

The Web Accessibility in Higher Education Project

Some lessons learned from coordinating
a statewide digital accessibility initiative

WAHEP

- Statewide effort
- Focus on web and digital accessibility in higher education
- Two broad focus areas
 - Institution level
 - Nuts and bolts

WAHEP Partners

- Oklahoma ABLÉ Tech, WebAIM, National Center on Disability and Access to Education (NCDÁE), Southwest ADA Center, OK Department of Rehabilitation Services.



Components

- 26 institutional teams
- Two day, on-site training in Fall, 2012
- Ongoing webinar series
 - Policy development
 - Project teams
 - Accessible documents
 - Common barriers in higher education sites
 - Evaluating web sites for accessibility

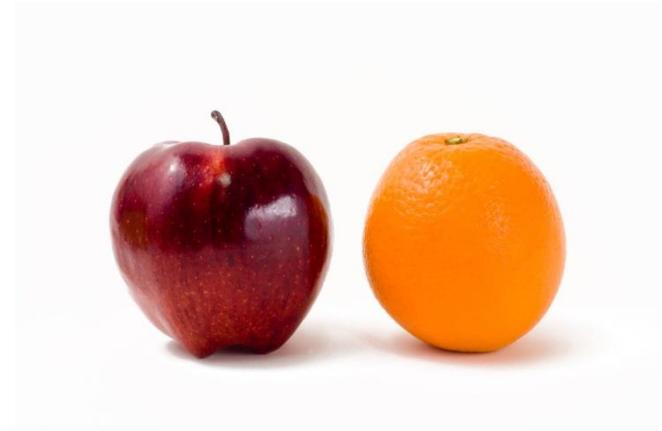
Additional Support

- Remote workshops, September, 2013
- Project web site at http://www.ok.gov/abletech/IT_Accessibility/WAHEP/
- Weekly Web Accessibility Tips
- ABLE Tech
- WebAIM
- NCDAE

Ties that Bind

- Memoranda of Understanding
 - Policy
 - Primary web site accessibility
- Common across teams
- Supported by State Regents
- Catalyst for action

- Institutions' experiences vary
- Patterns do emerge
- Adding to this knowledge base throughout the academic year



Comparing Three Institutions

Institution A

- Larger institution
- Led with accessibility policy
- Small policy committee that remained small
 - Policy scope broadened
- Policy published in less than one year
- Presence of strong advocates
- Committee has since grown

Pros

- Policy group was agile
- Policy received support from leadership
- Policy adopted quickly
- Committee involved student, faculty with disabilities

Cons

- Small committee, narrow focus
 - Magnifies turnover
 - Limits involvement
- Resources have not followed policy

Institution A Pro and Con

Institution B

- Larger institution
- Policy group began small, but grew organically
- Policy and implementation often discussed in tandem
- Moving toward policy, implementation plan and resource plan

Pros

- Broad policy
- Broad initiative
- Broad involvement
- Recognition that investment is required
 - Willingness to ask

Cons

- Slower process
- Larger committee
- No one with a disability is part of the conversation

Institution B Pro and Con

Institution C

- Small-medium sized institution
- Work digital accessibility into some staff training and resources
- No formal policy in place
 - Draft has floated around for a while

Pros

- Taking action quickly
- Using existing structures on campus
 - Build in, don't bolt on

Cons

- Can get the cart before the horse
- Not campus wide in reach
- Limited or narrow administrative support

Institution C Pro and Con

Recurring Themes

- Needs
 - Subject matter expertise
 - Answer to “why are we doing this?”
 - Broad administrative support
 - A representative, but appropriately sized, team
 - An understanding of how stuff works

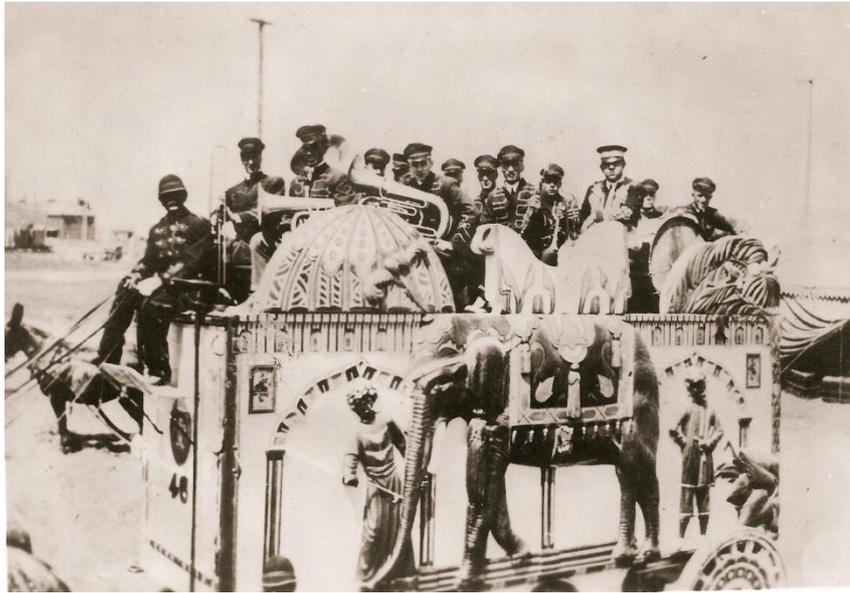
- Find someone with
 - Motivation
 - Knowledge
- Give someone
 - Time
 - Training
 - Resources
 - Support from leadership



Find or Make a Unicorn

Institutional Motivation

- Sure, it's the right thing to do. But why?
 - Direct benefits to people with disabilities
 - Recruit students, faculty, staff with disabilities
 - Ensure better outcomes for education and employment
 - Benefit to broad audience
 - Content clarity with focus on the message getting through
 - Lowering the barriers for everyone
 - Multimodal learning and captioning
 - Make life easier for content authors
 - Help risk management to sleep better



- The right advocate
- The right message
- The right audience

Getting the Institution on the Bandwagon

Team Building

- Team composition
 - Administration
 - Technical
 - Content
 - Legal
 - Purchasing
 - PWD
- Stakeholders vs. Task Force

- Team focus areas
 - Policy
 - Implementation
 - Timeline, approach, standards
- Use the team



Once Assembled...



- Apply accessibility to existing processes and functions
 - Understand where the good fit is
 - Understand how to fit it in
 - Tailor information, training and resources for the audience
- Create efficiency and redundancy

How Stuff Works

Where to Find the Right Fit

- Procurement
- Design templates and code libraries
- Style guides and related training
- LMS, CMS training
- HR, other technical training
- Hiring

In the WAHEP Testing Lab

- Help apply lessons to individual institutions
- More remote workshops and support
- More on-site presence
- Other interactive media
- Putting some weight behind the effort

Thanks Very Much!

Please evaluate this session!

More questions? Contact us!

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