Tips for accessibility testing

Testing approach

- Determine the accessibility standards and what level you are trying to achieve.
- Conduct technical testing, incorporating a combination of automated testing and manual inspection.
- Consider including user testing to appreciate practical accessibility and usability issues that may be experienced by people with a disability.

Automated testing

- Automated accessibility checkers assist the accessibility testing process, particularly for web sites with a large number of web pages or for organisations with multiple web sites.
- These tools can only test for a limited number of accessibility problems - about one third of the WCAG success criteria.
- They can also support a manual inspection process by identifying specific aspects of a web page that need to be checked.

Automated tools

- The WAVE by WebAIM is an automated accessibility checker used for testing individual web pages (wave.webaim.org).
- Web Accessibility Checker by the Adaptive Technology Resource Centre at the University of Toronto checks single HTML pages for conformance with accessibility standards (http://achecker.ca/checker/index.php).
- Functional Accessibility Evaluator evaluates the functional accessibility of web pages (http://fae.cita.uiuc.edu/).

Manual inspection

- Manual inspection consists of visual inspection of a web page and its code.
- There are a number of browser functions, accessibility toolbars, and other tools that can be used to support the manual inspection process.
- Typically manual inspection is based on a sample of representative pages on a web site:
  - Start with the Home page and any other main entry points
  - Include a page from each level of the navigation
  - Include a few content pages (with different layouts or types of content)
Include the search page and associated results page
Include an example form
Include pages that contain specific functionality (eg. shopping, maps, blogs)

**Accessibility Toolbars**

- Vision Australia Web Accessibility Toolbar for IE
  (www.visionaustralia.org/info.aspx?page=614)
- Web Accessibility Toolbar for IE Version 2.0
  (www.paciellogroup.com/resources/wat-ie-about.html)
- Web Accessibility Toolbar for Opera
  (www.paciellogroup.com/resources/wat-about.html)
- Juicy Studio Firefox Web Accessibility Toolbar
  (addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/9108/)
- Web Developer Toolbar for Firefox
  (addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/60)
- WCAG 1.0 Colour Contrast Analyser
  (www.visionaustralia.org/info.aspx?page=628)
- WCAG 2.0 Colour Contrast Analyser
  (www.paciellogroup.com/resources/contrast-analyser.html)

**User testing**

- Including people with a disability in user testing allows you to appreciate the usability issues these people may face when accessing your web site.
- While users testing web sites can provide their personal experiences, they cannot determine if the website is technically accessible, or if it will work with every type of assistive technology.
- Users should be skilled, but not expert, with their assistive technology.
- The web site needs to be technically accessible before asking users to test it.
- Bear in mind that people with a disability may require more time to complete tasks and they may benefit from some time to familiarise themselves with the web site before attempting any tasks.

**References**

- "Involving Users in Evaluating Web Accessibility"
  (www.w3.org/WAI/eval/users)
- "How People With Disabilities Use the Web"
  (www.w3.org/WAI/E0/Drafts/PWD-Use-Web/)
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