LiveWire4Education

How accessible is your organisation?

Best Practice 4Access

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Where is the Access Ramp for Information?

Many educational institutions are aware of the issues around accessibility, yet continue to use inaccessible document formats on their websites and as course materials for students.

The onus is then on students with a print disability and their support staff to transform these documents into a format that is accessible.

Worldwide there is a growing trend to use documents in a PDF format (PDF stands for Portable Document Format).

PDF files play a key role in innumerable areas where documents are needed. In almost any setting and in every economic sector, from banking to education to healthcare and insurance PDF has emerged as the electronic document format of choice.

PDF files work on all sorts of operating systems and browsers and always look the same no matter where or how they are viewed or printed. They work on any platform (Windows, Mac OS, Linux etc) and support multiple security, authentication, annotation, workflow and other business features that together make the format uniquely useful for a vast range of publishing and business purposes.

However, they can be completely inaccessible for users of screen readers, unless they are prepared with accessibility in mind. In this issue we examine some new simple and inexpensive tools that enable anyone to always produce an accessible PDF document, and to analyse and measure the accessibility of their own websites.

We also look at an exciting new Australian development called RealSAM that is helping many Australians with a print disability continue to access newspapers and other reading materials without having to use a computer.

Together with our other regular features we hope you find this edition useful and informative. And remember, we have many experienced people available to help with your queries. Please give us a call.

Commonlook Office

Commonlook Office enables anyone to create a PDF file that is fully accessible (compliant with WCAG2.0 standards).

Once installed it becomes an add-in for MS Office 2007(WORD and PowerPoint) and above. It is quick and intuitive and can be used by teachers, lecturers, course designers as well as administrators and support staff. Importantly it doesn't require any prior knowledge of PDF or accessibility.

Once you have created your document you use the Commonlook Office Wizard to guide you through the changes needed to make the document accessible. Accessibility becomes part of the authoring process, empowering everyone to be responsible about accessibility.

When you first get started a typical document of 5 pages would take less than 5 minutes to make accessible for all skill levels. The process is self-educating, leading to better authoring habits greatly reduced times to convert to an accessible PDF.

Standard MS Word styles are automatically mapped to appropriate PDF tags. Simple and complex tables are handled and support for headings, lists and more is all available.

CommonLook Office saves the document as a fully tagged and accessible PDF document that can be shared or placed on your website with full confidence that a screen reader user can access all the information it contains.

Commonlook Office is available for single users or can be deployed across networks. Trial versions are available for your evaluation.

How Accessible is Your Website Content?

Every educational institution in Australia has PDF content on their websites. However, very few know how much or if any of that content is accessible.

To get around that, most have adopted policies of providing alternative format copies of the same document in order to provide accessibility.

However, there are generally no safeguards or measures in place to ensure that the alternate format document is accessible. It also means that the web administrator always has to manage the information twice, and sometimes the content is different between the two formats.

Wouldn't it be simple to have one document in one accessible format?

Clarity is another product by Commonlook that will analyse any web site and produce a report on the accessibility status of all PDF content. Understanding the size of the problem is the first step to overcoming it.

File Testing Status		
Metric	**Count**	**%**
Number of Files Tested	20	N/A
Tagged Files	12	60.00
Untagged Files	8	40.00
Files Passing All Tested Checkpoints	0	0.00
Files Failing at Least One Checkpoint	17	85.00
Files to be Verified by User	3	15.00
Number of document passing automated checkpoints	2	10.00

Sample Clarity Report

We can produce a 'snapshot' report of your website at no charge. A full analysis is also available and the cost depends on the size and complexity of your site.

You can also purchase Clarity as a tool for the on-going analysis and management of your site.

RealSAM

RealSAM, is a mobile device with an interactive spoken interface that allows users to search and navigate a wide range of media, and have articles read to them. It provides unparalleled access to content – just click the (single) button and speak!

Up-to-date news and information and other online content can be very difficult to access for people with a print disability, and RealSAM successfully breaks down these barriers. RealSAM is also truly portable and can be used on the go, or while doing other tasks.

RealSAM can be used anywhere there is a WiFi or mobile network. Currently you can access;
- Newspapers and news feeds
- Podcasts – over 50,000 episodes of more than 1,500 podcasts
- Weather – current weather and forecasts for anywhere around the world
- Location – tells you where you are and points of interest nearby

And there are some exciting new developments in the pipeline which will really open the doors to simple 'one-button' access to a huge range of accessible content. Watch this space!

Check out this video of RealSAM in use;
http://youtu.be/ulvgQhM_txs

JAWS 16 Has Arrived

The world famous JAWS screen reader has been regularly up-dated over the years, but sometimes there is an up-grade that is more exciting than usual! This is such an occasion.

Access to maths equations has remained a problem for many users of screen readers. Complex mathematical equations have been rendered as images which cannot be read by screen readers. Now with V16 , JAWS will read math content that has been created in MathML. MathML is a language for including mathematical content on

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

Web pages, enabling browsers to present math equations and formulas as they would appear on paper.

JAWS V16 now provides spoken, natural language descriptions of MathML expressions, using the same terms a teacher would use to explain them in a classroom. There is a written, visual language of math, described by MathML. However, there is also a spoken language used when people discuss math problems. Students will benefit from hearing JAWS describe mathematical expressions as their teachers and peers do.

Just as exciting is a major up-grade to the OCR feature built-in to JAWS. This new functionality enables the user to OCR (scan and read) an entire document without having to exit or use an external program. The document that has been scanned will appear in a separate window, from which information can be copied and pasted to other documents or destinations. This is an extremely powerful tool that removes a major barrier as it is encountered, increasing productivity and independence.

There is also a new JAWS Command Search function - making it much easier for all users to locate various JAWS features along with the required keystroke. Great for teachers or support workers who may not use JAWS regularly and find it hard to remember all the commands!

Making Websites Accessible to People Who Don't Use Assistive Technology

When we talk about accessibility, most of the time we are thinking of people that already have AT tools like screen readers. Recent studies in the US and Europe have shown that there are large numbers of people who struggle to read print but don't have access to accessibility tools. To reach these people, webmasters are increasingly looking for tools that they can incorporate into their websites, so they can provide access for all.

BrowseAloud Plus is just such a product. It is installed into your website and adds high quality speech and reading support tools to extend the reach of your website to the 46% of the population who struggle to read. This includes those with:
- Dyslexia
- Literacy Difficulties
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Mild Visual Impairments

Website visitors browsing the web from their Smartphone, Tablet, PC or Mac can utilise BrowseAloud Plus and benefit from the reading support that suits their individual needs and preferences, whether they are At Home, In the Office or On the Go.

Key Benefits to Website Owners
- Reach a Wider Audience
- Reduce Costs
- Help Compliance with Legal Obligations
- Reduce Barriers on the Web
- Improve Access to your Website for all.
- Demonstrate Commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility

Key User Benefits
- Zero Implementation and Zero Download
- Compatibility with all Major Browsers and Devices

- High Quality Voices (incl. multilingual)
- Secure Web Page and PDF Reading
- Automatic Updates
- Free to the End User

What it Reads
- All Accessible Content
- ALT Tags Behind Pictures
- Accessible Flash and JavaScript
- Online PDF Documents
- Secure HTTPS Web Pages
- Online Form Fields
- Intranets and Extranets
- Social Media Pages (such as Twitter)
- Search Results Pages (such as Google)

BrowseAloud Plus reads website content out loud in a high quality, human-sounding voice. Each word is highlighted as it is read aloud and the sentence is highlighted in a contrasting colour. This allows users to easily identify what text is being read aloud and navigate within and between web pages.

Most importantly BrowseAloud Plus is free to website visitors, there's no download and the user interface is intuitive and easy to use.

Recommended Browsers & Platforms
- Internet Explorer 8 and greater (IE9 or greater for PDF Reading and Simplifier)
- Firefox (latest release)
- Chrome (latest release)
- Mac: Safari (latest release)
- iOS: Safari (iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch, latest release)
- Android: Chrome (Android v3 and greater)

There are different pricing structures dependent on the type of organisation so please give us a call today to find out how you can transform your website into a welcoming environment for all.

Quantum Webinars

Webinars are the fastest growing media platform for training and professional development in Australia. Quantum has already held a number of Webinars with participants from around Australia and New Zealand.

If you have missed out on a webinar we are starting to post these onto YouTube so you can follow along at a later date. The link to our YouTube Channel is;

http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk7K5vfqw4xY4DMNV6r8e4w

We have also held a number of private webinars for organisations or groups of who have asked for specific training sessions or seminars on product areas. These have proven to be very effective for groups that are widely dispersed and only physically get together rarely, such as itinerant teachers, or members of a government department that are geographically dispersed.

Subject areas include:

Awareness seminars: These cover a particular subject area from a general perspective and are designed to keep people current with the latest trends.

Products seminars: These provide an in-depth look at a particular product or product group, including applications and user prespectives.

Training seminars: These typically provide hands on training, and are best suited to small group or individual training.

We can tailor sessions at a time of your choosing and can develop highly customised training opportunities to meet your particular needs. If you want further information on this drop a note to Rebecca Clark at info@quantumrlv.com.au

ZoomText 10.1 is Here

ZoomText 10.1 contains the following new features and enhancements, allowing for greater productivity and support in the Windows 7 and Windows 8/8.1 operating systems as well as in the latest versions of popular applications. Be sure you also check out the list of all the features that were already in ZoomText, but here's a list of everything new:

- Support for Windows 7, 8 and 8.1 ZoomText 10.1 provides unmatched magnification and reading support for the new Windows 7, 8 and 8.1 operating systems and interface.

- Support for Microsoft Office 2013 ZoomText 10.1 supports the core applications in Microsoft Office 2013 including Word, Excel and Outlook.

- Support for Internet Explorer 10 and 11

- Improved Support for Videos and Games.

- Support for Touch Screen Devices ZoomText 10.1 can be used on Windows 8 and 8.1 touch screen devices including tablets, laptops and desktop monitors.

- Additional Levels of Magnification ZoomText's magnification levels have been extended and now include 42x, 48x, 54x and 60x.

- Improved Tracking and Program Echo.

Remember, ZoomText 10.1 supports:

- Windows 7, 8, and 8.1
- Microsoft Office 2013
- Internet Explorer (IE) 10 and 11
- Direct X10 for better graphics and games
- Aero Mode – translucent glass windows
- Touch Screen Devices (on Windows 8 and 8.1)