Chapter IV

The Ethics of Web Design: Ensuring Access for Everyone

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Abstract

Web accessibility is really not a technological issue but rather a cultural problem. A Web site is said to be Web accessible if anyone, regardless of capabilities or disabilities, using any kind of Web browsing technology to visit the site has full and complete access to the site’s content and has the ability to interact with the site if required. If properly planned from the start, a Web site can be functional, accessible and aesthetically pleasing. This chapter focuses on ensuring access to information available on the Internet. The overall objective is to increase awareness of Web accessibility issues by providing rationale for why Web designers should be interested in creating accessible sites. Specifically, this chapter identifies some of the emerging digital barriers to accessibility encountered by those with disabilities. Current efforts to address these barriers legally are identified.
and their effectiveness for breaking down barriers is discussed. The World Wide Web Consortium’s (W3C’s) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) is discussed, followed by a study of the 50 most visited Web sites. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the importance of this topic and future developments.

Introduction

“The power of the Web is in its universality. Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect.”

—Tim Berners-Lee, W3C Director and inventor of the World Wide Web

The Web has altered how many people work, learn, and even play. With publishing, electronic commerce, distance learning and delivery of governmental services, the Web has quickly become an integral part of our society. Some would even argue that Web access is mandatory for success in our information-driven society. Technology offers people of all abilities ways of interacting with the world that were previously unimaginable. The Web remains a ray of hope for full and equal access to information, goods and services. Unfortunately, it also erects barriers for those with disabilities.

Today, half of the world’s population, 3 billion worldwide, are either disabled or in direct contact with the disabled. According to some accounts, America is home to 50 to 55 million totally or partially impaired or disabled citizens who possess a wealth of ideas and are gifted. This estimate is stated as a range since it is ever-changing. Anyone can become disabled through injury, illness, or aging. In fact, most of us will experience at least some period of temporary or permanent disability as a result of life’s unpredictability. A broken arm, stroke, moderate hearing loss, or repetitive stress syndrome can render someone disabled. Furthermore, circumstances can create a situation that mimics a disability, forcing someone to rely on the same solutions used by those with disabilities. If your mouse stops functioning, you must rely on your keyboard—the same way someone who is blind or quadriplegic might. Assessing a Web page in a noisy environment that makes hearing difficult increases the importance of audio transcripts just as these transcripts are important to someone with a hearing impairment.
Dynamic Delegation of Authority in Web Services
www.igi-global.com/chapter/dynamic-delegation-authority-web-services/28516?camid=4v1a

Cybercafés and Prevention of Terrorist Activities
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