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www.consultspringboard.com

Nadine's Message

Dear friends:

I want to wish all of you a very happy New Year and for only wonderful things to happen for you and your family.

Thanks to each and every one of you; wonderful things happened for Springboard in 2012. Your commitment to mainstreaming disability in the global workforce, workplace and marketplace has allowed us to double in size, providing you with more services and support in more countries than ever before.

Why is this important? Because as you know all too well, the legislative landscape in support of individuals with disabilities is ever changing and it's quite varied from country to country; a huge challenge for so many of you who have global responsibilities.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration with you and your teams on this most important 2013 journey.

Nadine

2013 Disability Matters

United States:
April 15-17, 2013
Hosted by:
Florida Blue
Jacksonville, FL

International
Europe:
Paris, France
June 12 -13, 2013

&
Asia-Pacific:
Bangalore, India
September 18-19, 2013

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The ADA Inquirer:

by Shelley A. Kaplan, Manager, ADA Services, Springboard Consulting, LLC

Oversight Can Lead to Costly Legal Problems

Employers commonly provide staff training on their workplace policies and procedures especially those concerning anti-harassment. Training on workplace policies about equal employment opportunities for applicants and workers with disabilities is less common and often not effective. No doubt, every employee needs a general overview of the laws governing office operations. Training supervisors and managers, about reasonable accommodation issues, is equally important as an integral part of your company's training program. Reviewing and modifying when necessary, company policies and procedures aimed at removing workplace barriers is equally important in order to comply with disability anti-discrimination laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Furthermore, awareness, understanding and consistent follow-through of these policies and procedures by all personnel can determine a company's potential risk for disability discrimination complaints.

Employees may go to human resources or those responsible for processing requests, such as their supervisor or manager, when an "accommodation" is requested. If these personnel don't know how to recognize and respond to reasonable accommodation requests, they could be denying such requests without even realizing they are putting the company at risk for discrimination allegations based on disability. This could result in increased liability for the employer under the ADA.

Consider the following situation, discussed with an employer on Springboard's ADA Hotline:

Several times a day for the past month, our receptionist has missed numerous phone calls and has not been at her desk to greet clients. The supervisor overheard the receptionist tell a co-worker that she feels tired much of the time, is always thirsty, and constantly has to go to the bathroom. The supervisor suspects that the employee may have a disability, such as diabetes. What should the supervisor do?

How the supervisor responds in this situation may help you reduce your liability exposure under the ADA and state disability laws. Does your training program provide practical information that provides proper ways for supervisors to handle the following concerns?

- May the supervisor ask the receptionist whether she has diabetes? Are there any instances when an employer may ask an employee about diabetes or other disabilities?
- May the supervisor ask the secretary why her performance has declined?

The ADA Inquirer - continued

- May the supervisor send her for a medical exam because s/he has reason to believe that diabetes may be affecting the receptionist's ability to perform one of her essential duties (sitting at the front desk for long periods of time)?
- Can the supervisor require the employee to provide a doctor's note or other explanation to justify her change in performance on the job?

Accordingly, it's very important to train all supervisors and managers on ADA accommodations, including:

- How to recognize and respond to an "accommodation" request, including any request by an applicant or employee for a change in policy or procedure or other assistance related to his or her employment due to a medical condition. Such requests may be communicated in plain English and unintentionally overlooked as a request for an accommodation.
- What can and cannot be said to an applicant or employee requesting an accommodation, including not telling the employee the accommodation can't be provided before engaging in the "interactive process" to fully evaluate the accommodation request.
- How to ensure the confidentiality of all medical and other information received from an employee related to an accommodation request.
- What to do to ensure an employee who is provided an accommodation is not mistreated by coworkers due to the accommodation.

Supervisors and managers in your company may be violating employee rights under the ADA and not even know it. These oversights can lead to costly legal problems...problems that can be avoided or minimized with the proper training.

Helping your supervisors and managers understand how the Americans with Disabilities Act and other disability laws work may keep you out of court trying to explain why you didn't provide reasonable accommodation for a valued, hard-working employee with a disability who needed some help.

If you're interested in learning more, Springboard offers a variety of resources that address the above situation, such as onsite customized training and Audio Learning Experiences. Contact us to discuss what works best for you.

Technical Wire:

Peter McNally, Senior Usability Consultant, Bentley University - Design & Usability Center

Mobile Accessibility Summary

Mobile devices are next big thing in technology. Most organizations if they haven't already are moving to ensure they have their mobile experiences covered either on smartphones, tablets or both. Many people in the disability community, such as the blind and visually impaired have become big fans of mobile technology like the iPhone [1]. Therefore, from now on it is not good enough to just consider Web browser accessibility; we must now think about what does accessibility mean when we talk about mobile.

What are the unique issues for mobile?

The obvious main difference with Mobile experience is the screen size and input. Web pages that were designed to fit on a PC may be very hard to view and use on a smartphone or tablet. Furthermore, using fingers to tap and scroll presents different interactions and challenges than using a mouse. Now add in the challenges that a user with a disability has and you can see the potential issues that may arise.

Are there different standards that apply to mobile?

In surveying the latest trends in mobile accessibility I was surprised, that unlike for web pages, there is no clear set of mobile accessibility standards. This may be because the mobile technology field is relatively young compared to the Internet. Furthermore, there is a split into different technology camps such as IOS for iPhone/iPad and Android that use different operating systems and therefore have different techniques to developing for accessibility. With web accessibility standards we are mostly focused on one technology, i.e., HTML.

It seems the consensus out there is to follow current Web standards such as WCAG 2.0 and other Web-based standards as a baseline. According to Jonathan Avila [6] from SSB BART group, the same accessibility standards apply to mobile; such as WCAG 2.0 and Section 508 (in the US). In addition, Jonathan points to the recent US legislation, CVAA (Twenty first century Communication and Video Accessibility Act). The CVAA mandates that mobile web browsers are accessible to the Blind. Furthermore, the CVAA calls for media players to support captioning for video and audio descriptions.

The following are some guidelines or best practices for mobile (both mobile web sites and apps). This is a high-level overview. The references give more details and provide platform specific instructions for using some accessibility features. Also, the references provide some best practice for usability. I did not include these since you should be doing this anyway!

Guest Writers - Continued:

Peter McNally, Senior Usability Consultant, Bentley University - Design & Usability Center

General

- **Give feedback to the user**

When the user makes an entry, this should be confirmed both with a sound and with a short vibration if the device supports this. However, it should also be possible to switch off the feedback. Please note that input need not necessarily be text via a keyboard. It may be a voice command, a photo that has been taken, a gesture or a movement with the mobile. Feedback should be given in most cases but there may be exceptions as too much feedback would be a nuisance (for example, an application that functions as a pedometer must not give feedback for every step registered). [2]

- **In forms use the correct virtual keyboard to match the user's input [2, 3, 4]**

- **Line lengths must be adapted to the screen width but never exceed 70 characters per row, including spaces.**

Where possible, it should not be necessary to scroll sideways to read a row of content. At the same time, the line length must not be so short that individual words must be divided over several lines unless there is a natural break. The objective should be line lengths of 55-60 characters, including spaces, per line. [2]

Zoom

- **Ensure Zoom can be enabled and all text readable. [3]**

Touch

- **Ensure all content and functionality is available by touch [4]**

Ensure all buttons/icons are big enough and far enough apart for good "tapability". Recommendations vary by device and manufacturer, but it seems a good rule of thumb is 10mm x 10mm with 2mm between buttons/icons. [5]

- **Make it possible to control the interface with just one finger**

There may be situations in which it is not possible. However, where feasible, it must be possible to control all functionality with just one finger. It may be necessary for buttons to be hidden and to appear when you touch a certain area on the screen or press another button. [2]

- **Do not insert functions that can only be managed via gestures. Always add a (redundant) button/link [2]**

Guest Writers - Continued:

Peter McNally, Senior Usability Consultant, Bentley University - Design & Usability Center

Voice Output

- **Label graphic elements, icons and buttons with their reason or function**

On websites, significant images must have a text alternative. In the same way, images and buttons in applications must have a description. Exactly how this is done varies between the different operating systems. [2, 7]

- **Each form object must have either a caption or a description**

Form objects, for example text fields, radio buttons and check boxes, must, where feasible, have a visible caption that is linked to the form field in a correct manner. [2]

- **Just like with alt text for images on web page, all images should be labeled appropriately to support voice output [3]**

- **All decorative objects should be ignored [8]**

Conclusion

As can be seen with iPhone usage with the blind and visually impaired, Mobile technology has much promise for people with disabilities. However as with Web accessibility, the realization of accessible mobile experiences depends on product teams doing their part during site and app design and development. I hope this overview got you thinking about some things your organization can do when creating your next mobile web site or app. As mobile accessibility standards become clearer in 2013, I will keep you informed in “The Wave”.

References

Mobile Accessibility

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iPhone and iPad

- [7] Leonie Watson, (8/9/2012), Make your iOS app accessible with VoiceOver, <http://www.netmagazine.com/features/make-your-ios-app-accessible-voiceover>

Android

- [8] Henny Swan, (11/20/2012), Making Android apps voice output accessible, <http://www.netmagazine.com/tutorials/making-android-apps-voice-output-accessible>

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The Travel Spot:

Scott Rains—Rolling Rains Report

Glide-Path: Improving Travel with Reliable Airline Assistance Requests

By [Scott Rains](#) on January 10, 2013 3:13 PM



Glide-Path is a free-to-the-passenger web-based system that enables the passenger to enter more information about their specific needs, which can be accessed by airlines, airports and assistance providers to improve the quality of the service they deliver.

Passengers requesting assistance often experience frustration due to the actual process for making requests,

- separate requests for each journey/airline
- different information required on different forms
- details not passed to the airport staff
- sometimes it's a telephone call, sometimes a fax, sometimes online forms

And finally, just when think you've told the airline everything possible, you get to the airport and they have no idea of exactly what assistance you need.

With **Glide-Path** it's 3 simple steps:

1. You tell us just once about you and your assistance needs
2. Tell us about your journeys (this will be automatic from your booking in later versions)
3. You sit back while we ensure your details and needs are communicated to both the airline and the assistance team at the airport.

Occasionally, if medical clearance is needed, we will ask for you to supply additional information from you doctor.

Glide-Path offers facilities to register details of Assistance Dogs, people who will escort you on your journeys and the give you space to register needs not normally covered by Airline forms.

We can't guarantee that the airline and airport can meet all your needs, but we can guarantee that they have had the opportunity to know about them.

"We didn't know you were coming" won't cut it anymore.

Guest Writers - Continued:

Scott Rains—Rolling Rains Report

At **Glide-Path** we have many years of experience in aviation and have been looking at the problems facing elderly and disabled air travelers, particularly addressing the problems miscommunication causes. For airlines, airport and service providers this improved communication and access to detailed information, will facilitate a more effective and efficient service.

This service will go live in early 2013. In advance of this launch our test site <http://www.glide-path-test.co.uk/> can be accessed to create test accounts, view our easy to use input screens and enter data. We would appreciate any feedback info@glide-path.co.uk

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Guest Writers - Kathi Stearman and Kelly Stearman:

Employment Compliance Department, Brown-Forman

“A Day In The Life”

Brown-Forman is working very hard to increase its organizational knowledge in the disability arena. As an organization we feel we do a good job spotlighting the various areas of diversity but the topic of disability often goes without mention. To begin highlighting disability issues, we invited Nadine to come to our Celebration of Diversity week in October of 2012 and introduce this very important topic to our workforce. To maintain momentum on the disability topic, we felt that doing the “Day in the Life” activity would be a great extension of our Celebration of Diversity, and on Tuesday, December 4th, 2012 Brown-Forman embarked on its first ever “Day in the Life” exercise at our corporate campus in Louisville, Kentucky. This date was not chosen arbitrarily, as it was carefully planned to coincide with the “International Day of Persons with Disability”, which was nationally celebrated just the day before on December 3, 2012.



As I mentioned, this was our first experience with planning such an event and we knew we should try to keep it simple for our first try. Nadine was very helpful in walking us through how the day should be organized, what disabilities could be easily simulated and how to simulate them, and assisted us in developing pre-simulation and post-simulation questions to ask our participants.

Several weeks beforehand we put a call out to our employees asking for volunteers to participate in the day, asking them if they had ever wondered what it would be

like trying to do their job if they had problems seeing, hearing, or walking. Could they maneuver a wheelchair around their workspace or around our vast campus? Well, we were giving them a chance to find out! We had 8 participants who volunteered: a very manageable number for our first go at this. We learned that some of the participants have friends or family members struggling with some of the disabilities that were being simulated and volunteered for this reason. One employee who volunteered for the activity is a mother whose

Guest Writers - Continued

Kathi Stearman and Kelly Stearman, Employment Compliance Department, Brown-Foreman

son has a progressive nerve disease. The disease affects his motor skills and he is progressively approaching his need to use a wheelchair. Another employee shared with us that he is diabetic and the one thing he fears the most is eventually going blind as a result of his diabetes. For these individuals, the day was personal. On the other hand, some volunteered for organizational reasons. One individual from IT said he wanted to participate to gain insights on accommodations from an IT innovation stand point. Another individual said he was interested in participating because he's a big guy that people notice and people know who he is so he felt he was a good person to help create awareness for the exercise!

For this half-day exercise, we had two employees that simulated hearing loss, 2 simulated vision loss, 2 simulated loss of limb and 2 were using a wheelchair for the day. Aside from just going about their normal workday, we had a short list of items we wanted each employee to experience, including taking a tour of our campus, using the restroom, and eating a meal in our café. These would be tests for us an organization and areas in which we could gain some valuable insight. For the rest of our workforce that was not participating in the day, we encouraged them that if they saw one of their colleagues engaging in "A Day in the Life" program (and they would know this because they'd be the ones in the green t-shirts), to feel free to ask them how it was going!

We began the day in our conference center, which is located on the far side of our campus, and assembled everyone into their disability role. We then proceeded on a tour of our campus, which was surely the most challenging tour ever given by our campus tour guide. The participants were then instructed to go about their normal workday, as best they could, many making notes of issues and challenges they faced. We then met for lunch as a group in our corporate café, had lunch, participated in a group discussion and concluded with post-simulation, video-taped interviews of each individual participant.

The Disability ERG Professional Development Leadership Summit - U.S. 2013



DATE & LOCATION:

Monday, April 15th, 2013
8:30 AM-4:30 PM EST

SPONSORED BY:



CSX Headquarters
500 Water Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

PRICING*:

- **\$475 per person:** General Admission (regardless of registration, in order to gain entry to the event, you must show proof of being a corporate disability ERG leader at the registration desk on the day of the event.)
- **\$395 per person:** Disability ERG Leadership Networking Forum Subscribers

**Includes light breakfast and lunch*

RSVP:

Purchase a ticket and register no later than Friday, March 5, 2013 or until capacity is reached - [CLICK HERE >>](#)

Should you have any questions, please contact Jill Frankel at jill@consultspringboard.com or via telephone: 1-973-813-7260 x. 106.

REMINDER:

The 2013 U.S. Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference will be taking place the following two days, Tuesday and Wednesday, April, 16 & 19. If you are interested in attending please visit - <http://www.consultspringboard.com/2011/about-disability-matters-united-states/> or contact Jill Frankel at jill@consultspringboard.com or via telephone: 1-973-813-7260 x. 106 for more information.

HOTELS:

Sawgrass Marriott – this is the host hotel for the Disability Matters event. To view hotel's website, visit - <http://www.sawgrassmarriott.com/>



Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference:



DISABILITY MATTERS U.S.

2013

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Jacksonville, Florida

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Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference:

DISABILITY MATTERS EUROPE 2013

June 12 - 13, 2013

Paris, France

Host: 
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Association Française des Managers de la Diversité

Gold Sponsor:



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DISABILITY MATTERS ASIA-PACIFIC 2013

September 18 - 19, 2013

Bangalore, India

Host: 
CISCO.

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Come See Springboard!

Springboard Consulting will be presenting at the following conferences:



Abilities in Mind is pleased to present our first annual conference:

“Embracing Ability: Redefining a Diverse Workforce”
March 12th & 13th, 2013
Empire Landmark Hotel, Vancouver BC



GLOBAL ORGANIZATION FOR LEADERSHIP AND DIVERSITY

Friday, March 22, 2013

5th GOLD Symposium

"Reflect, Renew and Reinvent, Driving Innovation Through Inclusion"

InterContinental Hotel
Century City, Los Angeles, CA

A Note from the Springboard Team:

We apologize for the delay your receiving this January 2013 newsletter.

Springboard had their Annual Company Meeting in January and has a few new team members so we've been quite busy/got a little behind schedule.

As always, we hope everyone has enjoyed this edition of "[The WAVE](#)".

As always, tell everyone you know to visit our website and sign-up for the newsletter - <http://www.consultspringboard.com/newsletter/> .

Again, we thank you for your support and for subscribing to ...

"The WAVE"

Until Next Time...



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