

Code for KC recommendations for Accessibility

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"Previously, disability was defined as a set of limitations in the abilities of people with disabilities to function in society because of some pathology in us. The disability rights movement redefined disability as a problem mainly out there in society—not just in our bodies and minds but in society."

Paul Longmore
Historian and Disability Rights Advocate

Fully addressing the needs of people with disabilities requires addressing social issues as well as technical issues. The recommendations are divided accordingly.

Social issues:

People with disabilities often feel excluded and isolated. As a civic-minded organization, Code for KC can work to combat that. Making a point to address common concerns of people with disabilities makes them feel welcome and will make it easier to recruit

A few suggestions for addressing social factors:

- 1. Code for KC should take on a project that is explicitly related to disability such as re-creating a website that is not accessible or creating an ap to help people with disabilities find services or the most accessible route.**
- 2. Provide information on the events page about common issues for people with disabilities such as:**
 - a. Any transportation arrangements the group can make to facilitate the participation of people who cannot drive. This is especially important for people who are visually impaired because even a mild visual impairment will disqualify a person from driving.**
 - b. Where should a person who uses a wheelchair park and what is the most accessible route to the building?**
 - c. What is the most accessible route to the meeting place within the building?**
 - d. Where are the most accessible restrooms located?**

Code of Conduct

- 1. Add disability to point #9.**

Web Page

- 1. Add the W3C accessibility guidelines to the “get started” section of the “welcome/resources” page.**

Technical issues:

1. All assets created by Code for Kansas City will follow the W3C standards for accessibility. The standards can be found here:
2. <https://www.w3.org/standards/webdesign/accessibility>

Highlights of the standards:

1. All videos must be captioned.
2. Transcripts must be provided for all audio content.
3. <alt> tags will be used for all images that do not have captions. <alt> tags will be left blank on all images that do have captions.
4. Scalable fonts will be used in all assets created by Code for KC.
5. All color palettes used must be accessible for people with color vision deficits.
 1. Colorblindor <http://www.color-blindness.com/>
6. All text will be on a high contrast background.
7. All assets will also function with inverted color.
8. All assets will be compatible with screen readers and voice over.
9. Preliminary testing of websites should look for common issues before user testing:

- a. Magnify all websites to at least 4x magnification.
- b. Look at all assets using inverted color.
- c. Examine all assets using free screen reading software available on modern computers and smart phones.

User testing:

User testing allows developers to find problems with the interface that were not anticipated by following best practices and various theories of good design. This applies even more for persons with disabilities. People with disabilities exhibit all the unpredictable behaviors of users with the additional unpredictability of the use of assistive technology and/or individualized coping mechanisms. Therefore, Code for KC will actively seek out users with disabilities for user testing. Code for KC will use personal networks and form partnerships with local organizations that serve disabled people to recruit participants for usability testing.

Potential Organizations for partnerships:

<https://www.thewholeperson.org/>

Contacts: Sheila Styron and Karen Gridley

Logistical factors:

People with disabilities often face additional challenges getting to events and using unfamiliar equipment. Here are a few suggestions for reducing these obstacles.

1. Offer rides or reimburse transportation for testers with disabilities.
2. Hold testing events in locations that are easily accessible by public transportation.
3. Have at least one wheelchair accessible workstation for testers.
4. Be familiar with the built in accessible technology on testing computers and be prepared to turn them on when needed. All modern computers have accessibility tools.
5. Designate someone in the organization to maintain familiarity with free and low cost assistive software, and equip at least one testing computer with assistive software.
6. It should be possible to give a user access to wireframes, unpublished web pages and prototypes on their own computer to facilitate the use of customized settings or software that would be too complicated to replicate on other computers.

Resources for further exploration:

Accessibility for UX is a LibGuide created to gather resources for UX professionals to find information on accessible design.

<http://libguides.missouriwestern.edu/AccessibleUX>

Disability etiquette from United Cerebral Palsy

<http://ucp.org/resources/disability-etiquette/>