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Big Ten Academic Alliance Accessibility Collaboration

A Model for multi-institution collaboration

Note: the footer on each page contains the Big Ten Academic Alliance logo.

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Big Ten Academic Alliance Member Institutions

Graphic: Big Ten Academic Alliance Logo

Graphics: Pennant flags of all member institutions:

- University of Illinois
- Indiana University
- University of Iowa
- University of Maryland
- University of Michigan
- Michigan State University
- University of Minnesota
- University of Nebraska
- Northwestern University
- Ohio State University
- Penn State University
- Purdue University
- Rutgers University
- University of Wisconsin

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Presenters/Panelists

- **Graphic:** University of Iowa pennant, Kirk Corey – Director of Policy and User Services
- **Graphic:** Indiana University pennant, Joe Humbert – Accessibility Specialist
- **Graphic:** University of Iowa pennant, Todd Weissenberger – IT Accessibility Coordinator
- **Graphic:** Rutgers University pennant, Bill Welsh – Associate Vice President for Access

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Big Ten Academic Alliance: Origins

- Originally “Committee on Institutional Cooperation”
- Established to address common institutional challenges
- Envisioned by “Council of Ten” (Big Ten Presidents), 1956
- Seed funding allocated by Carnegie Corporation, 1958

Graphic: Vertical square knot. Yellow rope from the top and orange from the bottom.

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Strategic Themes and Supporting Goals

- PROVIDE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP & INFLUENCE
 - Enable members' executive leaders to showcase the impact of member institutions.
 - Emphasize and promote topics having interest and import to research universities.
 - Increase visibility of high-impact programs.
- PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE CULTURE OF COLLABORATION
 - Build academic and public partnerships.
 - Intentionally connect programs and activities across functional areas of the consortium and the member universities to accelerate adoption of best practice.
 - Align Big Ten Academic Alliance headquarters operations and resources to support large-scale initiatives and signature programs.
 - Model collaboration through a proactive and adaptive culture.
- INCREASE COST SAVINGS & EFFICIENCIES
 - Leverage strong peer groups to identify opportunities to maximize efficiencies.
 - Expand opportunities for cost savings through shared technology and library infrastructure.
 - Utilize joint procurement processes to gain efficiencies and reduce costs.
 - Develop model strategies for effectively sharing and promoting exemplary practices that enhance member universities' academic and administrative programs and activities

Graphic: Strategic Themes & Supporting Goals of Big Ten Academic Alliance from the Strategic Directions 2016-2018 PDF

URL: <http://www.btaa.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/big-ten-academic-alliance-strategic-directions-2016-2018.pdf> (may not be accessible)

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Executive Leadership

- Governed by Big Ten Provosts, a “Board of the Whole”
- Supporting leadership from
 - Chief Information Officers
 - Graduate Deans
 - Liberal Arts and Sciences Deans
 - Library Directors
 - Senior International Officers

IT Accessibility Group chartered, sponsored, overseen by Big Ten CIOs

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Information Technology Accessibility Group (ITAG)

- Initially an informal affinity group (Accessibility and Usability, ca. 2008)
- Chartered by Big Ten CIOs, 2011
- Dedicated to building strategies to address common challenges
- Comprises staff from a wide range of institutional roles

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- Initially an informal affinity group (Accessibility and Usability, 2008)
- Chartered by Big Ten CIOs
- Dedicated to building strategies to address common challenges
 - Comprises staff from a wide range of institutional roles:
 - Information Technology
 - Disability Services
 - Instructional Design
 - Student Affairs
 - Multimedia
 - Counsel

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ITAG Organizational Chart

- **Chief Information Officers (CIO's)**
 - Provide support&, collective funding
 - 2 CIO's are ITAG members
- **Information Technology Accessibility Group (ITAG)**
 - Information Technology, Disability Services, Library, Assistive Technology, Procurement, Instructional Designers
- **ITAG Subgroups (Practice groups)**

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Collaboration

- Academic Resources and Exchange
- Research Partnerships
- Library Initiatives
- Purchasing and Licensing Consortia
- Leadership and Staff Development
- Global and Public Health

Voluntary, Non-binding, Non-coercive

Background graphic: Soccer team puts hands into the center - 1,2,3 go team!

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How We Collaborate

- Monthly meetings
 - Set agenda
 - Success Stories
- Annual Face-2-face Meeting
- Subgroups/Practice groups
- Listserv
 - Breaking news
 - Continued discussion

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Annual Face-2-Face

- Hosted by member institution
- Low or no registration cost
(only travel)
- Explicit time for collaboration
- 1-day agenda over a 24-hour period
 - Critical topics
 - Subgroup meetings

Background graphic: Group photo from 2016 Information Technology Accessibility Group (ITAG) face-2-face meeting at University of Michigan on April 7.

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Subgroups/Practice Groups

- Cover an explicit topic
- Spread work load
- Allow for wider participation

Background Graphic: Training Subgroup from 2016 Information Technology Accessibility Group (ITAG) face-2-face meeting at University of Michigan on April 7.

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Initial Projects

- Evaluation of the accessibility of a single product
- Web-based accessible media player comparison
- Captioning survey and media captioning methods
- Vendor Guide to Web Accessibility (a.k.a. the Vendor Cookbook)

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Current and Ongoing Projects

- Accessibility 101: training and badging
- Accessibility assessment of products
- E-Book accessibility and assistive technology
- Purchasing language and contract models
- Accessibility Evaluation Tools & Methodology
- Collaboration with other BTAA groups

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Benefits of Collaboration

- Close working relationship with peers
- Sharing of resources
- Confidential information
- Funding
- Feedback on individual projects

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Sharing of Information

- All members explicitly acknowledge partnership & rules of conduct
- Shared to aid in development
- Group consensus, but individual institution adaptation

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Practice Group

a group of people who share an interest ...in a particular domain or area. It is through the process of sharing information and experiences with the group that the members learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally.

- Lave & Wenger 1991 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_of_practice)

- The ITAG is a great example of a Practice Group in action.
- This model can be replicated in other higher ed. consortiums.

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Other Big Ten Examples

- Combining leveraging and expanding resources of member universities is a central strategic focus
- The Big Ten Academic Alliance has saved more than \$19 million through the purchasing consortium
- Software Licensing Principles
- Reciprocal Library Borrowing

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Other Examples of Consortiums or Practice Groups Outside of BTAA

- [Cal State's Accessible Technology Initiative](http://www.csun.edu/universaldesigncenter/shared-responsibility)
(<http://www.csun.edu/universaldesigncenter/shared-responsibility>)
- [Montana Accessibility Interest Group](http://www.umt.edu/accessibility_group/default.php)
(http://www.umt.edu/accessibility_group/default.php)
- [Tennessee Board of Regents' Accessibility Initiative](https://www.tbr.edu/academics/accessibility-initiative)
(<https://www.tbr.edu/academics/accessibility-initiative>)

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How Could this Model Be Replicated?

- Start small with one or two projects to develop group practices
- Go for the low hanging fruits where efforts might already exist
- Start with assessment within the alliance
- Questions to ask:
 - Can similar models work within your academic alliances?
 - What are the some of the alliances to which audience members belong?
 - How to obtain buy-in?
 - Do CIO's get it?

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Session Q & A

Graphic: Big Ten Academic Alliance

URL: <http://www.btaa.org/groups/>