A blurry, blue-tinted photograph of a person's hands interacting with a computer mouse and keyboard, serving as a background for the title.

VPAT 101

The Definitive VPAT Explainer

The Who, What, When & Why of Digital Accessibility

THE WHO

The World Wide Consortium of Accessibility Guidelines and Section 508 Guidelines of the Department of Justice have set the parameters of what an accessible digital property should attain.

THE WHAT

Any commercial digital property, be it website, mobile app, web-based platform, curriculum, software program must be accessible to any person with a disability.

THE WHY

The parameters have been set in order to allow people with disabilities to fully interact with and access websites, digital tools and other forms of digital technologies.

THE WHEN

Now! The DOJ's September 25, 2018 letter is unequivocal in describing the application of the ADA to websites and all over commercial-use digital properties:

The department first articulated its interpretation that the ADA applies to public accommodations' website over 20 years ago. This interpretation is consistent with the ADA's title III requirement that the goods, services, or activities provided by places of public accommodation be equally accessible to people with disabilities."

Sept. 25, 2018 letter from Assistant Attorney General,
US Dept. of Justice

GSA **Section508.gov**
GSA Government-wide Section508 Accessibility Program



SO WHAT EXACTLY IS ACCESSIBLE DIGITAL PROPERTY?

All digital properties need to provide “reasonable accessibility” to people with disabilities.

There are four benchmarks of accessibility that every commercial digital property must successfully reach:



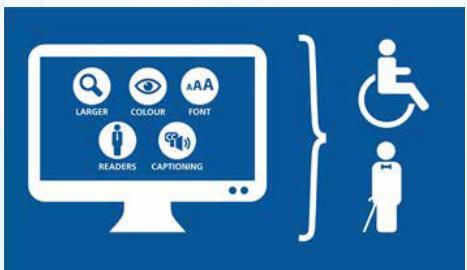
Perceivable: digital properties can be accessed and processed easily—no piece is available to only one sense, like vision or sight.



Operable: when your digital property is operable, it means your users can navigate their way without missing out on anything.



Understandable: If a piece of digital property is understandable, users can identify the language and easily read the content.



Robust: when digital property is robust, it works with all browsers, assistive technologies, and other ways to access web content, including mobile phones such as iPhones and Android. As technology changes, your site needs to change as well.

Digital Properties that meet these standards are accessible to everyone, so they are ADA compliant.

SO...WHAT EXACTLY IS A VPAT?

A VPAT (which stands for Voluntary Accessibility Template) is a document that explains how information and communication technology (ICT) such as software, hardware, electronic content, and support documentation comply with the Revised 508 Standards for IT accessibility.

When conducting market research and evaluating proposals, the VPAT assists federal agency contracting officials and government buyers assess ICT products and services for accessibility.

The VPAT form comes in four editions:

VPAT Section 508 is based on the Revised Section 508 Standards and includes WCAG 2.0 as well as individual chapters in Section 508.

VPAT 2.4 WCAG is used for reporting conformance based on WCAG 2.0 or WCAG 2.1.

VPAT 2.4 EU is used for reporting on EN 301 549 requirements as well as WCAG 2.0, 2.1, or ISO/IEC 40500.

VPAT 2.4 INT incorporates all three of the above standards.



CONTACT US



Why are my clients asking for a VPAT?



The VPAT is required for *any* company that wants to work with the federal government, federal government agencies, or federally funded organizations, including those that provide services to them.

Because the VPAT will assist businesses in understanding the accessibility features sought in an ICT product or service, it will encourage them to work toward achieving them in order to impress contracting and procurement officials in these organizations and persuade them to work with the businesses.

Beyond the federal government, more companies and organizations, especially in EdTEch, HealthTech, FinTech and SaaS products are also requiring VPATs for all digital vendors.

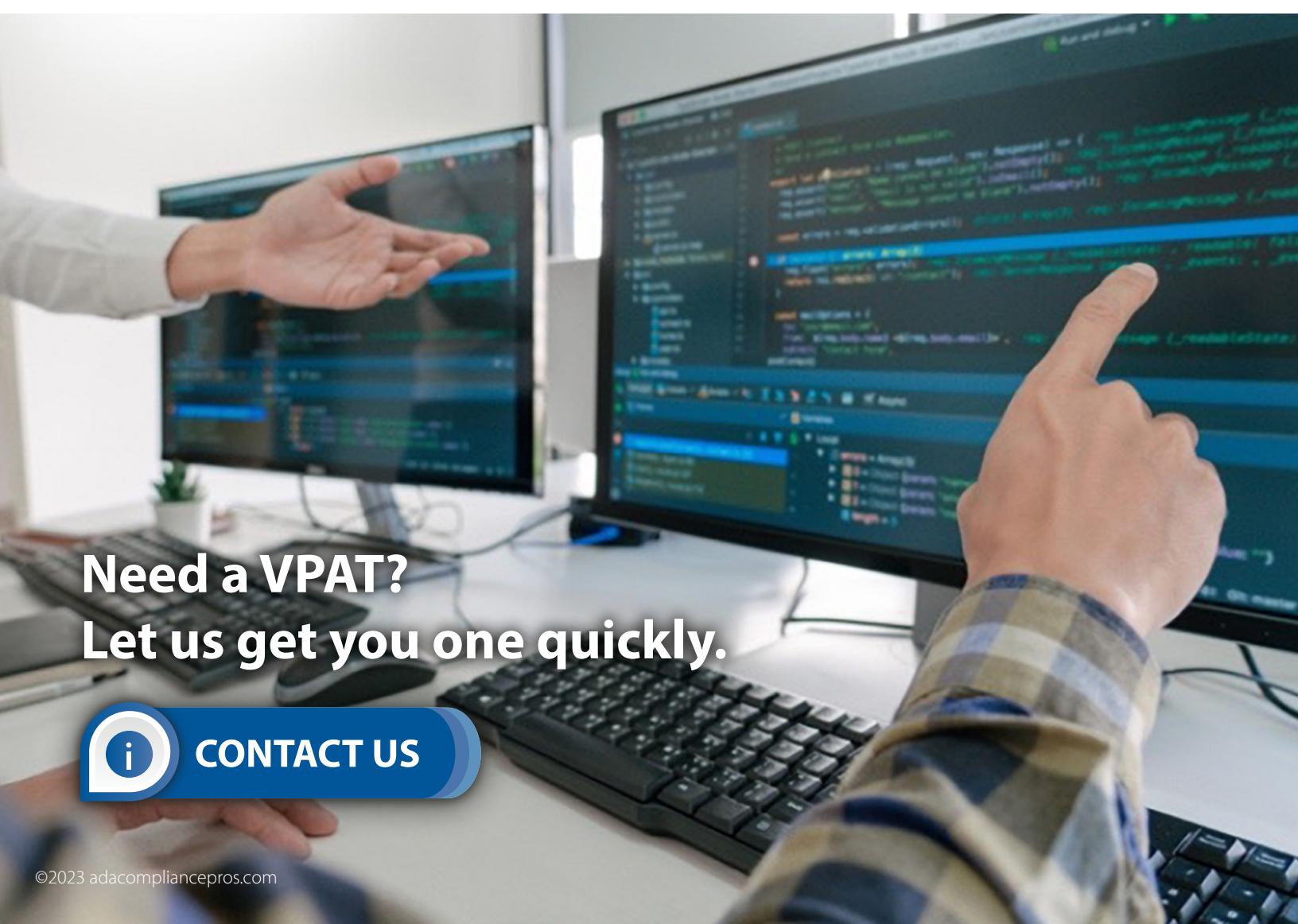
What are the benefits of a VPAT?



- It enhances the ability of buyers of your product to make informed decisions
- It improves chances of winning business bids
- It boosts the credibility and reputation of a business
- It enhances the products and services offered by the business
- Provides you with a standard format to help you determine and compare the accessibility of various EIT products and services during bidding processes.
- Because reviewing an EIT product or service's VPAT report can help identify questions to ask a developer or vendor to ensure that procurement and contracting decisions are based on the best information available, it aids in ordering dialogue about accessibility with developers and vendors.
- Assists in documenting accessibility-related claims from developers and vendors, fostering accountability because the information in a VPAT document can be used to inform efforts to resolve any identified issues to rely on when filing claims.
- Increases accessibility standards awareness, which aids in the promotion of best practices in fostering accessibility among EIT product and service developers and users.

YOUR STEPS TO DIGITAL PROPERTY ACCESSIBILITY

1. Schedule a free one-on-one consultation to evaluate your needs
2. Generate a timely proposal that includes your job details
3. Start your job after all the specifics have been confirmed
4. Onboard you into our custom easy to use, Client Dashboard
5. Complete the Manual Audit, VPAT and Accessibility Statement
6. Deliver the complete set of accessibility documents without delay
7. Support you in your journey to accessibility during remediation



**Need a VPAT?
Let us get you one quickly.**



CONTACT US