Meeting Web Accessibility Guidelines (Section 508/ WCAG 2.1)

CHOOSING A WEB CONFORMANCE GUIDELINE



Gerard K. Cohen
LEAD ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGIST

@gerardkcohen



Overview



Official Conformance Guidelines

Section 508

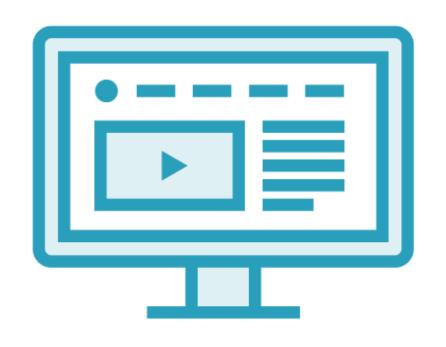
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1

Compare and Contrast

Which to Choose?



Web Conformance Guidelines



Accessible to people with disabilities

Protection from discrimination lawsuits

Better Search Engine Optimization

Greater overall usability

Future proof for yourself



Official Conformance Guidelines

Section 508
(United States)

WCAG 2.1
(World Wide Web Consortium)





1986 Amendment to Rehabilitation Act of 1973, updated in 2017



Targeting websites developed or used by the federal government



More information available at www.section508.gov



Web Conformance Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)



WCAG 2.1

Published in 2018 by the WCAG Working Group (WCAG WG), which is part of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)



WCAG 2.1

78 total criteria organized as 13 guidelines under 4 principles – *Perceivable*, *Operable*, *Understandable*, *Robust* (POUR)



WCAG 2.1: Perceivable

Users must be able to perceive the information being presented



WCAG 2.1: Operable

Users must be able to operate the interface



WCAG 2.1: Understandable

Users must be able to understand the information as well as the operation of the user interface



WCAG 2.1: Robust

Users must be able to access the content as technologies advance



WCAG 2.1

Each guideline has 3 levels of conformance – Level A, Level AA, and Level AAA



WCAG 2.1 Levels of Conformances

Level A

Most basic of web accessibility features

Level AA

Biggest and most common barriers

Level AAA

Highest level of accessibility



WCAG 2.1

More information available at https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/



Section 508 vs. WCAG 2.1



Which to choose?





WCAG 2.1 Level AA





Section 508 vs. WCAG 2.1

Section 508

Last updated in 2017

Limited to federal agencies, federally funded, or under contract by a federal agency

WCAG 2.1

Last updated in 2018

Global acceptance



Meeting WCAG 2.1 Level AA covers all of Section 508



Section 508 refresh is expected to require conformance to WCAG 2.1 Level AA



WCAG 2.1 Level AA



