

## NE-ISTE Webinar – February 12, 2015

### Ensuring your web presence is accessible to all

#### Description:

As schools increasing use the web to deliver information and educational content to students, families and the general public, questions have been raised as to how to ensure everyone is getting the same message. Everything from e-mail systems, content managements systems, social media outlets and on-line applications are being used to deliver your message and achieve your mission. But is your content accessible to all? In this presentation we will discuss and demonstrate how you can test and modify your web presence to ensure all users can connect with you.

#### Presenter:

John E. Brandt, Training/Operations Coordinator Maine CITE and Maine AIM programs

### Speaker's Notes

#### Setting the Stage

- Introduction
- We will not be able to cover everything there is to know in an hour.

#### What?

- We are talking about your web presence
  - **Web presence** – Any digital information that is conveyed to the public via internet and/or World Wide Web. Includes: traditional HTML web pages, content managements systems (e.g., Drupal, WordPress, etc.), associated Digital Documents as attachments and embedded content. Note: We are talking about contact/communications with everyone...NOT JUST STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES...
  - All content, communications, and digital assets (e-mail, social media, forms, websites, forums, video, audio, animation, content platforms or systems)
- We are talking about your digital documents
  - **Digital Documents** – Ancillary content that may be attached or embedded in web content or sent as an attachment via e-mail or other digital communication system. Includes: word processor, PDF, presentation, spreadsheet files, audio files, video files, and digital images including maps, charts and graphs.
- Accessibility Standards
  - **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)** are part of a series of web accessibility guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C), the main international standards organization for the World Wide Web. They consist of a set of guidelines for making content accessible, primarily for people with disabilities, but also for all user agents, including highly limited devices, such as mobile phones. <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>
  - **Section 508 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act** - Section 508 Standards apply to electronic and information technology procured by the federal government, including computer hardware and software, websites, phone systems, and copiers. They were issued under section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act which requires access for both members of the public and federal employees to such technologies when developed,

procured, maintained, or used by federal agencies. Section 508 regulations are currently being revised (508 Refresh) and it is anticipated that the new regulations will go into effect at the end of 2015. The last draft of the 508 Refresh now points to the WCAG v 2 as the new standards. <http://www.section508.gov/>

- **State Law and Local Policies** may be in effect. I am not familiar the laws in the various states, but I do know there is no state law that governs this topic. However, I know of numerous public and private colleges and universities that have established a local policy on accessibility. Your district may want to consider adopting one. Note: I found a local policy on the website of the
  - Cambridge (MA) Public Schools - [http://www.cpsd.us/web\\_accessibility\\_statement](http://www.cpsd.us/web_accessibility_statement)
  - Beaumont (TX) - <http://www.bmtisd.com/website-accessibility-statement/>
  - Northboro-Southboro (MA) - [http://www.nsboro.k12.ma.us/pages/Northboro-Southboro/Web\\_Site\\_Accessibility](http://www.nsboro.k12.ma.us/pages/Northboro-Southboro/Web_Site_Accessibility)
  - Warwick Valley (NY) - <http://www.warwickvalleyschools.com/District/webaccessibility.cfm>
  - Foxborough (MA) <http://foxborough.k12.ma.us/district/accessibility> (#GoPatriots)
- Educational Materials
  - **Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) or Accessible Educational Materials (AEM)** are specialized formats of curricular, instructional, assessment content used by and with learners with print-disabilities. They include Braille, audio, digital text, and large print. <http://aem.cast.org/>

## Why?

- There are lots of good social, marketing and technical reasons
  - It is the right thing to do
  - It is good for marketing and SEO. Google will like you when people search for you.
  - Improve usability on other platforms and different devices (universal design). Improves functionality with some legacy devices.
- But it is also the LAW.
  - **Recent legal actions:** According to the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), “With the assistance of the National Federation of the Blind, Noel Nightingale, a blind mother of three children enrolled in Seattle schools, filed suit (case 2:14-cv-01286) yesterday in the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, Seattle Division, against Seattle Public Schools. The suit alleges discrimination against Ms. Nightingale under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, because the Seattle Public Schools website and ST Math, a software program that students are required to use to complete math assignments, are not accessible to her...” Source: <http://jebswebs.net/blog/2014/08/happened/>
  - **Dear Colleague:** According to a report by Christina Samuels posted in Education Week, “The U.S. Department of Education’s office for civil rights has entered into an agreement with the South Carolina Public Charter District (SCPCD) to make the district’s Internet-based schools accessible to students and parents with disabilities, particularly those with visual impairments.” According to the report, the South Carolina Public Charter District “enrolls about 14,000 students in all, 9,000 of whom are in seven Internet-based schools: Palmetto State e-Cademy, Provost Academy South Carolina, South Carolina Virtual Charter School, South Carolina Calvert Academy, South Carolina Connections

Academy, South Carolina Whitmore School, and Cyber Academy of South Carolina.”

Source: <http://jebwebs.net/blog/2014/05/public-school-accessible/>

- Assume that you will have accessibility issues.

## How?

- Establish Vision and Leadership Commitment. Source: <http://ncdae.org/goals/>
- Develop a Plan
  - Establish a written policy.
  - Establish a time-line for mitigation.
  - All future purchases must meet standards.
    - Consider adopting the PALM Initiative (Purchase Accessible Learning Materials) which is a “market-based” approach to increasing access to content.  
[http://aim.cast.org/learn/practice/palm#.VNp3jvnF\\_h4](http://aim.cast.org/learn/practice/palm#.VNp3jvnF_h4)
  - Check with the lawyers.
- Gather the Resources
  - Time, tools, training
- Assessment
  - Check your content
  - Tools (automatic) for web pages
    - WebAIM – Wave <http://wave.webaim.org/>
    - HTML\_Code\_Sniffer [http://squizlabs.github.io/HTML\\_CodeSniffer/](http://squizlabs.github.io/HTML_CodeSniffer/)
  - Tools (automatic) for digital documents
    - MS Office 2010x – Windows only – Accessibility Checker  
<http://www.microsoft.com/enable/products/office2010/>
    - More about MSO-AC - <http://tinyurl.com/mbc5qa4>
    - Adobe Acrobat Professional – Accessibility Checker  
<http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/products/acrobat/training.html>
  - Human testing.
  - Test Video and Audio as well as text/graphics. Video needs closed captioning, audio needs transcript.
- Remediate if/what you can
- Contact your vendors – Request accessible versions, consider alternatives. AGAIN
- Train, train, train
- Remove old, non-accessible stuff until you can fix.
- Teach – don’t forget the kids!

## When?

- Now.
- And forever...
  - Establish policy, plan and process to continue in the future
  - Train new staff and students.

## Help?

- WebAIM <http://webaim.org/>
- Maine CITE <http://mainecite.org/> (for Maine schools only. There are AT Act Programs in every state) and in particular, our resource Accessible Web Design <http://mainecite.org/awd/>
- National Center on Disabilities and Access to Education - GOALS Project <http://ncdae.org/goals/>
- [W3C - Introduction to Web Accessibility](#)

- [National Center on Accessible Educational Materials – CAST](#)
- [American Federation of the Blind – Creating Accessible Websites](#)
- [Section 508](#)
- [Web Accessibility Toolbar \(WAT\)](#)
- [University of Washington - Developing accessible websites](#)  
<http://www.washington.edu/accessibility/web/>

## Tools

- [HTML Codesniffer by SQUIZ](#)
- [W3C HTML Validator](#)
- [W3C CSS Validator](#)
- [Functional Accessibility Evaluator \(FAE\)](#)
- [WAVE Web Accessibility Tool](#)
- [WAVE Toolbar Plugin for Firefox](#)
- [AIS Web Accessibility Toolbar](#)

## What about...

- Google Land and other Third party vendors
- Don't forget video and audio
- Tablets and other devices
- Social media
- E-mail and only line surveys
- On-line assessments

## Demo

### About the Speaker

John E. Brandt has been an Accessibility and Technology Consultant to the Maine CITE and Maine AIM programs for fifteen years. He is the owner and “head dude” at jebwebs.com a web design and development firm that provides consultation and training on accessible web design. In December 2014, John was hired as the Training/Operations Coordinator for the Maine CITE Program.

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## **Glossary/Definitions – The Naming of Parts**

**Web presence** – Any digital information that is conveyed to the public via internet and/or World Wide Web. Includes: traditional HTML web pages, content managements systems (e.g., Drupal, WordPress, etc.), associated Digital Documents as attachments and embedded content

**Digital Documents** – Ancillary content that may be attached or embedded in web content or sent as an attachment via e-mail or other digital communication system. Includes: word processor, PDF, presentation, spreadsheet files, audio files, video files, and digital images including maps, charts and graphs.

**Accessibility** - (From Wikipedia) Accessibility is the degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to as many people as possible. Accessibility can be viewed as the "ability to access" and benefit from some system or entity. The concept often focuses on people with disabilities or special needs (such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) and their right of access, enabling the use of assistive technology.

**Assistive Technology (AT)** – An Assistive Technology device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities or individuals with disabilities.

**Universal design** – (From Wikipedia) Sometimes referred to as inclusive design, refers to broad-spectrum ideas meant to produce buildings, products and environments that are inherently accessible to older people, people without disabilities, and people with disabilities.