

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST

This checklist lays out all the steps and best practices you should consider when planning your digital accessibility initiative.

Continue to reference this comprehensive and actionable checklist throughout your initiative and you will know exactly how to approach accessibility for your digital channels.



PHASE 1: PLAN AND COMMUNICATE

Plan and communicate your initiative:

- Write out your **accessibility policy** based on the answers to the following questions:
 - What are your digital accessibility goals? More Specifically, which channels are you making accessible (website, mobile site, mobile app, client systems, internal systems)? And by what standards?
 - How will you achieve making your digital properties accessible? (*Reference phases 2 & 3 below*)
 - How will you incorporate accessibility into the roles involved in creating and maintaining your digital experience for on-going compliance? (*Reference phase 4 below*)
 - What is your timeline for achieving digital accessibility and how are you prioritizing each channel?
- Communicate your digital inclusion efforts to all internal and external stakeholders and require third party developers to follow digital accessibility protocol.

UsableNet Best Practice:

Follow the W3C's **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0 AA)**, which are the most widely accepted standards for digital accessibility compliance.

Once you've written and communicated your digital accessibility policy, it's now time to execute your strategy. The following phases include best practices for achieving and maintaining digital accessibility compliance.



PHASE 2: TEST AND AUDIT

Perform initial tests on your digital properties:

- Use a [free automated accessibility checker](#) to quickly get a sense of how compliant your key pages are by WCAG 2.0 AA and the general web page elements you'll need to consider.
- For native apps, you can test accessibility with [Apple's VoiceOver feature](#) or [Android's Accessibility Developer Checklist](#). Android users can also quickly scan apps with [Android's Accessibility Scanner App](#).

Automated accessibility testing is an important first step for getting a general sense of how much work is ahead, but a full assessment of site content and functionality must be conducted by an accessibility expert for all user journeys.

Audit with Accessibility Professionals:

- Engage an accessibility expert to run a comprehensive audit of your website or app by WCAG 2.0 AA standards.
- Ensure the audit can be performed across all of your digital properties for multi-channel accessibility (desktop, tablet, mobile, pdfs, etc.).
- Generate a detailed compliance report to provide your developers or a third-party partner that includes all of the issues identified based on WCAG 2.0 AA.

UsableNet Best Practice:

Streamline issue remediation, by employing [accessibility developers for the audit](#), who can provide developer-friendly fix instructions alongside detailed descriptions of all issues identified.

Now that you've identified all the accessibility issues across your digital channels, it's time to fix them. Once fixed, you'll need to verify compliance by WCAG 2.0 AA.



PHASE 3: FIX AND VERIFY

Fix the issues identified - three remediation approaches:

- Provide technical training to your web developers on [the techniques](#) for following the web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG 2.0 AA) and then fix the issues internally.

_____ OR _____

- Work with a third-party accessibility partner to train and help your developers fix the issues identified in the audit.

_____ OR _____

- Implement a [dynamic, fully accessible view](#) of your website for quick WCAG 2.0 AA compliance (a fast and effective approach for websites that weren't originally designed with accessibility in mind).

Verify usability and accessibility:

- Re-audit the digital properties you just worked on to verify full compliance by WCAG 2.0 AA.
- Have a group of assistive technology users test your site and/or app to verify usability and accessibility.
- Have your QA team verify the code updates to ensure no impact on site performance.

UsableNet Best Practice:

→ **Coordinate the testing of sites and apps** by representative members of all the major disability groups (visual, auditory, tactile and cognitive) to ensure accessibility and usability.

Digital accessibility is an on-going effort. After verifying that your digital experience is now accessible to all users, you need to ensure it stays that way.



PHASE 4: DOCUMENT, TRAIN AND MAINTAIN

Document your level of compliance:

- Generate a compliance summary report for all stakeholders involved in the project.
- Update your accessibility policy & statements with your new level of digital compliance.

Train all remaining roles involved in maintaining your digital experience:

- Marketing & Management: introduce digital accessibility and review relevant guidelines, regulations and challenges.
- QA Team: review where to include accessibility testing in the development lifecycle and how to validate that all principles of the WCAG 2.0 AA are satisfied.
- UX Team: teach the key concepts for designing an accessible interface.

Maintain on-going compliance:

- Continuously evaluate accessibility compliance of your digital channels through automated tests, re-audits and user testing.
- Set up reporting mechanisms that generate compliance reports alongside your continued accessibility evaluations.
- Have a role, process or partner in place to stay up-to-date with accessibility laws and to update your accessibility policy when necessary.

UsableNet Best Practice:

→ **Integrate accessibility testing and reporting** directly into your development lifecycle to maintain agile release cycles and on-going digital accessibility.

Now that you know all of your options, you're in a good position to effectively plan your accessibility strategy. Not only will all of your customers and employees benefit, but you'll be contributing to the larger objective of creating an inclusive digital world for people of all abilities.

About Us

UsableNet is a strategic partner for digital accessibility and usability. We've helped hundreds of brands in all major industries create inclusive and high-performing digital experiences. Learn more about our range of [Digital Accessibility Services](#), our [Accessibility Management Platform](#) and our [Dynamic, Accessible Views](#).