



## 3 Reasons Why Accessible Design Is Good for All

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Most designers probably agree that [accessibility](#) matters: We want to create designs and interfaces that don't exclude users with disabilities. There are plenty of obvious moral reasons that accessibility matters, but, unfortunately, accessibility considerations are often one of the first things to get cut when resources or time becomes scarce. From a business perspective, it seems reasonable that it's better to release something that the majority of people will be able to use, than to delay a product or website launch. After all, users with disabilities only make up a smaller percentage of the customer group. As you might already suspect, the truth is a lot more complex, and choosing not to create accessible designs for financial reasons is not only often illegal but also short-sighted in terms of the business value you can gain from accessibility.

Here, we'll look at a few examples from the history of designing for accessibility which illustrate why accessibility is great for users and for business. We'll also take you through the primary reasons for why you should care about accessibility in the digital domain. If you're a designer, we're probably preaching to the choir when we say that accessibility and [digital inclusion](#) matter, so use our examples and arguments next time you have to argue for the importance of accessibility in a project in your own organization.

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## The Curb-Cut Effect

One of the primary reasons that accessibility has wider benefits than allowing people with disabilities to use your products is the curb-cut effect. **The curb-cut effect refers to the fact that designs created to benefit people with disabilities often end up benefiting a much larger user group.** The curb-cut effect takes its name from the ramps cut into the surfaces of sidewalks – as you see in the image above. In many countries, curb cuts are omnipresent in areas with foot traffic, allowing people with strollers, bikes, etc. easy access to the street when they need to cross the road. While curb cuts are used by all kinds of pedestrians, they were originally created for the sole purpose of allowing people in wheelchairs to cross the road. Curb cuts only started to become commonplace through the hard work of political activists who demanded that wheelchair users should be able to move freely about in cities, but they turned out to have more universal benefits. Most of us no longer think of curb cuts as accessible design, but simply as the most logical and user-friendly way to design sidewalks – hence the term “curb-cut effect”.

