



Shumaker Technology Group



The Compliance Countdown: Is Your Website Ready?

Presented By: Kyle Shumaker, Shumaker Technology Group

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Goals for today's presentation

What are we going to cover?

- ✔ Learn some tips and tricks to help ensure that the content you produce going forward is accessible.
- ✔ Learn some basic things you can do to see how accessible your site is.



What we aren't here to do:

- ✘ We aren't here to talk about every potential issue or teach you how to do a full accessibility audit. People go to school for years to learn all of that and we only have you for an hour.
- ✘ We aren't here to judge, blame, or criticize. We all win when we work together on accessibility.



While we can't turn you into a digital accessibility expert in the next hour, we can show you some of the **common pitfalls** and how to avoid them when producing content in the future.



What is the Americans with Disabilities Act?



The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is a federal law passed in 1990 that prohibits discrimination against people with any kind of disability.



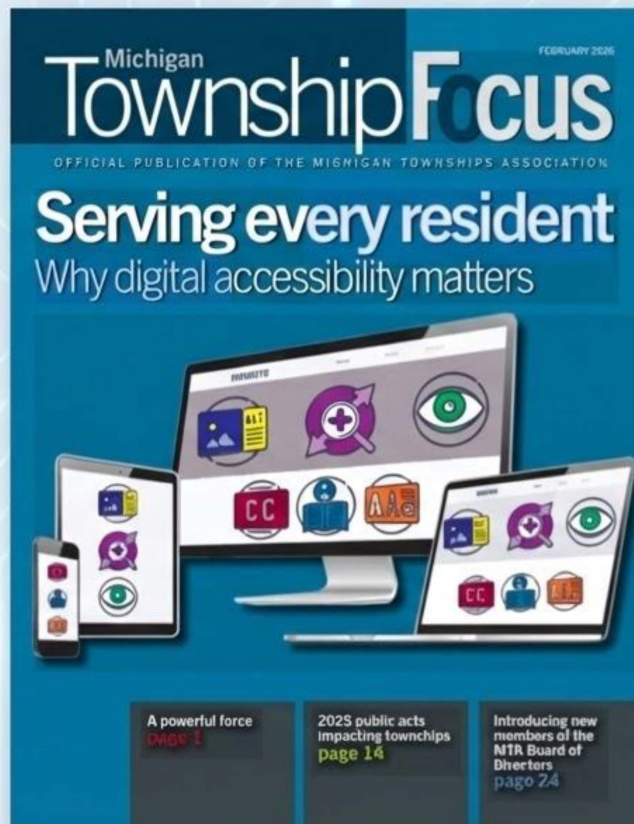
While that has always been the case, there has historically been much uncertainty as to how exactly it applies to digital spaces.



April 2024: U.S. Department of Justice clarified that ADA absolutely does apply to digital spaces (Websites, Social Media, Mobile Apps, Emails) and that those digital spaces need to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, Version 2.1, Level AA.



For more on legal aspects, read the article: **“Serving every resident: Why digital accessibility matters”** in the February 2026 *MTA Focus Magazine*, co-authored by Kyle Shumaker and Attorney Michael Bila of Bauckham, Thall, Seeber, Kaufman, & Koches.





Accessibility Cheatsheet



WE ALL WIN WHEN WE WORK TOGETHER ON ACCESSIBILITY!

- Mark a square if you think your website might not meet the requirement.
- Fill out the back of your card if you are interested in a no obligation website compliance review.
- Have fun! Feel free to ask questions as you learn more about accessibility best practices.

ALT TEXT All images have an alternate description	CONTRAST Contrast ratios for large text are at least 3:1 for small text & 4.5:1 for large text	DESCRIPTIVE LINKS Link text provides necessary context. No "Click Here" or "Visit this Page"	ARCHIVE SECTION All non-compliant documents & content are in a clearly labeled "archive section"	TIMELINE My website will be fully compliant with the guidelines by: 4/24/26 (or 8/20/26) and 4/28/27 (or 8/20/27)
CLOSED CAPTION Videos have closed captioning & all audio files have text transcripts	MOBILE SITE The website is fully mobile & tablet friendly	KEYBOARD NAVIGATION All pages can be navigated by keyboard with no keyboard traps	ERROR REPORTING Error messages are easily distinguishable without relying on color or eyesight	LOGICAL ORDER A screen reader can read content on each page in a logical order
SKIP NAV The website includes a skip navigation link that allows screen readers to bypass the main navigation	FONT SIZE The fonts can be resized without loss of content or functionality	FREE SPACE 	SCANNED DOCUMENTS No documents are scanned or include screenshotted items in them	ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT My website has an accessibility statement
HEADINGS Heading levels H1 through H6 are used correctly and in proper hierarchical order	COLOR PERCEPTION A colorblind person could perceive all content on my website	COGNITIVE DISABILITIES A person with cognitive disabilities could make effective use of my website	FORM LABELS Form fields are properly labelled to ensure screen reader users can identify and complete each field accurately	PAGE TITLES All pages on the website use clear, logical page titles
IMAGES WITH TEXT There are no instances of text contained within images	MOBILE APPS All mobile applications, social media content, and email communications follow accessibility best practices	TABLE HEADERS Tables are used only when necessary and include properly coded headers	DOCUMENT ACCESSIBILITY Documents utilize the "Accessibility Assistant" in Word or Acrobat to catch possible issues	FOCUS ORDER A visible focus indicator is present as users tab through interactive elements on the page



When do these requirements take effect?



Populations of 50,000+
April 24, 2026

- 🕒 45 days
- 🕒 1 month, 14 days
- 🕒 6 weeks and 3 days
- 🕒 1080 hours
- 🕒 64,800 minutes
- 🕒 3,888,000 seconds



Populations up to 49,999
April 26, 2027

- 🕒 412 days
- 🕒 1 year, 1 month, 16 days
- 🕒 58 weeks and 6 days
- 🕒 9888 hours
- 🕒 593,280 minutes
- 🕒 35,596,800 seconds





RELAX: The sky isn't falling.



What happened?

- ✓ We put time, money, and effort into solving problems using things like ramps, automatic door openers, curb cuts, disabled parking, disabled restrooms, etc.
- ✓ I am not aware of a single township that went bankrupt because of this.
- ✓ The townships that suffered the most financially were the ones that chose not to comply.



What didn't happen?

- ✗ We didn't bury our heads in the sand and ignore the problem.
- ✗ We didn't resign from our jobs as elected officials.
- ✗ We didn't put up the "for sale" sign in front of the township hall or get out the wrecking ball.
- ✗ We didn't go back in time and crucify the builder for not anticipating what new requirements would be passed in the future.

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No Crystal Ball

Many websites were created before current guidelines. Your Web Developer didn't have a crystal ball to predict future requirements.



Township Control

Townships want control over their Website content. A developer cannot guarantee inaccessible content won't be posted, just as a car dealer can't guarantee you won't speed.



Fiscal Responsibility & Choices

Many boards declined additional accessibility features in the past to be fiscally responsible, feeling they were doing the right thing at the time.



Ultimate Responsibility

Because of these factors, the municipality, not the Web Developer, is ultimately responsible for compliance.

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Are some solutions too good to be true?



The “Too Good to Be True” Reality



Passionate and well-intentioned companies exist (like Shumaker Group), but skepticism is warranted. If a solution seems too good to be true, it probably is.



The ‘Overlay Widget’ Trap



Automated “overlay widgets” often fail the disabled community. Example: accessiBe was fined \$1,000,000 by the FTC for misleading claims about WCAG 2.1 AA compliance.

Evaluating Expertise & Quotes



Low Quotes & “Self-Taught”

Low quotes may indicate a lack of WCAG understanding. “Self-taught” developers often lack crucial UI/UX expertise.



Qualified Professionals

Qualified firms employ staff with UI/UX degrees. Invest in proven expertise, just as you would for legal counsel.



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Should I shut down my website?



or



The Real Question

If you truly care about helping the disabled, then you definitely shouldn't shut down your website.

The Wrong Solution



Hard to get sued without a Website, but is that **REALLY** the right solution?



Shutting it down is a HUGE middle finger to the disabled. They need your services the most.



Do you really want to be THAT board member who proposes shutting down the site to avoid accommodation?



The Website saves time and money by answering questions 24x7x365. Why make life harder when a little effort makes it easier?

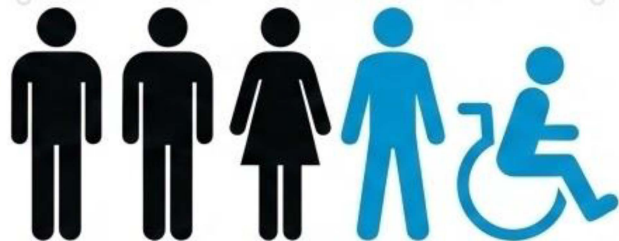


But, nobody in my township is disabled



If you can't tell from the bingo card, I'm a huge fan of Las Vegas! If anyone would like to bet that there isn't anyone who is disabled in their community, go ahead and put your wager in the chat.

If anyone lost that wager, feel free to send checks to Kyle Shumaker, Care Of Shumaker Technology Group.



1 in 4 Americans have some form of disability.



It's estimated that about **1 in 12 men** are colorblind.



Even if you truly don't have a single disabled person in your community, a disabled real estate investor from another state could be discriminated against if they can't view your assessing data, or fill out a permit for their rental property.



Who Does What?

Things You Can Do:

- Work with your web developer to come up with an accessibility plan.
- Advocate for a reasonable budget for improvements.
- Help identify an outdated content that no longer needs to be on the website.
- Learn to produce accessible content going forward.

Things Either Of You Can Do:

- Recreate any critical documents.
- Help test the accessibility of pages and documents.

Things Your Web Developer Can Do:

- Update the website's software platform to support the latest accessibility features.
- Provide a quick accessibility review or full accessibility audit of every page & document.
- Help you determine whether or not future posting will be compliant.
- Provide accessibility training and coaching.

1. Generate a spreadsheet or list of all pages and documents on the site.
2. Determine who in the township is responsible for what content.
3. Work with your Web Developer to determine what content does and does not meet accessibility standards.
4. Determine who will be responsible for fixing inaccessible content.
5. Determine a reasonable timeframe for making the site compliant.
6. Determine a reasonable interval to review ongoing site compliance.

Page / Document	Owner	Status	Plan
Elections	Clerk	Inaccessible ❌	Clerk will provide new forms from State of Michigan.
Assessing	Assessor	Inaccessible ❌	Township staff will remind assessor that scanned documents aren't accessible.



Free accessibility review from STG

Free Basic Website Accessibility Audit Audit from STG

Schedule a 30-60 minute virtual meeting to review your website results and formulate a compliance plan.

stgmunicipal.com/ada





We all win when we learn about accessibility

Learning from Real World Examples



Most people learn accessibility best from real world examples, not slideshows.

If your Website is used as an example, it's an opportunity for everyone to learn and fix, not for judgment.

The Power of 1% Better (MTA Conference)



Keynote speaker Juan taught the power of becoming 1% better every day, leading to 37% better in a year. Over 300 registered!

Share today's learnings with your Board, or watch the recording on the MTA Website.

Practical Steps for Townships



What if... your Clerk uses an accessibility checker for minutes?

Your Treasurer shares financial statements in an accessible format?

Your Assessor sends original PA 660 files instead of scans?



Let's make Michigan Townships THE model for accessible local government Websites.



Thank You for Your Time!



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