

The Direction of Accessibility Guidelines – What UX Pros Need to Know

March 31, 2021



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Agenda

- Introductions
- Definitions
- WCAG 3.0 Background
- WCAG 3.0 Structure
- WCAG 3.0 Structure (Testing)
- Questions and Answers
 - Please submit your questions for me or Jeanne and we will try to answer during the last 10-15 minutes (12:45 Eastern Time)

Introductions



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Speakers and Captioner



Jeanne Spellman
Co-lead Silver Task Force



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Senior Consultant
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Carrie O'Brien
Captioner
Purple Communications

Who We Are

We are a global user experience consulting group based at Bentley University. Since our foundation in 1999, we have provided hundreds of clients around the world with user experience research, design, and strategy services.



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Definitions



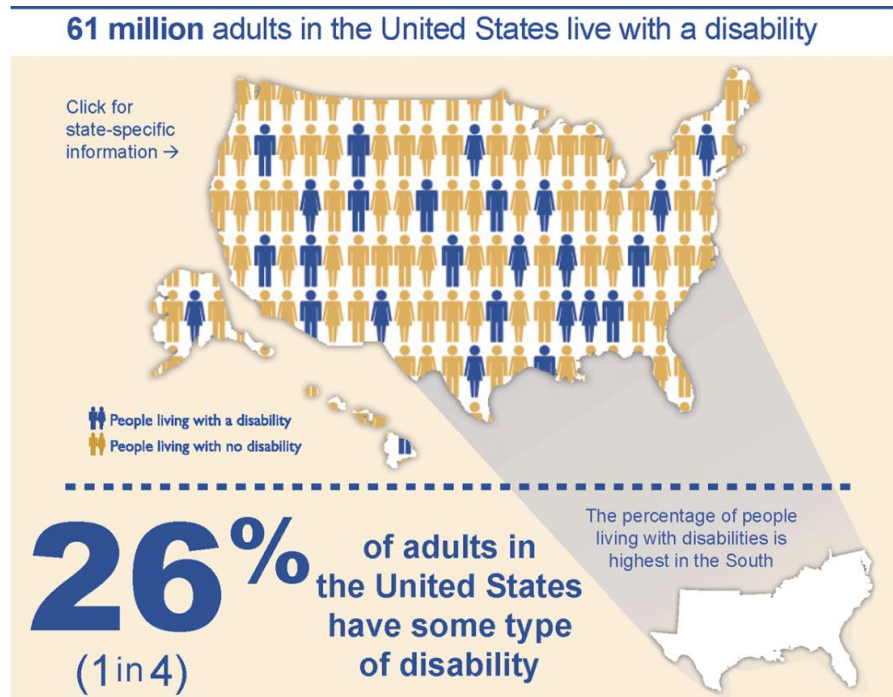
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What is Accessibility?

- Giving people with disabilities the ability to use technology.

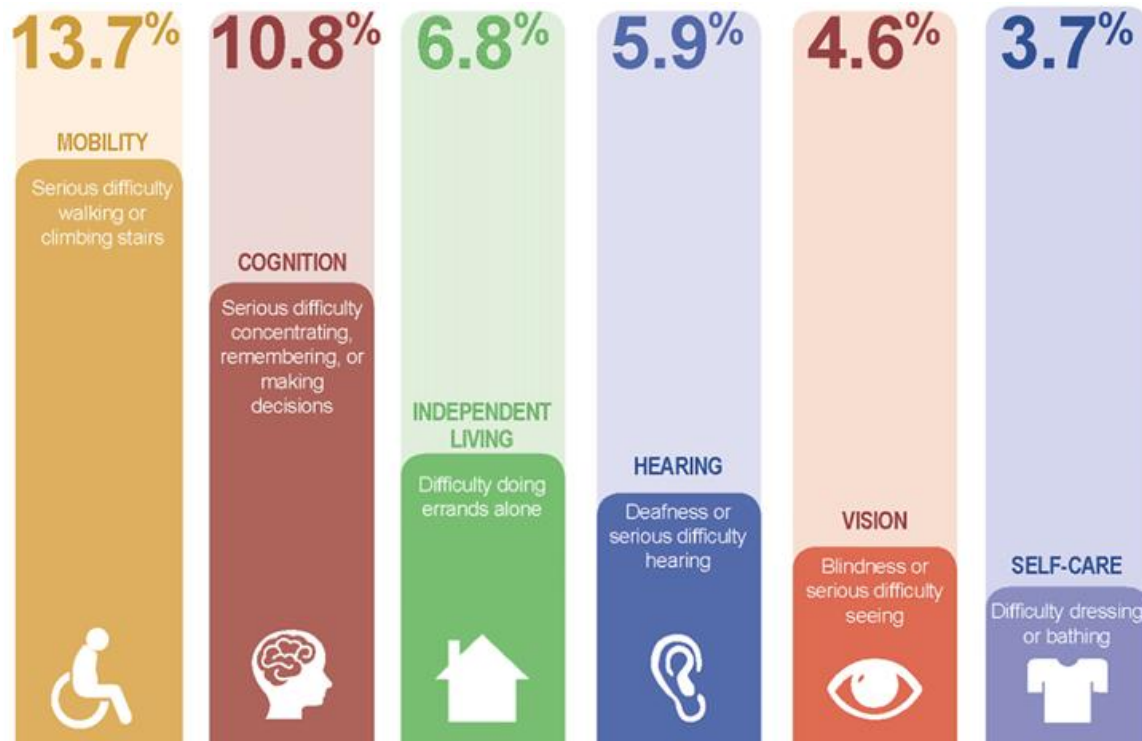


- ~61 million (26%) in US have disability.

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/info-graphic-disability-impacts-all.html>

- Globally about 1 billion have a disability
- “A11y” = Accessibility

What is Accessibility?

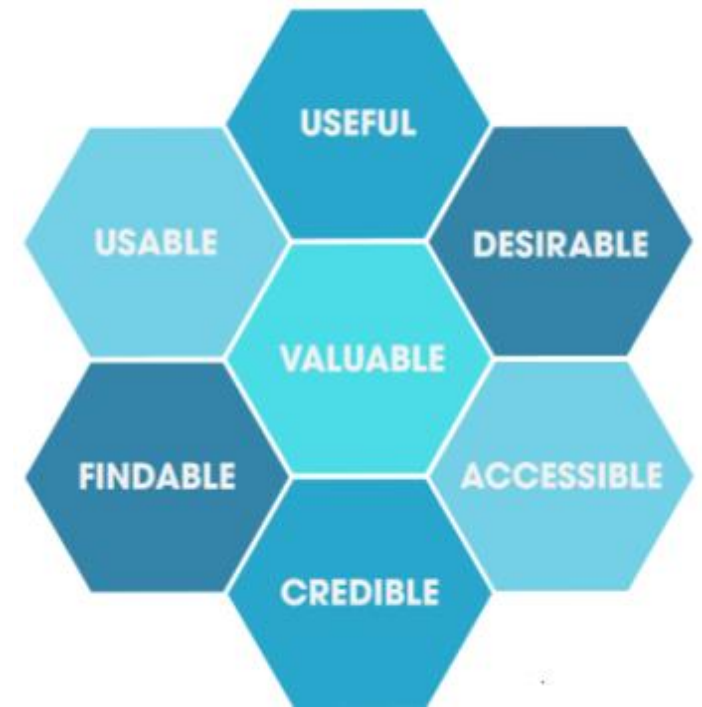


- Percentage of U.S. adults with functional disability types:
 - Mobility: 13.7%
 - Cognition: 10.8%
 - Independent Living: 6.8%
 - Hearing: 5.9%
 - Vision: 4.6%
 - Self-Care: 3.7%

Accessibility and UX

- Giving all the ability to use products and services
- Accessibility should be the baseline of a good UX
 - Without access not usable
 - Accessible (by itself) does not mean a good UX
 - Useful
 - Usable
 - Findable
 - Credible
 - **Accessible**
 - Desirable
 - Valuable

Peter Morville, Andrew Lehti, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons



WCAG 3.0 Background

Where did we come from?



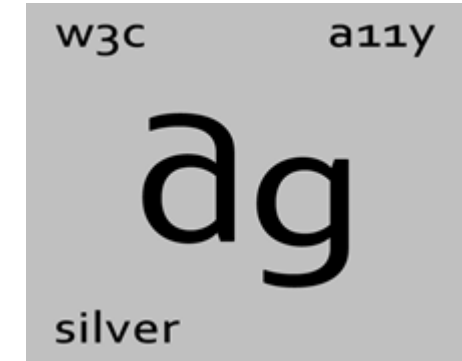
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What is WCAG 3.0?

- A DRAFT set of new accessibility guidelines from the W3C.
- WCAG pronounced “Wah-cag”.
- 3.0, slight name change to reflect broader scope.
 - **Old: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.**
 - WCAG 1.0 - 1999.
 - WCAG 2.0 - 2008.
 - WCAG 2.1 - 2018.
 - WCAG 2.2 - 2021.
 - **New: W3C Accessibility Guidelines.**
 - May have heard WCAG 3.0 referred to as “Silver”.
 - **Accessibility Guidelines = ag = Silver**
- WCAG 3.0 will not replace WCAG 2.X until 3.0 is final.
 - They will co-exist for years to come.



First Draft

<https://www.w3.org/TR/wcag-3.0/>

W3C Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 3.0

W3C First Public Working Draft 21 January 2021

This version:

<https://www.w3.org/TR/2021/WD-wcag-3.0-20210121/>

Latest published version:

<https://www.w3.org/TR/wcag-3.0/>

Latest editor's draft:

<https://w3c.github.io/silver/guidelines/>

Introduction: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/wcag3-intro/>

User Research from the Start

- 2016 project start -> Multi-year project
- Identified stakeholders and created list of research questions
- Evaluated WCAG2 and compiled feedback
 - Make it easier to understand - especially for beginners
 - Make the success criteria easier to interpret and remove ambiguity
 - Make the grading system more nuanced - not just pass/fail
- Invited 27 industry leaders to work on solutions for a 2-day Design Sprint.
- Used their suggestions to draft the project requirements.
- Worked on ideas and prototypes from 2018 to 2020.
- ***Question for Jeanne:*** What were some of the biggest surprises from this research?

Goals of WCAG 3.0 Based on User Research

- Easier to use guidelines, especially for beginners
- More inclusive – include more disability types such as
 - Low vision
 - Cognitive disabilities
- More platforms
 - Mobile
 - XR (augmented and virtual reality)
- Easier to maintain guidelines as technology changes

WCAG 3.0 Structure

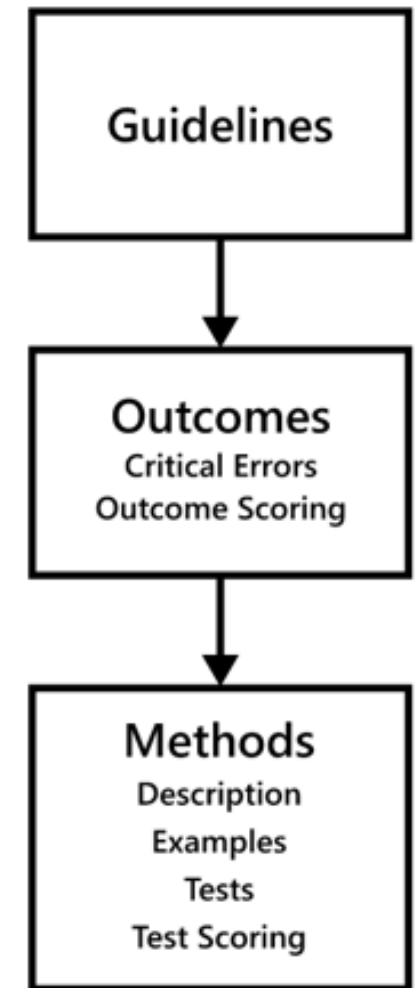


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New Structure

- Guidelines
 - High-level, plain-language version of the content
 - For managers, policy makers, individuals who are new to accessibility. How-To sections describe the guideline
- Outcomes
 - Testable criteria that include information on how to score the outcome.
- Methods
 - Detailed information on how to meet the outcome
 - Code samples, working examples, user stories, resources, as well as information about testing and scoring the method.
- **Question for Jeanne:** What do you think are the main advantages over the old structure of WCAG 2.X?



Guidelines

- For 1st draft 5 guidelines included:
 - Text alternatives;
 - **Clear words; - new guidance that could not previously be included in WCAG 2.X.**
 - Captions;
 - Structured content (headings); and
 - Visual contrast of text (color contrast).
- ***Question for Jeanne:*** Why were these 5 selected for the 1st draft? Were there any others that were strong contenders?

Clear Words

- **Guideline:** Use common clear words.
- **Outcome:** Uses common and clear words in all content.

Clear Words

- **Method:**(<https://www.w3.org/WAI/GL/WCAG3/2020/methods/clear-words/>)



Summary:

Clear words help create more accessible content for people with cognitive and learning disabilities. Use words or phrases that are most-frequently used for the current context, unless it will result in a loss of meaning or clarity.

Clear Words

- **Method:**(<https://www.w3.org/WAI/GL/WCAG3/2020/methods/clear-words/>)



Method: Clear Words

Introduction

Description

Examples

Tests

Resources

User Story:

As a user with a language impairment, learning disability and/or a memory impairment, I want the language used to be clear and easy for me to understand so that I can understand the content.

Related Personas:

- Carolyn: A Yoga Teacher who has ADHD
- George: A User who Works in a Supermarket and has Down Syndrome

WCAG 3.0 Structure (Testing)



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Testing Approach

- Outcomes are written as testable criteria
- Testing scoped at View and Process
 - View = page or screen
 - Process = the steps need to complete a user task (one or more views)
- Atomic (element) vs. Holistic testing (*experience?*)
 - **Question for Jeanne:** *How do you see user research and inclusive design playing a role in holistic testing?*
- Conformance levels
 - Bronze – minimum requirement; If not Bronze, then does not pass WCAG 3.0
 - No critical errors
 - Meets minimum score (point system)
 - Silver (work in progress)
 - Gold (work in progress)

Testing Approach (Critical Errors)

An accessibility problem that will stop a user from being able to complete a process.

Critical errors include:

1. Items that will stop a user from being able to complete the task if it exists anywhere on the view (examples: flashing, keyboard trap, audio with no pause);
2. Errors that when located within a process means the process cannot be completed (example: submit button not in tab order);
3. Errors that when aggregated within a view or across a process cause failure (example: a large amount of confusing, ambiguous language).

Testing Approach (Point System)

The point system has 3 levels:

1. Testing the views and processes (Atomic tests)
2. Assigning the Outcome score
3. Calculating the overall score
 - a. The overall score for the site or product
 - b. The overall score by disability category
 - c. Whether it meets Bronze level

Benefits of the Proposed Testing and Critical Errors

- Sites can have a small percentage of accessibility bugs as long as they are not a critical error for people with disabilities.
- Tests vary by guideline and method so the most appropriate test can be used.
- More needs of people with disabilities that were previously too hard to measure with a true/false test can be included.
- If a critical error is encountered, you can stop testing that guideline because it fails. Some testers are reporting that it speeds the conformance testing process.
(not testing for bugs)

Questions and Answers



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Get Involved with WCAG 3.0

Want to help?

- Join the [Silver Community Group](https://www.w3.org/community/silver/) (<https://www.w3.org/community/silver/>). They have groups forming to work on new guidelines.
- Comment on future versions of WCAG 3.0 (<https://www.w3.org/TR/wcag-3.0/>)
 - The status (<https://www.w3.org/TR/wcag-3.0/#sotd>) section contains instructions for comments.

Register for our next Webinar on May 7th!



Where is Your UX Compass Pointing?

A Case Study of a New Experience
Scorecard to Measure Overall
Product Sentiment and Drive
Design Priorities

Webinar Hosted by:



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Questions about UX and accessibility? Get in touch.

Email: uxc@bentley.edu

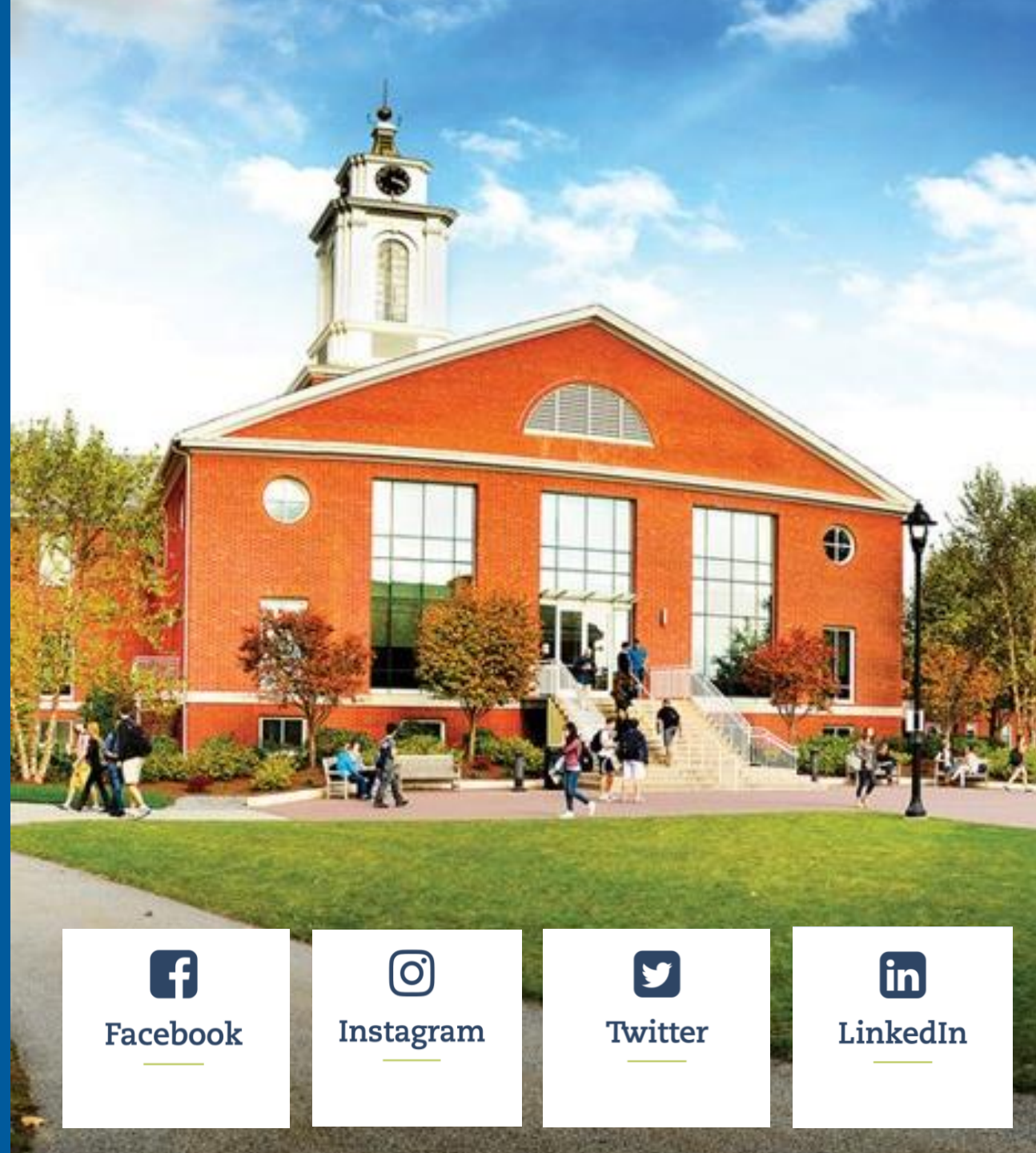
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