

# Bringing accessibility awareness to JobCloud

*Making Switzerland's leading job portal more inclusive for all*



Perceivable



Operable



Understandable



Robust

Yesterday

**Senior Director of Strategic Business Development and Global Market Research Analysis in the Department of Imaginary Company...**

📍 Location

⌚ Workload

📄 Contract type



aria: "Save job"

It is a saved job but  
Make sure the checked  
unchecked states also  
convey => "save job checked" / "save job unchecked"

FR: Sauvegarder l'

DE: Job speichern

alt=""



Company name

screenReaderOnly="Employer bbv Soft..."



# Summary and key numbers

I led an initiative to bring accessibility into the core of JobCloud's design process. Through user testing with visually impaired users, workshops, and new workflows, we fixed critical blockers and achieved 85% WCAG compliance during the brand refresh. This shifted accessibility from an afterthought to a company-wide standard.



# Summary

As a Senior UX Designer at Jobcloud, I led an initiative to improve the accessibility of Switzerland's leading job portal. A usability study with visually impaired users, revealed critical blockers that made it impossible to apply for jobs using a screen reader.

To drive long-term change, I initiated and led a collaborative effort between design and engineering to "shift left" and bring accessibility into the early stages of the design process. This included:

- Facilitating an accessibility workshop for the UX team
- Introducing tools and workflows to check accessibility during design
- Adding annotations for dev handoff and helping prioritize fixes

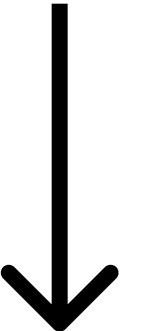
The result: a more inclusive platform—and a team empowered to build with accessibility in mind from the start.

# Impact on users

Approximately **1.7 million adults in Switzerland are affected by disabilities**, which represents about **25% of the population**.

This group includes individuals with physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychological impairments, encompassing both temporary and long-term conditions

Source: [Federal statistical office](#)



Potentially **975K monthly visitors who might have disabilities**.



**Usability study with a  
visually impaired user**



## How it started

As a market leader, Jobcloud serves a wide and diverse audience across Switzerland. However, the site was not fully accessible, which meant some users—especially those with disabilities—faced serious barriers.

To understand the current state of accessibility, we conducted a study with a blind user. The findings were eye-opening:

- He couldn't apply for jobs due to a CAPTCHA on the login page—an insurmountable obstacle for someone using a screen reader.
- Although he was browsing in French, VoiceOver (VO) read the site in English, due to incorrect language tags in the code.
- Several other issues added up to a frustrating experience.

We realized that without addressing these problems, we were excluding thousands of potential users.

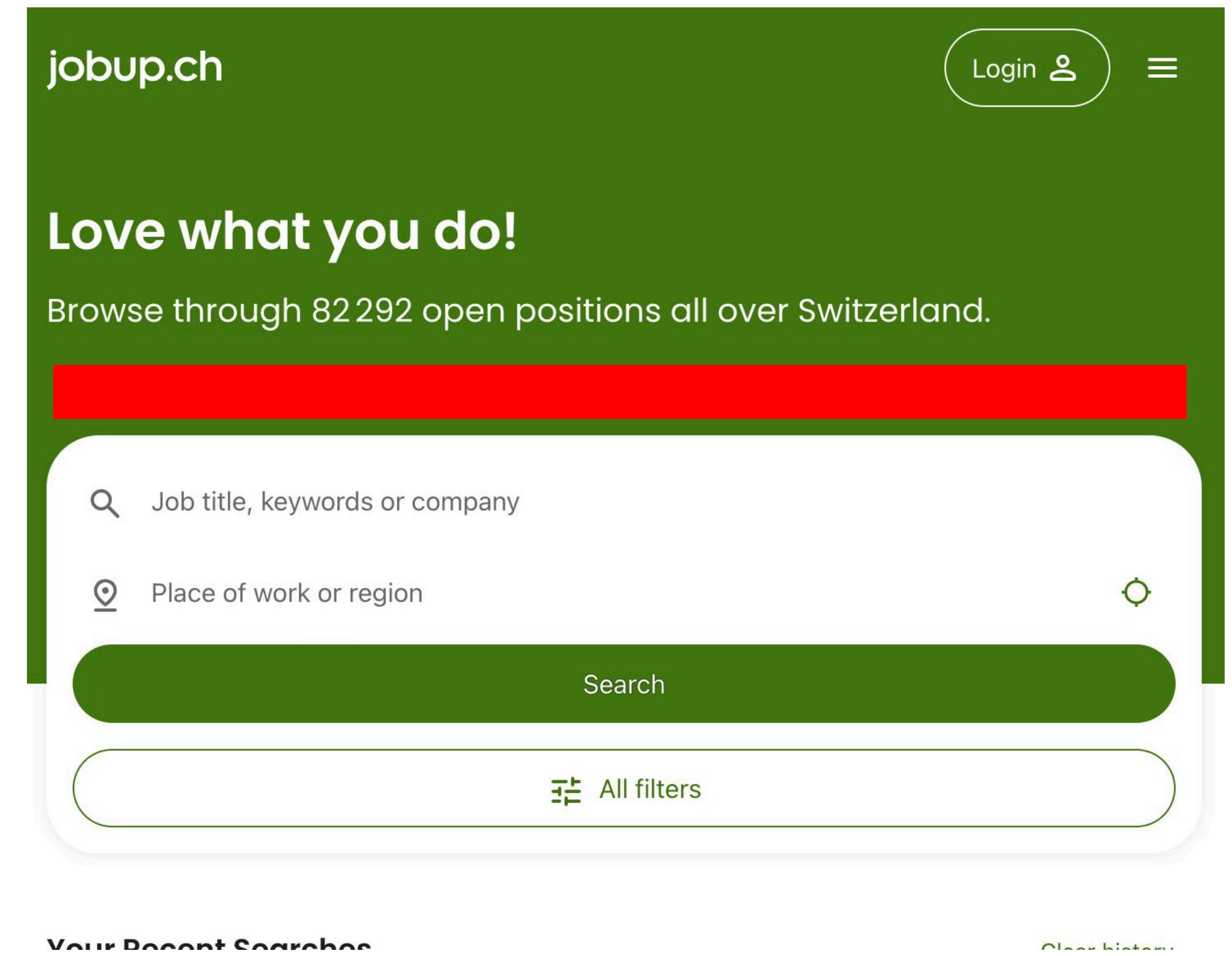
# Identified problems and challenges - Search Functionality

**Reading hierarchy issue:** Hidden items behind the search bar confused the screen reader “No search results” after reading H1, leading to incorrect navigation cues.

Same when input in search bar -  
**Hidden labels read the number of results before clicking on “search” ⇒ confusing**

“Edit combo → profession mot clés  
→ 3 résultats dispo...”

❗  
**No search results**



# Identified problems and challenges - Search Functionality

**Search bar confusion:** Did not realise that we have 2 fields for the job search “Job title” and “location”.

The term “combo” from his screen reader, lead to the **error of entering job titles into the location field without realising it**. This resulted into an empty job search for “brand manager”.

**Could not proceed without help.**

*“It confused me I did not know in which field of the form I was”*

jobup.ch

Login ≡

Love what you do!

Browse through 82 292 open positions all over Switzerland.

Job title, keywords or company

Place of work or region **Brand manager**

Search

All filters

Your Recent Searches

jobup.ch

Login ≡

Job title, keywords or company

Place of work or region **brand manager,**

Search

All filters

No jobs in Brand Manager

Save this search as a JobMailer and receive the most recent job offers or [reset filters](#)

Set up JobMailer

# Identified problems and challenges - Application process

**Login/Captcha Issues:** Captcha verification blocked access - not accessible “Screen reader doesn’t realise there is an image”.

Error message displayed at the top, not read by the screen reader = **could not login without help.**

jobup.ch

Back

**Log in with your OneLog account**

Email address

sophiedoe70@gmail.com

[Change](#)

Password

.....

[Show](#)

[Forgotten password?](#)

I'm not a robot



reCAPTCHA

Privacy - Terms

[Continue](#)

One login – a whole range of services

- ✓ Receive new job offers and email
- ✓ Fill in your application form with one click
- ✓ Just one login for straightforward portals that use OneLog

Email address

sophiedoe70@gmail.com

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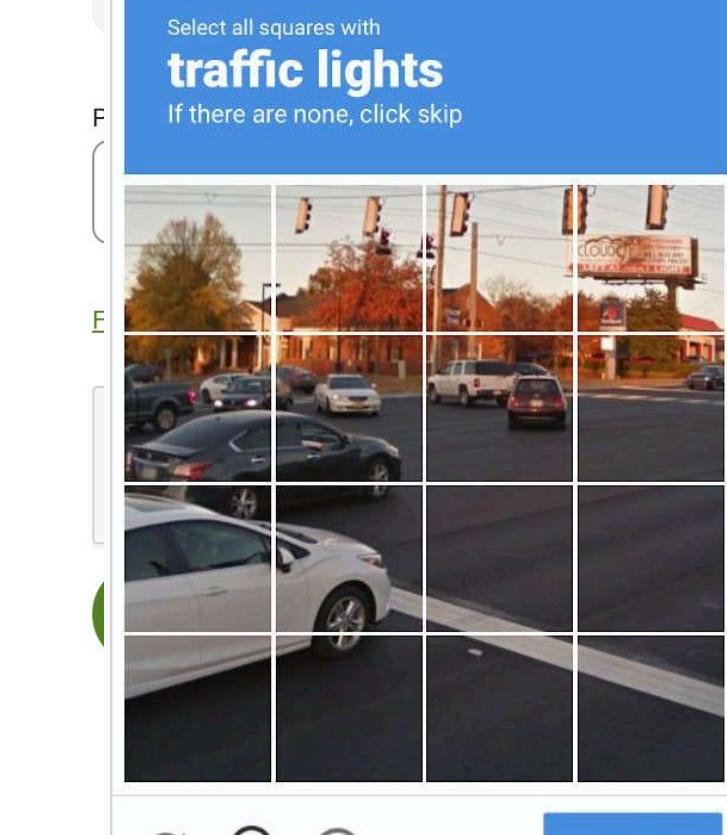
Back

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jobup.ch



Failed bot check. Please try again later.

Back

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Password

.....

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One login – a whole range of services

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OneLog

The Swiss media

jobup.ch ► jobs.ch

Other portals and services

Checked then unchecked

This is a montage

Error banner at the top = not read by screen reader

# Configuration issues

**Language settings:** Screen reader settings were in English, while the interface was in French, suggesting code-level language configuration problems.

The screenshot shows the jobup.ch homepage with a dark green header. The header features the jobup.ch logo, a search icon, a user icon, and a menu icon. Below the header, the tagline "Love what you do!" is displayed in large white text, followed by the text "Parcourez 82607 postes à pourvoir dans toute la Suisse." A search bar with placeholder text "Profession, mots-clés ou entreprise" and a location input field with placeholder "Lieu de travail ou région" are visible. To the right of the search bar is a green button labeled "Recherche". Below the search bar are several filter options: "Publié depuis", "Taux d'activité", "Temps de trajet", "Domaine d'activité", "Type de contrat", "Télétravail : Possible", and "Tous les filtres" (which is highlighted in green). A "Réinitialiser les filtres" button is also present. On the left side, there is a decorative graphic of a magnifying glass over a clock and a recycling symbol. On the right side, a section titled "Vos dernières recherches" lists previous search terms: "Brand manager" (location: "Toute la Suisse"), "Brand manaher" (location: "Toute la Suisse"), and "Toutes les offres d'emploi" (location: "Brand Manager"). Each search term has a "Créer un JobMailer" button next to it. At the bottom right, there is a link to "Effacer l'historique".



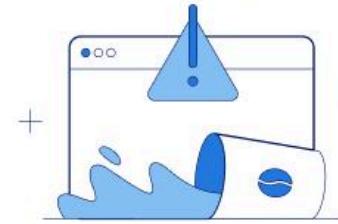
# Raising Awareness

# Presenting the insights and recommendations

To create real change, we needed buy-in beyond just the design team. I presented the findings across the company to raise awareness and advocate for a long-term commitment to accessibility.

## Finding summary

- Searching and applying for a job without help is nearly impossible for visually impaired users.
- Key barriers include confusing navigation, inaccessible form elements, poor feedback mechanisms, and inaccessible login processes.
- Without significant improvements, visually impaired users face challenges, making independent use of our platform unrealistic.



## Moving Forward: recommendations

### 1. Improve error messaging and feedback:

- Error message should be read when they appear (e.g. failed to login)
- Provide immediate audio feedback for successful or failed actions, like button clicks (for saved job ad, motivation letter generator...).



## Moving Forward: recommendations

### 2. Enhance screen reader compatibility

- Improve the clarity of navigational elements by ensuring labels are properly defined and consistently read by screen readers.
- Use more intuitive cues instead of technical terms like "combo" and ensure that input fields are distinguishable.
- Update the configuration to have the screen reader in the language of the interface language.



## Moving Forward: recommendations

### 3. Simplify login and verification processes:

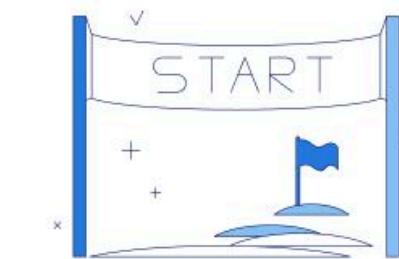
- Consider alternatives to visual captchas, such as audio or logic-based verification.
- Ensure all form-related elements, including captcha prompts and verification steps, are fully accessible and provide auditory cues.



## Moving Forward: recommendations

### 4. Clarify end points and steps in application flow:

- Clearly label steps in the application process and use headings to mark significant sections (e.g., "Motivation letter generated").



# a11y task force between design and engineering

After presenting the findings, we received the green light to dedicate resources to improving accessibility. The initiative was taken on by the design system guild—a cross-functional team of designers and developers

Given the limited resources, we prioritised the most critical user flows: job search and the application process.

- We created over 20 Jira tickets based on issues uncovered during user testing, distributing them across multiple teams.
- Additionally, we conducted a Lighthouse audit of the platform, which led to the creation of 14 more tasks focused on technical fixes

Tasks

Issue type	Ticket
1. Aria Attributes match their roles. Includes: Custom controls have associated labels and ARIA roles	<a href="#">↑ APL-741 - Aria Attributes match their roles</a> <span>CLOSED</span>
2. Contrast	Taken care of in: <a href="#">↑ APL-670 - (jobs) Design System: Colors and Typography</a> <span>RELEASED</span>
3. Names and labels	<a href="#">↑ APL-758 - Names and Labels (jobs.ch)</a> <span>RELEASED</span>
4. Alternative Text	<a href="#">↑ APL-759 - Alternative Text</a> <span>CLOSED</span>
5. No repetitive ID's	<a href="#">↑ APL-760 - Best practices</a> <span>CLOSED</span>
6. Don't disable zooming	<a href="#">↑ APL-761 - Zooming</a> <span>CLOSED</span>
7. Logical tab order	<a href="#">↑ APL-762 - Fix logical key-tab order in certain views</a> <span>RELEASED</span>
8. Interactive controls are keyboard focusable	<a href="#">↑ APL-763 - Interactive controls: keyboard focusable</a> <span>RELEASED</span>



# a11y workshop for 4 UX designers



# Shifting left: from dev fixes to design-first

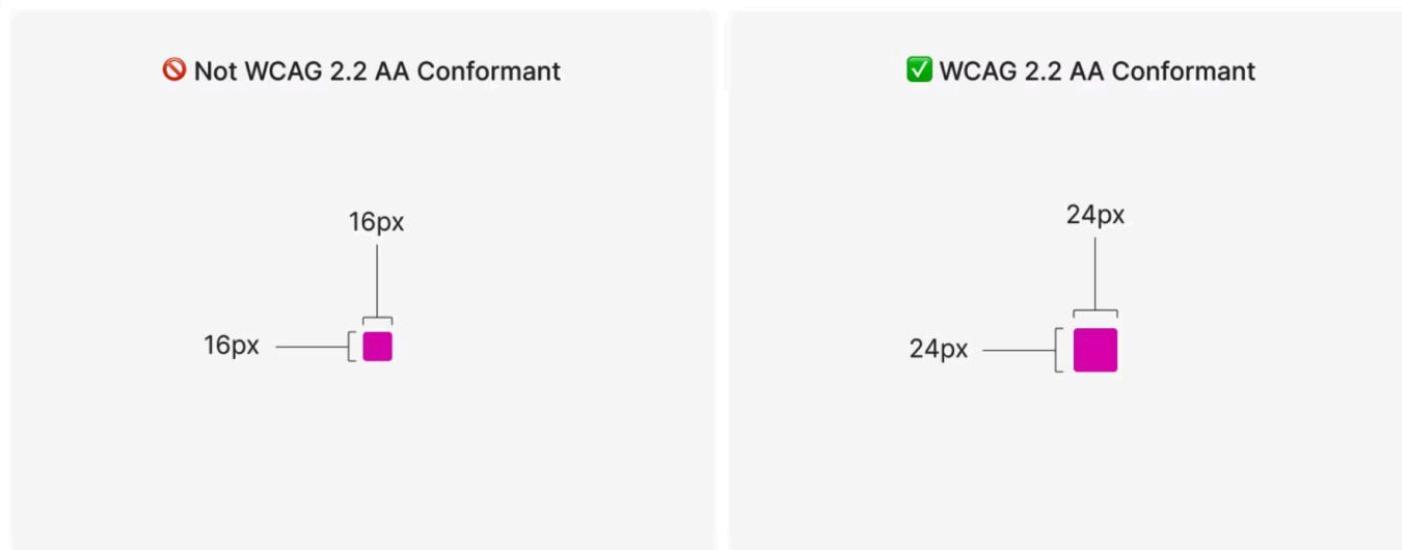
Instead of treating accessibility as a final QA step, we (the design system guild) decided to shift left and consider it earlier in the design process. To support this, **I led an accessibility workshop for the UX team** focused on building awareness and practical skills.

During the session:

- I gave an overview of WCAG, explaining how to understand and apply it in everyday work
- I introduced low-effort tools and plugins (like Include) to check accessibility early in the design phase
- I shared a new workflow with accessibility annotations to improve dev handoffs
- I set up hands-on exercises to help designers practice using annotations and better understand accessibility needs
- I encouraged the team to see accessibility as a core part of user experience, not a feature or afterthought

# Overview of WCAG with examples of use

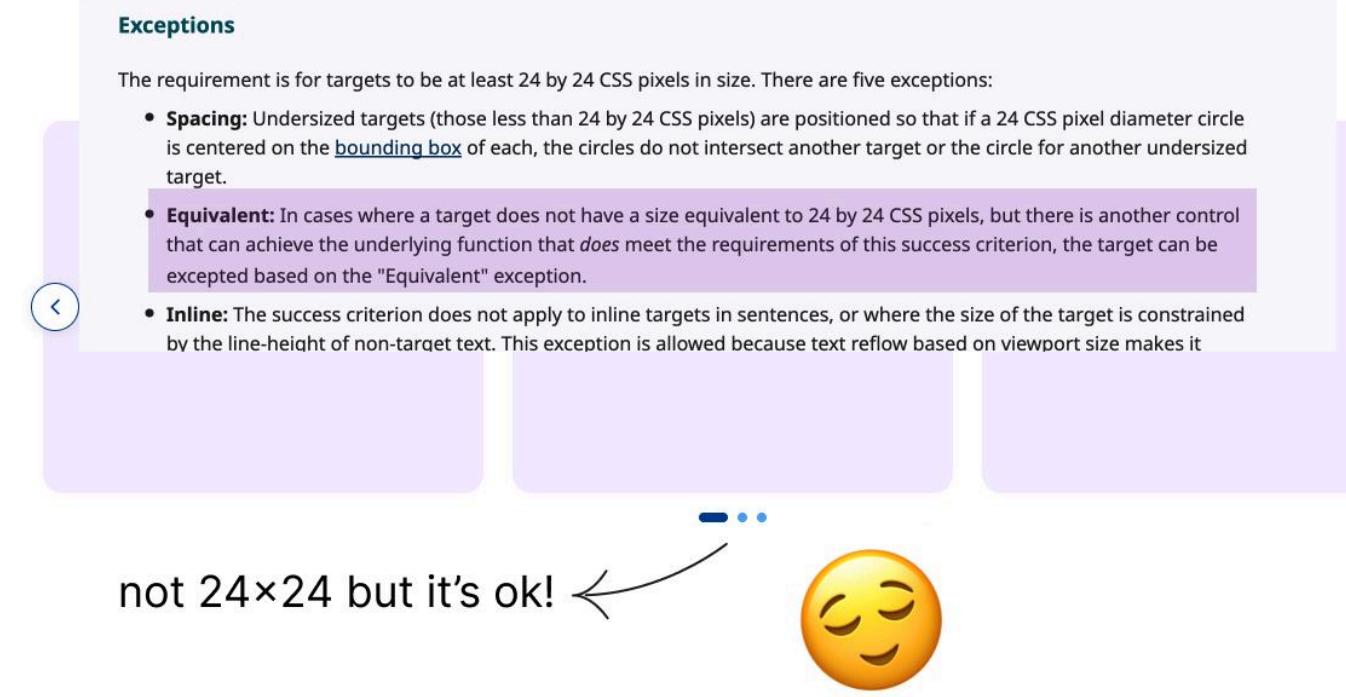
## Example AA SC - Interactive Element Size



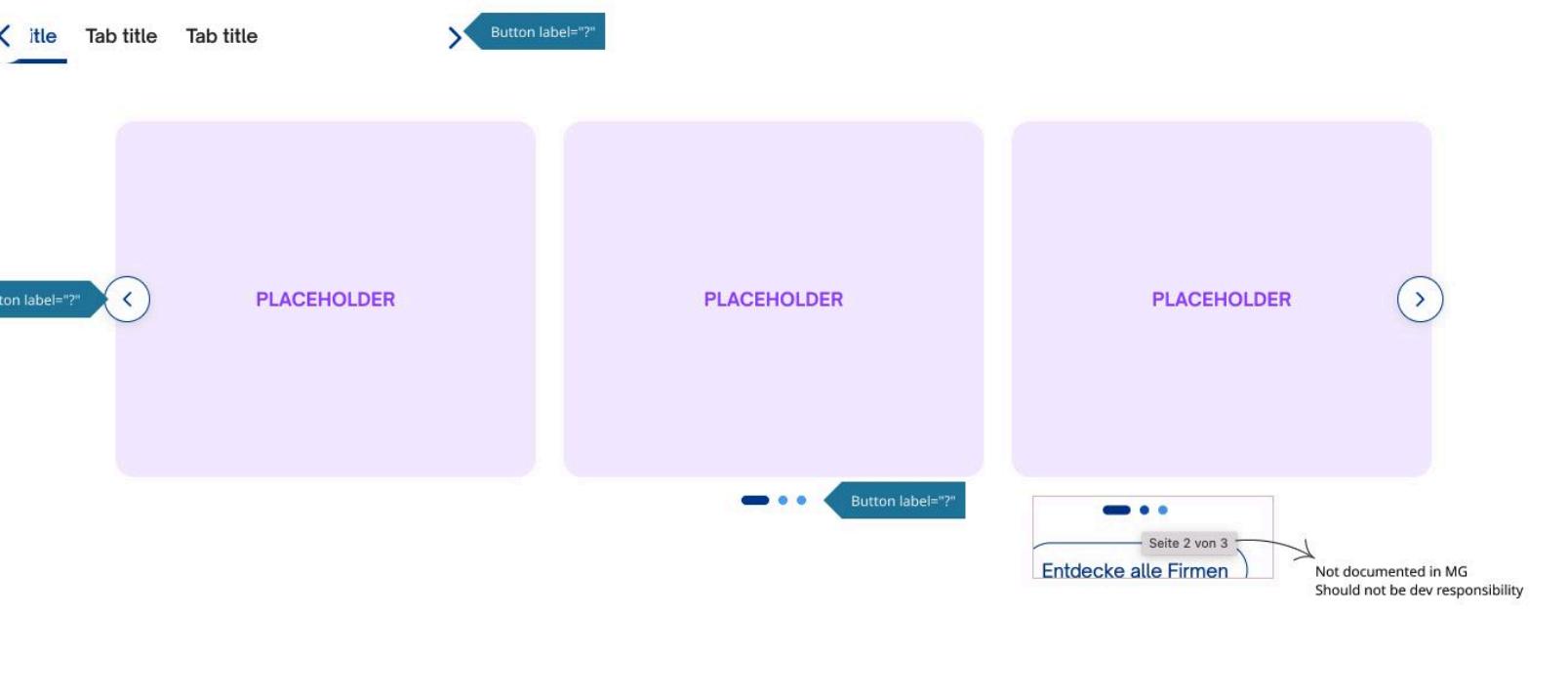
## Example - Interactive Element Size



## Example - Interactive Element Size



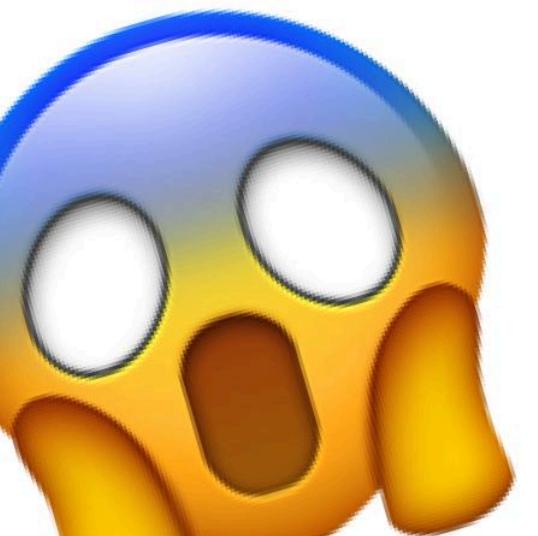
## Example - Interactive Element Size



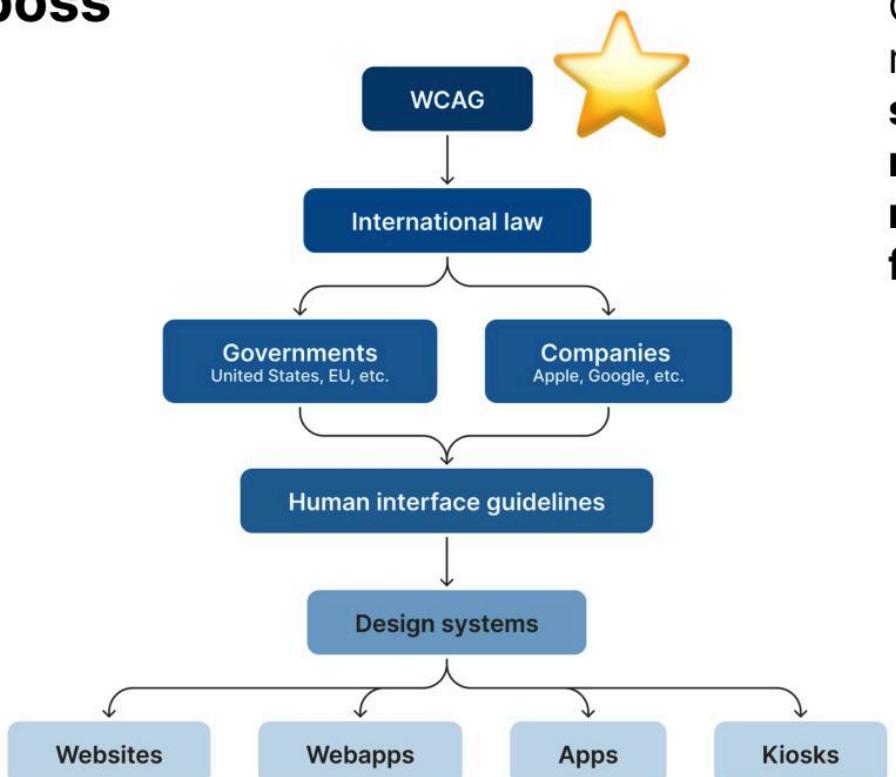
## Apple and Android: the source of more confusion

Apple's [Human Interface Guidelines](#) and Google's [Material Design](#) are guidelines for how to design interfaces for their respective platforms.

- WCAG → 24×24
- Apple's guidelines → 44×44 points
- Google's guides → 48×48 using density-independent pixels.



## Who's the boss



Goal with rebranding ⇒ **def set of OUR a11y rules for web & native (target size, font size...)**

# Tools to support accessibility in the design process

⇒ a11y checklist

⇒ Include plugin,  
minimum effort to  
get it right

**ebay**

**Include**  
—An accessibility annotation tool

Landmarks · Focus grouping ·  
Headings · Reading order · Touch  
target · Alternative text · Contrast ·  
Color · Text resizing · Responsive  
reflow · Complex gestures

The interface includes a sidebar with navigation links like 'Dashboard', 'Audit history', 'Audit report', 'Audit log', and 'Help & support'. A progress bar at the bottom indicates 'Doing well' at 28%.

**JobCloud**

**Write an anonymous review about JobCloud**

It only takes a few minutes to give your anonymous feedback.

**1 Company name**  
JobCLOUD Zurich

What is your current status with the company?\*

Current employee  
 Former employee  
 Applicant

Which department are you in?

What is your contract type?

Email address\*

Your email will be used for verification only and will never be shared or published.

Back Next

**Designer checks**

- Landmarks
- Headings
- Reading & focus order
- Alternative text
- Sufficient text color contrast
- Color checked
- Text resizing documented
- Responsive reflow documented
- Sufficient click target sizes
- Complex gestures documented

# Hands on exercises

The 24 daily challenge created by Daniel Henderson-Ede was perfect for our needs.

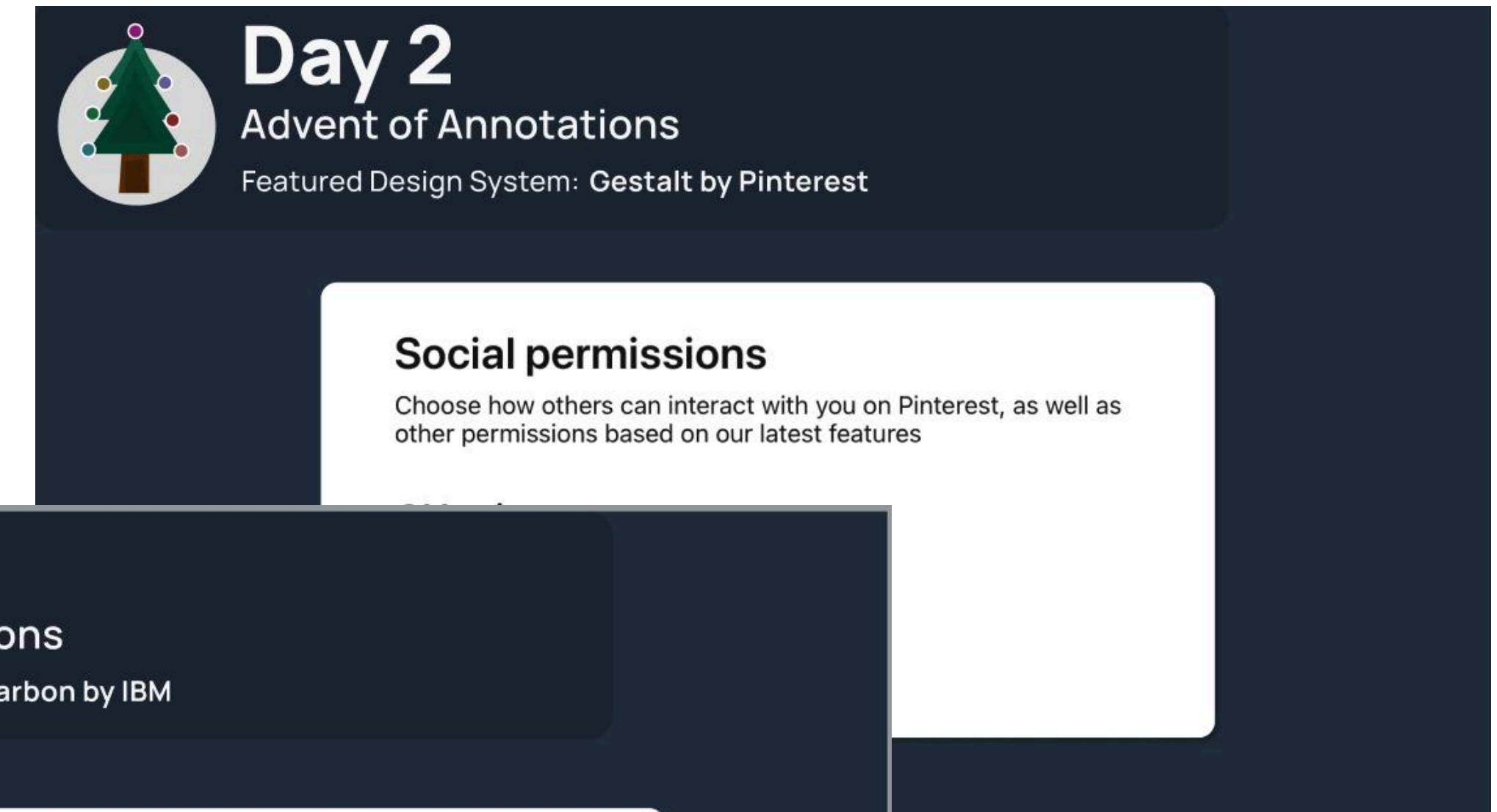


**Advent of Annotations**  
24 daily annotation challenges

Practice your Web accessibility skills by annotating a real design from a different organization each day.

Created by Daniel Henderson-Ede

A stylized green Christmas tree with colorful ornaments (purple, yellow, blue, red) is visible at the bottom right of the page.



**Day 1**  
Advent of Annotations  
Featured Design System: Carbon by IBM

**Day 2**  
Advent of Annotations  
Featured Design System: Gestalt by Pinterest

**Social permissions**  
Choose how others can interact with you on Pinterest, as well as other permissions based on our latest features

# Exercises highlight

The goal is for designer to learn how to annotate their design before handover to development

The image shows two screenshots of a Mailchimp interface with various annotations:

- H1**: An annotation pointing to the "Day 5 Advent of Annotations" header.
- Link to URL**: An annotation pointing to a "Link to URL" button.
- Button**: An annotation pointing to a "Sign up for Mailchimp" button.
- Label**: An annotation pointing to a "Create a free account or log in" label.
- screenReaderOnly=""**: An annotation pointing to a "screenReaderOnly=""choose your language"" dropdown.
- alt="Foo"**: An annotation pointing to a "alt="Foo"" attribute on an image element.

On the right side, there is a detailed view of a language dropdown menu with the following annotations:

- screenReaderOnly="Change language"**: An annotation pointing to the "screenReaderOnly" attribute of the dropdown.
- svg.fill\_[currentColor].h\_100%.w\_100%**: An annotation pointing to the SVG icon of the dropdown.
- ACCESSIBILITY**: An annotation pointing to the accessibility section of the dropdown.
- Name**: An annotation pointing to the "Name" field in the accessibility section.
- Role**: An annotation pointing to the "Role" field in the accessibility section.
- Keyboard-focusable**: An annotation pointing to the "Keyboard-focusable" field in the accessibility section.
- image**: An annotation pointing to the "image" field in the accessibility section.
- 'bdr\_r32 d\_inline-block">'-1" title="Sprache wählen"> grid**: An annotation pointing to the "title" attribute of the dropdown.

linking the exercise to real cases from our platforms

# Exercises highlight

The screenshot shows a dark-themed web page for 'Day 8' of the 'Advent of Annotations' challenge. At the top left is a small Christmas tree icon. The main title 'Day 8' is in large white font, with 'Advent of Annotations' in smaller text below it. A note says 'Featured Design System: Salesforce Lightning Design System'. On the left, there's a purple button with 'h2' and a list item 'Get timely updates and fresh ideas delivered to your inbox.' Below it is a green button labeled 'Sign up now'. In the center is a cartoon illustration of a brown bear in a green outfit performing a star jump in front of two palm trees. Around the bear are several icons: a magnifying glass, a heart, a chart, and a search icon. To the right of the illustration is a '1 Image' label. A callout box titled 'Image Details' provides a detailed description of the image: 'A cartoon character in a bear outfit doing a star jump in front of two tall green trees. A love heart, chart and search icon are located around the trees.'

## Informative Images

in [Images Tutorial](#)

### Overview

Informative images convey a simple concept or information that can be expressed in a short phrase or sentence. The text alternative should convey the meaning or content that is displayed visually, which typically isn't a literal description of the image.

In some situations a detailed literal description may be needed, but only when the content of the image is all or part of the conveyed information. Whether to treat an image as informative or [decorative](#) is a judgment that authors make, based on the reason for including the image on the page.

### Page Contents

- [Example 1: Images used to label other information](#)
- [Example 2: Images used to supplement other information](#)
- [Example 3: Images conveying succinct information](#)
- [Example 4: Images conveying an impression or emotion](#)
- [Example 5: Images conveying file format](#)

### Should this image have an alternative text?

- If it provides no additional useful information ⇒ no ?
- It may not provide any information in a literal sense, but it does **convey emotion and impression**. It says "**we're a fun and friendly brand who is excited to share ideas with you**". **If you don't describe the image, people who cannot visually perceive it are going to miss that important emotion.**
- The W3C WAI page on informative images briefly presents this example: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/tutorials/images/informative/>

# Outcome of this initiatives

## Outcomes

- By fixing accessibility blockers, we opened the platform to potentially 975K monthly visitors with disabilities.
- This improved compliance also reduced legal and reputational risks for JobCloud.
- Developers have clearer, annotated designs—resulting in less guesswork and cleaner implementation.
- The most critical accessibility blockers were fixed and deployed.
- The company now treats accessibility as a shared responsibility, not just a tech issue.



**Upcoming rebranding as  
an opportunity to improve  
accessibility**

# Rebranding as an opportunity to improve accessibility

We're preparing a full rebranding of jobs.up and jobup.ch, and we see this as a key moment to integrate WCAG 2.2 standards from the start.

The goal is to go beyond visual updates and make the platforms significantly more accessible—targeting over 85% compliance through improved structure, contrast, and interaction patterns.

Goal #7  
rebranding rolled out on  
jobs.up and jobup.ch with  
over 85% WCAG 2.2  
compliance

**Level AA**

learnings and personal  
growth

- **From beginner to advocate:** I started with no prior knowledge of accessibility, but I used that gap to become the accessibility advocate for the team. By diving into the standards and collaborating closely with engineers, I led the initiative to improve accessibility across the platform.
- **Collaboration is key:** Working cross-functionally with designers and engineers taught me how to drive change through collaboration. We found that accessibility is most effective when it's a team effort, not just a designer's or engineer's responsibility.
- **Shifting mindsets:** I learned how crucial it is to get buy-in from all stakeholders early. Raising awareness across the company helped foster a shared responsibility for accessibility, making it part of the design and development process, not an afterthought.
- **Iterative improvement:** Accessibility isn't a one-time fix. I learned how to prioritize improvements and iterate over time, focusing on the most impactful areas first, while keeping long-term goals in mind.