Accessibility and Library Websites: What You Need to Know

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East Lansing Public Library

FY2018 Action Plan

Date: July 19, 2017

Mission statement:

The East Lansing Public Library provides a place and resources where people gather to share information and ideas to enrich lives and foster community.

Focus Areas

Community: Providing opportunities for people to meet, share ideas and take part in the development of their community.

Learn: Promoting learning and literacy in all forms to all ages.

Collaborate: Working with partners toward a common goal.

Develop: Creating an environment that is future-oriented, serves as good stewards of public resources and innovates the staff and community.

Discover: Providing a space and the resources that spark creativity and an organization that is in sync with industry trends.
Love your online library.

BiblioCommons builds software that transforms the public library’s essential online services—your website, your catalog, your events calendar—from transactions to experiences worthy of your public library.
February 7, 2018
On November 20, 2017, the U.S. Department of Education (the Department), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), received a complaint filed against East Lansing Public Library (the Library), alleging that the Library discriminates on the basis of disability. Specifically, the Complainant alleges that the Library’s website has substantive accessibility issues. The alleged inaccessible pages include, but are not limited to, the following:

...the Complainant alleges that the Library’s website has substantive accessibility issues.
First Step: Ask For Help
Second Step: Legal Counsel
And then, an interesting email from Sonya...
Michigan woman fights for accessible websites in U.S. school districts

School districts across the U.S. be warned: if your websites aren't accessible to people with disabilities, Marcie Lipsitt is ready to take action.

Lipsitt, a Franklin resident and an outspoken special-education advocate, has been on a one-woman crusade, filing hundreds of federal complaints against schools, school districts, state education departments and other public agencies nationwide if she finds their websites aren't accessible to people with vision and hearing disabilities.

Common problems include websites missing text that describes images to blind or visually impaired people who use special software, content that can only be used by people who have a mouse, and videos that aren't captioned or aren't accurately captioned.

"I will file as long as I need to file," Lipsitt said. "I'm hoping my efforts will inspire others to file these complaints. If one person files in every school district, wow, we'd have tens of thousands of accessible school districts."

- Related: Supreme Court to hear case of disabled Michigan girl and her dog

Her crusade is getting action. Of the 400 complaints Lipsitt has filed — most of them within the last six months — the federal Office of Civil Rights that is part of the U.S. Department of Education has opened investigations into about 175.

And so far, the federal office has entered into resolution agreements with nearly 20 schools, school districts and education departments.

Eleven of those were highlighted in a news release last week from the education department, which praised them for voluntarily entering into an agreement.
Sonya

Learned HTML writing an Intranet for the Braille and Talking Book Library where two staff members were screen reader users.
In 2014, the Michigan Department of Education faced the exact same complaint that East Lansing Public faced in 2017. We were the first agency in the nation to do so.
Our Working Definition of Accessible

"Accessible" as used in this Agreement means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. A person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability. Although this might not result in identical ease of use compared to that of persons without disabilities, it still must ensure equal opportunity to the benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of such technology.
What did this mean in practical terms?

● Proper HTML mark-up with modern standards.
● Meeting the WCAG 2.0 AA level of compliance.
  ○ 1,700 webpages did not meet this standard.
  ○ Multiple errors across nearly 50 criteria of the WCAG 2.0
● The MDE’s website had over 8,200 PDFs and over 1,200 Office documents that did not meet the Accessibility Policy.
All had to be remediated or removed
More than 50 people received one and a half days of in-person training and 4 hours of Lynda.com training.
MDE Software Solutions

Adobe Acrobat Pro DC or Creative Cloud
SiteImprove
What Was the Result at the 2 Year Mark?

The work was overwhelming and most staff decided that website content was too difficult to fix.

Other big organizations have made different decisions.
What Have We Learned At the 5 Year Mark?

A Positive Attitude

Enforcement
March 2018...One Month Later...

- 302 Agreement
- Draft Accessibility Policy
- Draft Accessibility Procedures
- Adopt Technical Standards
- Accessibility Audit
- Annual Training for Staff
- Deadlines
And then, a curious call from our lawyer...
New Rules Let Ed Department Ignore Disability-Related Complaints

by Hannah Lang | April 2, 2018

Since January 2016, Marcie Lipsitt has filed 2,400 complaints with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights over web accessibility for people with disabilities.

Lipsitt, a Michigan-based special education activist, estimates that a thousand of those complaints have ended in resolutions. However, last month she began receiving letters notifying her that hundreds of her complaints under investigation had been dismissed.

The reason: Under a new set of guidelines that went into effect March 5, the Office for Civil Rights can now dismiss reports if “a complaint is a continuation of a pattern of complaints previously filed with OCR by an individual or group against multiple recipients, or a complaint is filed for the first time ... that places an unreasonable burden on OCR’s resources.”
New Rules Let Ed Department Ignore Disability-Related Complaints
by Hannah Long | April 3, 2018

Since January 2016, Marcia Lipsitz has filed 2,400 complaints with the US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights over web accessibility for people with disabilities.

Lipsitz, a Michigan-based special education activist, estimates that a thousand of those complaints have ended in resolutions. However, last month she began receiving letters notifying her that hundreds of her complaints under investigation had been dismissed.

The reason: Under a new set of guidelines that went into effect March 3, the Office for Civil Rights can now dismiss reports if a complaint is a continuation of a pattern of complaints previously filed with OCR by an individual or group against multiple recipients, or if a complaint is filed for the first time that places an unreasonable burden on OCR's resources.

“...if a complaint is a continuation of a pattern of complaints previously filed with OCR by an individual or group against multiple recipients...”
So What Now?
Same Plan

- Site Clean-Up
- Accessibility Policy
- Accessibility Procedures
- Software Update
- Site Audit
Our Timeline
Our Issues
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Informative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Night Out &amp; Touch a Truck</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>August 7, 6pm</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
eBooks

cloudLibrary eBooks - 7/1/2018
New stuff, old stuff, and Great American Read Stuff, ready for check-out.

National Night Out & Touch a Truck
Aug 7th | 6:00pm - 8:00pm
Join us at ELPL for our annual National Night Out and Touch a Truck celebration! We're teaming up with the East Lansing Police Department...

cloudLibrary eBooks - 6/25/2018
Beach reads, cabin reads, any type of reads you want!

cloudLibrary eBooks - 6/21/2018
Some new, some old (but still good!) and some in-between, for all ages.
BiblioCommons Announces the Upcoming Release of BiblioWeb V3.0

Originally posted on March 22, 2018.

Toronto, ON – Eight years after its initial launch, BiblioCommons is proud to announce the upcoming release of version 3.0 of its BiblioWeb website-building and content-publishing platform.

The original version of BiblioWeb (then called BiblioCMS) was launched in 2010 and built on the Drupal content management system. Based on library feedback and working in collaboration with Chicago Public Library and other library partners, BiblioCommons then redeveloped BiblioCMS using WordPress, with specialized functionality for public libraries’ website needs built on top. This version 2.0 of BiblioCMS was launched in 2014, and rebranded as BiblioWeb in 2016 to better reflect its robust website-building functionality and library-specific workflows.

BiblioWeb was designed to provide libraries with a best-in-class content management system that offers strong two-way integration with the heart of the library’s online experience: the catalog. Its card-based architecture and content-repurposing workflows allow libraries to easily create content-rich websites that draw patrons in and showcase the full breadth of the library’s services and collections.
Next Steps: Adding Accessibility to Procurement Language
Help from the Big10 Academic Alliance
Low-Hanging Fruit of Writing Accessible Text for the Web
Screen Readers Take Links Out of Context

Clarence the Clown is going to visit the library on Saturday. **Learn** about his amazing tricks, **see** pictures of his feats, and **click here** to register!

A screen reader reads…

Link: “Learn”

Link: “See”

Link: “Click here”
Don’t Use “Click Here” as Link Text

Our Friends Group has its fall book sale this weekend. You can read more about it here.  

Our Friends Group has its fall book sale this weekend.  

Screen reader reads: “Link: fall book sale”
Don’t Repeat Linked Text

Our website contains great information about what’s going on at the library. You can also view the website of our township office to see what’s going on in the community.

“Link: our website.”

“Link: township office.”
Best Practices for Using Tables

- Caption the table
- Use a column or row header
- Don’t merge cells
- Don’t leave cells blank (even if you input “null” or “0”)
Don’t Display Hyperlinks, Embed Them

We’d like to thank our sponsor, Kroger, http://kroger.com, for donating snacks.

We’d like to thank our sponsor, Kroger, for donating snacks.

“Link: Kroger”
November 28, 2018
November 28, 2018
Ms. Kristin Shelley
Library Director
East Lansing Public Library
950 Abbot Road
East Lansing MI 48823

Re: Directed investigation of accessibility of website and on-line programs

Dear Library Director Shelley:

Thank you for your institution’s participation in the website accessibility webinar that the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) offered in June 2018. OCR hopes that you found the webinar useful in assisting you in making your website and on-line programs accessible to individuals with disabilities.

“...OCR will initiate a directed investigation commencing on May 15, 2019.”
Thank You For Your Time

If you have questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us:

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