



Employer Assistance & Resource Network (EARN)

THE ACCESSIBLE SYSTEMS RACING LEAGUE 2.0: Guidance for Ensuring Your Career Site is Accessible

The Accessible Systems Racing League (ASRL) is an easy-to-use tool that highlights barriers job seekers and employees with disabilities may face when trying to access your company's career Web site or other online HR recruiting and hiring tools and systems. As employers increase dependence on online systems for their HR operations – including recruiting, hiring, benefits and training – the need to ensure that these systems are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities, is critical.

Why is this important?

For the more than 50 million people with disabilities, accessibility is not just about being able to access information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For many, access problems occur because it is assumed that everyone sees and uses Web pages or online systems the same way. Accessibility for job candidates with disabilities has a very specific meaning - whether the individual can receive, read, manipulate and submit information. Examples of accessibility barriers include Web sites with videos that lack captions, that cannot be read by screen reader software or other forms of assistive technology or that have confusing layouts that present difficulties for users with cognitive disabilities. If businesses do their utmost to design and implement Web sites and online systems that avoid these types of barriers, all end users will benefit. Additionally, accessible Web sites and inclusive practices may provide a competitive advantage. By ensuring your career site is accessible, your company can leverage the skills, knowledge and abilities of an expanded talent pool that includes people with disabilities.

How can this tool help?

The Practice Course Performance tool at the end of this document provides you with a method to evaluate the accessibility of your career site. The tool is comprised of 15 questions, or "laps." Each "lap" includes an evaluation question, information on the relevance of the question and steps for analysis.

We encourage you to use the tool to conduct an analysis of your career site. The results can be used to develop an action plan that addresses any issues uncovered. We also recommend sharing the tool with your web design and information technology staff.

To use the Practice Course Performance tool, simply follow the directions under "STEPS FOR ANALYSIS" and enter the results in the "RESULT" column. You can find more information on the importance of accessibility and additional resources to assist you in ensuring your site is accessible at www.earnworks.com/508Racing.asp

The Racing League is an exercise intended solely to provide companies with information about the accessibility of Web sites and online human resources systems. It is not intended to be, nor will it be used in any way as, a means of enforcement of any law, regulation or directive. Rather, this is merely an educational tool to heighten users' awareness of the need for fully accessible information technology and to informally assist users to reach that goal.

earn@earnworks.com

1-866-327-6669 (V/TTY)

www.earnworks.com

EARN is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



URL: Enter URL
 TESTER: Enter Tester's Name
 DATE: Enter Date of Test

LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
1	Enter Result Green=Fully Accessible Red=Inaccessible	Does the site allow navigation with a screen reader?	Screen reader software provides computer access for users who are blind or who have low vision. The software reads aloud all text information on the computer screen while the user listens through speakers or headphones. For a Web site to be fully accessible and usable, it needs to be compatible with screen reader software so the user can hear all of the content on the site.	While using a screen reader , attempt to browse all pages of the Web site and ensure that the screen reader software is capturing all of the text on the page. Also ensure that the screen reader is reading all navigational links on the site and that the keyboard allows access to each of the links. If you do not have access to a screen reader, here is some guidance to assist you in designing a compatible Web site.
2	Enter Result	Does the site provide text alternatives for all non-text content?	Non-text content (e.g., charts, diagrams, pictures, animations, image maps, submit buttons) should be made accessible using a text alternative, or description of the meaning of the object. Text alternatives are a primary way for making information accessible because they are convertible into other forms	Using an automated accessibility tool , enter all links into the tool and start the check. The tool will determine if any non-text elements lack accompanying alternate text.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
			people need, such as large print, Braille, speech, symbols or simpler language conveying the intent of the object to those who cannot see it. For example, a person who cannot see a picture can have the text alternative read by their screen reader.	
3	Enter Result	Does the site provide accessible multimedia (audio/visual (A/V) or alternatives) that allow users to understand the content?	For individuals who have difficulty perceiving visual or audio content, it is essential to provide alternatives such as captions, text alternatives, audio description, and other alternatives. For individuals who are blind or have low vision, assistive technology (AT) can read text alternatives aloud, present them visually or convert them to Braille. Accompanying audio description can also be a helpful alternative to video content. For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, text alternatives and captions properly synchronized with the main content can convey all of the audio information (including dialogue, identification of the speaker and meaningful sound effects).	Locate any A/V content on the site and determine if it is either open- or closed-captioned. For presentations that are time-based, check to ensure that all captions appear at the same time as the associated content. Also, make certain that audio descriptions of any pertinent information are included in any audio content.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
4	Enter Result	Does the site use other means of conveying information besides color?	People with partial sight often experience limited color vision, and many older users do not see color well. People using text-only, limited-color or monochrome displays and browsers are unable to access information presented only in color. Therefore, color should not be the only visual means of conveying information, indicating an action, prompting a response or distinguishing a visual element (e.g., “required fields are red” or “Bill’s sales are in red, Nancy’s are in blue”). Providing the information conveyed with color through another visual means without color ensures users who cannot see color can still perceive the information.	Manually review the site to identify areas where color is used as the only means of conveying information. Pay particular attention to any online processes/forms as these areas can be particularly inaccessible if color is the only means used.
5	Enter Result	Does the site allow users to lower the volume or completely turn off any background audio content?	Individuals who use screen reader software can find it difficult to hear the speech output of their device if there is other audio playing at the same time. This difficulty worsens when the screen reader's speech output is software-based (as most are today) and has the same volume control as the overall computer sound. Therefore, it is important that the user be able to pause,	Determine if the site contains any audio content. If audio content is presented, look for a mechanism to adjust its volume independently of the main system volume.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
			stop, turn off or lower the volume of the background sound while still listening to their screen reader.	
6	Enter Result	Does the site allow navigation by a user who does not use a mouse?	Wherever possible, content should be able to be accessed through a keyboard only. When content is accessible via a keyboard, it can be accessed by people with no vision, who cannot use devices such as mice that require eye-hand coordination, as well as by people who must use alternate keyboards or input devices that act as keyboard emulators. Keyboard emulators include speech input software, sip-and-puff software, on-screen keyboards, scanning software and a variety of other assistive technology (AT) tool.	Inspect the source code. For each instance of links and form elements, check that the code properly specifies the name, value and state.
7	Enter Result	Does the site provide users with enough time to read, understand and interact with online content?	All users must be given adequate time to read, understand and interact with online content. People with disabilities such as blindness, low vision, dexterity impairments and cognitive limitations may require more time to read content or perform functions such as filling out online forms. If there is a time limit associated with a particular function, it could be difficult for some users to	If a script on a page controls the time limit, check that there is a mechanism to turn off any time limits near the top of the page. The evaluator should also verify that the time limit for the page is long enough that a user can easily navigate to the mechanism, even if they are 10 times slower than most users.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
			perform the required action before the time limit occurs. Examples of time limits include partial or full updates of content (e.g., page refresh), changes to content or the expiration of a window of opportunity for a user to react to a prompt for input. Animated, moving or scrolling content also introduces a time limit on a user's ability to read content because the content may move at a rate beyond the user's ability to read and/or understand it.	If there are session time limits, check that the page includes a checkbox to request additional time to complete the form, and that checking the box actually extends the time limit. On a page with moving or scrolling content, use the mechanism provided in the page or by the assistive technology device to pause the moving or scrolling content, and ensure that the content does not resume movement while it is paused, but that it can be restarted when the user is ready to move on.
8	Enter Result	Does the site avoid content that flashes or blinks too quickly?	Any elements that flash, flicker or blink more than three times during any one-second period may induce seizures. Regardless of flash speed, these elements may also present accessibility challenges for users with low vision.	Check that there are no more than three flashes during any one-second period.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
9	Enter Result	Does the site allow the default human language of each page to be programmatically determined?	Allowing the default language to be programmatically determined allows greater ease of use for users who rely on Braille translation software and speech synthesizers and allows easier access to dictionary tools that a user may need to consult.	Examine the html element of the page and check that it has a lang and/or xml:lang attribute. Then check that the value of the lang attribute conforms to appropriate standards and reflects the primary language used by the page.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
10	Enter Result	Does the site present content in an organized manner that avoids unexplained changes in context?	<p>Content is often more accessible when it is presented in a predictable order from page to page, and when the functional and interactive components of a site operate predictably. Users with cognitive limitations may become confused if components appear in different places on different pages. Placing repeated components in the same relative order within a set of pages allows users with reading disabilities, for example, to focus on an area of the screen rather than spending additional time decoding the text of each link. It also makes the content more understandable for users with screen readers and screen magnifiers.</p> <p>Anytime a link could change the context of a page, such as opening a new window, it should be explained in advance with adequate cues (e.g., “clicking here will take you to our corporate diversity page”) so as to avoid the disorienting and confusing effects of an unexpected and unexplained change in context.</p>	Examine the site to determine if the content appears in an organized and logical manner; repeated components of the site are placed in the same relative order within each part of the site; and changes of context are adequately explained.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
11	Enter Result	Does the site help users avoid and correct mistakes?	Individuals with certain types of disabilities may have more difficulty avoiding mistakes, particularly when interacting with items such as online forms. For any part of a site that requires input from the user, there should be adequate instructions, labels for the form fields and cues for entering information, such as a selection of the available choices (if applicable) or examples of expected data formats. For input in a required form field such as "Date of Birth," labels should clearly indicate that the field is "Required" and that it calls for the inputting of "Date of Birth," and there should be information on the expected data format (that the date must be in the "MM/DD/YYYY" format, for example). For users who have difficulty noticing error messages or understanding their errors, it is important that error messages be noticeable and provide the user with sufficient guidance to re-enter the information correctly.	Ensure that all required fields are text labeled, all form control labels are visually present and that they are programmatically available to and can be read by assistive technology (AT). Ensure that all controls can be accessed and manipulated in a fashion that would be reasonably expected. Also, ensure that all fields requiring specific formatting (dates, numbers, etc.) indicate the specific formatting in the textual label. The formatting requirements should be visually present as well as programmatically available to AT.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
12	Enter Result	Does the site allow users to skip repetitive content?	For individuals who use screen readers and/or who only navigate sites with the use of a keyboard, the content on pages appears sequentially, often in a top-to-bottom, left-to-right fashion. Because sites typically have repeated blocks of content, such as navigation links, header graphics or advertising frames, a method to skip the recurring content should be included in the site design. This ensures that those with visual disabilities do not have to listen to and those using keyboards do not have to tab through this type of content repeatedly as they navigate the site.	Using a screen reader in virtual cursor mode, navigate to and through any repetitive navigational elements, and determine if a mechanism such as a link or button is present on the page to allow the user to skip navigational elements. If it is present, test it to ensure that it is working properly.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
13	Enter Result	Does the site provide fully accessible PDFs, PowerPoint documents and online forms?	PDF and PowerPoint documents may be inaccessible to users with disabilities (particularly those who rely on screen readers) if they are not developed in the correct manner.	<p>With a screen reader running, attempt to open the document and ensure that the untagged PDF dialog does not appear with PDF reader.</p> <p>If you do not have access to a screen reader, download the PDFs and test to see if they are tagged properly. Here is some guidance to assist you in determining if they are accessible and, if not, how you can create accessible PDFs that can then be uploaded to the site.</p>
14	Enter Result	Does the site display the company's equal employment opportunity (EEO) policy statement?	The EEO statement sets out the company's stated position with regard to its legal obligations and desire to employ individuals with a wide array of backgrounds and abilities.	Examine the site and determine if the EEO policy statement is prominently displayed.

PRACTICE COURSE PERFORMANCE



LAP #	RESULT	LAP DESCRIPTION	RELEVANCE OF THIS LAP	STEPS FOR ANALYSIS
15	Enter Results	Does the site explain to people with disabilities how they can get help using it and where to get reasonable accommodation if they cannot apply online?	<p>The site should present information for how people with disabilities who may rely on assistive technology (AT) or need assistance navigating the site can request assistance using or navigating it.</p> <p>If the Web site is not fully accessible it should present instructions for how a person with a disability can request a reasonable accommodation in the application process. This information should be included in the EEO policy statement addressed in Question 14.</p>	Review site content and determine if it includes a method for individuals with disabilities to request help with the site. Also, ensure instructions for requesting reasonable accommodations in the job application process are available.