Web Accessibility

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE & WHY IT MATTERS

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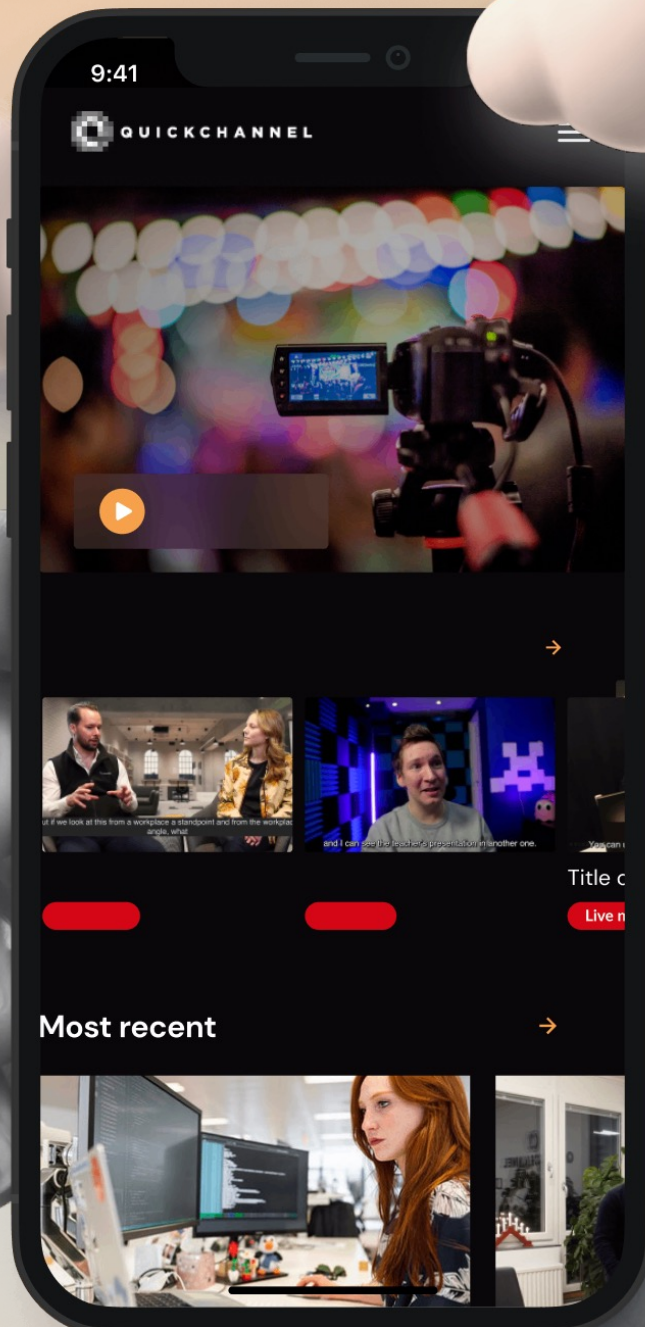
Why is it important?

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, ensuring that websites and mobile applications are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities, is not just a benevolent goal—it is an imperative. Web accessibility means making web environments usable for people in a wide range of situations, including those affected by temporary, permanent, or situational disabilities.

Web accessibility benefits a significant portion of the population. **Statistics indicate that approximately 1 in 4 adults in Europe faces some form of disability that affects their interaction with digital platforms**. This not only highlights the importance of inclusivity but also underscores the potential market that accessible design addresses.

At Quickchannel we're dedicated to ensuring that our video platform and its services are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities. Our company's commitment to meeting and exceeding the requirements set forth by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) reflects our dedication to inclusivity and digital equality. By ensuring that our platform is accessible, we not only comply with legal standards but also champions the rights of all users to have equal access to digital content. **The significance of web accessibility cannot be underestimated.** Embracing web accessibility is not only a legal obligation but also a moral and economic opportunity. By prioritizing accessibility, businesses and public entities can cater to a wider audience, improve user satisfaction, and promote inclusivity. If you're interested in learning more about video and WCAG – we're here to listen and offer guidance! Don't hesitate to reach out.
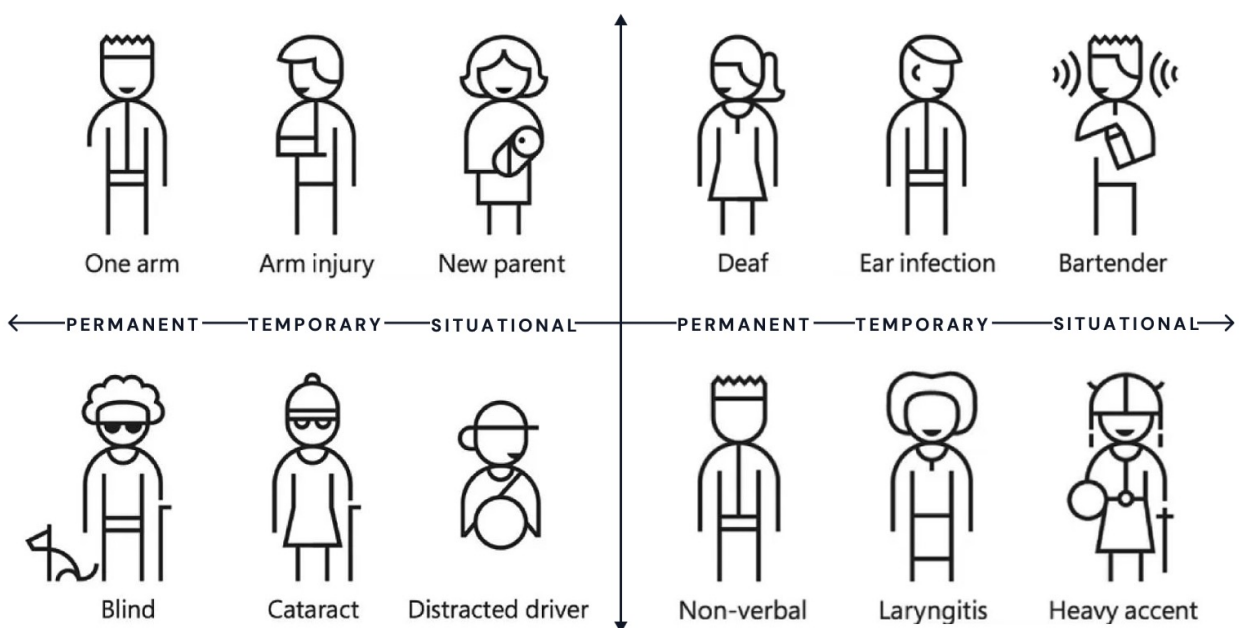
Viktor Underwood
CEO, Quickchannel

Understanding the Persona Spectrum

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are developed with the broad spectrum of users in mind, including those with disabilities. To understand and address the diverse needs of these users, WCAG considers what is known as the "persona spectrum." This concept helps developers and content creators appreciate the wide range of abilities and challenges that users might experience while interacting with digital content.

One arm	Arm injury	New parent	Deaf	Ear infection	Bartender
PERMANENT	TEMPORARY	SITUATIONAL	PERMANENT	TEMPORARY	SITUATIONAL
Blind	Cataract	Distracted driver	Non-verbal	Laryngitis	Heavy accent

Here's how the Persona Spectrum breaks down:

Permanent disabilities: These are long-term physical, cognitive, or sensory disabilities that individuals live with daily. Examples include permanent blindness, deafness, or mobility impairments.

Temporary disabilities: These are conditions that temporarily impact an individual's ability to interact with digital content. For instance, a broken arm or a temporary hearing loss due to an infection would fall under this category.

Situational disabilities: These occur when someone faces a disability due to their current environment or situation. For example, trying to view a screen in direct sunlight .

Application of the Persona Spectrum in WCAG

By recognizing the persona spectrum, WCAG guidelines are designed to accommodate users across this entire range, ensuring that web content is:

Perceivable: Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive. This could mean providing text alternatives for non-text content or creating content that can be presented in different ways without losing information.

Operable: User interface components and navigation must be operable. This includes making all functionality available from a keyboard for those who cannot use a mouse due to a temporary or permanent disability.

Understandable: Information and the operation of the user interface must be understandable. This helps users with cognitive limitations or those in a distracting environment to still make sense of the information.

Robust: Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies. This means content should remain accessible as technologies and user agents evolve.

The persona spectrum not only broadens the understanding of accessibility but also highlights the importance of creating flexible solutions that cater to a variety of users with different needs at different times. This approach underpins the WCAG's commitment to making the web an inclusive and accessible environment for everyone, regardless of their ability or circumstance.

WCAG 2.0
11th of December 2008
& is ISO/IEC 40500

WCAG 2.1
Published 5th of
June 2018

WCAG 2.2
5th of October 2023 & **WILL** be
ISO standard in the future.

A
MINIMAL ACCESSIBILITY
Websites that do not at least meet level A
are impossible or exceedingly difficult for
people with disabilities to use.

AA
RECOMENDED ACCESSIBILITY
This level is used in most accessibility rules
to ensure that websites are usable for the
majority of people with or without
disabilities.

AAA
ENHANCED ACCESSIBILITY
The recommended level for applications and
websites that are especially aimed at people
with disabilities or the elderly.

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are organized into three levels of conformance to help developers and designers meet the needs of different individuals and situations. These levels are A, AA, and AAA, each providing a higher standard of accessibility:

Level A: This is the minimum level of accessibility and includes the most basic web accessibility features. Conforming to this level means that some barriers to accessibility are removed, but not all. Requirements at this level are essential for some people to be able to use web content.

Level AA: This level deals with the biggest and most common barriers for disabled users. Meeting Level AA conformance means that the website or application is accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including the major categories of disabilities such as blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity, and combinations of these. This level is typically aimed at and recommended for all web content.

Level AAA: This is the highest and most thorough level of accessibility. Achieving this level indicates an excellent degree of accessibility, though not all content can meet this level due to the nature and capabilities of the content or some types of disabilities. Level AAA conformance makes a site accessible to more people with more severe disabilities but can be more difficult to implement.

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EN 301 549

"Accessibility requirements for ICT products and services". Includes requirements from WCAG 2.1: A + AA (Not AAA).

INSPIRED BY WCAG 2.1

Meeting all WCAG 2.1 criteria doesn't guarantee compliance with the Web Accessibility Directive due to additional requirements.

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

It also includes requirements that are not relevant to the Web Accessibility Directive, for example requirements that apply to hardware.

EN 301 549 is a European standard that specifies the requirements for digital accessibility to ensure that websites, apps, and other digital products are more accessible to people with disabilities. This standard is particularly important for public sector bodies in the European Union and applies to a broad range of products and services, including computer hardware and software, websites, mobile apps, and more.

The EN 301 549 standard is aligned with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, meaning it incorporates the same accessibility principles and guidelines but expands on them by specifying requirements for other technologies as well. It plays a crucial role in fulfilling the obligations of the European Accessibility Act and the Directive on the Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications, ensuring that public services and products are accessible to all users, including those with disabilities. This helps in creating a more inclusive digital environment across the EU

EN 301 549 V3.2.1

Officially supported by EN 301 549 v3.2.1. Directive does not cover live video (and live captions). EN does not cover accessibility statements.

WAD

"On the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies".

DEFINITIONS

Presumed conformity with this Directive's accessibility requirements is based on clauses 9, 10, and 11 of European standard EN 301 549 V1.1.2 (2015-04).

REQUIREMENTS ARTICLE 4

Member States must ensure **public sector websites** and apps are accessible. Making them perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust.

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The Web Accessibility Directive (WAD), officially known as the Directive (EU) 2016/2102, is a legislative act of the European Union that requires websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies to be accessible to everyone, particularly people with disabilities. This directive aims to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access and use public sector digital resources with the same level of ease and convenience as other users.

Key points of the WAD include:

Scope: The directive applies to all public sector bodies' websites and mobile applications, including state, regional, and local government levels. It covers everything from administrative portals to public service apps.

Requirements: The directive requires that new websites, existing websites, and mobile applications meet specific accessibility standards, which are closely aligned with the WCAG 2.1 guidelines at the AA level.

Monitoring and Reporting: Member states are tasked with monitoring and reporting on the accessibility of websites and mobile apps covered by the directive. This ensures compliance and helps in maintaining high standards of accessibility.
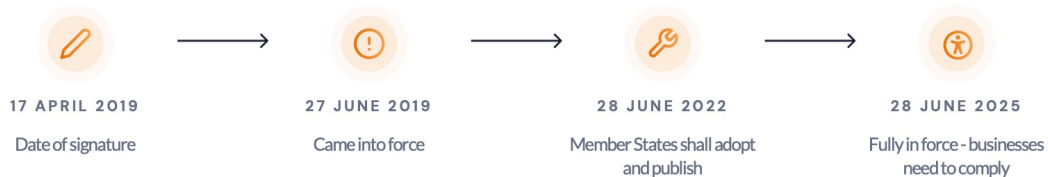
Enforcement: Each EU member state is responsible for implementing the directive into national law, which includes setting up bodies to monitor compliance and enforce the rules.

The directive is part of a broader effort by the EU to enhance digital accessibility, reducing barriers for people with disabilities and promoting an inclusive digital

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EUROPEAN ACCESSIBILITY ACT

EAA

"On the accessibility requirements for products and services".
Will be supported by EN 301 549 v4.1.1 in 2025.

17 APRIL 2019	27 JUNE 2019	28 JUNE 2022	28 JUNE 2025
Date of signature	Came into force	Member States shall adopt and publish	Fully in force - businesses need to comply

Fully in force – business need to comply – 28 june 2025

The overarching goal of the European Accessibility Act is to improve access to key products and services for people with disabilities, ensuring they can participate fully in society. It also seeks to eliminate barriers within the EU's internal market, making it easier for companies to sell accessible products and services across Europe. This act is a crucial part of the EU's commitment to upholding the rights of people with disabilities, aligning with broader international efforts like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Products & services as per EAA

- ✓ Computers and operating systems
- ✓ Smartphones
- ✓ Telephony services and related equipment
- ✓ ATMs, ticketing and check-in machines, payment terminals
- ✓ TV equipment related to digital television services
- ✓ The 112 EU emergency number
- ✓ Audio-visual media services such as television broadcast and related consumer equipment
- ✓ Air, bus, rail and waterborne passenger transport services
- ✓ Banking services
- ✓ E-books & E-commerce

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Here's what the EAA means for businesses:

Companies are required to ensure that their products and services meet specific accessibility standards. This includes making physical products, digital interfaces, and related services accessible to people with disabilities. For example, electronic devices like smartphones and TVs must be usable by people with visual or hearing impairments.

Design and development changes

The need to adhere to the EAA may require companies to modify their design and development processes. This includes integrating accessibility features right from the early stages of product development and considering accessibility throughout the product lifecycle.

Market expansion

By adhering to a standardized set of accessibility requirements, companies can more easily market and sell their products across all EU member states. This harmonization removes barriers that might have prevented entry into different national markets due to varying accessibility laws.

Increased costs

Compliance with the EAA may lead to increased costs for research, development, and implementation of necessary accessibility features. However, these costs are seen as an investment in a broader customer base and improved product offerings.

Legal and financial risks

Failure to comply with the EAA can expose companies to legal and financial risks, including fines and reputational damage. EU member states are required to set up bodies to monitor compliance and enforce the directive, which could lead to penalties for non-compliance.

Innovation and competitive advantage

The directive encourages innovation in the field of accessibility. Companies that invest in advanced accessible technologies may gain a competitive edge, attracting not only individuals with disabilities but also older adults and other users who benefit from easier-to-use interfaces and products.
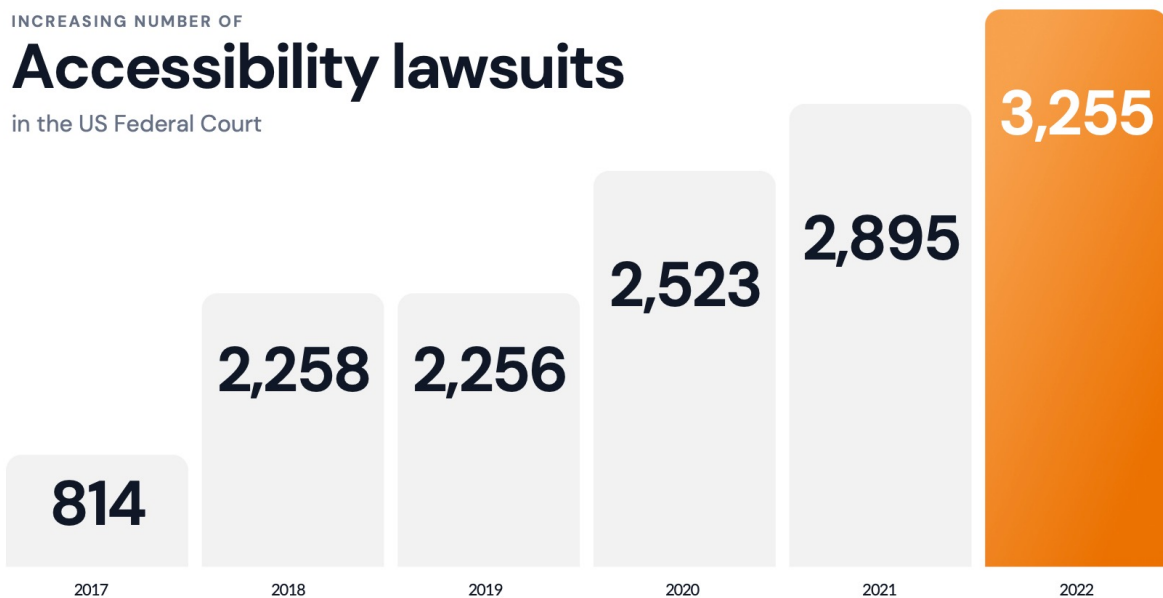
Employee training and awareness

Companies may need to invest in training for their staff to raise awareness about accessibility and ensure that all employees understand how to implement and maintain accessibility standards in their work.

Long-term strategic planning

The EAA requires companies to think long-term about the inclusivity of their products and services. Strategic planning will need to consider ongoing compliance and how new products or services will adhere to accessibility guidelines set forth by the directive.

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Increasing importance of accessibility in various sectors

Implementing web accessibility can be technically challenging. It requires a detailed understanding of both the guidelines and the specific needs of various disability groups. Tools and technologies that automate aspects of accessibility testing and compliance, such as AI-driven solutions for captioning and contrast checking, are becoming increasingly important. The rise in web accessibility lawsuits, signals a growing legal focus on digital inclusivity. These legal challenges emphasize the importance of adhering to established web accessibility standards to avoid potential litigation

INCREASING NUMBER OF
Accessibility lawsuits
in the US Federal Court

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
814	2,258	2,256	2,523	2,895	3,255

Best practices for ensuring accessibility compliance

To effectively meet accessibility standards, organizations should:

• Conduct regular accessibility audits.

• Provide training for staff on accessibility issues and solutions.

• Engage in continuous user testing to ensure that all potential barriers are identified and addressed.

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What about video?

Core requirements for WCAG-compliant Video Content

Captions: One of the most critical elements for accessible video content is the provision of captions. Captions must be provided for all pre-recorded audio content in synchronized media. This not only benefits individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing but also aids users in noisy environments or those who prefer to read along with the audio.

Audio descriptions: Videos should include audio descriptions of important visual details that cannot be understood from the main soundtrack alone. These descriptions are essential for people who are blind or have low vision, ensuring they can fully understand the content being presented.

Accessible player controls: Video players used on websites must be operable through keyboard interfaces without requiring specific timings for individual keystrokes. This ensures that users who cannot use a mouse can still fully operate the video player.

Contrast and visibility: Ensure that any controls or text within the video player meet the contrast ratio requirements to guarantee visibility by users with visual impairments. Elements like play buttons, sliders for volume, and progress bars must be easily distinguishable.

Examples of requirements

found in **EN 301 549** and relevant to the **WAD**, but not in **WCAG 2.1**

- ✓ 7.1.1 Captioning playback
- ✓ 7.1.2 Captioning synchronization
- ✓ 7.1.3 Preservation of captioning

Wonderful captions

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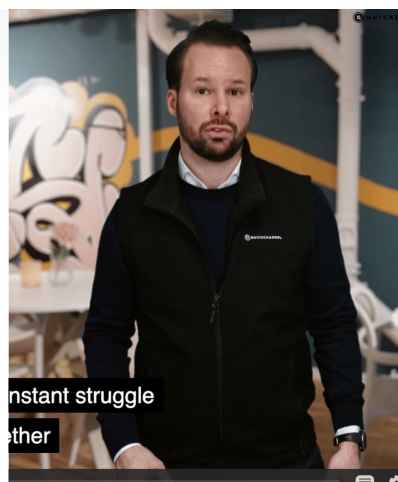
Implementing advanced accessibility features

Extended audio descriptions: Where the information conveyed by the video's visuals is complex, extended audio descriptions may be necessary. These descriptions provide more detailed insights into the visual content during natural pauses in the video's audio.

Sign language interpretation: For videos intended for broad dissemination and essential services, including sign language interpretation can make the content accessible to users who depend on sign language.

User control over accessibility features: Providing options for users to toggle captions, choose between standard and extended audio descriptions, and adjust the size and background of captions can significantly enhance accessibility.

SOME IMPORTANT

WCAG requirements

NUMBER	NAME
1.1.1	Non-text content
1.2.2	Captions (pre-recorded)
1.2.3	Audio description or media alternative (pre-recorded)
1.4.3	Contrast (minimum)
2.1.1	Keyboard
2.2.2	Pause, stop, hide
2.5.2	Pointer cancellation
3.1.1	Language of page
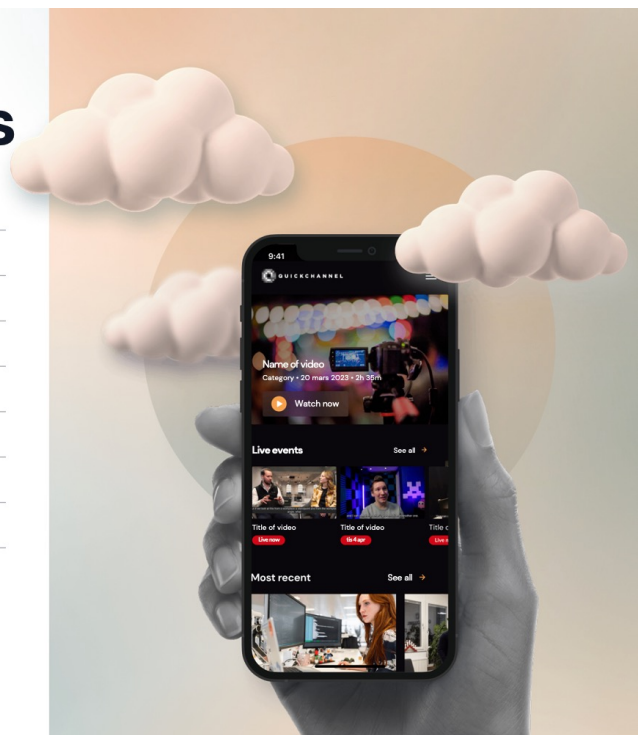
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Key features of Quickchannel's WCAG compliance

Captioning and audio descriptions: Quickchannel offers robust support for both captions and audio descriptions, which are critical for users who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as those with visual impairments. Our platform ensures that all video content can be accompanied by accurate and synchronous captions and also provides options for integrating audio descriptions seamlessly.

Accessible media player: Our video player is designed with accessibility in mind. It is fully operable via keyboard inputs and includes accessible controls that are easy to navigate. This ensures that users with physical limitations who cannot use a mouse can still enjoy a complete viewing experience.

Contrast and visual presentation: Recognizing the importance of visual accessibility, our platform ensures that all text and interactive elements within the platform have sufficient contrast ratios as defined by WCAG standards. This feature assists users with low vision in navigating and interacting with the platform more effectively.

Adherence to latest standards: At Quickchannel we stay updated with the latest versions of WCAG, currently aligning its platform with WCAG 2.1 standards, and prepares for future updates to maintain compliance. This proactive approach ensures that Quickchannel as a company remains at the forefront of accessibility.

Ongoing commitment to inclusive design:
Quickchannel's approach to WCAG compliance is not static; it involves continuous improvement and regular updates based on user feedback and evolving standards. Our company actively engages with our community to gather insights and identify areas for enhancement. Additionally, Quickchannel conducts regular accessibility audits and user testing sessions to ensure that its solutions meet the highest standards of accessibility.

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Key features of Quickchannel's WCAG compliance

Contrary to popular belief, there is no certification for WCAG compliance. However, competence can be certified and Quickchannel has employees IAAP Web Accessibility Specialist certified to fully understand and meet the guidelines. This is a list of all the WCAG 2.1 and upcoming WCAG 2.2 AA guidelines Quickchannels player complies with.

Requirement	Level	Version	Compliant
1.1.1 Non-text Content	A	2.0	Yes
1.2.2 Captions (Prerecorded)	A	2.0	Yes
1.2.3 Audio Description or Media Alternative (Prerecorded)	A	2.0	Yes
1.2.5 Audio Description (Prerecorded)	AA	2.0	Yes
1.3.1 Info and Relationships	A	2.0	Yes
1.3.4 Orientation	AA	2.1	Yes
1.4.1 Use of Color	A	2.0	Yes
1.4.2 Audio Control	A	2.0	Yes
1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum)	AA	2.0	Yes
1.4.4 Resize text	AA	2.0	Yes
1.4.5 Images of Text	AA	2.0	Yes
1.4.10 Reflow	AA	2.1	Yes
1.4.11 Non-text Contrast	AA	2.1	Yes
1.4.12 Text Spacing	AA	2.1	Yes
1.4.13 Content on Hover or Focus	AA	2.1	Yes
2.1.1 Keyboard	A	2.0	Yes
2.1.2 No Keyboard Trap	A	2.0	Yes
2.1.4 Character Key Shortcuts	A	2.1	Yes
2.2.2 Pause, Stop, Hide	A	2.0	Yes
2.3.1 Three Flashes or Below Threshold	A	2.0	Yes
2.4.2 Page Titled	A	2.0	Yes
2.4.3 Focus Order	A	2.0	Yes
2.4.4 Link Purpose (In Context)	A	2.0	Yes
2.4.6 Headings and Labels	AA	2.0	Yes
2.4.7 Focus Visible	AA	2.0	Yes
2.4.11 Focus Appearance	AA	2.2	Yes
2.4.12 Focus Not Obscured (Minimum)	AA	2.2	Yes
2.5.2 Pointer Cancellation	A	2.1	Yes
2.5.3 Label in Name	A	2.1	Yes
2.5.3 Label in Name	A	2.1	Yes
2.5.8 Target Size (Minimum)	AA	2.2	Yes
3.1.1 Language of Page	A	2.0	Yes
3.1.2 Language of Parts	AA	2.0	Yes
3.2.1 On Focus	A	2.0	Yes
3.2.2 On Input	A	2.0	Yes
3.3.1 Error Identification	A	2.0	Yes
3.3.2 Labels or Instructions	A	2.0	Yes
3.3.3 Error Suggestion	AA	2.0	Yes
4.1.1 Parsing	A	2.0	Yes
4.1.2 Name, Role, Value	A	2.0	Yes

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The future of web accessibility

Looking ahead, the field of web accessibility is set to expand significantly.
With technological advancements and increasing legal requirements, organizations
must stay proactive in their accessibility efforts to not only comply with the law but
to genuinely support an inclusive digital environment.

Embracing web accessibility is not only a legal obligation but also a moral and economic
opportunity. By prioritizing accessibility, businesses and public entities can cater to a
wider audience, improve user satisfaction, and promote inclusivity. As digital platforms
continue to dominate aspects of everyday life, the importance of making these platforms
accessible to all cannot be overstated.

Are you ready to lead the change towards a more accessible digital future?

Contact Quickchannel today for expert guidance and support in implementing and
enhancing web accessibility for your organization. Partner with us to create a more
inclusive digital world, one step at a time. Visit our website or call us directly to learn how
we can help you transform your accessibility practices.

Book a WCAG meeting with one of our
video experts at Quickchannel.com

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References

For further guidance and detailed techniques on making video content accessible according to WCAG, visiting resources like the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) website can provide comprehensive information and support.

https://www.etsi.org/human-factors-accessibility

https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/

https://www.w3.org/tr/wcag22/

https://labs.etsi.org/rep/hf/en301549/-/issues/75

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