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

Dean Brusnighan

Purdue University, dabrus@purdue.edu


David Schwarte

Purdue University

MaryAnn Ferkis

Purdue University

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

Dean Brusnighan, Assistive Technology Specialist

Mary Ann Ferkis, Assistant Dean of Students

David Schwarte, Assistive Technology Specialist

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

Current Status: Faculty Buy-In

- 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>
- Purdue's Web Accessibility Committee Website
 - <http://www.purdue.edu/webaccessibility/>

Contact Us

- Dean Brusnighan
 - dabrus@purdue.edu
- Mary Ann Ferkis
 - maferkis@purdue.edu
- David Schwarte
 - schwarte@purdue.edu

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