



Importance of web development in India for Accessibility

When people talk of accessibility for websites, they tend to restrict their thinking to the blind or partially sighted person visiting their website. But in reality accessibility covers a whole range of disabilities - hard-of-hearing, deaf, low-vision, mobility-impaired, learning disabled such as dyslexia. For example,

1. A common problem among the elderly is low-vision or hard-of-hearing, which might not classify them as disabled, but it does give rise to problems that affect them. If the text of a particular site is too small, it will be hard for them to read the information.

Hence, proper web development must be done by your web development company in India for accessibility for disabled people of all kinds. What follows is an explanation of various types of disabilities.

Physical Disabilities

For those who are not physically disabled, try using a website without your mouse. You will find it difficult to access unless you were lucky with the website i.e. it has keyboard features. Some of the people who are physically handicapped might find it difficult to use a mouse. Unless these users are kept in mind while web development by your web development India company and creating website navigation and input methods, these particular surfers will find websites completely inaccessible.

Hearing Disabilities

People with hearing disabilities will have absolutely no way of gathering information that is given out through sound clips. They will be completely lost unless a second option is provided to them, such as alternative text content. A option that explains the same information not using sound, but text description or images will give these people some accessibility.

Visual Disabilities

In a similar way to hearing disabled users not having any way of understanding sound clips, users with visual disabilities have no way of understanding information that is communicated with images. These users are of a wide range, from color blind to fully blind. This is a group of users that have problems understanding sites that are not logically built when "viewed" using a non-visual browser such as a screen reader. A screen reader is web browser that reads websites out aloud so as to make them accessible to visually disabled users. A visually perfect site will often become faulty when listened through a screen reader.

Cognitive and Neurological Disabilities

Some websites are complicated, which can be difficult for even the most efficient among us. These kinds of sites usually have an overly complicated design, navigation that works differently on different pages and distractive



repetitive animation. All such sites pose even greater hurdles for people with Cognitive and Neurological Disabilities and will be completely inaccessible for them.

Legal Requirement

For some websites, like government sites, it is legally binding to be easily accessible. However, others can be affected because of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

As we have discussed and found out that the Internet can be a difficult task for disabled people. By following the guidelines of the 1995 act a site can be made that serves its purpose and is accessible to all its users, including the disabled. But accessible web design has benefits other users/groups too, such as...

Cell phone users.

Users who live in a noisy environment.

Surfers with low bandwidth connections.

Users who are driving.

People with low literacy levels.

Improving accessibility in turn improves:

Website maintenance.

Search for information.

Machine indexing of content.

Page transmission.

Apart from these benefits, there are several other reasons why one should opt for accessibility. Current figures show that the population of disabled is 10% to 20%. Hence, web development India for increased accessibility will bring your business more customers. Also, the average age of the population in many countries is increasing, which brings with it a number of accessibility issues including vision and hearing changes and changes in dexterity and memory. If your market includes a huge number of elderly users then you can increase that to a much larger percentage of users who will reap the benefits of accessible web design.

It is common thinking that if you use accessibility tools, the site will turn out dull, boring and text filled, which is completely wrong. We have already mentioned the numerous benefits of accessibility, and now we will give you some tips that will make it possible to provide a fully accessible sight.

1. Navigation should be given the utmost importance; otherwise movement on the website could become troublesome. Images should have a descriptive meaning via the alt tag and title tag. Describe the image to give the



information like what it is of, does it link to another page etc. For complex images you can either add a caption to the image or provide a long description. This could be a separate text HTML page that explains the image in detail.

2. Long descriptions can fully explain images like photographs, giving a complete description of what the image is, who the people in it are etc. It would be like explaining to someone what the image looks like. Long descriptions should be used especially when you can't explain using the alt and or title tags.

3. Certain things like company logos don't need long descriptions as the information needed to explain them can be handed with the alt and title tags. These things are easy to do and are inexpensive but go a long way in making the site more accessible.

Many people think that adding accessibility to the website will make the process more expensive. In fact, adding accessibility later after the site is complete will increase the cost and can take longer time. At basic level accessibility can get expensive when you start looking at advanced level of accessibility which has advanced options like closed captioning for video etc. It is a better choice to get it built in at the manufacturing stage than to add it later, when it also costs more. The fact is that people would rather spend their money on fancy graphics, JavaScript, and flash than on accessibility.

If you create a site for client without accessibility features, you will be responsible for making them lose clients. For example, if your site has 1% of blind visitors per month then you may think why bother, but if your site becomes popular and the hits increase then 1% are a substantial number of people. So, if you are running a business website without easy accessibility, it results in a loss of potential customers.

Not all visitors surf for personal leisure; some of them could be doing research, finding information or comparing prices for someone else. If your site is not easily accessible, then a disabled person might find it difficult to do so. You may even lose an able-bodied customer if the disabled person can't find the information for him.

Building a Credible Website

A recent study shows that people are not comfortable with placing an order online. If there are surfers who need your product/service, but go away without placing the order then you are losing money everyday because of the fear of people to buy over the Internet.

Some people might not buy online due to other reasons, but the majority of those last minute cancellations are due to fears brought about by the horror stories people hear and read about of all the Internet scams and rip offs that has happened in recent past.

To avoid this you must do everything you can to prove to people that your website is a secure place to do business. If you achieve this, your sales will go up considerably.

Following are some ways of web development to improve the credibility of a website:

1. Contact information must be placed on your website. This information should include your name, physical address, telephone number and email address on your home page, your contact page and your order page and if possible, your photograph. Displaying your picture will play an important part in increasing sales as the customers



confidence in your website will go up. If visitors know you are easily accessible, they will feel better about doing business with you.

2. Placing a picture of the product will significantly increase sales. Also, when you are displaying a picture of any branded product/service, don't forget to add the details. Clearly state your policy on returns, including any time limits you impose on accepting returns. Highlight the guarantee you offer on your products/services to avoid any later complication.

3. Highlight testimonies of satisfied customers through out your website to get third party credibility, particularly on the order page.

4. Let your visitors know how your products and services will be delivered, and how long delivery will take. If possible provide shipping tracking information when products are in transit for delivery.

5. Stress on personalizing your website, so customers will feel like they know you and will be more comfortable doing business with you.

The best way to add credibility is to think like the visitor. What will make you feel comfortable and do business with an online website? Think hard and you may come up with some innovative ideas which will improve credibility and therefore sales.