Whitepaper

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for Government Entities

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are essential for ensuring that all websites from state and local to government and federal are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities.

The latest version, WCAG 2.2, is an extension of the WCAG 2.1 guidelines and introduces additional criteria for content accessibility including support for users of small or touch-screen devices, as well as for low-vision users and users with cognitive, language, and learning impairments.

1. **WCAG 2.2 Level AA Compliance:** These sites must meet WCAG 2.2 Level AA standards, which include providing text alternatives for non-text content, ensuring keyboard accessibility, and making content adaptable to different devices and assistive technologies.

2. **Perceivable:** Information and user interface components must be presented in ways that users can perceive. This includes:

   - Providing text alternatives for images and multimedia.

   - Ensuring sufficient color contrast.

   - Making content adaptable to different formats. (e.g., large print, braille, speech).

3. **Operable:** User interface components and navigation must be operable. This means:

   - All functionalities should be accessible via keyboard.

   - Users should have enough time to read and use content.

   - Content should not cause seizures. (e.g., avoiding flashing content).

4. **Understandable:** Information and the operation of the user interface must be understandable. This includes:

   - Making text readable and understandable.

   - Ensuring web pages appear and operate in predictable ways.

   - Helping users avoid and correct mistakes.

5. **Robust:** Content must be robust enough to be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies. This involves:

   - Using clean, standard HTML.

   - Ensuring compatibility with current and future user tools.

New Success Criteria in WCAG 2.2:

1. **Focus Not Obscured (Minimum and Enhanced):** Ensures that when an element on a web page receives keyboard focus, it is at least partially visible (AA) or fully visible (AAA). This is particularly important for users who rely on keyboard navigation, such as those with motor disabilities or visual impairments.

2. **Dragging Movements:** Requires that any action involving dragging can be performed using a simple pointer alternative, benefiting users with motor disabilities.

3. **Target Size (Minimum):** Specifies minimum target sizes for interactive elements to aid users with limited dexterity.

4. **Consistent Help:** Ensures that help mechanisms are consistent across web pages, making it easier for users to find assistance when needed.

5. **Accessible Authentication:** Introduces criteria for accessible authentication processes, ensuring that users with disabilities can log in or authenticate without undue difficulty.

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