Accessibility Tools

What is accessibility?

It the usability of something, in this case a website, regardless of their physical and/or mental abilities.

Why hasn’t accessibility become more essential or more of a requirement?

For the most part, it comes from a position of privilege, the people who are creating these websites do not take differently abled people into consideration. When looking into the industry of technology in general, there is a stereotype that has been created. The people who work in the industry and the people who are sought out are ‘white men’. From the talk that was given by Hanli Geyser, they spoke about there being a drive looking for ‘anti-social white males’ This has now become the image of the people who are the image of the technology industry. There is a privilege that comes with being white and never having to live without the world catering to you.

It is much easier to create a website with the bare minimum and continuously use the same conventions without there being creative in any way to cater towards other people.

The release of technology if rapid, there is barely any time, money, or enough people, not clear or detailed requirements, ever evolving tech and this leads to web sites being made with the bare necessities.(Brajnik 2004)

Accessibility allows for the elderly, and disabled users to be able to interact with content without much difficulty. A step forward into making accessibility is evaluating web accessibility tools.

There are many ways to evaluate but as of right now there are 4 main ways.

First approach

To run an accessibility evaluation tool on the website to review whether or not the website goes against the guidelines for website accessibility. These are software’s created that can either find general or specific accessibility tools. General checkers do the bare minimum in only evaluating most of the guidelines.

Second approach

The second evaluation is manual, where a person will evaluate the webpage and examine whether the website violates the guidelines of accessibility. The limitation of this form of evaluation is that as a human, accessibility becomes subjective and if you aren’t aware of certain people who need to be catered too then you will not be looking for that accessibility. This leads to many marginalized groups of people being left out and forgotten.

Third Approach

This approach uses the help of the marginalized groups of people and their evaluation of the websites. Using the aid of these groups to identify whether or not the website is even able to cater towards their needs and if the accessibility put in place is actually useful. This eliminates human error from the second approach and the lack of in depth searching from the first ones too.

The fourth approach

This is a combination of automated and manual evaluation. To me this is one of the more effective and efficient ways of evaluation as it includes e-learning, allowing children who need more aid to be able to be catered too as well as tackling the problem of schools treating all students the same and being intolerant to marginalized people. (Alsaeedi 2020)

Accessibility has become a last thought thing, making life for marginalized people difficult as well as excluded. These people cannot access basic things majority of people would consider vital to their every day while minorities have to fight and come up with solutions themselves in order to even be thought about never the less included.

References

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