



Manual Accessibility Testing: Why You Need It

Manual testing allows for real, trained professionals to evaluate your website's accessibility beyond what an automated crawler can do.

A Holistic Approach

Web accessibility is an ongoing process that requires dedication, time, knowledge, and a comprehensive approach.

While the Accessibility feature of the Siteimprove Intelligence Platform or any other automated crawler detects many errors, there are additional tests that can only be done manually.

Making progress with an automated tool is an excellent first step, but an automated tool can only check up to 40% of accessibility issues by itself.

Enlisting the help of both automated and manual testing is part of a comprehensive, holistic approach that has a monumental impact on your journey toward compliance.

Manual Accessibility Testing

Siteimprove Accessibility Testers navigate pages without using a mouse, use a variety of screen readers that convert text to spoken audio, and leverage semi-automated tools to scan for non-compliance with WCAG 2.1.

The team tests things that require context, such as:

- **Page titles:** The team looks for a page title that is unique, meaningful, and concise. Page titles are what is visible in tabs or bookmarks and should be appropriate to the page content and/or task.
- **Heading levels:** They check that headings fit a logical page structure. They also determine if headings accurately and concisely describe

the content, and they find page areas that would benefit from having an additional heading.

- **Visible focus:** As they navigate the page, the team looks for a visible change when an element receives focus.
- **Forms:** Forms are inspected for accessible labelling, required field flagging, error messaging, and more.
- **HTML5 and WAI-ARIA elements:** These aren't required but are a best practice. Testers can check to make sure they are being used correctly.

About the Team



Six team members are trained in the use of assistive technology used by people who are blind, have low vision, have limited mobility, or have learning disabilities



Audited 828 web pages in 2018

Software used:



JAWS and NVDA on Windows 10



Navigating only using the keyboard



Chrome, Firefox, and Internet Explorer

Accessibility is a Process, Not a Project

Whether you're just getting started or have already begun, remember that accessibility is not a one-time project, but an integral process to include in all aspects of your digital presence.

Including manual testing as part of your accessibility efforts and processes allows for a more balanced and comprehensive approach to compliance.

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I am constantly impressed by Siteimprove's commitment to customers, such as the City of Eugene. We truly value your expertise and your commitment to accessibility. We know we have a lot of work to do, but are dedicated to the goal. The tools and reports you provide are critical to this work.

- Katie Sproles, Web Analyst at The City of Eugene

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