

Accessibility: The Technology Side

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What is Accessibility About?

- It is about student success!
- It is about a quality education for all students.
- It is the right thing to do!
 - Universal Design for Learning*
Provide multiple means of
 - Engagement
 - Representation
 - Action & Expression

*From: [The UDL Guidelines](#), CAST, INC. (2021)

UDL and Technology

“Sometimes inclusive or universal design is not enough to meet the needs of an individual with a disability...” [CIDI Georgia Tech](#) (Assistive Technology page)

Adaptive Technology

Adaptive Technology: “Special versions of already existing technologies or tools that provide enhancements or different ways of interacting with the technology...”

From: [What is Adaptive Technology?](#), Adaptive Computing Technology Center, Curators of the University of Missouri (2021)

Adaptive Technology already in Place

Brightspace (D2L)

- HTML Templates
- Accessibility Checker
- Alternative Text required for images
- WCAG AA color check
- Video Notes (Automatically generate captions)

Add On To...
Everything
Accessibility
Tip: Every
Image Needs
Alt Text
(Continued)

- Alt text training is important

“one of the best-known guidelines is to provide alternative text for images in the alt attribute of the tag. If web developers learn only the guideline, but not the reason for the guideline, they may provide alternative text that is not helpful to users who need it. They may even create rather than solve accessibility barriers”

From: [Constructing a POUR Website, Putting People at the Center of the Process](#), WebAIM.org (2021)

Associated Article: [WebAIM: Alternative Text](#)

Revisit: Retroactive Accessibility at ALG

- “Slow conversion of all materials to accessible Word or HTML versions”
- My experience as an ALG Round Two grant team member

Identify tools and resources

- Ask your disability support specialists, IT professionals, D2L Admins, CETL staff, and webmaster
- Attend events as you are now
- As you get those vendor emails, add them to Excel spreadsheet of potential vendors
- Look to the centers for teaching and colleagues other schools
- Do a “state of the market” analysis
- Costs and risks

Accessibility Tech Tip 1: Ask the tough questions

- How does this product work for students, faculty, and staff who require accessibility accommodations?
- Is the integrations user interface's portal or 'main page' 508 compliant? *
- Is all content delivered to students through the app 508 compliant according to revised US Section 508 Standards? *
- Do you test for 508 compliance?*
- Do you have [VPAT documentation](#) related to this integration?*
- Is integration in compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, Level AA (WCAG 2.0, AA)?*

* From the 2020L USG Third Party Vendor Questionnaire, USG GeorgiaView



Integrate tools and resources

- Invite a diverse team to review and test the accessibility and functionality of a tool, resource, or vendor's product
- Be realistic, integrations for D2L or other technology systems take time
- Take advantage of offers to beta test products.
 - GHC beta tested Blackboard Ally
- Technology...flashlight or laser?
- With caution, give your current vendors time to grow

Accessibility Tech Tip 2: Web policies and standards

Know your institution's Information Technology policies and standards.

- Do they contain a section on accessibility?
- Do your faculty and staff know that those concerning the Web apply to all content hosted on official college/university websites and all other websites owned or operated by your institution?

Deploy tools and resources

- Technology system administrators involvement
- Data Trustees and Data Stewards approval
- Consider if there needs to be a soft rollout or an “all hands on deck” so it is available to all now
- Consider rolling it Annual Compliance or the biannual cybersecurity training
- Training: Now and reoccurring, by whom?
- Do not hesitate to pull a product offline.

Accessibility: It's Personal

- To each student it is very personal.
- Guide faculty, staff, and administrators to that personal experience.



Thank You!

For questions, please contact:
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