

ADA Compliant Planned Giving Websites

Panic Unnecessary; Understanding Required

by Viken Mikaelian



Evaluating websites in terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – who needs the aggravation? Not fundraisers. But the issue of online ADA Compliance isn't going to go away, and there's a very real downside to non-compliance:

PlannedGiving.Com/wp1001

Our attitude is: let's get practical about this.

ADA Compliance is a complicated issue. It's like the IRS Tax Code. There can easily be a multitude of interpretations and misinterpretations attached to it. Of course that

only makes nonprofits more nervous, especially in New York and California, where the regulatory environment is more aggressive.

Naturally a number of our clients have put their web teams to work evaluating their VirtualGiving.Com websites against ADA requirements. But this is where it starts to get sticky.

Those teams may know website *development*, but they may not be up to speed on website *compliance*. So they turn to compliance *evaluation engines* to do the actual testing.

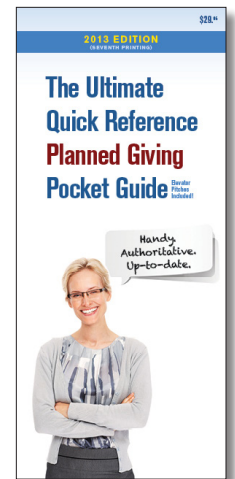
- These engines can perform the evaluation in different ways, using different criteria.
- As a result nonprofits can get inaccurate or even conflicting results with no way of assessing independently what the data really mean.

So let's talk about standards.

The most-used compliance engine is **Cynthia Says** (<http://www.cynthiasays.com>). It enables users to test individual pages on their website and provides feedback in an easy-to-use and understand format. It can identify potential errors in their websites

Over...

FREE FOR OUR CLIENTS



If for some reason you have not received your *free* copy, please call us at:

800-490-7090

Every fundraiser needs this planned giving pocket guide.

against **Section 508 standards** and/or WCAG guidelines for web accessibility. So be advised:

- The true ADA compliance rule is Section 508: <https://www.section508.gov>.

So when you run Cynthia Says in Compliance Mode, make sure you specify that it use the **Section 508 standards**. Then you'll be getting solid results.

Contrary to this, some webmasters may verify for W3C HTML standards using an engine like the one found here:

<http://validator.w3.org/>

This is a mistake.

They are assessing the website using incorrect standards, so the results won't be valid in terms of ADA Compliance.

The whole ADA Compliance thing may be overwhelming, but it shouldn't prevent you from taking full advantage of e-marketing through your planned giving website. With so many new and exciting web features being developed every day, and so many picky little ADA rules, it's impossible to stay 100% compliant. But we'll work with you to provide the correct mix of content design and accessibility, so you don't have to worry about serious compliance issues.



I hope you found this white paper stimulating and useful.

My mission is to make available to you the best know-how, insight, and tools so you can keep yourself, your career, and your organization permanently ahead of the curve.

Contact me. Let me know how you're doing. And let me know how I'm doing.

Let's improve and succeed together.

Viken Mikaelian
Founder, PlannedGiving.Com
Success@PlannedGiving.Com



PlannedGiving.Com/linkedin

WANT TO REPRODUCE THIS ARTICLE?

Readers are invited to distribute the contents of this article in hard copy or in electronic form on the conditions that its contents remain unchanged, and that PlannedGiving.Com be credited as its source.



Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
(800) 873-9203
Success@PlannedGiving.Com

Copyright 2013, Chris McLeod,
Giving Matters, Inc.



plannedgiving.com/facebook
plannedgiving.com/twitter