org/>. WordPress plugin:
<https://wordpress.org/plugins/userway-accessibility-widget/>

Part 2 – Tools to be used during development:

- <https://github.com/wpaccessibility/wp-theme-auditor>
- Follow this WCAG 2.1 checklist as you're developing:
<http://accessw3.com/wcag21-accessibility-checklist.html>
- Run accessibility checks throughout to catch potential issues as early as possible.

Part 3 – Tools to be used after development:

- <https://khan.github.io/tota11y/>
- Firefox accessibility inspector:
https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Tools/Accessibility_inspector

What would an accessibility audit look like?

- As a starting point use this WCAG 2.1 checklist: <http://accessw3.com/wcag21-accessibility-checklist.html> (Don't worry about items that aren't present on the site; for example, if the site does not contain video, you don't need to check the video boxes.)
- Additionally, as needed, use existing team accessibility checklists.

Resources

Feel free to use these resources and suggest your own.

- <https://webaim.org/resources/designers/> Nice infographic on design basics.
- <https://inclusivedesignprinciples.org/> Set of principles that are useful when designing interfaces from scratch.
- <https://davidakennedy.com/2014/10/30/web-accessibility-in-60-seconds/> Quick testing for sites.
- <https://www.deque.com/axe/> Best browser plugin to test web pages.
- <https://getstark.co/> This is a great tool to use with Sketch to check color contrast and also tooling to simulate different types of color blindness.
- <https://khan.github.io/tota11y/>
- <https://webaim.org/resources/designers/>
- <https://wptavern.com/new-tools-for-theme-developers-theme-sniffer-plugin-and-automated-accessibility-testing>
- <https://inclusivedesignprinciples.org/> – For more complex design items.
- <https://alistapart.com/topic/accessibility/>
- <https://accessibility.blog.gov.uk/2016/09/02/dos-and-donts-on-designing-for-accessibility/>
- <http://wave.webaim.org>
- [18F Accessibility Guide](#)
- [Accessibility Guidelines by Vox Media](#)

- [Web Accessibility Checklist by A11Y](#)
- Chrome Lens: <http://chromelens.xyz/> – An extension for Chrome DevTools with filters to experience a website as someone who is blind or has varying degrees of colorblindness.
- Funkify: <https://www.funkify.org/> – An extension for Chrome that comes with simulators that try to emulate various conditions, like cognition, dyslexia, tremors, vision impairments, etc.
- A11y Style Guide: <https://a11y-style-guide.com/style-guide/> – This site is a gold mine of A11y information and resources! It's using WCAG 2.0 (where we use 2.1), but it's still useful, and there's a resources page filled with tools: <https://a11y-style-guide.com/style-guide/section-resources.html>