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How a Leading Insurance Organisation is Embedding Accessibility Best Practices within Design, Development and Testing

How TTC is supporting one of the largest insurance companies in Australia and New Zealand

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TTC's client is the largest general insurance company in Australia and New Zealand. They sell insurance under many leading brands. To support those leading brands, there are approximately 150 live digital assets. Our client is hugely committed to diversity, inclusion and belonging and has progressed in recent years in its access and inclusion journey. Their Financial Inclusion Action Plan includes actions in relation to digital accessibility and they have recently shared the 'pivotal moments' of their journey towards inclusion of people with disability. This insurer understands the importance of inclusion for customers and employees and has full senior leadership support and engagement to progress this.

They are at the beginning of their journey towards embedding digital accessibility into their DNA. They have already fulfilled a key enabler on this journey by gaining senior leadership support and engagement. The executive understands why a focus needs to be placed on digital accessibility and provide full support for decisions made. The Head of Accessibility notes that there are five key areas to focus on:

1. Basic Awareness
2. Training
3. Testing Tools
4. Audits
5. Support

This was a team effort and navigating a large, complex organisation could not be achieved alone! 'We needed a line of champions' to make this happen.

Basic awareness cannot be underestimated and is important when starting out. In addition, training teams in where their responsibilities lie and how their role impacts accessibility is key. When an organisation starts out focussing on accessibility, using free testing tools can be helpful. However, in order to achieve a multi-faceted approach to accessibility and to form a complete picture, this insurer needed a testing tool that could be embedded into their existing processes. Embedding accessibility is a key imperative for them.

The Head of Accessibility advises that audits can be useful, however we need to be mindful that once a site or app is accessible, it needs to be monitored for accessibility, otherwise the very next day it could become inaccessible! Without having appropriate tooling and training embedded for teams, reliance can be placed on audits, which does not necessarily shift accessibility left into the design phase.

Shifting accessibility left to the procurement stage is also vitally important. Ensuring ICT procurement decisions factor in accessibility is good practice and is a focus for our client. Australian Network on Disability's (AND) accessible ICT procurement taskforce focuses on creating national best practices for organisations. As a result of the task force AND's accessible ICT procurement tool was built. This tool is freely available on their website and will assist other organisations aiming to factor in accessibility from the beginning.

The Head of Accessibility's advice for other organisations at the beginning of their journey is to 'be pragmatic. Focus on the issues going forward with new apps or sites from today'. Draw a line in the sand and approach the next project with accessibility factored in, rather than trying to retrofit all existing assets. Providing support to teams within this organisation is essential, and the Head of Accessibility provides support internally for approach, technical solutions and complex issues. In addition, they tap into the expertise of third parties, such as TTC and UsableNet as required.

> **Overall, the Head of Accessibility shares that it's best to start small and measure success and that digital accessibility is a journey, it keeps going.**

This large insurer sought to find the best accessibility testing tool in the market. Their goal is to embed accessibility practices within design, development and testing teams and to make accessibility testing easier for those teams. After a robust market comparison, they identified TTC and UsableNet's AQA tool as the best. There were many factors that led them to select AQA as their accessibility testing tool.

The stand-out factor in this decision was the way the tool maps out user journeys and tests against how a person interacts with a site or system; 'it's built differently' said the Head of Accessibility. 'It's a true tool with a proper UI'. Other success measures for selecting AQA included, 'it's simple and easy for teams to use, the quantity and quality of the tests is very detailed, the quality of the reporting is incredible compared to other tools (as well as access to past reports) and the ability of TTC and UsableNet to provide support and training is solid.' They shared that AQA is the 'Best tool by far. Advanced testing with a good and intuitive interface with very good support'. Whilst every organisation is unique and will encounter their own challenges, our client cites that factoring in appropriate internal timeframes could be challenging and not to underestimate the different teams that may need to be involved in rolling out a new testing tool!

So far, it has been key to the implementation success to have a project team from across the business that met regularly to keep the drive and momentum going. This team discusses any technical requirements or roadblocks with TTC and UsableNet. It has been fundamental to have technical representation on the project team, in addition to procurement representation, legal and accessibility. The Head of Accessibility explains that this was a team effort and navigating a large, complex organisation could not be achieved alone! 'We needed a line of champions' to make this happen.

Our client is currently running their pilot and training three digital teams in AQA. They will measure knowledge before and after the training and pilot and will progress to rolling AQA out to more teams at a later stage in a phased approach. Overall, the Head of Accessibility shares that it's best to 'start small and measure success' and that 'digital accessibility is a journey, it keeps going, there isn't an end destination'. Digital accessibility is about people, it is about the human experience when interacting with an organisation's website, app or system. How we design and develop our sites and systems will impact people.

Tip: Start with accessibility from the procurement stage.
Ensuring ICT procurement decisions factor in accessibility is good practice.

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Key Phases of Journey

Phase 3
- Pilot with three teams in Australia and New Zealand
- Training teams
- Analysis and surveys
- Phased roll-out across additional teams

Phase 2
- Form project team across legal, procurement, technical, accessibility and TTC/UsableNet.
- Championing and team-work: budgets, security, procurement requirements, set-up, testing.
- Design phased approach for roll-out and identify initial teams.

Phase 1
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Trial
- Market Analysis
- Senior Leadership Engagement

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Journey with AQA

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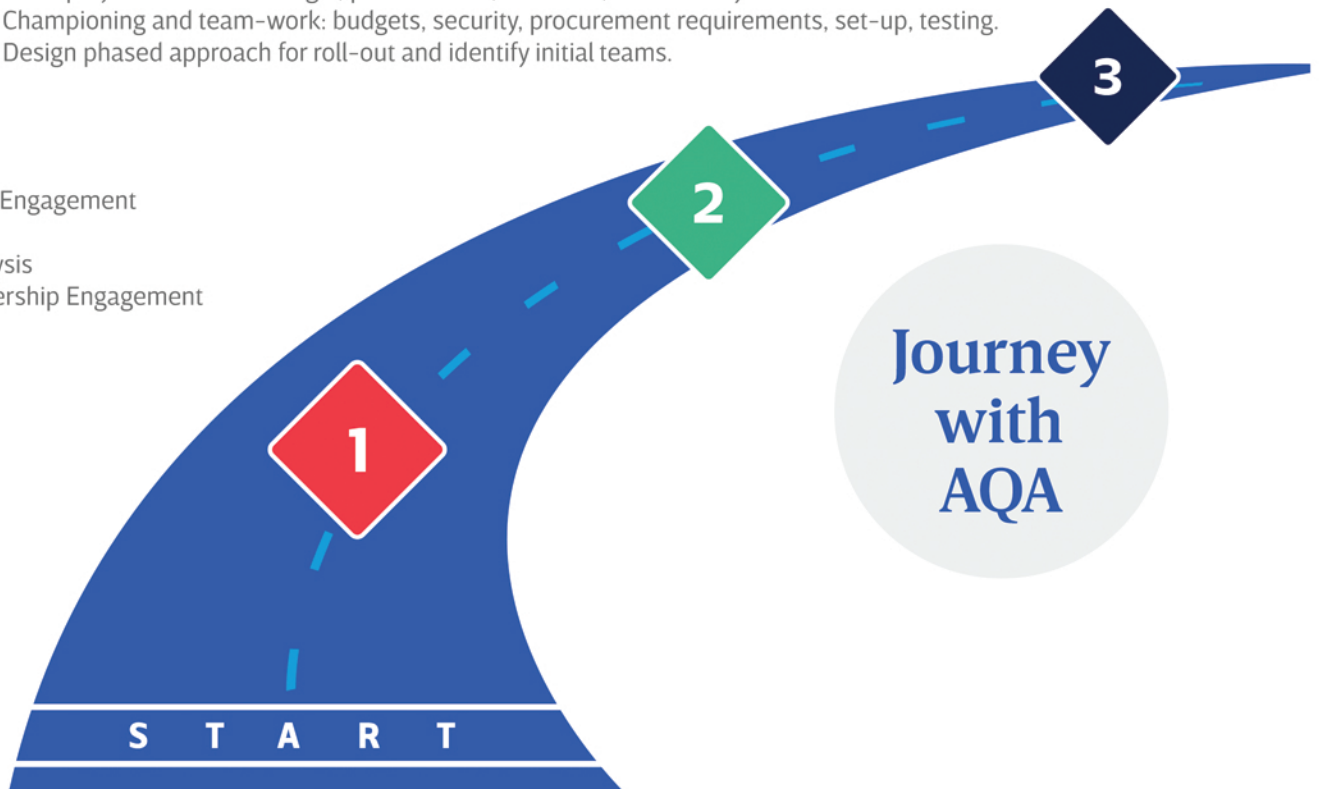
- **Over 1 billion people globally have disability**
- **1 in 5 people in Australia experience disability**
- **1 in 4 people in New Zealand experience disability**

Research indicates that over three quarters of people with disability will move away from a website or service if they deem it inaccessible

About the Author

Samantha Dancey is TTC's Global Accessibility Practice Lead. Previously, Sam worked on the leadership team at Australian Network on Disability for nearly 8 years consulting with and supporting organisations to include people with disability across the whole of business. If you would like to discuss your organisation's digital accessibility journey, contact TTC's Global Accessibility Practice at samantha.dancey@ttcglobal.com or +61415050221