

The Case for Accessibility

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Accessibility Starts with Awareness

- RetrievalWare and 508 Compliance
 - Sophisticated information retrieval system used by federal agencies
 - 508 compliance viewed by federal & corporate management as burden and mere contractual “check box”
- Only 30% of federal agencies make their videos accessible
- Awareness must emerge from leaders as well as grass roots

Business Case Stakeholders

- Persons with disabilities are not the only accessibility stakeholders
- Agency management and staff
- Government contractors
- Non-governmental organizations
- Private citizens and businesses
- Each category plays a role in accessibility regardless of individual disability status

Accessibility Unlocks Opportunity

“We've seen what can be accomplished when we use 50 per cent of our human capacity. If you visualize what 100 per cent can do, you'll join me as an unbridled optimist about America's future.”

Warren E. Buffet
Chairman and CEO
Berkshire Hathaway

Multi-Faceted Business Case

- Economic case - operational efficiency
- Legal case - mandates and liabilities
- Technological case - collateral benefits
- Social case- unlocking opportunity
- All cases are interconnected and together drive a comprehensive business case for accessibility

Economic Case

- Agency efficiency independent of accessibility concerns
- Changing stakeholder demographics
- Sample calculation
 - 240,000 Georgians with visual disabilities
 - 20% access online services 1 hour per year
 - Tax payer savings of \$4.7 over 5 years
 - Uncaptured opportunity costs: person w/disability
- Related economic drivers: legal and technological issues

Legal Case

- State mandates
(e.g. Georgia 665-2-3-.04, Articles for Special Purposes)
- Federal mandates (e.g. 28 CFR PART 35 and 75 FR 43460)
- Tort-related mandates (e.g. Penn State, Case Western Reserve, Pace University, and Reed College)
- Indirect driver for economic case

Technological Case

- Extensibility and scalability
- Bandwidth use
- Server loads
- Maintenance costs
- Indirect driver for economic case

Social Case

- It's not simply the "right thing to do"
- Demographic destiny: growing awareness of persons with disabilities
- Independence and connectedness for all
 - Technology holds special promise for persons with disabilities
 - The virtual social web is becoming as important as physical social networks
- Benefits beyond persons with disabilities

Conclusion

- Awareness
- Support
 - Management
 - Staff
 - Designers
 - Developers
- Economic case: operational efficiency
- Legal case: mandates and liabilities
- Technological case: collateral benefits
- Social case: unlocking opportunity