

Digital Access Matters: Practical Steps for Inclusive County Services

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Objectives

1. Understand the core principles of digital accessibility and why they matter in county services.
2. Identify common accessibility barriers in digital content.
3. Learn three practical steps county leaders can take to promote inclusive digital practices.



Understand Core Principles

The legal and technical backbone of digital inclusion

Accessibility Regulations & Standards

True or False?

1. The Americans with Disabilities Act is the foundational legislation regarding digital accessibility.
2. The US Secretary of State is responsible to enforce accessibility rules.
3. The rules apply to all levels of government, not just federal.

Answer:

1. TRUE: The ADA requires government services be accessible to individuals without barriers related to disability.
2. FALSE: The US Department of Justice is responsible for enforcing accessibility rules.
3. TRUE: Accessibility rules apply to federal, state, and local governments.

▶ Where does the rule apply?



Web content includes text, images, sound, videos, and documents.

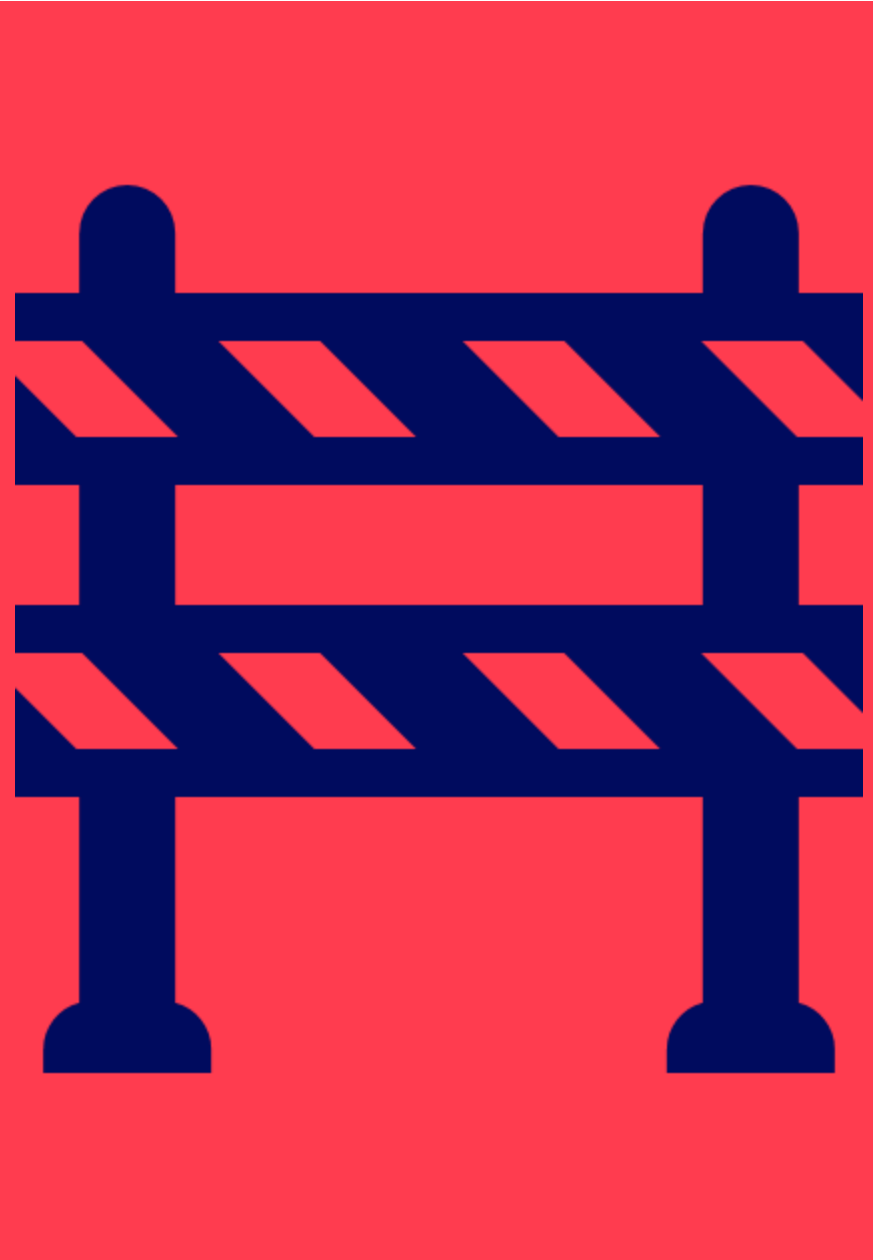


Mobile apps: downloaded and designed to run on mobile devices like smartphones and tablets.



Exceptions to the Rule

- Archived Web Content
- Pre-existing conventional electronic documents
- Individualized documents that are password-protected
- Pre-existing social media posts
- Content posted by a third party where the third party is not posting due to contractual, licensing, or other arrangements with a public entity



Common Digital Accessibility Barriers

Hidden hurdles in digital services

► Understanding Accessibility

P



Information must
be presented in
ways users can
perceive

O



Interface must
operate with
multiple inputs
from different
sources

U



Content must be
clear, predictable,
and easy to
understand

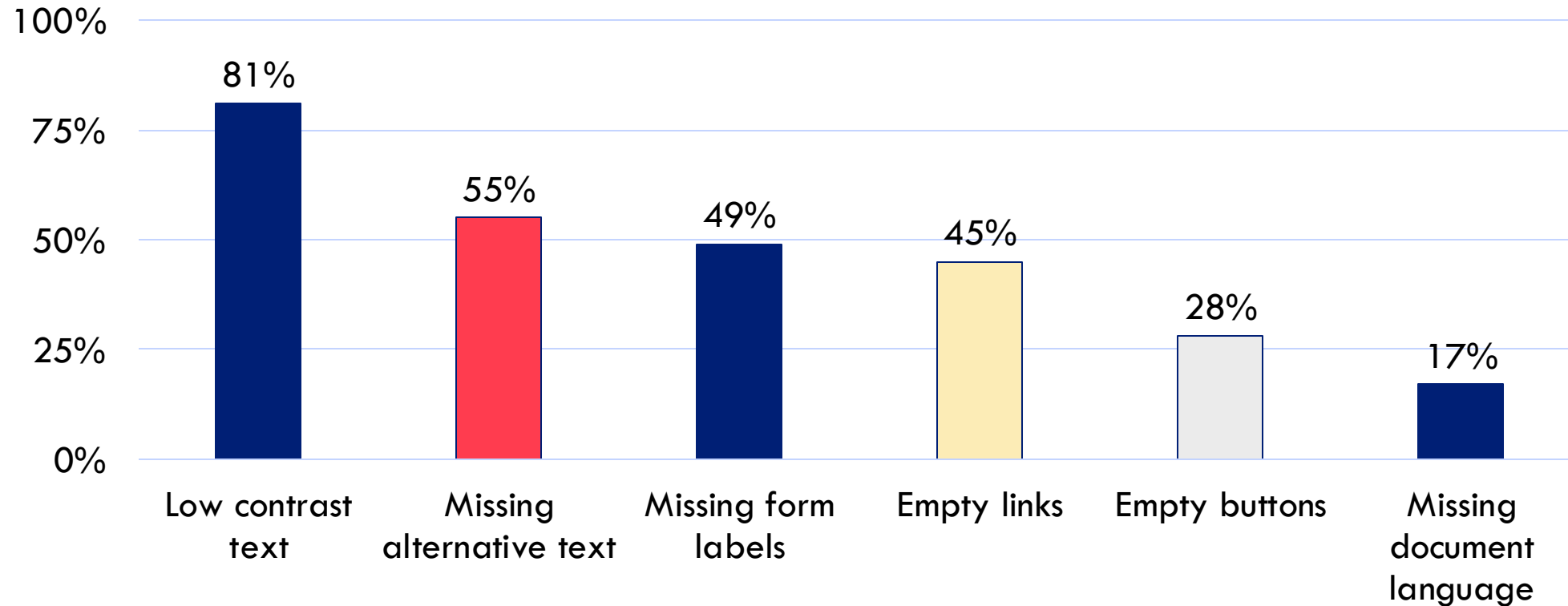
R



Backend must be
robust to work with
various assistive
technologies

▶ Most Common Issues*

n= World's top 1 million homepages



*2024 WebAIM Million Report

▶ Handout



Digital Experience Examples

Accessibility is both a **legal requirement** and a **service excellence standard**—ensuring every resident can access county information and services with independence and dignity. Below are examples of what may be experienced by users.¹

Aspect of Digital Use	Non-Disabled Users	Users with Physical Disabilities	Users with Cognitive Disabilities
Reading Content	Read text with ease regardless of layout or font	May need to zoom, customize font size, or use screen readers	May struggle with dense text, jargon, inconsistent headings, or poor content structure
Media Consumption	Easily watch videos, listen to audio, and interact with animations	May need captions, transcripts, or media that doesn't require fine motor control	May need slowed-down videos, simplified content, and media without distracting elements
Use of Color	Understand content regardless of color schemes	Same, though may need visual customization tools	May struggle if color is the only method of conveying information
Error Recovery	Can easily understand and correct errors	May require additional time or assistive support to make corrections	May not notice, understand, or remember what went wrong or how to fix it
Use of Language	Understand typical web language and phrasing	Generally similar, though some tools like screen readers may misread overly complex content	May need simpler language, plain instructions, visual cues, or step-by-step guidance

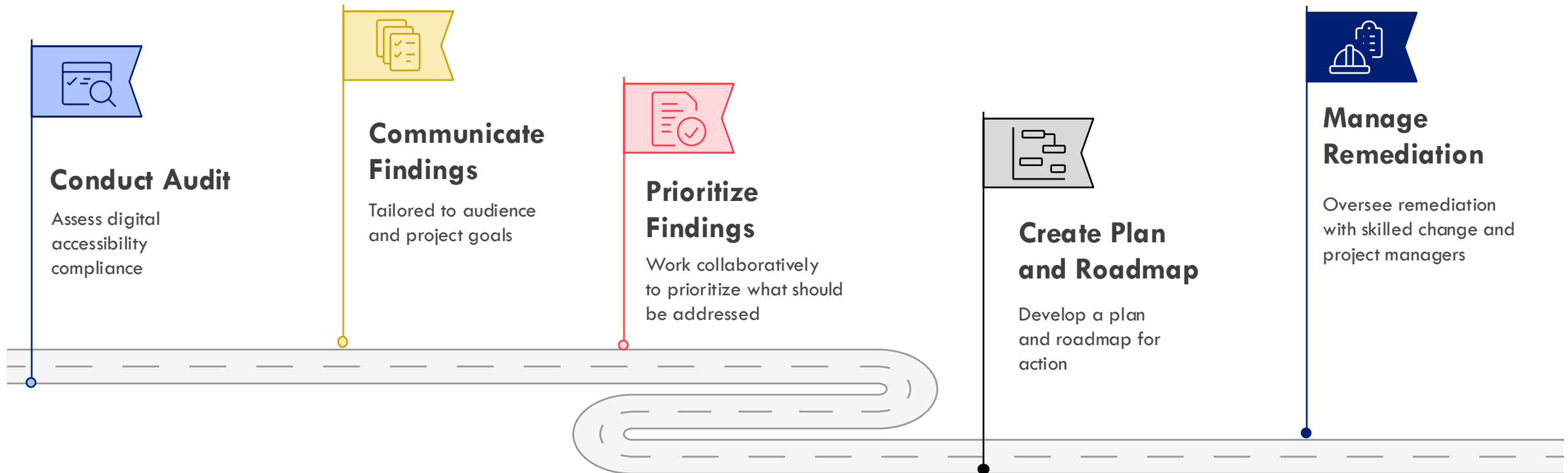
¹ Adapted from Web Accessibility Initiative <https://www.w3.org/WAI/people-use-web/user-stories/>



Practical Steps to Promote Inclusive Digital Access

Simple actions every county can take

► Execution: From Insight to Action



▶ Our Services: Expertise Across the Lifecycle



Vendor Coordination

Vendor coordination
and oversight

Accessibility Audits

Web pages, software, and
documents audit for digital
accessibility



Stakeholder Engagement

Training & stakeholder
engagement



Policy & Standards

WaTech, WCAG &
Section 508 compliance



Organizational Development

Policy and governance integration
with people and projects

Professional Services

Project & change management
in accessibility related projects





Open Discussion

What are your next steps?

Thank You

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