Handout for Accessing Higher Ground, November 2012

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Themes

Note: I cannot vouch for the quality or accuracy of claims by these WordPress themes; testing all of them was well beyond the time I had available. However, these are specific themes that either claim accessibility or that I'm aware have been described as accessible.

Only themes that have been updated within the last 2 years are covered, on the grounds that older themes, even if they are accessible, may not be compatible with newer versions of WordPress.

Accessible WordPress Themes:

Themes that are modifications of other themes or a child theme associated with a primary theme:

Twenty Ten (http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/twentyten) with **Accessibility** (http://sprungmarker.de/2010/wordpress-child-theme-for-twenty-ten-accessible-1-0/), by Sylvia Egger

Twenty Ten Five (http://www.twentytenfive.com/) with **Accessibility Five** (http://accessible.sprungmarker.de/2011/04/accessible-five/), by Sylvia Egger

Twenty Eleven : Accessibility (https://github.com/RRWD/accessible-twenty-eleven-theme), a modified version of the default theme Twenty Eleven. Modified by Rian Rietveld.

Genesis Framework (http://www.studiopress.com/themes/genesis) with Accessible child theme (https://github.com/RRWD/accessible-genesis-child-theme) by Rian Rietveld

Accessible Stand-alone WordPress Themes:

Arjuna X (http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/arjuna-x) by SRS Solutions (http://www.srswebsitedesign.com/services/wordpress-design)

Scrapbook (http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/scrapbook)

ZenLite (http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/zenlite)

Purple Pastels (http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/purple-pastels)

Victorian Xmas (http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/victorian-xmas) all by Mel

Pedley (http://blackwidows.co.uk/)

Blaskan (http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/blaskan) by Per Sandström (http://www.helloper.com/)

RedLine (http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/redline) by Yulian Yordanov (specifies only Section 508 standards)

Plug-ins

Plug-ins to implement accessibility features – these are hand picked; some that claim to do this are not listed, due to inferior implementation, irrelevancy, or a failure to understand accessibility best practices.

WP Accessibility (http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/wp-accessibility/) by Joe Dolson

Accessible External Text Links (http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/accessible-external-text-links/) – provides notification that external links will open in new windows. (Requires editing content.)

Accessibility Language (http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/accessibility-language/) adds button to visual editor (only) to switch language of content.

Accessibility Abbreviation (http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/accessibility-abbreviation) adds button to visual editor (only) to add an abbreviation (‹abbr›) element with title attribute and language.

MCE Accessible Language Change (http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/mce-accessible-language-change/) Not updated in over 2 years, but still works. Essentially the same as Accessibility Language, above, but with better usage instructions.

With over 22,000 plug-ins in the WordPress plug-in repository, most additional features you may want in your plug-in will be represented. Whether they will be accessible is a different question. When it comes to plug-ins that generate content on your site, even if that plug-in is accessible in itself, it can only be as accessible as the theme it's built into. I can recommend a few plug-ins to do popular tasks that I believe are accessible:

1) Accessible Twitter plug-in: https://github.com/RRWD/wpacc-accessible-twitter-feed

2) Accessible Calendar plug-in: http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/my-calendar/

3) Contact forms:

   1. Contact form 7 (http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/contact-form-7/) can be made fairly accessible, although imperfectly. The default HTML for the forms,

however, is atrocious, and must be modified.

2. Fast Secure Contact Form (http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/si-contact-form/) has pretty good accessibility, but is difficult to set up.

3. Contact Form (http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/contact-form-plugin/) is reasonably accessible and very simple, but limited.

Many contact forms have atrocious HTML or questionable JavaScript; but there are so many of them it's hard to get through them all!