UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
Accessibility Policy for
Technology Purchases

Purpose

Purchases of information technology services and products by the University, including but not limited to use of hardware and software products and web pages design or maintenance should be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Using Vendors for University Web Sites

When hiring a vendor to help create, update or maintain a University website, University staff should:

- Ask the vendor to ensure that its products and services for the University website will comply with the Web Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 level AA standards for web sites.
- Ask the vendor to provide accessibility testing results when the work has been completed to confirm the website is accessible.

Questions regarding web accessibility should be directed to the ADA Coordinator, adacoordinator@uwyo.edu.

Evaluation of Technology Products or Services When no Competitive Bidding is Required

The unit or department purchasing the technology products or services should ask the vendor whether its products or services are accessible.
The unit or department may also consider:

- Requiring the vendor to give demonstrations and/or tests, e.g. give presentation of how to use the product with a screen reader, demonstrate how product can be used with keyboard, without the mouse, etc.
- Having University personnel run web pages through an online accessibility checker, involving actual users with disabilities in the product testing, etc.
- For "out of the box" products, search for 508 or VPAT on the manufacturer's website or contact the company and ask for information on the accessibility of their product.

Questions regarding evaluating the accessibility of technology products or services should be directed to the ADA Coordinator, adacoordinator@uwyo.edu.

Evaluation of Products and Services When Using an Competitive Bidding Process

When using a competitive process for information technology or services such as an RFP or bid process, the unit or department should:

- Consider including accessibility as one of the requirements or assigning a sufficiently high number of points that it influences the purchasing decision.
- Include a series of standard requirements or questions regarding the accessibility of the vendor's product or service. The following are some examples:
    1. Describe specifically how your product or services comply with Section 508 standards.
    2. If your product it not currently compliant in certain areas, describe your plans and time frame for achieving compliance.
    3. Describe your accessibility conformance testing process.
    4. If you roll out upgrades after the University purchases the product, how can you assure the University that the upgrades will not interfere with accessibility?
    5. Who will pay to remediate any necessary fixes after purchase?

6. Provide a completed Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) for your product. If you do not have a VPAT, please provide your accessibility statement on how the product is fully accessible, or compliant, with Section 508.

Questions regarding evaluating the accessibility of technology products or services should be directed to the ADA Coordinator, adacoordinator@uwyo.edu.

Exceptions to Policy

In certain circumstances it may be impracticable to comply with this policy. This policy does not apply to the following situations:

- Where the product or specific features the product has is unique and/or there are no equivalent accessible products or services. Colleges, department, schools, or units are responsible for documenting their identification of alternative applications or equipment that do not provide additional accessibility or that are accessible but do not meet the desired functionality requirements.
- Where the product does not currently meet accessibility standards but the vendor represents it will become compliant within a reasonable period of time.
- Where the acquisition of an accessible product would impose an undue burden due to significant difficulty or expense or would result in a fundamental alteration of the program.
- Other unique or extraordinary circumstances as approved by the University's ADA Coordinator, in consultation with the applicable Vice President.

Accessibility Defined

For purposes of this policy, technology services or products, e.g. computers, peripherals, software, etc., are considered accessible if they comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Part 1194. Some examples of this type of compliance include software not using flashing or blinking texts, making sure electronic forms used allow people using assistive technologies access to the information, requiring keyboard access to the software so that a person unable to use a mouse or other pointing device may use the software, and many other standards that can be found at the United States Access Board website as follows: http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-the-section-508-standards/guide-to-the-section-508-standards.

Websites or web-based content are accessible if they comply with the Web Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 level AA standards, which is the commonly used standard developed by the World Wide Web Consortium group for website design in order to comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Some examples of this are ensuring that there is a text equivalent for every non-text element, web pages are designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, pages are designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker, and many other standards that can be found at the United States Access Board website as follows: http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-the-section-508-standards/guide-to-the-section-508-standards.

Administration of Policy

This policy shall be administered by the University's ADA Coordinator or designee. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the ADA Coordinator, adacoordinator@uwyo.edu.

Effective date: February 15, 2016