



IBM CUSTOMER FACING SOLUTIONS
+USER EXPERIENCE
 Accessibility



Accessibility

Both public and private sectors around the world are faced with accessibility challenges such as providing “equal access for all” and complying with accessibility regulations like the “Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005” and the W3C’s Web Accessibility Initiative standards. IBM’s Customer Facing Solutions (CFS) leverages its industry knowledge, accessibility experience, technical and user-centered design skills, strategic relationships, and research innovations to deliver solutions that can help organizations realise their goals and better support their constituents regardless of their ability.

Accessibility Strategy and Roadmap Offering

A team of accessibility specialists conducts interviews and surveys, and then facilitates a Customer Vision Workshop with key stakeholders to document the “accessibility as-is

state.” CFS accessibility specialists analyse dimensions such as business processes, organization, human capital management, and IT, and document future goals related to accessibility. CFS then conducts a gap analysis between the current and proposed future states. After conducting the gap analysis, CFS drafts a strategy and roadmap based on the IBM Accessibility Framework with prioritised recommendations, suggested schedules, and a detailed plan for how to close the gaps.

Benefits of the accessibility strategy and roadmap include:

- Laying the foundation for the organization to develop clear strategy and roadmaps in areas such as supply management, marketing, IT development, and people management
- Improving corporate culture and work environment accessibility which in turn, helps improve employee satisfaction
- Helping clients address requirements

in accessibility laws and regulations, improving satisfaction among employees, customers, partners, and citizens

Accessibility Diagnostic Assessments and Remediation Offering

The assessment service measures an existing IT solution’s level of compliance with recognised accessibility laws, regulations or standards (e.g., W3C WCAG, etc.) or client-specific accessibility standards. The scope of work is based on the client’s predefined set of websites/web applications (Intranet, Extranet, and Internet). Analysis is performed using a combination of automated tools and manual testing to identify issues that impact a client’s compliance with the applicable laws, regulations, or standards. Such non-compliance problems can result in accessibility issues for employees and constituents, and may put the organization legally at risk. IBM provides an accessibility assessment report that includes recommendations and suggested approaches for repairing any non-compliant components.

A remediation service is also available, following completion of the assessment activities. In this service, CFS accessibility specialists work with the client IT team to repair existing applications that are non-compliant.

Benefits of the accessibility diagnostic assessments and remediation can include:

- Helping organizations maximise accessibility and usability of web-based or software solutions for employees and constituents including people with disabilities, aging and multicultural populations
- Helping organizations mitigate legal exposure by assessing and documenting compliance with provincial, state, or local government web accessibility policies and other applicable laws
- Positioning the organization for greater accessibility self-sufficiency in the future with knowledge transfer that occurs between CFS and the organization's technical team

Application Design with Accessibility Offering

IBM offers full life cycle accessible web design services that can be performed as part of a larger services engagement, or as a smaller stand-alone activity. CFS accessibility specialists recommend that clients plan to incorporate accessibility requirements into a project as early in the life cycle as possible. By doing so, an organization ensures that the most usable solution will be developed while minimising any costs that might be incurred later to repair non-compliant components. CFS will begin by assessing which recognised accessibility laws, regulations, or standards are applicable for the client (e.g., W3C WCAG, etc.). Then, working collaboratively with the client team, CFS will develop user-centered design deliverables that document the web application's accessibility requirements.

Benefits of designing with accessibility can include:

- Helping integrate accessibility / usability into websites, portals, and applications for employees and constituents
- Helping organizations address requirements in provincial or state and local government laws and regulations

Accessibility Development and Testing Procedures Offering

This service facilitates the production of client-specific technical development and testing policies, processes, and procedures. It supports enterprise-wide compliance with all, or selected forms of electronic and information technology (EIT) covered by recognised accessibility laws, regulations, and standards (e.g., W3C WCAG, AODA, etc.) or other specific accessibility standards.

Benefits of accessibility development and testing procedures can include:

- Helping organizations realise efficiencies in their information technology development, testing, and procurement processes
- Helping organizations support a compliance program and ensuring that the technology offerings are accessible to diverse employee workforces and user constituencies including people with disabilities, aging populations, novices, and multi-lingual populations

The Accessibility Practice is part of IBM Customer Facing Solutions. For more information contact: Karen Yarmol-Franko at 416.478.2803, kyarmolf@ca.ibm.com. http://www.customerfacingsolutions.com/offerings/offering_userexperience_accessibility.html

Impact of Accessibility

Do you need a rationale for including accessibility as part of your redesign?

Consider these facts:

- In 2001, Statistics Canada reported a disability rate of 12.6% among all Canadians. This means over 4 million Canadians - customers, employees, friends and family members - have self-reported a disability.
- Statistics Canada reports the aggregate annual income of Persons with Disabilities to be a minimum of \$78 billion.
- Disability rate increases with age, climbing from 16.7% in the 44-65 age range to 53.3% in the 75+ age category.
- Baby-boomers are now on the cusp of this inevitable change. In Canada, 31% of the population is now over the age of 50 - that's 10 million people.
- Through 2020, the labour gap will cost Canada \$7.8 billion annually, adding 0.64% of marginal cost to the average company income statements. The labour gap can be addressed in part by increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities and by retaining maturing knowledge workers.

Accessibility provides opportunity to all persons, regardless of age or ability.

(Sources: Statistics Canada. Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS), 2001)

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