

Accessibility Glossary

Accessible Canada Act

Also known as bill C-81, the Act provides for the development of accessibility standards and gives the Government of Canada the authority to work with stakeholders and persons with disabilities to create new accessibility regulations that will apply to sectors within the federal jurisdiction. These new regulations will set out requirements for organizations to follow in order to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Accessibility

The measure of something's usability by persons with one or more disabilities

Adaptability

The ability of certain building spaces and elements, such as kitchen counters, sinks, and grab bars, to be added or altered so as to accommodate the needs of individuals with or without disabilities or to accommodate the needs of persons with different types or degrees of disability.

Accommodation

Where it is impossible to remove barriers without undue hardship, special arrangements must be made so that persons with disabilities can fully participate

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A11Y

A11Y is another term for accessibility, and depicts that there are 11 letters between the “a” and the “y” in accessibility. The term is associated with striving for accessibility for all, and to be an ally to those within the disabled community.

Alternative Text

The short text used to describe images for visually impaired persons---usually 125 characters or less

Assistive Technologies

Technologies that increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities

Audio Browsers

Web browsers that provide a text-to-speech capability for the blind and visually impaired

Augmentative and alternative communication devices

Augmentative and alternative communication devices, or AAC, refers to communication methods used to supplement or replace speech or writing for people with impairments in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language

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Braille

A form of written language for blind people, in which characters are represented by patterns of raised dots that are felt with the fingertips

Camel Case

When an initial capital is used for the first letter of a word forming the second element of a closed compound, e.g. PayPal, iPhone, MasterCard.

Many screen readers will read words like this incorrectly if camel case is not used

Captions

A textual representation of sounds--usually associated with television programming or movies; captions are meant to display in real time and to capture speech sounds and sounds beyond speech in some cases.

- Closed captions can be turned on and off
- Open captions always remain on screen
- Both are to be synchronized with the content of the video or presentation

Clickability Cues

A visual indication that a given word or item on a Web page is clickable. Cues that can be used to indicate the clickability of an item include colour, underlining, bullets, and arrows. Some cues, like colour, may not be accessible to certain people.

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Closed Functionality

Devices with closed functionality mean that the use of some assistive technologies is not possible

Compatibility

Compatible programs work with assistive technology. Compatibility contrasts with closed functionality.

Contrast

The degree of difference between tones, usually between text, background, and images. Visual presentation must follow guidelines to ensure that students with difficulty distinguishing color (i.e., color blind) are still able to access and comprehend the materials.

Curb Cut

A small ramp built into the curb of a sidewalk to make it easier for people using mobility aids or strollers to pass from the sidewalk to the road

Early Adopters

A user who tends to embrace new technology before the majority

Easy Read

A style of writing information for persons with language difficulties, using basic vocabulary, short sentences, and often the use of images to accompany text

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International Access Symbol

The International Symbol of Access, also known as the Wheelchair or Handicap Symbol, consists of a blue square overlaid in white with a stylized image of a person in a wheelchair. It is used to indicate that someone has a disability or that certain spaces are reserved for persons with a disability.

Late Adopters

Individuals who are slow or hesitant to adopt new technology

Plain English

Language that is clear and concise, avoids complex vocabulary, and is free of clichés and technical jargon. Plain English makes information more accessible to people with language difficulties

Public Facing

Content made available by an agency to members of the general public; examples include but are not limited to an agency website, blog post, or social media page

Quiet Room

Multipurpose spaces used for naps, relief from stress and over-stimulation. Many persons with autism experience sensory overload and can benefit from taking a break in a quiet room.

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Screen Reader

A software program used to allow reading of content and navigation of the screen using speech or Braille output. Used primarily by people who have difficulty seeing. JAWS, NVDA, and iOS are examples.

Signage

Displayed verbal, symbolic, tactile, and pictorial information

Sign Language

A system of communication using visual gestures and signs, as used by deaf or hard of hearing people. The most commonly used sign language in Canada is American Sign Language (ASL), while Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) is used in Quebec.

Subtitles

Captions displayed at the bottom of a movie or television screen that translate or transcribe the dialogue or narrative. Subtitles are not specifically for hard of hearing or deaf persons, unlike captions.

Switch Control

An accessibility feature of iOS 7 and later that allows users with motor impairments to access their iPhone, iPod touch, or iPad by sequentially highlighting items on the screen

Transcript

A text only version of what's said in a movie or television program

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Text Telephone or Tele Typewriter (TTY)

A TTY is a special device that lets people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired use the telephone to communicate, by allowing them to type messages instead of talking and listening

Universal Design

Universal design is the design of buildings, products or environments to make them accessible to all people, regardless of age, disability or other factors

Usability

Usability measures the quality of a user's experience when interacting with a product or system, such as a website

W3C

W3C stands for World Wide Web Consortium, an international community that develops standards to ensure the long-term growth of the web. W3C created the WCAG guidelines

- [WAI](#) Web Accessibility Initiative, created by the W3C to make the web accessible to all
- [WCAG 2.0](#) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, for making web content more accessible

Web Accessibility

Web accessibility in the CSU context is the application of design principles to make websites, web applications and web content usable by persons with disabilities who may be using assistive technologies to access the site