Creating, Implementing and Supporting a Web Accessibility Policy at Purdue University

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Creating, Implementing and Supporting a Web Accessibility Policy at Purdue University

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Outline

- Brief history
- Drafting a web accessibility policy
- Gaining buy-in
- Implementation
- Training and support
- Policy Outcomes
- Current status
- Future steps
Brief History

- In 1998, Purdue Universal Access Initiative was formed to raise awareness and provide training in accessible web design.
- In 2005, Purdue’s Web Accessibility Committee was formed to formulate a web accessibility policy.
Drafting a Policy: What Worked

- Using Section 508 Standards
- Providing a timeline to come into compliance (4 year period)
- Including language on every web page that indicates how users can contact someone for assistance when experiencing access difficulties
  - If you have trouble accessing this page because of a disability, please contact (person or department name) at (email address)
- Allowing exceptions and extensions
- Providing examples and recommended best practices
- Making it a system-wide policy
Drafting a Policy: Lessons Learned

- Had a misunderstanding of who would be responsible for implementing the policy
- Method for ensuring compliance was not effective and did not address long-term compliance
- Would have been more effective if the policy addressed procurement
Gaining Buy-In: What Worked

- Policy requested by several high-level administrators
- Grass-roots effort with many departments participating
- Informed IT Executive Steering Committee
- Legal review
- Reasonable timeline for fixing existing pages
- Implementation priorities defined
- Training
Gaining Buy-In: Lessons Learned

- Posting draft policy to get feedback
- Seek faculty/staff input during policy creation
- Be patient – policies take time
Implementation: What Worked

- Providing an open forum in June of 2010 after the Policy became effective on March 15, 2010 (March is Disability Awareness Month in Indiana)

- Speaking with individual departments about the policy, expectations, and addressing their concerns
Implementation: Lessons Learned

- Making sure the office responsible for the implementation of the Policy is equipped to do so
- Didn’t fully identify the challenges individuals would face and the tools they would need to comply with the policy
- Should have spoken with more departments about the policy, the expectations, and addressed their concerns
Partnership

- Web Accessibility Committee (WAC) and the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) relationship

- Roles
  - WAC: Provides technical assistance
  - OIE: Addresses Policy questions
  - Together the WAC and OIE continue to provide training and to increase compliance
Self-guided Training

- For text editor, Dreamweaver, Serena Collage
  - What worked
    - Example file with errors to correct
    - Training document text the same for each
  - Lessons learned
    - Uncertain how much it was used
Instructor-led Training

- Multiple sessions on accessible Web design
  - What worked
    - Handouts included slides to follow along
    - Permission from WebAIM to include excerpts in handout
    - Showed video of JAWS being used
  - Lessons learned
    - Some prefer hands-on learning
Accessible PDF Training

- Funded through an AccessComputing Minigrant and conducted by Terrill Thompson

- Trainings offered for PDF documents and forms
  - What worked
    - Separate sessions for documents and forms
    - Train the trainers
    - Lots of hands-on work
    - Lots of helpers to keep presentation on track
  - Lessons learned
    - More training always needed
Reporting

- Policy approach was to have a self-reporting system for departments/units

- OIE created a web-based status report form

- Reporting was to be at the lowest departmental, program, or unit level possible
Reporting: Challenges

- Difficult for OIE to determine who hasn’t self-reported
- Policy allowed some freedom for consolidating reports within Schools/units before submitting
- Many units are still unaware of the Policy and their responsibilities
Still working towards faculty buy-in to comply with policy to ensure students have access to classroom content

- Uploading materials to Blackboard

Common arguments:

- “Why should I make something accessible if no one has requested it through the Disability Resource Center?”
- “Why should I make everything accessible for a small percentage of the population?”
Future Steps: Revise Policy

- Revise policy to use WCAG 2.0 AA standard
- Add procurement
Purdue Resources

- Office of Institutional Equity web accessibility page
  - [http://www.purdue.edu/ethics/oie/web-accessibility.html](http://www.purdue.edu/ethics/oie/web-accessibility.html)

- Purdue’s Web Accessibility Committee Website
  - [http://www.purdue.edu/webaccessibility/](http://www.purdue.edu/webaccessibility/)
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Feedback Requested

- Please give us your feedback about the presentation
- Session Title:
  - Creating, Implementing and Supporting a Web Accessibility Policy at Purdue University
  - Thank You!