Providing online services to ALL users regardless of user platform
What is web accessibility?
- Definition

• Difference between usability and accessibility
  - Examples
Website Accessibility

• Premise of accessibility?
  - Content and presentation should be separated

• Content
  - the information itself

• Presentation
  - the specific layout or structure of the information as it is conveyed to the audience
Website Accessibility

• Why separate content from presentation?
  - Information can be extracted in a way the USER can understand it.
  - More control for the webmaster
  - If designed correctly, information can be displayed in an understandable format regardless of user platform
Why design for accessibility?

- For some agencies it is required by law
- Although universities are not presently required to conform, this may not always be the case
- It costs time and money to retrofit
- Avoid discriminating against minorities
- “Accessibility provides another form of redundancy”
- Provides educational opportunities to those that cannot participate in traditional classroom instruction
- It makes good sense.
How- Are there any accessibility standards or guidelines?

- **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)**
  - World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) created the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) which authored the WCAG

- **Section 508**
  - On August 7, 1998, President Clinton signed into law the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 which covers access to federally funded programs and services.
The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/#Guidelines

- Explanation and definition
- Organization of the guidelines
  - 14 guidelines or principles
  - Checkpoints
  - Priority Levels
  - Three conformance levels
Section 508 Guidelines
http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12

- Explanation and definition

- Organization of the guidelines
  - 6 standards
  - 16 rules that pertain to web page authoring
Comparison of WCAG and Section 508

- Generally, the Section 508 standards define the minimum level of web accessibility for federal government websites to be compliant.
- “The WCAG represents a higher level of accessibility.”
Comparison of WCAG and Section 508 - the following are consistent when compared.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 508</th>
<th>WCAG 1.0 Checkpoint</th>
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General guidelines for accessibility:
- Provide a text alternative to an image.
- Do not use color alone to convey information.
- Be careful when using light colors for links or text - these can be difficult to see.
- Use style sheets to control layout and presentation.
- Use relative (percentage) and not absolute units for markup language attributes and property values.
- Be careful when using acronyms or abbreviated text.
- Do not use tables to lay out pages and do use tables for truly tabular information with proper markup.
- Avoid using serif fonts. These can display improperly on screen.
General guidelines for accessibility:

- If using new technology on a web page, make sure the page will still work in older browsers.
- Avoid causing content to blink or move on the page- This can cause problems with screen readers as well as individuals with sensitivity to flickering.
- Be careful when using embedded objects (such as scripts or applets). If inaccessible to assistive technologies, ensure content is still understandable and not dependent on the embedded object for meaning.
General guidelines for accessibility:
- Do not design for a specific device but for a variety of input devices (mouse, keyboard, voice command)
- Do not use spawned windows or pop-ups unnecessarily.
- Provide clear and consistent navigation mechanisms (navigation bars, site map, titles).
- Use clear and simple language.
- Never design a web page according to how it looks on your particular monitor.
General guidelines for accessibility:
- ALWAYS view the web page you are creating in as many different browsers as possible. The following are free browsers that can be used for testing.
  - Internet Explorer 3 is a Broken browser. This was the first browser to implement CSS. Unfortunately, CSS was still being written and ended up being different from IE’s implementation of CSS.
  - Internet Explorer 5.5 and 6 for Windows are much better. IE 6 is considered to be a fairly compliant browser.
  - IE 5 and 5.1 for Macintosh is also considered to be standards-compliant.
General guidelines for accessibility:

- Netscape 4 is a Broken browser of the worst kind. It is the albatross of the virtual realm. It attempts to support CSS but does not recognize many of the properties, therefore results are questionable to say the least.

- Netscape 6 is considered to be good at CSS support and HTML standards.
General guidelines for accessibility:

- Opera 6 and up are recommended as good testing tools.
- Mozilla and Firefox browsers are also good testing tools. These browsers began as open source software projects.
- The Lynx browser is one of the oldest browsers in existence and is text based. This is good for testing how a page will look if style sheets are turned off.
- Use Common sense!
Bibliography


Section 508.  

[http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/](http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/)