

The 34th Anniversary of The Americans with Disabilities Act Reveals a Massive Divide

Digital Accessibility is Not Just a Matter of Convenience. It's a Matter of Civil Rights!

The logo for curbcutOS, with "curbcut" in black and "OS" in orange, followed by a trademark symbol (TM).

BOISE, IDAHO, UNITED STATES, July 26, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

turns 34 today and has significantly improved the lives of millions of people. However, a glaring gap still exists as society becomes increasingly digital. This is referred to as "digital accessibility."

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Mark Pound

From online banking and telehealth to remote work and virtual classrooms, digital platforms have revolutionized how we live, work and interact. Yet, for those people with disabilities, these websites, apps, and other digital advancements often come with new barriers. These impediments make these "conveniences" difficult or impossible to use.

Here are just a few of the many examples of this ever-increasing digital divide:

- Websites and Apps that are not assistive technology friendly.
- Images that lack alternative text.
- Hyperlinks that aren't properly formatted.
- Inaccessible documents.
- Inconsistent website navigation impacting user experience.

"What good is a website, app, or other digital gadget if those with disabilities can't use them?" asks Mark Pound, CEO of [CurbCutOS](#), a digital accessibility solution provider. "Yet that's what's happening today. According to WebAIM's 2022 report, a staggering 97.4% of the top one million homepages had detectable WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) failures. This statistic

highlights a critical failure to include people with disabilities in the digital age.”

Pound says it’s no surprise that web accessibility litigation is on the rise, and even big names like Beyonce, Harvard University, and Domino’s Pizza have all been sued because their sites were not digitally accessible.

For individuals with visual impairments, screen reader-compatible websites are crucial for accessing information and services. For those with motor disabilities, navigable interfaces and keyboard accessibility ensure they can interact with digital content. For people with hearing impairments, captions and transcripts are essential for consuming audio and video content. The benefits of digital accessibility are broad and far-reaching, fostering greater independence, engagement, and participation in society.

It’s also important to note the benefits of digital accessibility don’t just improve the lives of the 1.85 billion people living with a disability, the aging population, and those with chronic disease, it has also been proven many times over to help those without disabilities.

Pound is quick to point out that contrary to popular belief, implementing digital accessibility is not an insurmountable challenge. The technology and guidelines exist; what is needed is the will and commitment to apply them.

“Organizations must prioritize accessibility across design and development, incorporating best practices and conducting regular audits with remediation to ensure compliance and more importantly, delivering an optimal user experience,” he said. “Government agencies must lead by example, ensuring their websites and digital services are accessible to all citizens. Moreover, there must be robust enforcement of existing laws and the introduction of new regulations that specifically address digital accessibility.”

Finally, Pound says as we commemorate the ADA’s anniversary, the best way to honor its legacy is by addressing the digital accessibility gap, creating a truly inclusive society where everyone can participate fully and equally.

“The need for digital accessibility is not just a matter of convenience. It’s a matter of civil rights,” he said. “The ADA’s principles of equality and inclusion must extend to the digital realm.”

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About CurbCutOS

CurbCutOS, originally formed in 2019, was founded by people with disabilities – to help those with disabilities achieve an equal digital experience. <https://www.curbcutos.com/>

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