Setting up an Accessible Web Page: Introduction to Inclusive Design (A UX Accessibility Blog Series)

This UX Accessibility Blog Series, “Setting Up An Accessible Web Page,” will walk you through the basic elements of an accessible web page in hopes that you can take what you’ve learned an apply it to more complex pages. This blog series is loosely based on Heydon Pickering’s book “Inclusive Design Patterns: Coding Accessibility Into Web Design.” First, we’ll describe the type of design used to create accessible content (inclusive design) and how it relates to accessibility.

**What is Inclusive Design?**

Inclusive design isn’t just about designing for those with a disability, it’s about designing for every single person that could possibly use your web page to accomplish a task. That could be taken as disabled, elderly, millennial, educated, uneducated, etc. Any sort of demographic you can come up with needs to be able to use your web page as effectively as any of the other demographic groups.

As developers, we tend to design for people who are like us, namely people who are very comfortable with computers. We’ve all thought at some point, “well, I know how to use it so it shouldn’t be a problem.” That is the exact opposite of the “inclusive design” way of thinking. Some people, even if they aren’t disabled, are very uncomfortable around computers, to the point where they think they might break a computer if they touch the keyboard. We need to consider those people as well when we’re developing a new product or updating an existing one.

**What is the difference between “Inclusive Design” and “Accessibility?”**

Inclusive design simply describes a particular way of designing your web page that includes anyone and everyone that could possibly ever want to use your website, as stated above. Web accessibility, in its most basic form, aims to help those with a diagnosable disability. Inclusive design helps everyone. Web accessibility (though is often helpful for everyone) aims to help those with some kind of barrier in their way to accomplish these tasks – also known as *a disability*. As Heydon Pickering says in his article “What the Heck is Inclusive Design?”, you can think of it this way: inclusive design is the means and accessibility is the end, but you also get much more than accessibility out of inclusive design.

**Closing Thoughts**

In this blog series, I’m going to go through some of the things you can do to make your products accessible from the very beginning. Accessibility shouldn’t be an afterthought and certainly is not just a feature. Just plugging in some aria attributes and roles *is not enough*. We can’t wait until the end to make things accessible. By using inclusive design from the beginning, we can make using Corelogic FNC’s products a better experience for every user.