[Accessibility in Software Development](https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics/case-studies/accessibility-in-software-development" \t "_blank)

In the ACM case study Accessibility in Software Development according to Horton et al., (2025) the software company AllTogether released a collaboration tool that lacked accessibility compliance due to project time constraints. This decision violated several principles in the ACM Code of Ethics, including the duty to contribute to society and human well-being (1.1), avoid harm (1.2), act fairly without discrimination (1.4), and uphold professional competence by respecting established rules (2.3). These oversights excluded users with disabilities, undermining inclusive design principles essential to ethical software development.   
  
From a legal perspective, neglecting accessibility measures exposes developers and companies to significant risk. In the United States, such non-compliance may breach the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, potentially resulting in litigation, fines, or loss of contracts (*The Americans with Disabilities Act | ADA.gov*, no date) Likewise, the European Accessibility Act sets binding standards for digital accessibility across EU member states. These frameworks reinforce the idea that accessibility is a legal right, not an optional feature.  
  
Socially, the exclusion of users with disabilities contributes to digital inequality and marginalization. It raises ethical concerns about the responsibilities of computing professionals to serve all users equitably. The team’s actions in this case reflected a lapse in integrity and professionalism, contrary to the expectations outlined in the ACM Code.  
  
The British Computer Society (BCS) Code of Conduct supports similar values. It calls on members to act in public interest (1a), promote inclusive access to IT (1c), and comply with legislation and good practice (2b) (*BCS Code of Conduct for members - Ethics for IT professionals | BCS*, no date) Both codes emphasize that accessibility is not just a technical or legal issue, but a central element of ethical and professional responsibility.

Reference List

*BCS Code of Conduct for members - Ethics for IT professionals | BCS* (no date). Available at: https://www.bcs.org/membership-and-registrations/become-a-member/bcs-code-of-conduct (Accessed: 24 May 2025).

Horton, S. *et al.* (2025) ‘ACM TechBrief: Advancing Accessibility in the Digital World’. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1145/3731725.

*The Americans with Disabilities Act | ADA.gov* (no date). Available at: https://www.ada.gov/ (Accessed: 24 May 2025).