**ROUGH EDITED COPY**

**JAN**

**MONTHLY WEBCAST SERIES**

**OCTOBER 8, 2019**

**1:45 P.M. ET**

**CAPTIONING PROVIDED BY:**

**ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION SERVICES, LLC**

**www.CaptionFamily.com**

\*\*\*

This is being provided in a rough-draft format. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

\*\*\*

>> LOU ORSLENE: Good afternoon, everyone, my name is Lou Orslene and I'm one of the associate directors here at the Job Accommodation Network. We welcome you to Job Accommodation Network's Monthly Webcast Series and happy National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

In celebration of NDEAM we wanted to talk about one of the most important issues companies are grappling with as they move towards a more inclusive workplace, that of digital accessibility.

At JAN we have seen information technology professionals increasingly tasked with responding to internal and external requests with digital accessibility for applicants, candidates, employees, and customers who are living with a disability. And we know that digital accessibility for many people may be unchartered territory and particularly those who are I.T. professionals.

And that's why we partnered with a number of Disability:IN companies, accessibility vendors and Deb Dagit to role out a -- roll out a repositories of resources to share best practices and external resources to make what can be a complex process just a bit simpler. This drawer of resources for I.T. professionals can be found at askJAN.org/toolkit.

This trend in the development of the drawer of resources within the JAN toolkit was the genesis for today's webcast entitled: Web accessibility-bridging the gap between I.T. & HR. Featuring a presentation by Kara Zirkle, training and compliance manager for eSSENTIAL Accessibility.

But before I introduce Kara let's start off with a few housekeeping items.

If any of you experience technical difficulties during the webcast please call us at 800-526-7234 for voice and hit button 5.

Or for TTY call 877-781-9403.

Toward the end of the webcast we'll spend some time answering questions that you may have. You can use our question and answer pod located in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen. To use the pod, just put your cursor on the next line, next to the word question, type your question, and then click on the arrow to submit the question to queue. Or not left-hand side of your screen you'll notice a FileShare pod if you have difficulty viewing the slides or would like to download them please click on the button that says save to my computer and finally I want to remind everyone that at the end of the webcast an evaluation form will automatically pop up in your screen in another window we really appreciate your feedback so please stay logged on long enough to fill out the evaluation form. For today's webcast as I said we welcome Kara Zirkle IAAP CPAC, some of the qualifications which we'll talk about later with Kara. Kara has over 18 years experience working in the field of disabilities and education and outreach she's an advocate and educator with regard to providing awareness and guidance on accessibility, assistive technologies and the implementation of accessibility into the business life cycle. It's a great pleasure having Kara here today. Thank you very much and welcome Kara.

>> KARA ZIRKLE: Thank you, Lou and welcome everyone good afternoon so web accessibility bridging that gap between I.T. and HR so really to get started a little bit starting out with some stats to just kind of understand what kind of a gap are we talking about? About 1.3 billion individuals globally have disabilities. If we're talking about that just within the United States, it's the largest minority group of about 60 million individuals and what we know of is about 19% of individuals self-identify. So for all of those HR, think about how many people you know within your business or your company that have self-disclosed of having a disability. Is it anywhere close to 19%?

Now the reality of that is we're all an aging population. Whether we may have a disability now or not, we're going to eventually have you know maybe need those glasses or maybe need that hearing aid.

We also have a Veteran population coming back to the workforce and those individuals might not always self-disclose very quickly. So the reality is is that 19% is actually probably very low. So if you are under 19% look at that and think about how many people may not self-disclose to you and maybe ask the question of what are we doing and what can we do differently to make this a more inclusive environment to help more individuals feel safe and feel comfortable to self-disclose if they need to have some of those accommodations and things like that.

It's important to understand that friends and family represent another 105 million customers. Because good news and bad news alike spreads like WildFire and the same thing is when we're talking about that population of someone with a disability if someone with a disability knows that they can go to a Website and access and purchase something or do everything completely on their own because accessibility has been implemented they are going to go and tell all of their friends and family of how accessible it is. Versus that of something that could be inaccessible, whether it is an application or you know what the most popular people might hear about right now is Dominos ordering a pizza that spreads like wildfire where it's not just that 60 million but includes more of that 105 million of those friends and family.

People with disabilities control about $2 trillion of income but if add that 105 million we're really looking at close to $8 trillion of income overall so when we're talking about that gap we really do have a large population we can work with.

So by going to the next slide we ask the question of what is web accessibility exactly? You know if we are talking HR and trying to bridge that gap between I.T., I.T. might say, hey, you know we're designing, we're developing, we need to make these things accessible. But from HR, HR is thinking, well we have these applications, we're trying to hire individuals and some of these individuals have disabilities and can they fill out the applications independently so web accessibility is really talking about all of these tools and technologies and really any digital properties nonetheless that are designed and developed with people with disabilities in mind to where they can use them equally and independently.

So in some of these cases, accessibility is essential for organizations to really want to create high-quality Websites, applications, products, services, you're really putting yourself out there as a company to make yourself known by your walking the walk and talking the talk. So that talk is learning the lingo.

You know, a lot of times we have a lot of folks starting out in accessibility saying, what is accessibility? And what's some of these acronyms? So you know I like to pose the question of, does anything kind of stick out? Because learning the lingo, we have a lot of different acronyms that we use. So Lou, I'll pose the question now to the team. Anything that you think could come out as a lingo to learn?

>> LOU ORSLENE: Yeah, you know, I do, I think VPAT I think a lot of people that's used often and I'm not sure that people know what that means.

>> KARA ZIRKLE: That's a great one so VPAT stands for Voluntary Product Accessibility Template. And for HR or I.T. alone this is a great gap because it doesn't matter if the I.T. Department is building and creating an application or if maybe they need to purchase a third party application like a chat or a checkout system or maybe it's the HR department purchasing a system, more of a Learning Management System or something to where they are doing their hiring process, any time you're working with a company that has an application, you can always ask them for a VPAT. And it's essentially an Accessibility Checklist that can provide you a little bit of an insight on how accessible that product might be. Because even though you might build accessibility into your Website, if you rely on a third party, then you can't make those changes. So you're asking them the level of their accessibility and that kind of comes into the form of a VPAT.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Kara, another one. I think people -- I hear often of WCAG and then WCAG 2.0 and some companies I know are moving to WCAG 2.0 AA and AAA. What does that all mean?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: So WCAG is really your Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and it's really your international language. So 2.0 has been out since 2008. 2.1 just came out June of last year, so almost a year and a half now.

So a lot of companies are starting to think about that change of 2.0, can they start to look at 2.1. As a best practice though when we're working with individuals we really just go with our starting point as WCAG 2.1 because it's now been out long enough to know that you are aware of the situation and aware of accessibility, this provides you an update to where you're saying you know what, we're trying to hit the mark as high as we can. Let's go with WCAG 2.1 Level AA is the common standard. But at the same time there's a lot of AAA items that can really provide a lot of best practice insights and basic overall experience. And WCAG being the international standard, if you're going to be Federal Government, you might be used to Section 508. If you're in Europe, you might be used to EN 301549 if you're in Canada you may be familiar with AODA but the bottom line is all of these reference the WCAG standard of WCAG 2.0 or 2.1.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great that's very helpful. Another one that I hear of is A11y. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: Sure so any Twitter followers here, anybody who like to tweet a lot of stuff about what's going on with the company, A11y is your hashtag for accessibility. So between A and Y there's 11 letters so it's A11y. So it's #A11y. A11y. So a small piece about accessibility in social media is if you're hashtagging anything and you're going to hashtag say eSSENTIAL Accessibility or screen reader, two different words, always make sure you capitalize the first and second word within your hashtag and that's one of the many ways that you can help better the accessibility of your tweet.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great; great. Thanks very much for that. I appreciate it.

>> KARA ZIRKLE: So that kind of gives you a starting point of learning some of the lingo. But moving on of how does everyone really benefit from accessibility? So we might not think about it but just some questions to think of is have you ever had to use voice recognition or text-to-speech on your phone? We have some of these things. Maybe you have an Alexa or Siri or Google in your home that you're using that voice recognition on.

This was originally designed for individuals with disabilities. Maybe you've had to zoom into a page, whether you're looking at it on your mobile device or your computer another thing we don't often think of is word prediction as we're typing or texting someone on our cell phone have you ever used maybe some of that swipe technology to where you don't have to lift your finger? That's word prediction and that's again something that was designed originally to help mobile disabilities.

Finally have you ever been on your phone and walked from inside to outside and the brightness automatically changes on your phone? These are all things that were originally designed and created to help individuals with disabilities that we now see as universal design because we're using it and benefiting from it every day. So apply some things like that to now the business perspective of your applications and the questions that you're asking and just more of your applications of hiring process and items like that.

Maybe you want to look at some of the additional benefits of accessibility. We allow -- we're allowing more users to access our Website and user services every day and that really maximizes our users and retains our customers.

Advertising advancements of accessibility. If you are starting to build accessibility in and you have a competitor who might not be there yet, you can use that as a marketing advantage. Letting everybody know what you're doing as a company and by doing that you're tapping into other marketing venues to generate more business or create a more competitive advantage. Accessibility built in is really that Universal Design and that usability concept and by doing both of those you can increase productivity for everyone, not just your public but also your internal employees. And by also adding accessibility because it's really the right thing to do, you are building a more employee loyalty, customer loyalty base. And you're also sometimes attracting more customers, as well. Going back to that friends and family of that extra 105 million of how just information spreads.

So there's such a benefit to accessibility. But there's really also a Return on Investment.

So there was a case that was done that actually showed a business case a Return on Investment of 2.4 to 1 when they started to include accessibility. And when they were looking at the market increase, it increased by 8%. But ROI is more than just numbers, as well. Because accessibility and mobile design overlaps so much by about 75 to 80% especially now that we're looking at WCAG 2.1 that specifically calls out some mobile design. But it also overlaps so much with your Search Engine Optimization, your SEO so there was research done by W3C that actually showed that SEO helps search traffic increase by another 7% just by including accessibility. So if that's not enough to get your leadership and higherups on board then let's break that down to have some numbers because you know there's some logical analytical type folks, as well. I'm unfortunately one of those. So I like to see numbers.

So if we would take some business assumptions to say maybe your site gets about 10,000 visits a month and out of those 10,000 visits, 10%, 1,000 people will put something in their shopping cart now that's just putting it in there they could save it they could come back to it but out of that 1,000, 33% actually start the checkout process.

Now as all of this we're also thinking about individuals with disabilities. And out of that 333 that start the checkout process only about 100 of them fully complete and purchase an item.

Now there's about a 70% abandonment rate of out of those 33% of people that were starting the checkout process if they run into an accessibility issue and aren't able to check it out on their own or run into some issues that cause some frustration, 70% of that is an abandonment rate that they will not complete the purchase.

So if your site brings in about $10,000 in revenue which is an average of about $100 per checkout and we know that about 19% of people with -- individuals with disabilities will self-disclose, so out of that 10,000 visits, you have about 1900 people that could potentially have a disability. And if you have that 1900 about 70% of a dropout rate, you can start to see how this can really start to hurt the bottom dollar.

If you can just drop that abandonment rate by even 5% by using this 33% of checkout that started 100 of them will actually complete it with about $100 checkout piece, dropping that down of an abandonment rate from 70% to 65% could actually bring you in almost $20,000 extra a year.

So if the ROI really doesn't help when it talks about the mobile design and the SEO and things like that then using some equations and numbers like that really can help sometimes just to see what the importance is of accessibility. Not just for the customer. But internally as your employees, also.

But when we talk about WCAG, it's really to know it's not enough to be using WCAG by itself. It's really going to be looking at universal design and usability to really provide that overall equal access.

So when we dive into WCAG a little bit, WCAG is broken down into four principles.

It's called the POUR perspective. P is for perceivable as you look at it maybe the application for hiring or developing a Website, is all of the information there perceivable regardless of whether I can see it, regardless of whether I can hear it. Maybe I'm colorblind. There's 1 in 7 men and 1 in 12 women who are colorblind. So maybe that means if you have a logo, does that logo have a description for us to know that it's the JAN, Job Accommodation Network's logo?

Or does it say image blank because if it doesn't have an Alt text it's going to tell someone that it's blank. And if you ever hear oh hey look over there and you can't look just yet, don't you wonder what you're missing? It's that same concept when we're talking about the perceivable things of maybe you're playing a video but you don't have closed captions and someone is deaf, are they able to follow along? How do they know what's being said?

The color contrast is another one for colorblindness. So there's a lot of things that could be done to make sure that your users can still see and hear and learn how to use the content because it's being perceived in that way.

Next one is O for operable.

And operable is really just saying, can I operate it? Can I use it? Can I use it independently? So this is really where you're looking at your clear structure. Throw away that mouse and start tabbing through the Website or the application. Can you get to everything on it? Does it follow suit top to bottom, left to right? If it skips around some, then our taborder is not accurate and that's going to make it very difficult to operate it in the sense that it's supposed to be done.

So for example, if it's a form and you're filling out your name and it skips address and goes straight to the submit button then how do I get back up to the address because it's not going in the logical order of that top to bottom, left to right.

We want to make sure that our links are descriptive so we're not using the click heres or read mores but instead we're actually saying hey, click here for more information about JAN's webinars.

Things like this.

So we kind of want to make sure that it's going to be operable by all types of different disabilities, as well.

The other one is understandable. So understandable is just making sure that everyone can understand it. Are there clear and concise directions? What about some of the templates? Is it consistent? Using plain language, indicating even at the very top of the page is the language set for it to be set as English or French or Spanish, whatever it might be.

And then finally we have robust. And robust is a little bit more of your developer side of things. It's making sure that your sites and your applications are going to work with assistive technologies. And it's really adding some of that metadata and things to make things a little easier to use across the site and across the development.

So if we want to break it down from a universal design usability and WCAG perspective, universal design has that of 7 principles. Usability has that of 5 principles. And WCAG has the 4 that we just covered.

So in this slide here you can start to see a little bit of color as well as some asterisks. Just to be kind of seeing the overlap if we look at the universal design for example there's Principle 3, simple and intuitive that's in green using three asterisks. And you can see that the overlap of usability has learnability. How easy is it for users to accomplish some of those basic tasks? Well that's very similar to that simple and intuitive. Same thing with memorability how easy is it for that person to be able to re-establish where they were at by visiting the site over and over but this also overlaps with the WCAG understandable principle and that's why it's important to know that WCAG is really the accessibility side of things but true basic user experience is including usability and universal design as well.

So that kind of brings us to the cartoon of work smarter not harder.

We're getting ready to come to a fall period and soon enough we'll have -- we'll run into winter and we'll all have an experience like this to where the gentleman is shovelling the stairs and there's a person in the wheelchair saying hey could you please just shovel the ramp so we can all get in he's like no, no, I'll get to the ramp as soon as I get to the stairs but the realistic portion is if we consider universal design, usability and accessibility as the way we perceive and look at things, we can really work smarter and provide everything in one instance rather than having to do two separate instances kind of like what the cartoon is showing here of having to shovel both areas.

So I like to ask the question and here is a picture of what could be a bridge or a fence and I always ask the question consider that effects of perspective. Some people are going to see a bridge. Some people are going to see a fence. The beauty of it is there's no right or wrong answer. We see things differently. And what we really need to do is we need to start to think about how can we see things and perceive them from the perspective of individuals with disabilities?

So the slide here is perspective is everything. And in this cartoon type we have four squares. The top left is someone driving the older car looking at a new car saying, wow, look at that new car. Like that's really cool. That's what I would like to have. In the top right we have someone on a bike seeing that very same old car to say, man, if I only I could afford a car maybe I'm tired of riding this bike but then on the bottom left you have the same person on a bike and someone at a bus stop saying man I just wish I had a bike I am tired of riding this bus but on the bottom right you have an individual in a wheelchair on a balcony who sees the person at the bus stop saying, wow, he can go wherever he wants.

So perspective is everything. And we need to really consider that when we do our design, development. When I.T. and HR are talking about the needs of that information of whether it's going to be the application process. If it's going to be the design of a Website. At the end of the day we need to also understand that as a user experience versus the design, it's not always going to turn out how we thought. And that's okay. As long as we really start thinking about how various different users with disabilities may work with and achieve or try to use our products and our Websites.

So kind of closing out a little bit of that balance of the basic user experience, you have some of that accessibility. You have some of that usability. But really we want to look at it from the content versus the context. And really look at that as an overlap of our users, thinking about all of these things.

So really explaining the how and why we must have a unique balance on each project and what that business goal would look like is really making sure our user needs and behavior and content are achieving that of accessibility, universal design and usability.

So to just break it down a little bit is your roles and responsibilities.

And our roles and responsibilities, everyone will play a role in regard to accessibility. But for HR specifically, you know adding some things in for your job knowledge to make sure you're hiring more folks to help in the I.T. environment. That know about accessibility.

Sometimes it's going to be more of your developers, including and developing with accessibility in mind.

You know directors these are your financial decisions. Managers help with the life cycle process. Procurement are that VPAT and that third party.

Even down to your sales. If you are walking the walk and talking the talk, everyone in the company needs to understand and be able to repeat what you're doing from an accessibility standpoint. And it just trickles down throughout everything regardless of who you are. But when we're looking at that from an accessible workplace, from a technological ecosystem that's where we can break it down to look at it from technology companies, maybe Government organizations, whether you're the employer, maybe education and research. And when we're looking at this, the accessible workplace technology it's divided into six different subcategories. And really it's meant to illustrate a general accessibility workplace that is -- it's not an exhaustive list by all means. But it's just there to show all of the different things that could apply or could be used in some of these entities. And within this the organizations have a lot of technical assistance. They have a lot of different areas that may apply across the board. But it's really advocating for people with disabilities regardless of who you are or what ecosystem you might be working in.

So did you know? The lawsuits are huge. From 2017 there were 814 lawsuits. In 2018 alone, now we're almost closing out 2019 but 2018 alone that had 177% increase. And now we're talking about 2019, we're coming to a close. And Dominos has been the biggest one where that one was literally just announced yesterday in the courts because they tried to fight it for accessibility to not have to make the changes.

And when we look at this, there's so much going on that there's so much power for individuals with disabilities that it's just a better experience to be able to incorporate and design and develop for individuals with disabilities. There's actually a 2019 case that was a very large motor company that was sued because it was against the employer because the online application process was not accessible to apply for a job as part of the accommodation requests and so on and so forth and that was one of the 2019 lawsuits. We have not really got to talk about it much because we haven't come to the close of the year yet.

So some of the main points and some of the most common ones we're looking at when we talk about checking accessibility is that Applicant Tracking System, your learning management, sometimes what's your accommodation process and what's your system look like? Not just your public Websites because of your customers but what does your intranet portal look like more importantly promotions those marketing and communications going back to that 105 million friends and family if you mark something and market it well with accessibility in mind that will get forwarded and that will get shared so these are some of the things to think about overall and we commonly get the question of, what are some questions employers should consider? So asking the question of, is it required for the applicant to apply online or do you have an alternative method because if they are required to do it online and it's not accessible then there's going to be some concern. As an employer wanting to understand okay maybe the application process is accessible but you're using a third party and I want to understand from an employer how serious you're taking accessibility. Well I might go to your Website to see is that Website accessible? Do you have an accessibility statement, is there an effective accommodation process available for some of these online applications so these are some things to think about that it's not just the start to finish application to apply for a job. But we really kind of start to look at the web accessibility of the company and what you're doing for statements and accessibility and things like that as well to see if it's really just a one and done from an application or if you're really doing it from a whole system business perspective.

So communicating accessibility across the board.

Job seekers and new hires, you really want to discuss the commitment of what you're doing for that equal access and the promotion of accessibility and importance of it across everything. If there's existing employees build out on Accessibility Committee, keep things transparent, work on building policies, maybe even using some of these individuals with disabilities to check some of the accessibility of things that you're designing and developing. Then finally communicating that with the general public of letting them know with that accessibility statement, what you're doing for diversity and inclusion. You know the DEI is a great area of a starting point of your Disability Equality Index. Showing what you're doing and how you're doing it to not just promote that internally but also externally, as well but at the same time, communication goes both ways. So listen to your employees. Do I.T. need training around accessibility? What if they need additional resources? Sometimes the remediation to get started because people ask, where do I start? How do I achieve this?

The starting point is anywhere. It's just as long as you're starting. There's no too late in this game. But at the same time, doing some of the remediation sometimes your I.T. support might need help remediating at least get to subpar accessibility to then start incorporating it from there but we also look at that prioritization.

So looking at it from that business life cycle just very lightly talking about how it can fall into all of those different roles and responsibilities. Looking at it from your Google Analytics to see what are some of the biggest workflows what are some of the biggest pages that are having hits to see where you might include accessibility from there.

And there's so much importance based upon that professional development. These are just a few of the different conferences and certificates or certifications that are out there. And the IAAP at the very bottom right was one that you know Lou had mentioned from certification. And we can talk about that as well but IAAP is one of the first accessibility professional organizations that people can join and then have certifications showing proof that they are having knowledge of accessibility from a general pursuit to even more of a specific web.

But the others are all conferences that if your I.T. are needing help, these are great resources to look at and go to and see what you can do. So hiring that accessibility specialist. So look for someone who is familiar with testing various environments. Not just web but also mobile. Making sure that they are familiar with the up-to-date standards. 2.0 -- like I said 2.1 has been out for about a year and a half now depending on where some of your clients might be with Brazil they have just updated their standards within the last couple of weeks in Europe they updated the 301-549 to match WCAG 2.1 depending on where you're at and if you're an international company make sure the groups you're working with are going to be familiar with the standards as to what your need is because your customers are. Making sure they are going to use both automated testing which only covers about 30% of accessibility errors but also manual and functional testing. Manual and functional testing is where they are actually using individuals with disabilities to do the manual testing so you're getting almost like a usability type test but you are looking at some of the main workflows of your sites or of your applications and testing it with assistive technology, as well.

You want someone who can help you prioritize because sometimes if you're just in the start of it you may come back to find so many errors you're like, wow, what do I do? Where do I start? Having someone that can help you prioritize and there's various different ways that can be done. Look for a partner and someone that can really walk you through that life cycle process and somebody that's going to understand your needs and walk with you rather than walk towards you, give you something and walk away but make sure that they are going to work through your life cycle process and truly understand what your needs are. And then finally providing you reports that are in a useful context, checklist, resources, look for an accessibility specialist that can provide a larger environment of accessibility, not just a testing perspective.

So when we talk about accessibility versus accommodations one of the things that we like to show is in this picture on the very far left we have three different individuals all of various heights but they all have the same box that they are standing on trying to look over the fence, which is the barrier to watch a baseball game. And then the second imagine is we have the same three individuals of various heights but now we have kind of changed over the boxes to now where everyone can see over the fence which is the barrier to watch the game but they are not really being treated equally in this then.

Whereas the third image, the fence has actually been taken away. The accommodations have been taken away. And everyone, regardless of their height, is able to watch the same game through the same wired fence because there's no barrier involved anymore. And that's really what we want to think about is our barriers. So we have a lot of assistive technology. And assistive technology can be considered as part of an accommodation. But it's not truly your accessibility.

So when we look at your seven common accessibility barriers, that's where we want to think about images missing Alt text. If you're going to be using tables maybe that color contrast that was mentioned. Headings, making sure you're using headings 1s, 2s and 3s you don't jump from heading 1 to heading 4 just because you like the look and feel of it. Descriptive links, again, is it going to say click here, read more? Or is it actually going to tell you what you're going to read more about? Forms, making sure you have labels. At least every Website has a search field that has a label on it.

And finally, throw away that -- throw away that mouse and just start tabbing the keyboard, can you get to everything? So these are some of the common accessibility barriers. But at the end of the day we want to make sure that we're focusing on those barriers and not the disability.

And barriers can be more than just technological. Barriers can be attitudinal. It could be informational. It could be policy, business. There's a lot of different ways that we can look at from a barrier perspective here so it's good to understand what some of the common barriers are per type of disability.

So the first one we want to look at is a common barrier of the group of anyone who might be blind, low vision or colorblind so there's ten different items here and a lot of these you'll start to see overlap with some of those seven common accessibility barriers that I quickly went through.

But some of these you're going to start to look and overlap with. So when we talk about web accessibility, we often think a lot about blind or low vision. Talking about the Dominos portion that just came up in the news.

So the individual was blind. And he was not able to purchase a pizza independently on his own. And we hear a lot about blind/low vision when we talk about web accessibility. And a lot of that is mostly because the items you see here as barriers, if these are achieved and made accessible they are going to start trickling down and helping multiple other types of different disabilities.

Whereas your population and different groups of different types of disabilities is actually your cognitive group so when we look at these ten items we might see some inconsistent navigation. We might see visual content that has no text alternatives so that's your images missing Alt text. You might have the inability to navigate a page without that of a keyboard or a mouse.

So out of these ten when we look at that of the deaf and hard of hearing, now, that's going to be the only group that's a little separate because it's talking about audio needing a transcription. Video needing closed captioning. If it's a face-to-face environment, because we are talking about corporations and HR, is there interpretation available? Maybe that is going to be sign language. Maybe that's going to be CART services. Which if you're ever at a graduation or a game or something, you might see this large projector screen that has a lot of words coming down on it much like that of closed captioning on a TV but that's a whole screen, that's your CART service so these are the two common barriers that you see for these two types of disabilities.

But if you look at the next one to see mobility related, any of the items that are marked with an asterisk which all three of them are also would be found in the blind, low vision and colorblind. So if we design with accessibility in mind and have that perspective and thinking about it from someone who might be blind, low vision or colorblind and start to incorporate that accessibility, we're automatically incorporating to help multiple types of different disabilities.

And so when we look at the cognitive and the learning, as well, there's a common barrier for the group. But there's also sometimes very specific disability related because cognitive and learning there's a lot of different types, whether it's going to be dyslexia. There's a math type of dyslexia things like that but there's also some overall generic barriers in these instances.

But not just is it the barriers for different disabilities that's going to benefit and trickle down from one group to another but you also have a lot of things like English as a second language or maybe you're a non-traditional individual starting to use technology for the first time as an older environment. When I worked in higher education, we heard a lot of international students say you know what, I actually started to watch videos and turn the closed caption on and that's what helped me learn English before coming to the States.

So you can see where accessibility is beneficial across the board from multiple ways. But it also trickles down for some of these things, as well.

So just kind of checking for accessibility. And leaving you with some homework on your own is you know there's something called TechCheck. And this is -- TechCheck is actually done through a sister partner of JAN. And it's just going to be a quick question of asking you some technology, employers and provide you some best practices on where you are and how you're incorporating accessibility. Another one is called TalentWorks. Buy-IT! is actually done by GSA and a purchasing guide it talks about the starting point of the VPAT the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template and the last two are a couple of accessibility free tools that you can use one is done by WebAIM which is a group that has a lot of great information about accessibility. It's called Wave and it's just an online tool that can check for accessibility of those Websites. So like I said, as a potential employee or as a customer, I might check your site to see if it's accessible to make sure you're really following through with what you're saying you're doing as an accessibility statement and that same thing can be used through Aslint and Aslint it's really more for your developers to use, you can integrate into that life cycle and check for accessibility as you're developing and designing.

So we cover a lot of different topics in a very short amount of time so I want to open this up and make sure we can answer some questions.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great, thanks very much Kara and you're absolutely right we covered a lot of ground in the last 40 minutes.

So the question -- Question No. 1 is, what's the best way to go about getting I.T. on board? When it comes in particular to have them have additional accessibility training.

>> KARA ZIRKLE: So really when it's talking about getting more I.T. on board and looking at the training looking at the goals and objectives, are the teams scattered are there different types because the different conferences we have learning disability there's so many different areas that may be beneficial. It could be hiring someone to come in and do the training internally for them. Or it may be kind of mixing them and having them go to multiple conferences and pulling back information to have a single hub of that.

It can really work differently based upon the groups themselves. But really accessibility training is the key place to get started.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great. Another question just about the challenges, so what are the primary challenges that you're seeing with corporations today?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: One of the largest is really just trying to figure out where to start. You know, is it the buy-in? Getting everyone on board? That topdown approach? Sometimes it's just more of I don't know what I don't know. Which kind of goes back to that training question.

These are some of the challenges that I see or that we have seen in general of some of the different clients that we work with is just finding that best place to start. Making sure it's getting integrated into the full life cycle and really getting that buy-in.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great and then so how do you think companies are doing with this? Finding out how to start and moving through the process. Just to get some idea.

>> KARA ZIRKLE: Every company is different. You know when -- if a company really determines that they are going to make accessibility a priority, it can easily be incorporated. But it's working with the right partner that fits the environment and meets the needs of the company to really truly understand that vision and a company that can flourish and do amazing things in accessibility. It's just more of you know starting somewhere and ensuring that they are working with someone that can help them achieve the goals that they have but also see the promise in them to help them attack areas that they might not also see. You know for example, the marketing standpoint. We think accessibility. But we might not necessarily think how it can help us from a marketing standpoint, as well.

>> LOU ORSLENE: So who do you think it's best to drive that accessibility process? Is it somebody at the VP level? Do you see people at the CIO level? Or who is actually driving this?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: For it to really be driven throughout the corporation, the topdown approach is absolutely the key. Because a lot of times what we see are individuals who are the developer and they have been asking some questions about accessibility. And all of a sudden, oh, hey, you're the new accessibility guy. It's like crap I was asking because I was wanting to learn how to do it, not because I wanted to run it because I don't know enough about it.

(Chuckles).

>> KARA ZIRKLE: That's a common scenario that we actually see which then again goes back to that training piece that you asked originally.

But when we're talking about driving the process, it really does need to be done from a topdown approach but if we look at it from a corporation standpoint, driving accessibility really kind of started out in more of your Government and education due to some of the different laws and regulations. But over the last few years, we have actually started to see much more of an uptick in corporate. And some of that has been due to lawsuits and things and that's really driving accessibility as a priority.

And you know within that instance, if some of those higherup individuals who are wanting to drive the process need a business following to kind of see what that ROI would look like, these are some of the areas that they might be able to go and see you know how it started out with Government and education. Because there was a requirement there. But now corporate, it's not necessarily -- it's more of the morality of they are doing it because it's the right thing to do. Some of them are doing it because they might have gotten dinged from a lawsuit. But this is going to be a great place for those -- that leadership to really fight for accessibility and incorporate it from that basic user experience.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great, thanks, and this is a very specific question that was asked. We have a company that's using -- their systems are based on Python. Do you know anything about the accessibility of Python?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: You know I usually leave that to our technical leads so I don't speak a lot for the code portion.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Sure. Another question, is there any preference to using the push-pull gauge tools when doing accessibility checks? There seems to be so many options at various price points. How do you prioritize?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: So when we're talking about accessibility and automated tools, I mean, looking at the basics, 30% is about all they can check for. W3C is actually working on trying to standardize rule sets for all of these tools to use because right now each company, including our own, have rule sets that we have identified based upon WCAG.

Now, what we interpret as accessibility in WCAG might be slightly different from another company which might be slightly different from a third company.

But then we also have what we consider best practices that even though it might not apply directly to WCAG, it might apply a little bit more to that usability. It's going to still be seen as a best practice for that overarching portion of that universal design, that usability, that WCAG, to really provide a better equal access and that's where you have some best practices so right now any automated tool is still going to find you about 30%. Some free ones will only do a single page. Whereas some at cost will allow larger scans.

Sometimes that costing is based upon number of sites it scans or maybe number of users. There's a lot of different depictions between all of these things and really finding a company that works best for the environment and for the need is really when it comes down to when you're talking about a costing method but at the end of the day 30% is 30%. If you have the resource and want to use a free tool like Aslint and work that into your development life cycle, then you're going to be able to get the same results as what you would be a paid tool it's just you're not getting it through scans of various pages of 100 to 5,000 pages and you're not getting it into a nice format of a Word or Excel output but you're simply getting it within the tool itself so it simply depends on the need of the company.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great, thanks for that. Are you seeing companies starting the accessibility journey externally through public-facing Websites or internally with EHR systems? What's your experience?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: You know it's really a little bit of both. The majority of our clients do start externally. But that's because it's more of looking outward facing of where the priority is.

If it's a company that's selling something, obviously more of their clients are going to be external and that's a higher risk. Whereas some companies, their Websites really aren't selling a lot of information. And it's more for research base to where they might have a higher priority need for internal.

So really you're looking at it from what the company -- who is the company? What is their overall objective and need? And who is their greater audience for that risk for individuals with disabilities? Some companies also start to do a parallel of doing both outward as well as inward and do it at the same time and do parallels.

>> LOU ORSLENE: So we have another question here. It is the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act which became law December 20th aims to reduce taxpayer costs and improve the usability of Federal Websites by promoting electronic signatures, digital forms and self-service experiences. Do you know is there anything on the horizon for states or private sector businesses related to their Websites? Do you have any familiarity there?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: To just follow trends of everything else prior to that, I'm going to say yes. Because if you look at how Section 508 for the Federal Government started back in 2001, by 2005 to 2007 you started to see states picking up and saying hey we need to have a state law very similar. I can use Virginia as a sample because I worked there in Virginia for a short time. And state of Virginia started to adopt similar rules and regulations of that of Section 508 and referenced WCAG. And by doing that as a state requirement, that's where then some of your colleges and universities started to hire web accessibility specialists to then start to meet those new requirements of the state.

And now if you look today, all 50 states have some guideline, policy or principle around accessibility that references WCAG. And so to follow suit and to follow trends, it's just a matter of time before something else takes off like that.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great, thanks very much for that.

We have a viewer that wants to know, are you finding that many private sector companies are having an accessibility plan or are they pretty much just doing this piecemeal?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: We see a little bit of both. You know so take some of your Canadian companies for example so AODA as part of AODA they require a plan.

So that's part of what some of the companies have is they do have a plan of action. Other companies come and they have a plan or they think they have a plan and by the time they really learn what accessibility means and what it means to be incorporated from a full perspective of HR procurement, documents, videos, it kind of goes back and changes that plan because they thought of it as a single area of entity for web accessibility.

But at the same time if they don't have one, then by the time they are working with a partner to include accessibility, they walk away with a plan of action because without one it's just the Wild Wild West there's so much that can be done. You can have -- accessibility falls into so many different roles and responsibilities that if you don't tackle each area and have somewhat of a plan of action, just every day comes up with a new thing to say now what, now we have this or I didn't think of that before and that's really where your policy starts to drive things because your plan almost becomes your policy.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Great thank you for that so we talked a little bit about credentialing and oftentimes WIOA as a best practice says companies embed somebody certified through IAAP for instance embed them into their I.T. team so there's at least one specialist there that can provide some guidance but if I'm looking for someone to hire as many companies are now looking to embed someone with that -- within their I.T. team, what am I really looking for in terms of credentialing. Is there a four-year degree? Or is it purely certifications at this point? How am I finding -- how am I going to find someone?

>> KARA ZIRKLE: So looking at HR and having that preferred of knowledge around accessibility, it's very gray at this point. It is ideal to have certification through IAAP you have two different types you have the accessibility core competencies which is your CPAC and you have your other one which is your WAS which is your web accessibility specialist. Some individuals have both but it is good to -- if you at least start out asking or having a preferred method of having knowledge of accessibility, maybe have a probationary time of within 6 to 12 months an individual needs to achieve one of those two certifications. I've seen that done before, as well.

Now when we're talking about certifications there's not a lot of entities that have certificate or degree programs but there's far more now than what there were years ago. The TEACH Act program is one that's actually done a lot more about trying to -- they are a group that collaborates with academia to include accessibility into the core of classes so even if I am a web designer, by trade and by class I'm now starting to look at pieces of bits of accessibility into my classes even though it may not be a full accessibility program.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Got it. Thanks very much.

So as we wrap up today, can I put you on the spot and just ask you, so at the moment, in terms of like the most accessible Applicant Tracking System or Learning Management System or virtual meeting software, who are really the leaders?

(Chuckles).

>> LOU ORSLENE: And I know this is dangerous territory.

(Chuckles).

>> KARA ZIRKLE: You know we don't like to name names.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Right.

>> KARA ZIRKLE: But anyone working with third party I kind of go back to that VPAT. That Voluntary Product Accessibility Template.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Okay.

>> KARA ZIRKLE: Regardless of who you use and regardless of when that contract renews or if you're looking to purchase something new, go back and ask the question for their VPAT. It should have far more support on that checklist than does not support. And not only that but these VPATs should be filled out and completed by a third party accessibility company. They shouldn't be done internally. Because there's bias. Whether we want to think about it or not. As a developer, I want to make sure the product I just developed is going to be accessible so yeah I think these support it but we also want to make sure when you're looking at the VPAT you have a lot of remarks and explanations explains that supports or does not support.

When we're looking at that, as well, virtual meeting systems are huge. When we started out five years ago, there wasn't a lot out there. I know from a Learning Management System platform you now have Blackboard. You have Canvas. You have Desire2Learn all of these are companies that are starting to incorporate and build more accessibility in.

When we're talking about virtual meeting software, Zoom has done a lot for accessibility. But you know Adobe has done a little bit more to build theirs in.

There's different programs out there. Some offer more than others. There's just no one good way of calling someone out for that whether it's an LMS, an ATS or whatever that might be but really just looking at that from that VPAT asking some procurement questions. And really the vendors that offer mobile accessibility, is there a mobile app to this or is there responsive design of can you look at it from a web base to a mobile version of a web atmosphere. Not maybe the native app but maybe more of a browser. Because the vendors that use mobile are more adaptable to change and technology and are more forward thinking in that aspect because mobile accessibility can overlap some to mobile design guidelines. That might be another way to think about how companies are willing to be able to move into a prospective future of incorporating accessible when you do ask that question, whether they see it as a priority now. Or whether you may be the first company or the tenth company to ask them about accessibility, they may be more apt to start making the change.

>> LOU ORSLENE: Excellent, thanks so much. I love us leaving on that note. Thanks again, Kara, for your time, your effort, your expertise in this presentation. We really appreciate that. I would also encourage everyone out there, too, to visit askJAN.org/toolkit and go to our new drawer specifically for I.T. professionals. There's a considerable amount of information there. If you're looking to build in WCAG or 508 language into your solicitations or your RFPs, there's information there, there's a new tool from the Disability:IN that's accessible from there. There's conversations with people like Kevin Grogg from EY who is playing the liaison role between HR and the I.T. team so there's all sorts of information in this area. We have tried to capture as much as possible in that I.T. drawer for -- or the drawer for I.T. professionals.

So today that's really all the time we have. Thanks very much for attending and finally I just want to remind you that at the end of this webcast an evaluation form will automatically pop up on your screen in another window. Really appreciate your feedback so please stay logged on and fill out the evaluation form.

Happy NDEAM everyone and this concludes today's webcast thank you, Kara.

>> KARA ZIRKLE: Thanks, everyone.

\*\*\*

This is being provided in a rough-draft format. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

\*\*\*