



OVERVIEW

The County of Fresno's journey to an accessible website was driven by a perceptive IT department that was concerned about serving their customers with disabilities. Before their website redesign project, Fresno County, like many other local agencies, was unaware of the variety of accessibility standards impacting government. The Vision team provided guidance on new laws and training for their staff to not only improve the accessibility of their website at launch but maintain it over time.

SOLUTIONS

visionLive™

(Active since 2017)

POPULATION

974,861

WEB ACCESSIBILITY TRAINING OFFERS FRESNO COUNTY A NEW WAY TO SERVE THEIR CUSTOMERS

SITUATION

Poor Website Accessibility

As one of the most populous and diverse agencies in California, the County of Fresno's journey to an accessible website was driven by a perceptive information technology (IT) department that was concerned about serving their customers with disabilities. What they lacked, however, were the skills to achieve compliance.

Fresno County's website editors were not trained in digital accessibility standards, resulting in a website that was difficult for visitors with disabilities to navigate and access information.

SOLUTION

Content Strategy and Accessibility Training

Daniel Moore, IT Manager for the county, didn't know what to expect when it came to Vision's content strategy consulting service, and was surprised at how integral it was to their website project.

The process started with Vision reviewing their website and user analytics, which was invaluable to provide a better understanding of the types of customers using their website. With this data in hand, Moore and his team began looking at content writing and accessibility in a whole new way.

"Vision made us aware of how diverse our customers' needs really are – from millennials and baby boomers to non-native English speakers – it's not just accessibility for those with a disability. It's about creating accessible content for everyone," said Moore.

Training and Tools to Maintain an Accessible Website

Before their website redesign project, Fresno County, like many other local agencies, was unaware of the variety of accessibility standards impacting government, such as WCAG 2.0. The Vision team provided guidance on the new laws and suggested Fresno County scan their site using an accessibility tool that would measure how their website stacked up to the latest standards.

When the county first scanned their new website, their accessibility score was in the 60s on a 100 point scale. While this score is considered acceptable, Moore knew there was a lot of room for improvement and immediately decided to put his team through web accessibility



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*Daniel Moore, IT Manager,
Fresno County*

METRICS

20%

ACCESSIBILITY SCORE
INCREASE

100%

CONTENT READABILITY
SCORE

training with Vision. He saw the training as a risk mitigation tactic that would allow them to maintain an accessible website for years to come to do right by county customers and to avoid the possibility of costly litigation and remediation.

Moore's team has also developed a formal discipline to maintain continuous accessibility. Periodically running the scanner on the site, the county's webmaster shares the resulting reports with the appropriate department content creators, and then works with them to correct their content both for accessibility and content strategy best practices.

Consumable Content to Serve Diverse Audiences

Moore's team also appreciated the impact of the content strategy service. "The content strategy consultation and training got us thinking about how we should formulate everything we put on the website so it can be consumed by the most people, in the easiest manner," said Moore.

When asked what best practices stuck with him the most, Moore mentioned the importance of converting large blocks of content into relevant headings with bullets for easy scanning. He also appreciated the advice to shift to a more service-minded approach.

Moore also recommended completing the writing for the web and accessibility training before being trained on the actual content management system (CMS). "This gave the content editors a skill set, so when they dug into their content before the migration, it could be written well and made accessible right off the bat," Moore said.

When asked his perception of the difference between the content strategy training and accessibility training, Moore replied, "Content strategy is about creating web pages for people with and without disabilities; web accessibility training is for creating content for those with disabilities. Now that Vision's trained us in both, we can best serve every customer who comes to our site."

RESULTS

A More Accessible Website for Everyone in Fresno County

- After applying the techniques learned in training, Fresno County's accessibility went from scores in the 60s to scores in the 80s.
- The most important improvement was that Fresno County's content editors were trained to maintain an accessible website over time.
- In addition, Fresno County took a "train the trainer" approach. The county's webmaster went through the content and accessibility training several times and will be responsible for onboarding new content creators going forward. The goal is to give them knowledge right from the start to ensure the website maintains its current level of content quality and accessibility.

ABOUT VISION

Headquartered in El Segundo, Calif., Vision is a national leader in government website design, development and hosting with more than 800 government, non-profit and education clients in U.S. and Canadian communities with populations that range from less than 1,000 residents to more than 5 million. For more than 20 years, Vision has created cost-effective solutions that increase government efficiency, build transparency and promote interactive communications with citizens.