



Age: 57
Location: Jakobsberg, Sweden
Marital status: Married
Education: 3 years college
Job: Full time employee
Impairment: **Macular degeneration**

meet Märta Hansson...

Märta Hansson (57) lives with her husband Emil Karlsson (58) in Jakobsberg, Sweden. She is a mother of two girls Elsa (25) and Annike (28), who is expecting her first child. For years she has been working at home, raising her two daughters. About 6 years ago Märta started experiencing difficulties with her central visual field as a consequence of macular degeneration.

When they went to college, Märta suddenly had more time on her hands. Therefore, she decided to follow evening classes in Web Development. After her studies, she started working at a non-profit organization which supports people with disabilities by explaining in what ways the government provides (financial) options to help them. For this organization she teaches courses on how visually impaired people use computers and the internet. Quite a lot of developers follow these courses and she can show them in what way internet applications can be made accessible technically.

technology use

Märta has had a PC at home for years. Nowadays she uses her (work) laptop more and more, especially because she has to go and teach courses. Märta uses Windows XP, and has Office installed, mainly for her work – preparing presentations for courses, creating documents for the organization, and Outlook Express to keep her agenda and contacts up to date. To help her work on her desktop (17") and laptop (15"), she has speech output and uses screen magnification (Zoomtext).



She does her finances online, and takes care of social security arrangements regarding support for assistive technologies for her severe visual impairment. But her daughters really showed her the way to the many opportunities of the world wide web.

Two years ago she bought a new mobile phone; her old one was somewhat hard to use due to the incompatibility with speech output software which made it crash all the time. This was also one of the reasons she didn't use it a lot. At her organization her colleague Brigitta is specialized in support for mobile phones – it is her daily work. Therefore she talked about it with her to decide which phone she should buy. Now she has a foldable phone, which has large, clearly separated buttons, and is compatible to a great extent with her speech output software, screen magnification and SMS voice communication aid. She can now synchronize her agenda and contacts on her laptop (on Outlook Express) with her phone.





problems

- Not all web pages and applications are fully accessible. She also hates to have to use two browsers, Internet Explorer and Firefox, to be able to access most sites.
- She uses a speech synthesizer which is helpful in one way, but also frustrating in the way she has trouble to access the input fields of the synthesizer.
- All graphical online content that doesn't have an alt-tag defined is difficult to understand.
- From time to time though her phone still crashes or the buttons seem to freeze, forcing her to reboot the device.



needs & wants

- Märta is thinking about buying a larger screen she can use for both her PC and Laptop, which would make things easier to read.
- She likes to take part in discussions on web development on online forums. However, she would like to see a bigger or more active community around accessibility issues. Those threads are usually less vibrant.
- She also has a printer at home; this is especially helpful to print train tickets since the ticket machines at the stations all have touchscreens and are not accessible.
- She wants a fully equipped laptop with accessible add-ons in combination with docking stations offering large monitors at public locations.
- Märta needs more accessibility features that are OS integrated. Sometimes they are less advanced than 3rd party programs, but at least they rarely have compatibility issues.

last month...

A while ago, her daughters taught her about Facebook. They showed Märta how she could follow their status and profile updates and how she could track down old friends. After an initial steep learning curve, Märta finally figured out the mechanics behind Facebook, after which she started using it on a daily basis to check upon friends and family. All went well until all of sudden Facebook decided to completely renew its layout and look and feel. Märta is totally lost again and hasn't really used Facebook ever since. Hopefully her daughters will be able to help her out once again.