Your Digital Accessibility Roadmap

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Introductions and Bios

Jason Taylor, Chief Innovation Strategist at UsableNet

Jason C. Taylor is the Chief Innovation Strategist and Advisor to the UsableNet CEO with nearly 20 years of experience in usability and accessibility. He is a global technology thought leader for multichannel customer engagement, actively advising leading companies on how to extend their brands across multiple channels for all users. He has been an active member of the accessibility and usability communities since 2001, which started with leading partnerships between UsableNet, Macromedia (now Adobe), and The Nielsen Norman Group.

Jeff Adams, Director of Accessibility Operations at UsableNet

As Director of Accessibility Operations, Jeff works with UsableNet clients to ensure success in their digital accessibility efforts. Jeff is a Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies (CPACC) by the International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP).

Jeff has worked at UsableNet for more than nine years where he has helped hundreds of clients. He previously held the role of Client Services Director, working with top-tier clients. Jeff advises companies on best practices in website accessibility while also optimizing for their specific needs. His experience in client support spans broad projects, such as performing processes analysis for clients, training on our tools, and recommending products and services to fill client needs.

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Agenda

- Stakeholders to engage in accessibility

- The Three Phases of Your Accessibility Roadmap

- Actions you can take right now to improve the user experience

- Best practices for remediation of your digital accessibility properties

- Document, Document, Document and why your legal team will thank you

- How and why you must continue to monitor for ADA compliance / WCAG Accessibility

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Who to Engage in Your Accessibility Plan

- **Executives** must stress the importance of it to the company and its customers.

- **Product owners and project managers** must ensure it's part of project and maintenance scopes and requirements

- **UI/UX designers** must design the sites, apps and other digital properties to conform to accessibility standards.

- **Marketing and content teams** need to provide accessible content for the site, and also including things like customer emails and social media posts

- **Developers** must always code to WCAG standards

- **QA** must test using assistive technology and tools like UsableNet's AQA platform.

- **Customer service team** needs to know how to assist customers from the disability community if they have issues with the website.

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Your Accessibility Roadmap

1 Where are You At?	**2** Get In a Good Place	**3** Stay In a Good Place

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Actions

1 Improve Accessibility & Reduce Risk

- Take stock of digital experiences - websites, apps, videos, pdfs

- Establish representative sample - homepage, header, footer and navigation, top user task(s), templates.

- Perform initial test with screen reader user, test with keyboard and with an automated testing tool.

- Offer training to your teams.

- Create access to a subject matter expert.

- Check videos for captions and pdfs with Acrobat Pro.

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Typical Representative Sample

ORDER USER JOURNEY

1	Homepage + GE (Desktop) T62273	5	PDP1 (Desktop) T62283	9	Login (Desktop) T62275
2	Search results (Desktop) T62287	6	PDP2 (Desktop) T62285	10	My Account T62277
3	Custom Packages (Desktop) T62281	7	Cart (Desktop) T62289	11	Order history T62278
4	PLP (Desktop) T62279	8	Checkout (Desktop) T62291	12	Gifts T62310

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Documentation

1 Start with easy to digest information

- Draft your Accessibility Statement and Policy.

- Prepare General Executive Summary of where the site and/or apps stand for resource allocation, budgeting.

- Detail the list of issues to be fixed, organized by global elements, components, and unique issues on pages/templates.

- Compile initial feedback from user testers on major blockers or barriers to complete key tasks.

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Challenges

1 It is new to everyone and there is a lack of knowledge

- Collecting issues from automated, user testing, and manual review into one place.

- Integrating blind user testing feedback and connecting their issues with needed code fixes.

- Making it easy for teams to recreate the issues without guessing – testing results

- Knowing which issues will need to be addressed by which team - UX, Dev, Marketing, Internal or External Vendor

- Lack of knowledge within teams about remediation and verification

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Actions

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2 Core Remediation

- Complete WCAG Audit - automated & manual techniques to find all issues.

- Integrate reporting into ticket system.

- Prioritize remediation based on major barriers and high visibility issues.

- Establish teams responsible for issues.

- Perform User Testing with Members of the Disability Community.

- Remediation Verification

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Who Handles Common Accessibility Issues?

Content Team:

- **Missing text alternatives** for non-text content leaves screen reader users in the dark about what's represented in an image. (WCAG Success Criteria 1.1.1)

- **Images of text** not read by screen readers or not perceivable by low vision users. (WCAG Success Criteria 1.4.5)
  UI/UX may also be involved.

- **Links with no or insufficient information** will prevent a screen reader user to understand where the link leads. (WCAG Success Criteria 2.4.4)
  UI/UX may also be involved.

- **Videos without captions and/or audio descriptions** will be inaccessible for Deaf and blind users. (WCAG Success Criteria 1.2.2, 1.2.3)

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Who Handles Common Accessibility Issues?

Development Team:

- **Lack of Bypass Blocks** will prevent users in navigating to the relevant part of the site. (WCAG Success Criteria 2.4.1)

- **Wrong focus order & Visible Focus** will prevent users to know where they are on the page (WCAG Success Criteria 2.4.3, 2.4.7)
  UI/UX may also be involved.

- **Lack of Field labels** will make difficult for Screen Reader users to understand the information that's expected to go in the fields. (WCAG Success Criteria 3.3.2)

- **Pop-Up Overlays** that aren't announced to VoiceOver, trap users inside with no way to close via keyboard or allow the user to exit the pop-up without closing it. (Numerous WCAG Success Criteria are often violated here)

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Who Handles Common Accessibility Issues?

UI/UX Team

- **Headings out of order or used only for style** will prevent users to understand the way the content is organized and to quickly access to the information. (WCAG Success Criteria 2.4.6) *Development Team may also be involved.*

- **Not adequate Color Contrast** will affect low vision and color blind users ability to perceive content. (WCAG Success Criteria 1.4.3)

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2 Build out more formal and robust documents

- Complete and publish Accessibility Statement and Policy.

- Pre- and post-Audit or Testing summary to show the improvement and efforts made.

- Document verification from users in the disability community.

- Review third party content/feature contracts and accessibility status.

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Challenges

1 It is new to everyone and there is a lack of knowledge

- Collecting found issues from auto, user, and manual review into one place

- Integrating blind user testing feedback and connecting their issues with needed code fixes

- Making it easy for teams to recreate the issues without guessing - Store testing results

- Knowing which issues will need to be addressed by which team - UX, Dev, Marketing, Internal or External Vendor

- Lack of knowledge within teams about remediation and verification

2 What seemed easy can be complicated

- Time and resources available - need to get high-level buy-in to prioritize work

- Major decisions could be needed in changes to UX rather than just updated small elements such as forms, labels, and images.

- Knowledge needed for the more complex fixes

- Multiple teams responsible for different aspects of the site - how to organize?

- Providing access to pre-release web or app instance for a second round of user testing

- An SDLC where Accessibility is part of standard release process, not a separate silo.

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Actions

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3 Ongoing Monitoring/ Releases

- Put Accessibility First for new projects and maintenance so conformance stays high.
- Build UX personas and Dev standards.
- Set up regular User Testing (monthly/release)
- Set up WCAG automated monitoring of top ten pages as well as Keyboard Navigation testing (weekly/release)
- Provide a simple way for users to report issues

Accessibility Testing Process, Tools and Platform

Documentation

1 Start with the easy to digest information	**2** Build out more formal and robust documents	**3** Embed into company wide initiatives
▪ Draft your Accessibility Statement and Policy. ▪ Prepare General Executive Summary of where the site and/or apps stand for resource allocation, budgeting. ▪ Detail the list of issues to be fixed, organized by global elements, components, and unique issues on pages/templates. ▪ Compile initial feedback from user testers on major blockers or barriers to complete key tasks.	▪ Complete and publish Accessibility Statement and Policy. ▪ Pre- and post-Audit or Testing summary to show the improvement and efforts made. ▪ Document verification from users in the disability community. ▪ Review third party content/feature contracts and accessibility status.	▪ Create internal policies and processes, including release criteria concerning accessibility, customer support escalation of issues, internal UI/UX and Dev guidelines. ▪ Distribute regular reports for all stakeholders that track progress and issues over time. ▪ Make Accessibility part of your contracts with all web and app vendors. ▪ Treat Accessibility with the same importance as Privacy and Security and document accordingly.

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Challenges

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- Knowledge needed for the more complex fixes
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- Providing access to pre-release web or app instance for a second round of user testing
- An SDLC where Accessibility is part of standard release process, not a separate silo.

3 — Make it an everyday activity for all teams

- Track and Document all efforts over time to support legal and compliance.
- Involve screen reader users who are blind (this is the most active plaintiff group).
- Catch and prioritizes high visibility / high severity WCAG violations ahead of each release.
- Learn how to communicate your efforts to all users, including plaintiff law firms and their testers.

Key to Successful Accessibility Program

Unless your site is static, you're never done with accessibility. Across the organization, everyone needs to understand their role in digital accessibility.

Because of the nature of Accessibility and all its implications, an accessibility program is necessarily a **collaborative effort and must be part of the software development lifecycle (SDLC)**.

This 3-phase approach ends with Phase 3 which is ongoing

It cannot be achieved by you or any one team alone; it requires awareness and ongoing involvement by all people that contribute to your digital experience.
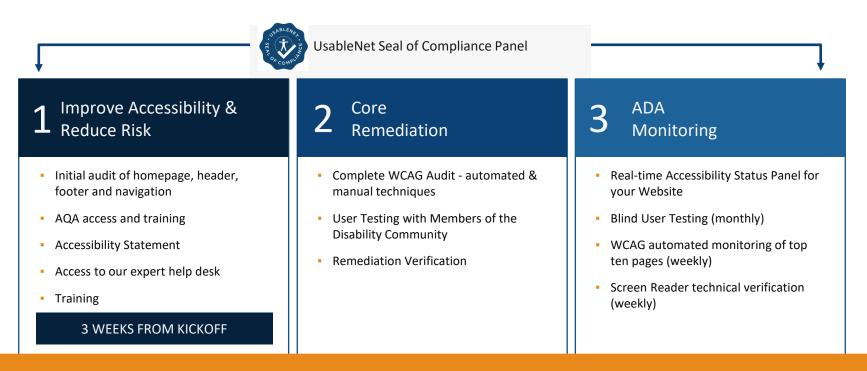
As you map out your digital inclusion roadmap, continue to reference these steps.

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Questions?

Contact Us
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Jason Taylor - jason@usablenet.com

Example of an Accessibility Program with UsableNet

UsableNet Seal of Compliance Panel

1 Improve Accessibility & Reduce Risk

- Initial audit of homepage, header, footer and navigation
- AQA access and training
- Accessibility Statement
- Access to our expert help desk
- Training

3 WEEKS FROM KICKOFF

2 Core Remediation

- Complete WCAG Audit - automated & manual techniques
- User Testing with Members of the Disability Community
- Remediation Verification

3 ADA Monitoring

- Real-time Accessibility Status Panel for your Website
- Blind User Testing (monthly)
- WCAG automated monitoring of top ten pages (weekly)
- Screen Reader technical verification (weekly)

AQA accessibility management software
Enables your team can find, fix, test and report on Accessibility faster and with less overhead

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People

1 — Initial buy-in and leadership

- A11y lead
- Compliance and Legal
- Executive level sponsor
- UX, Dev, QA, Marketing Representatives
- Outside Web/App Vendor (if applicable)

2 — Build a working team

- A11y Expert for remediation help
- User Testing from disability community to Verify
- UX, Dev and QA team leads
- Outside Vendor Team
- Compliance/Legal awareness

3 — Make Part of Everyday Life

- Marketing that update content
- Project/Product Mangers
- UX Leading Dev and QA
- Add User Testers from disability Community

Training

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