



Digital Accessibility MythConceptions

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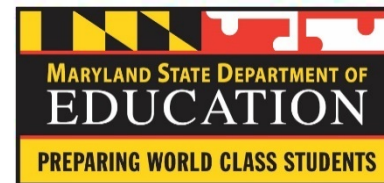
What is “Digital” Accessibility?

“Accessible” means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to:

- **acquire the same information,**
- **engage in the same interactions, and**
- **enjoy the same services**

as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with **substantially equivalent ease of use.**

~ **US Department of Justice**



US Department of Justice, con't

“The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information **as fully, equally and independently** as a person without a disability.”



MYTH #1

“Accessibility
doesn’t apply to
my agency.”



REALITY #1

- Got customers?
- Got employees?
- Got ADA?

Accessibility applies
to you.



MYTH #2

“We don’t need to be accessible. People with disabilities don’t use our site/product/services.”



REALITY #2

They would if they could. People with disabilities are:

- Employees
- Business Owners
- Homeowners
- Parents
- Commuters
- Tourists

who also happen to have a disability.



MYTH #3

“The Vendor says it’s 508 compliant. That means it’s accessible.”



REALITY #3

- Lesson 1: Never trust the vendor.
- Lesson 2: “Section 508 compliant” doesn’t mean it can actually be used by a person with a disability.



“508 compliance” ≠ Accessibility

Usability = Accessibility



MYTH #4

“If it’s 508 compliant, we can’t get sued.”



REALITY #4

“508 compliance” ≠ Accessibility

Usability = Accessibility

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Title I — Employment
- Title II — State & Local Governments
- Title III — Public Accommodations & Commercial Facilities



MYTH #5

“Accessibility only pertains to blind people.”

a.k.a. “If it works with a screen reader, we’re golden.”



REALITY #5

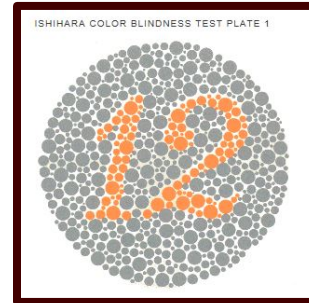
Blame: “Maryland Information Technology Nonvisual Access (MD IT NVA) Regulatory Standards”
(COMAR 14.33.02.01-.12)

Incorporates Section 508 by reference.

ALL of Section 508



REALITY #5



MYTH #6

“Accessibility only pertains
to web pages.”

a.k.a. “It’s all about the HTML.”



REALITY #6

All Web and non-Web content and software (with a few specific exceptions), including:

- Public-facing web pages and all attachments
- Intranets
- Business documents shared digitally (word processing, spreadsheets, slides, booklets, reports, correspondence)



REALITY #6

All Web and non-Web content and software (with a few specific exceptions), including:

- PDFs
- Authoring tools
- Forms, questionnaires & surveys
- Email attachments



MYTH #7

“A text-only or alternate site just for people with disabilities is an option.”



REALITY #7



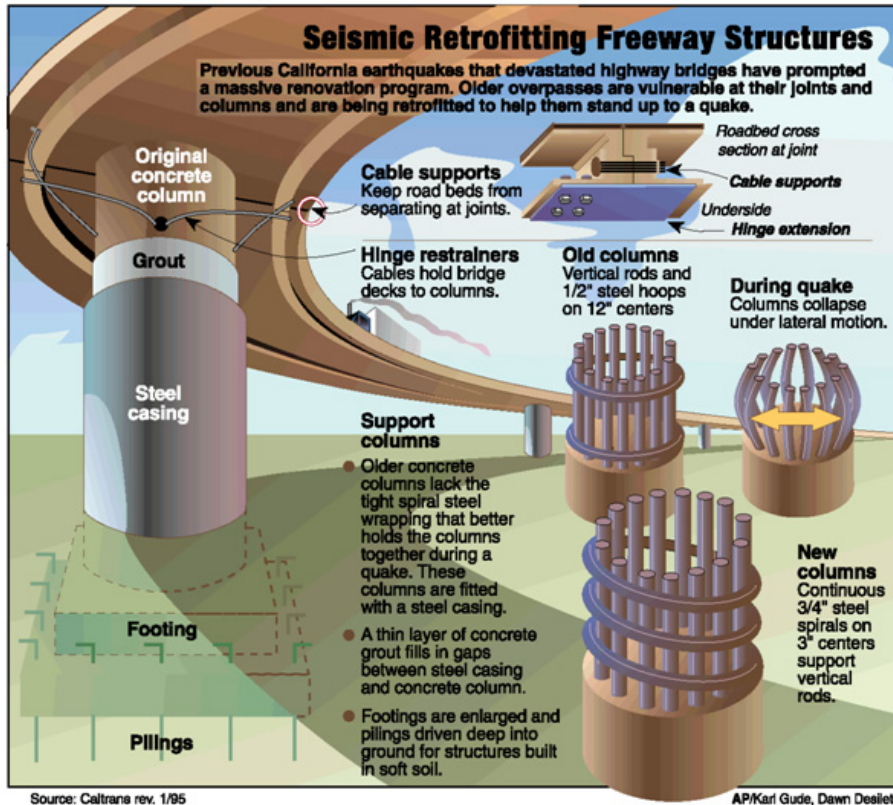
**Separate but equal
never is.**

MYTH #8

“Accessibility is expensive, time-consuming & difficult.”



REALITY #8



Retrofitting sub-standard code is expensive, time-consuming & difficult.

MYTH #9

“Automated
evaluation tools prove
we’re accessible.”



REALITY #9

Automated evaluation tools can only test 30-40% of a site's accessibility issues.

Human beings must manually check the rest.



REALITY #9

- Does the site work with mouse-free navigation?
- Are there color-only or color contrast issues?
- Do all form fields have labels?
- Check for semantic markup (e.g., is a heading coded as an <H>?).
- Is page readable with CSS turned off?
- Is page readable magnified 200%.
- Does it pass an HTML validator?
- Does media have captions, audio descriptions, transcripts?



MYTH #10

“We don’t need to caption our video, YouTube does it automatically.”

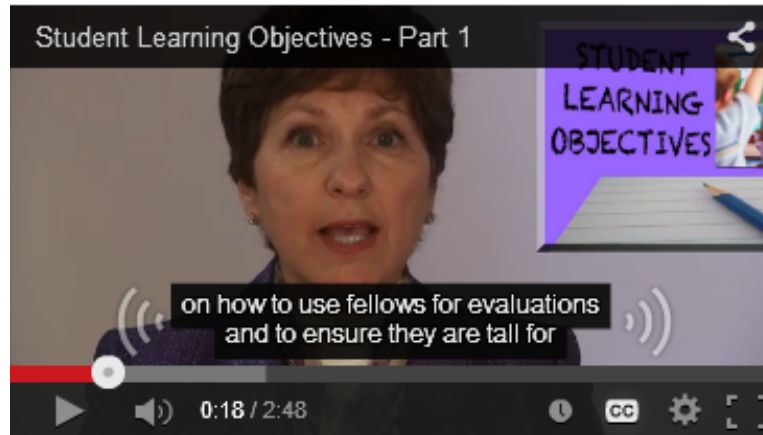


REALITY #10



REALITY #10

“...how to use fellows for evaluations and to ensure they are tall for...”



“...how to use S.L.O's for evaluation and ensure they are a tool for...”

YouTube’s “automated captioning” is notoriously, and sometimes hilariously, inaccurate. When Google’s robots try to guess what your speakers are saying, they will guess **WRONG**.

