

Accessible Sites for the Hearing Impaired

By Marcus Lansky, Abilitator

People who use websites come from a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives. When it comes to designing a website for your business, it's crucial to ensure your site works for all potential clients and customers. That includes individuals with different abilities, such as people living with hearing impairments.

Designing a site that accommodates all types of customers, including those with hearing impairments, doesn't just give you a competitive edge. More importantly, it builds trust, communication, and rapport with potential customers, showing them you're an ethical, compassionate business. If anyone can access your site content, regardless of ability or impairment, you'll reach more customers and, hopefully, make more sales.

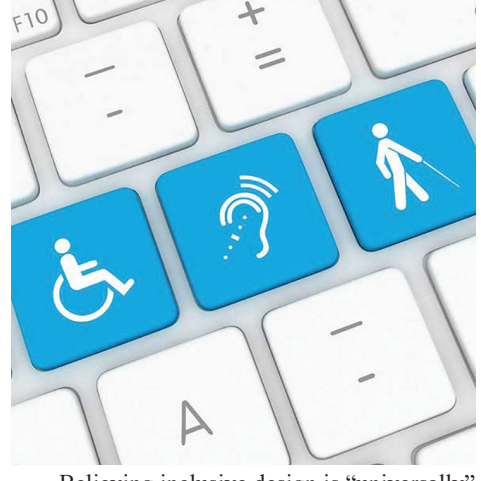
Here's how to design a site that's accessible for people with hearing impairments:

Why Accommodate Hearing Impairments?
Before changing your website, it helps

to understand why you should make your site accessible to individuals with hearing impairments. First, there's a good chance that many of your prospective clients and customers are hearing impaired. According to statistics, thirty-six million Americans have a hearing impairment. Hearing loss can range from tinnitus to disabling hearing impairments, such as deafness, so it's important to design your website to meet every type of hearing impairment.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that at least nine hundred million individuals "will have disabling hearing loss" by the year 2050. As your business grows, the number of people with hearing impairments who use your website will probably increase, too. It's essential to prepare in advance so you can accommodate them.

Understanding Inclusive Design
Websites that cater to all people, regardless of ability or impairment, provide a more respectful, delightful experience. The strategy of building these websites is called inclusive design.



Believing inclusive design is "universally" beneficial, Microsoft offers recommendations and downloadable files to help you make your site more inclusive. Because features like video captions help everyone, designing for the hearing impaired can

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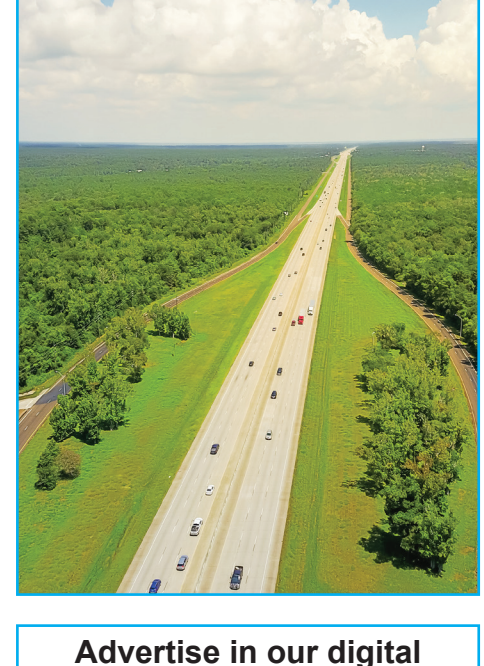
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For more info contact
Valerie Voorhies at
vvv@sbeinc.com

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2023

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Wednesday, October 18, 2023, 9:30 am–10:30 am CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
Join the Small Business Administration (SBA) Illinois District Office for a virtual workshop providing an overview of the 8(a) Business Development program, eligibility requirements, and program benefits. Also learn how to increase your potential for federal contract opportunities through System for Award Management (SAM) registration, including information that you need for the registration process. SBA presenters will offer additional tips, address FAQs, give directions on where to get further assistance, and answer your other questions. To register for this free webinar, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/8a-orientation-sam-registration-tickets-518989961947>

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Program Webinar
Thursday, October 19, 2023, 9:00 am–10:00 am CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/welcome-to-wosb-webinar-tickets-482397041537>
Fee: Free; registration required
Welcome to the WOSB webinar series! Are you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government's goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA's Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. The monthly sessions will include an overview of the self-certification process, as well as a discussion of the NAICS codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register for this free webinar at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/welcome-to-wosb-webinar-tickets-482397041537>

Selling to the Federal Government Webinar
Thursday, October 26, 2023, 12:00 pm–3:00 pm CDT Online
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration
Contact: [George Tapia](mailto:George.Tapia), 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov
Fee: Free; registration required
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CERTIFICATION

Small Business Exchange, Inc.
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