

# The Intersection of Digital Accessibility and Trust - Monsido Breakout Session

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Hi everyone, and welcome to this breakout session for the accessibility.com event. So thrilled to have you joining us here today as we're going to be talking about the intersection of digital accessibility and trust, a very important and exciting topic and a new look at accessibility. We're very proud to present this on behalf of Acquia. And so, you know, my name is Jasmine, and I'm going to be taking you through this presentation today.

So for those of you who are not familiar with von Sydow, we are a web governance and accessibility tool that helps scan your web site on a weekly, ongoing basis so that you can proactively address and find any accessibility issues on your website before it impacts users. We have a browser extension that makes it easy for you to work on page, which we're very, very proud of and have, thousands of customers that use. For those of you who are familiar with us, you may also know that. And for those of you who aren't, you may also know that we have recently joined Acquia, and we're very proud to be part of the digital experience leader and bringing web accessibility to even more organizations around the globe, as well as Acquia. Fantastic landscape of customers and partners.

And today we're going to talk about a couple of different key topics. So as I mentioned, we're looking at the intersection of digital accessibility and trust. And so what I really want to look at first is just the digital accessibility landscape. And then look at how we're defining digital trust in the world today. There's no right or wrong, but they are definitely intertwined.

And then we'll look at and that is I will then have a look at how they intersect. Last but not least, I don't want you to walk away empty handed. So we do have some great resources for you so that you can continue on your accessibility journey as we jump into this. I do always like to go through an introduction of digital accessibility and just the different aspects and elements of it.

Many of you are here today because you want to learn about accessibility, and I applaud you for taking the first step. But one of the things that often confuses people is the difference between physical and digital accessibility. Physical accessibility is something that there was a lot of legislation around, and the 80s, 90s and early 2000 and these are things like making sure that there are ramps into buildings or that, hallways are wider so that people in a wheelchair, for example, have free mobility and accessibility in the physical space.

What we've seen in recent years, and especially after Covid, where a lot of the world has traveled to transition into more of a digital approach, is that these digital assets and experiences are not necessarily accessible. And that is because there's a couple of basic things, but also more advanced and complex ones that need to be built into these experiences to ensure that

assistive technology, such as a screen reader, has equal access to browsing and navigating things like a website or a mobile application.

But other digital services and experiences also fall under the realm of digital accessibility. This can be something like when you go to an airport and you're trying to check in on one of those self-service kiosks, that's a digital experience. That is not necessarily accessible to everyone, and there needs to be valid and usable alternatives. Now, we specialize, of course, in website accessibility, which is a huge thing because it is the portal and the central part of your digital experience for your customers.

While all three things here have in common is that they're all governed by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines or WCG or what category, or sometimes here, other people in the space mention them. These are internationally recognized standards that have been published by the World Wide Web Consortium, W3C. And while they are guidelines, they're also a set of rules and rules that many different legislations, recognize and point to.

So the landscape, where you might be in your state or your country can definitely vary. There's plenty of national and federal legislation. But may or may not apply to certain types of organizations. Same with state legislation even more local in some instances. Most of these types of legislation. I highly recommend that you consult with your legal counsel to find out more about what you should be looking at, at what your specific cases in terms of accessibility compliance, both on the physical and digital side.

But the one thing that a lot of these regulations have in common is that they're not setting new standards or guidelines for digital accessibility. Rather, they are referencing the web content Accessibility guidelines. So whether you live in Manitoba and Canada or in New York or Texas, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines are a very safe approach for you to work towards accessibility, compliance.

Accessibility compliance is also changing. The web content Accessibility guidelines exist in several different versions, the latest one being 2.2 that was published in October of 2023. And so, yes, legislation may not yet be referencing the latest version that's published. We do always encourage people to make sure that their digital experiences are as accessible as possible by trying to maintain that, uphold and work towards the latest guidelines, and ensure that all aspects of their website or other digital experiences are, equally accessible for all.

So why should you care about digital accessibility if this is something that's totally new for you, it might be something that you underestimate of how many people it impacts. The World Health Organization has a statistic that around 16% of the world has a disability. That's about a billion of people in the world. So it is definitely something that we do need to think about as well.

A lot of accessibility principles don't only benefit people who have a disability, but all of us. If you have a temporary disability, meaning that you need enlarge text on your phone or on your digital devices, accessibility principles will make that more of more of a user friendly experience for

you. Same as we age, the elderly segment is growing immensely and some of the latest updates from the accessibility community, like the wcaG, recently introduced, a new standard that says button sizes.

need to be of a certain size, which is incredibly helpful when you're on a mobile phone and you have a shaky hand, for example. This is something that could also be, situational. For example, let's imagine you're riding a train or a subway and you're holding your phone and trying to press a button and your hands are shaking because of the vehicle.

ensuring a certain minimum target size is incredibly important and makes the digital experience more usable for you to. Beyond that, of course, it is a legal requirement, so make sure you do go out and educate yourself on what's applicable for you. But as I mentioned, it does really impact and benefit everyone. having clearer, error messages on forms instead of just red highlights helps all of us better be able to understand and engage with our digital experiences.

It makes it easier and straightforward. Of course, it also creates new job opportunities. There is lots of different things to do in accessibility and we are all responsible. And I always say accessibility is a team effort. We're all responsible. But it does also mean that you can get more, experts into your organization. But last but not least, it is the right thing to do.

There's, of course, a lot of different human factors that play into this as well, because accessibility is essentially also about inclusivity. And so, whether that is ensuring that everyone has equal access. the other things that it also plays into is making sure that it is an inclusive experience, regardless of diversity, or ensuring that there is diversity, that you're embracing language.

And a great example of that is that there's a large part of a population in the United States, for example, that has English as a second language. Are you making sure that your content on your website is accessible for these people who have English as a second language? but making sure that you're using plain language or simplified language, but also other factors, of course, include gender, age, culture, ability and environment.

And by embracing accessibility, you're hopefully also embracing these other factors for inclusivity as you're building up this accessibility and inclusivity. championship for your digital services. All right. Well, what does this have to do with trust? And this is where I want you to think about how would you define digital trust in today's world? Because for me, a lot of different experiences depend on how seamless, the experience is.

And that's what makes it trustworthy for me. Would I go back to that website? Yes, I would, because it was a smooth user experience, but a smooth user experience also means an accessible one. Let me give you an example. one of, a person who I know who is an individual who was blind was booking a hotel trip.

And it was absolutely fantastic because most of the different elements on the hotel's website were fully accessible until the very end. As the person was getting ready to check out the I accept terms and conditions checkbox was not accessible and so does not make it a trustworthy site or no. Maybe it's still a trustworthy site, but it definitely wasn't a seamless experience.

And that person probably wouldn't recommend that hotel website to another person who was, for example, a screen reader user. So yes, while accessibility and digital trust are two different things, they are inherently interlinked because making an accessible and user friendly experience increases the level of trust in a website or did other digital experience, and thereby also hopefully spreading the word of mouth amongst other people.

Another important accessibility. feature that I always like to talk about when it comes to digital trust is consistency. So as you start digging into the guidelines, some things that they'll talk about is ensuring that you have a consistent structure for different websites. And so what you'll see common here is that all of them have a top a navigation in the top.

They have a similar layout in their navigation. I'm sure if we scroll to the bottom of all of these websites, there would also be a sweater in the bottom that also follows a very similar pattern. Making sure that you're following tried and true trusted best practices for website design or other digital experiences helps reduce the confusion when you're navigating, these different experiences.

And it's also good accessibility practices. So that is something where digital accessibility and digital trust really go hand-in-hand. If you go to a website that is testing a new, setup where the navigation was in the footer, you probably would be a little bit suspicious and not see it as a sign of trust. So while the very small subconscious changes, those things can really have a big impact as to whether or not we feel comfortable, engaging with the digital experience.

And also, if they're not accessible, that will add another layer onto it. Another couple examples are for for example, here on the right we have an SSL certificate. Making sure that these experiences are accessible. And this might be an SSL but make sure that there's it's trustworthy. but also making sure that screen reader, for example, is able to navigate this kind of a pop up message is incredibly important.

So, yes, there's some people who forgot to add an SSL certificate to the website, but making sure that people can navigate around that and not be stuck in a keyboard trap is incredibly important. Another really important example here is with banks and other kinds of systems where you require login nowadays that want two factor authentication. A lot of different systems, digital experiences are built up around two factor authentication.

That's not necessarily, accessible. So for example here, if I were to have if I discovered unauthorized use of my card, I would get a text message from my bank letting me know. The interesting thing was, and the first thing I did was Google, is this the right phone number that I should be receiving this message from?

To make sure it was not a scam? And this is where your website with an SSL certificate is incredibly important, but even more so, it's important that this is accessible so that everybody can access this information and not get confused by any kind of two factor authentication. In addition, two factor authentication is notoriously inaccessible. So making sure that you're building an alternative method, whether it be, sending a link to someone's email instead of asking them to retype in a code that's an important consideration.

Last but not least, I did just want to go through a couple of different elements of digital trust. All of these are not related to accessibility. Some of them like an e-commerce experience, making sure you have a secure checkout flow and trusted payment options are, of course, more related to the e-commerce experience and digital trust. But if the e-commerce experience is not accessible, you will then again lose digital trust and someone will choose another vendor.

Same things go with compliance statements or just the user experience in general. If there are any one of these, if they're not accessible, how are you supposed to trust the organization? Right? So if, for example, wider recognition, a lot of websites have a customer logo bar, that's great. It's supposed to create some kind of recognition for you as a consumer as you come in.

But if you have not properly like label those different logos explaining what it is in the context that their customers that you're already working with, then it might just appear as a screen to a screen reader user of logo 54. And that's not helpful. That doesn't create digital trust. In fact, I believe it decreases digital trust. And the same goes for privacy and ethics.

If someone needs to, for whatever reason, requests personal data, making sure that all of these key processes, that people need to be able to perform in your digital experience or your website is incredibly important. I hope with that. it was a little bit helpful to think about how improving web accessibility can improve your digital trust of your organization on your website.

we're very excited to be celebrating Global Accessibility Awareness Day later this month, and we'd love for you to join us. We are hosting a webinar on the hidden costs of ignoring digital accessibility, and you can visit us at [acquia.com/guide](https://acquia.com/guide) for more information. We've also got lots of great content on Acquia TV, which you can subscribe to, and we're excited to have a recent episode, that was published with Merrill Ovens.

And with that, I just want to say a big thank you for joining us today. If you're curious to learn more about Von Sydow, please do feel free to drop by our virtual booth here today, and you're welcome to reach out to us on our Qualcomm as well. And you can request a complimentary website scan. Wishing everyone a lovely day.

Thank you so much.