

Running an Accessibility Testing Lab

Model versus Reality

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AUL Background

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Goals:

- *provide the university with reliable information about the accessibility of web sites and software applications based upon systematic testing*
- *communicate to the campus about our work to improve the quality of our IT systems and through that improve the campus environment for the users of assistive technology.*

Staffing:

- 1 full time manager
- 3 part time permanent staff
- 4-6 part time testers (students and former students)

Basic Model

1. Test digital content for accessibility with native users
 - a. Test with blind and low vision users
 - b. Use multiple screen readers, magnifier, and platforms
 - c. Write scripts with service owner input
 - d. Create a report based on test results

Basic Model

2. Update searchable A11Y Database with test results
 - a. Cross-reference issues encountered during testing with issues already in the database
 - b. Update database with new issues
 - i. Description
 - ii. Cross-reference to test report
 - iii. Cross-reference to WCAG 2.0

Basic Model

3. Build reference sources from A11Y database
 - a. Identify patterns of egregious accessibility violations
 - b. Build training based on specific issues
 - c. Identify audiences who would most benefit from training
 - d. Introduce audiences to good and bad practices based upon these issues

Basic Model - Goal

1. Test campus sites and applications
 2. More knowledge in the lab
 3. Train campus
 4. More knowledge on campus
 5. Better applications and sites
 6. Less need to test

Reality Check 1: Test Models

Initial model set: in-depth formal tests only

Discovery: one size does not fit all

Expanded test model set:

1. In-depth formal test
2. Quick review
3. Ongoing iterative testing

Reality Check 2: Factors affecting testing

1. Application factors:
 - a. Application completeness
 - b. Completeness of test environment
 - c. Stability of test environment

2. Service owner factors:
 - a. Responsiveness
 - b. Commitment
 - c. Competence

3. Lab factors:
 - a. Staff availability to meet the timeline

Reality Check 3: Database

1. Tensions with the current state
 - a. Searchability
 - b. Format unfamiliar to developers
2. Feature requests
 - a. Include videos (in progress)
 - b. Include solutions (no)

Reality Check 4: Training

1. Presentation factors

- a. Topic choice: impact and interest
- b. Extensive preparation time
- c. Knowledge
- d. Public speaking skills

2. Audience factors

- a. Identifying appropriate audiences
- b. Receptiveness
- c. Mixed skills and experience levels

Key Point: Focus on goals, strengths & mandate

Strong points

- Perform systematic testing
- Provide detailed reports

Weak points

- Help with remediation efforts
- Pinpoint errors in code

Resolution

- Point client to third-party consultant for code remediation

Key point: Flexibility and adaptability are essential

Initial process

- Test with as many screen reader / browser / OS combinations as possible
- Provide narrative reports without interruptions from WCAG references
- Insist on doing everything as an in-depth test

Current process

- Test with most popular or currently available combinations
- Provide references to WCAG paired with the description of issues
- Run quick reviews when in-depth test is unnecessary or unavailable

Resolution

- Shift from all in-depth tests to a mix with quick reviews

Key point: all successes count; big goals take time

Success stories

- Dining menus
- Student facing portal elements
- Immediate response and remediation from a major vendor

Our work is never complete

- Document collaboration
- Online conferences
- System-wide employee portal

Thank you for listening

Q&A time

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