

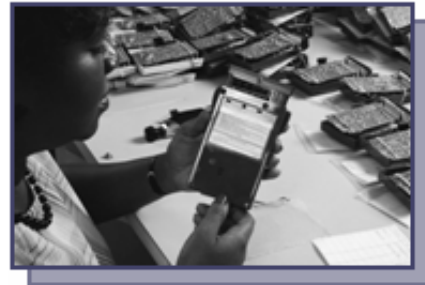
ACCESSIBILITY, INTEROPERABILITY AND USABILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

"Today's business and community leaders are delivering accessible and usable products and services to customers and employees with disabilities. There is an ever growing business case for global web accessibility, interoperability, and usability for people with disabilities."

— David Dikter, Executive Director
Assistive Technology Industry Association

Basic Benefits of Interoperability and Accessibility

The drive to develop products and services and to compete for workforce talent are just two reasons why businesses, government agencies and educational institutions are addressing the accessibility of information technology (IT) and its interoperability, or compatibility, with assistive technology (AT). More and more businesses are proactively designing accessible IT to eliminate barriers faced by, and to compete for, employees and consumers with disabilities. Undeniably, the more user friendly and inclusive an IT environment, the more pleasant the experiences are for all users navigating it.



Reduces IT Costs

Businesses that make accessibility a part of their strategic planning assure their business long-term financial advantage. IT that is both accessible and interoperable with AT significantly reduces the cost associated with systems modifications. Benefits include:

- Elimination of expensive retrofitting of IT infrastructure systems.
- Decreased customization of off-the-shelf products.
- Decreased use of costly customer service programs to support users who have difficulty in navigating the system.

Expands Reach to Talent

Accessible, interoperable and usable IT effectively enhances the diversity of your workforce. The accessibility and usability of human capital management IT such as career sites, applicant tracking and benefits management systems (e.g., timekeeping, expense reporting, etc.) allow people with varied ability levels the opportunity to apply for, gain and maintain employment. For example, ensuring that a website can be read by a screen reader eliminates a huge barrier for blind individuals and allows you to more easily tap into this group from both employment and consumer marketing perspectives.

Expands Reach to Consumers

Business leaders understand access to the internet and IT results in a return on investment. The increased market share reached by providing access to customers with disabilities and the direct impact to their families is a successful business strategy.

A business that opens an online storefront that is accessible and usable by customers with disabilities opens their business to an audience with significant purchasing power. Businesses increase their potential to market products and services to people with disabilities as well as their families. It is a simple business proposition. People with disabilities want to buy products and services online and complete their purchases independently without special assistance. Businesses want to complete profitable transactions without the need for special customer services. Accessible IT means everyone wins.

For more information on how to effectively implement proactive workplace accessibility strategies to expand your recruitment and consumer reach to the disability market, contact one of the resources listed below.

Contact Us

For more information contact ODEP's cost-free resources:


America's Choice for Qualified Workers
Employment Resources
www.earnworks.com
1-866-327-6669


200 Accommodation Network
Accommodations Resources
www.jan.wvu.edu
1-800-526-7234