

### 3Play Webinars | Accessibility at a Global Scale with Merck

ELISA LEWIS: Thank you, everyone, for joining us today for this spotlight chat, Accessibility at a Global Scale with Merck. My name is Elisa Lewis. I'm the senior Inbound Marketing Manager here at 3Play Media. And I will be moderating today's session.

I'm a white female with dark brown hair. And I'm wearing a dark green sweater today. And without further ado, I want to welcome Steve Framil and Jim Fox with Merck. Thank you both so much for joining us today for this discussion. We're happy to have you.

**STEPHEN** Pleasure. Thank you for having us.

**FRAMIL:**

**JIM FOX:** Thank you.

**ELISA LEWIS:** So to start off today's discussion, I want to ask you each to sort of take a turn and briefly just describe, for the audience, who you are and your roles at Merck and how accessibility fits into your particular role.

**STEPHEN** OK, great. Jim, I'll go ahead and take a swing at it first. So Steve Framil. I'm of Caucasian and Pacific Islander  
**FRAMIL:** descent. I've got a blue blazer on, mostly black hair, and a nice headset with a mic on it. And I am the Corporate Accessibility Lead at Merck and MSD. And in terms of accessibility, that is my role as it were.

You asked about how that fits into my day job. And that would be my day job as the corporate accessibility lead for the company, leading the areas of policy, of training, and of implementation and remediation. So in a nutshell.

**JIM FOX:** Hello. My name is Jim Fox. I'm a white male wearing a dark blue shirt with salt and pepper hair. I'm also the Associate Director of Collaboration Services. And I manage the Webcasting Services Center of Excellence here at Merck.

This is my 23rd year at Merck. I came from the broadcast and cable television industries prior. I was hired way back when to write, shoot, and edit video for the research division. And as my career developed, webcasting was a new technology that was born. And now I lead the department providing webcasts and digital conferences globally to our company colleagues.

Accessibility, we had one goal of making the content we create reach the largest audience in the most easy-to-understand way. So we incorporated simultaneous interpretation as well as real-time captioning.

We started real-time captioning in 2016 and built on those successes. And in 2020, we now offer captioning in up to 22 different languages for every webcast that we create. So I come from more of the production end of the world as far as video, audio, et cetera.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Great. Thank you so much, Steve and Jim. So this next question, Steve, maybe is for you. For global companies, what are your thoughts and maybe some advice on how to embark on a company-wide digital accessibility policy? We know this can be particularly difficult at really large-- and, like I said, global-- companies. So what advice do you have for our audience today?

**STEPHEN** Well, that's a great question. It's a question that often has to be considered by companies about-- the easy part  
**FRAMIL:** about accessibility is that we have the standards, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standards. 2.1 is the latest. 2.2 is coming soon. And so those crowdsourced standards are really available. And that's really kind of what guides the implementation.

But the challenges are, for large companies, who's going to own it within the company? And I think what you'll find, and what I've learned from a lot of large corporations, is that it doesn't sit just in one place. It sits and spans across multiple areas. One high-level example is Salesforce, they have a team that really kind of connects all the different parts of their business together and brings it all together.

And so you really have-- and the way I think of it, you have the why. You've got to answer for the why. You have to answer for the how-- how are you going to do it-- and the what. And so at Merck, we situate the why-- we answer the why with our D&I, Diversity and Inclusion, group as to making sure that we have access, equal access, to not only all of our workforce, but our patients and consumers as well.

So the thought leadership really is coming from our global diversity and inclusion group that sits within HR. The what-- or, rather, the how, really is technical in nature. And this is where, of course, that naturally is suited to fit in IT in the various IT divisions. And of course, the what really depends on any business unit that is part of the digital landscape, in particularly the commercial part of the business because we have a lot of externally-facing digital assets.

And so everyone's got a stake in the game in terms of where it sits, who owns it. And so what we have done at Merck is really kind of had this co-sponsorship of accessibility, across from HR to IT to commercial, really those groups and their leadership really coming together, and of course getting executive leadership sponsorship as well.

So to answer that first question, the initial question that a lot of organizations have, is, who's going to own it? Where should it sit? It shouldn't just sit in IT. It shouldn't just sit in customer experience or product development. And it shouldn't just sit within HR D&I. It's really a partnership. And I think, when you approach it that way and orchestrate cross collaboration, it really can strengthen and be able to further the cause of accessibility across a large global organization.

Having said that, at Merck, we do have some organizations that really are focused on disability. In particular, out of the HR diversity and inclusion organization, we have a Disability and Inclusion Strategy Council. And also part of-- and this is where, actually, our thought leadership for digital accessibility comes and sits.

And in addition to that, we have employee resource groups for our workforce with disabilities. And really, the intent is to build a disability-confident workforce/workplace by having these organizations.

A lot of companies think, OK, well, how are we going to make this a priority? And again, I think if accessibility has a lot of alignment with DE&I objectives, other types of thoughts out there in terms of Environmental Social Governance, ESG. That's another thing that our companies are embracing. And accessibility does link to a lot of those areas in terms of social and governance.

And believe it or not, even environmental. One little fact that's out there is that, in terms of the carbon footprint for our digital space, that is larger than what our airplanes do in terms of a carbon footprint. And when we have a more efficient and universal-- with universal design for our digital landscape, then we are helping that environmental sustainability.

I know I've said a lot. And I'm probably veering off track. So let me pause there, see if there's any follow-up questions or maybe other comments.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Yeah, thank you. I think one of the things that I'm kind of getting from what you've shared is really this need and kind of in scope, and this is broad scope, that accessibility really touches all of the different aspects of an organization, particularly a large global organization.

I'm curious if you can share a little bit about how leadership can be a driving force in implementing accessibility, and how you go about maybe getting that buy-in and making sure that leadership really understands and can be an advocate for accessibility.

**STEPHEN FRAMIL:** Yes. That's a great question and, of course, an important one. Because so often, accessibility efforts are done at the more grassroots level or even mid-level. And it can be a challenge.

I think there's a few things depending on the audience that you're talking to. If you're talking to an IT audience, IT leadership, accessibility really is something that can really impact, influence security, privacy, cybersecurity.

A lot of the reasons why there may be data breaches, things of that nature, are because of human risk factors. And when you use universal design and accessibility design on your digital landscape, you're improving, universally, the human experience, and thereby mitigating to some extent any sort of cybersecurity issues. That's very important.

So it's often human error that leads to cybersecurity issues. And so when you design better, with universal design, you're designing for everyone, then you're going to help mitigate any potential cybersecurity issues.

That's of course-- most companies are cognizant of this. They're risk averse. And so if I'm speaking to and presenting, like, this is a way to avoid potential risk in the future, then this is one point that could be made.

If you're talking to commercial leadership-- and at least at Merck, we're a pharmaceutical company-- we have, according to a study that was done a couple of years ago, by the Global Economics of Disability, we've got 1.85 billion people with disabilities on the planet. It's about 23%. Around that, you have 3.3 billion caregivers, families and friends, who are part of that family.

And so what does that actually mean? Well, this study indicated that we have over 13 trillion in disposable income, income beyond the taxes and expenses and things that you have to have. And so just from a pure commercial point of view, it makes just good business sense to have accessibility design in everything that you're doing that reaches out to your customers.

But then what I found with accessibility and working with leadership is that it can be very personal. And I think all of us are going to experience some form of disability throughout our lives, whether it's something that is temporary, if we break a leg, then we are temporarily disabled.

It could be situational, where if you have a baby, a child, and you're carrying, you only can use one arm, that's situational. You just have the ability of one free arm to use. I can remember, with my first kid, as a baby, of holding her so long that I actually got carpal tunnel in my arm. And it was very painful with everything that I did. And of course, that eventually went away. And then you have disabilities that are more permanent. And so I think relatability is a big factor when you're talking with leadership.

There's also disabilities that are not visible. There could be all sorts of emotional disabilities or cognitive disabilities of that nature that aren't apparently visible. But everyone-- we're all human. And we're all going to age into disability as we grow older. And I just went to the eye doctor last week. And we're trying to figure out how to-- it's going to happen. And so this is where everyone, whether you have aging parents, you're dealing with disabilities.

I think this is something that everyone can relate to. And I think it's presenting that business case to leadership and making it relatable is where you're going to be able to find that empathy and find that support.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you so much, Steve. Lots of great thoughts here. We could certainly go on and on about this particular question. But for the sake of time, I'm going to move on. Jim, I'm curious if you could share a little bit about why you decided to take the initiative to include accessibility into your webcasts. And what are some of the capabilities that your team offers?

**JIM FOX:** So the why was basically being-- moving from research division to a global service, we have multiple countries with speaking multiple languages. So our first impact to be accessible for everyone was simultaneous interpretation. So with our webcast, the audience can select what language they would listen to the content in. They could also choose what language they want the webcast platform to be displayed in for navigation.

We have an option where the clients can provide the slide deck in different languages. So we built on that success by saying, OK, well, language was a barrier for the comprehension of content. Well, we looked at it a little bigger scope and, well, not everyone hears well. Or not everyone works in a place where they can have the speakers turned on.

So those that suffer with hearing loss, English as a second language-- for me, I can read French better than I can comprehend it listening. So I mean, that similar concept played very well into, why do we offer real-time captioning during our webcasts? So and then, one step further, for those with visual issues, reading the captioning is available where you're able to adjust the font size, the speed of the scroll, the color of the font, and the color of the background. So we really do try to offer accessibility for as many different use cases or needs that we can.

Basically, it's to try to level the playing field amongst all colleagues so we all have a fair shot of understanding the content and working collaboratively towards a common goal, which, at Merck, is new drugs and medicines to cure diseases.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Absolutely. Thank you. And can you share a little bit about how you're ensuring that you are prioritizing the quality as well as accessibility in your webcast production?

**JIM FOX:** Sure. It's more of a self-driven ensuring, where we, not just me, but my whole team, collectively pride ourselves on the quality of not only the picture quality, the sound quality of what we're creating, but the quality of our real-time captioning and our simultaneous interpreters as well.

So it goes for-- as far as utilizing professional interpreters that listen in English and speak the target language. We partner with key vendors that are known for high-quality captioning. So people have tried to push us into using speech-to-text captioning. Well, that works to a point. It's not very accurate. So with a human captioner, you get the comprehension and context clues about what is being communicated.

So captioning is not necessarily a word-for-word translation, but more of communicating what is being said so the end viewer can understand and react. So we push ourselves to offer that highest quality, especially since we-- we webcast the CEO, the senior leaders, all the way down to my own town hall meetings for my team. We want accurate content. And we want it to be delivered in the best way possible.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you. And I know we often hear about the technical challenges with implementing accessibility. And from a technical perspective, it certainly can be a little bit challenging to implement that. With these technical challenges, or with that technical component, how do you deal with that across such a large organization? And can you share some of the technical challenges to accessibility that maybe you've identified in your role, and how you overcame them?

**JIM FOX:** So I'll start with the unresolved role of challenges to accessibility. I've had meetings with Microsoft as part of other meetings. And I'll continue to say it to whoever will listen. The golden ring or the missing piece, to me, is adding sign language, AI sign language.

Number one, AI, I understand, has its limitations as far as accuracy. However, with AI, we're not having to pay talent and it can be turned on for all events.

So my goal is, if anyone out there has this capability, let me know. We have the good, quality transcript. So we have someone listening in English, a human, typing in English. And then the next step would be to have AI take that and display an avatar doing the hand gestures, et cetera. I know it's a huge ask and will never replace a human 100%, but it goes a long ways to accessibility.

So going back to what we were able to accomplish, we didn't have many challenges in implementing captioning. One challenge was just to ensure that the captioning did not interfere with the video packet delivery. So with a webcast, the first priority is, does it sound good? If we lose the picture, we can still hear the content.

So then the next thing is the video. Video we use for increased engagement because you can see facial expressions, hand gestures, things like that to better communicate your message. You can know if someone's laughing, making a joke, much easier than just reading a transcript or hearing them with audio only.

So we overcame that concern by including the captioning capability in our webcast platform with a button. So if they choose to view captioning, they click the button and it pops open a new window. So in that new window, it gives them the flexibility and freedom to change the color, the size, the speed of the captioning going, and arrange on their screen what's comfortable for them.

So by popping out into a new window, I call it open captioning. I know there's a technical term, but closed captioning is embedded in the video stream, which, when you're webcasting, you want to conserve as much bandwidth as possible. So with the open captioning, it gives it a lot-- pristine-quality captioning for people to read. Hope that answered your question.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Yeah, absolutely. And we had an audience question come in for you, Jim. Someone's asking, do you see particular issues with auto-captioning given the industry that you're in?

**JIM FOX:** I feel pressure, the justification of using human captioners versus AI captioners. Because with Zoom, with Webex, Teams-- I don't know about Webex. We don't use Webex. But with Teams and Zoom, for example, captioning is included in the platform. You click a button, there it is. It doesn't cost you any more.

So with businesses, they're always asking you, how can you remove cost from what you do? And some may see human captioner as a low-hanging fruit. But when it comes to quality and accuracy, it's what keeps it in play.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you. And we have another audience question coming in. Steve, I think this one might be a good one for you to give us an answer on. The question is, can you talk about how procurement affects accessibility at Merck? And they said, hint, Procure Access.

**STEPHEN FRAMIL:** OK. Good question. In fact, I do a lot of collaboration with the Disability:IN. So shout out for them. And Procure Access, that was actually an initiative last year that I was a part of, and putting that all together. And we're continuing forward to even build it out even more.

But basically, Procure Access is designed to ensure that, whether you're a buyer or a seller, that you're looking to make things more-- what you're buying, what you're selling, is more accessible.

And so at Merck, and from a supplier management perspective, this goes to ensuring that any of our vendors or third parties have the capability to deliver on accessibility. It is a company policy. And so like any of our policies around privacy, around either cyber security, drug safety, things of that nature, when we're using a third-party vendor, they need to be able to comport to those policies.

So accessibility is no different. And so one of our many workstreams within the accessibility office is to-- not only at the contract level, to ensure that the WCAG 2.1 AA standards are used in the delivery of anything in the digital space, but also assessments, things of that nature. And so that's a new workstream that we're continuing to work with supplier management, especially when it comes to contract renewal. They come around every once-- there's a regular life cycle to contract renewals. So ensuring that accessibility is part of that.

And so I'm of the-- and this may seem a little harsh, but accessibility is a rising tide. And if you're a technology company, and this is something that you're not necessarily weaving into the fabric of your code, then this could be dangerous in the future for your existence.

This is the rising tide. Rising tide lifts all boats. And I think accessibility and universal design is one of them. And so as-- for the most part, Merck is on the buyer side. And so it's really working with our suppliers and moving the needle in terms of ensuring accessibility in our platforms, our systems, things that we-- our everyday workforce tools such as Microsoft. Of course, they do great. But just ensuring that our suppliers and our agencies, agencies of record, have that capability.

It is a skill set, a UX skill set, that I think is increasingly more being adopted. I kind of bring the example of, if you remember a few years ago, when responsive design was new. And if you were going to-- basically being able to see anything, any URLs on any viewport sizes.

And it was new. Business units had to prioritize whether or not they were going to pay for it. And it was something that had to be evaluated. Well, today, everything is responsive. And it's just an assumption. And so it's part of the knowledge base. But I would expect that, a few years down the road, that accessibility is going to be so part of the digital fabric and universal design that I'll need to go find something else to do because that will be just the way the digital landscape is. So--

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you. And we have a couple more great audience questions coming in for you, Steve. You had kind of mentioned this earlier, but someone's asking, can you talk more about the correlation between accessibility and cybersecurity? And they mentioned the visual-only Captcha example as being an accessibility issue.

**STEPHEN FRAMIL:** Well, in terms of specific details, I can't get into that because I'm not an engineer specifically. But other than what I had mentioned just about improving on human risk factors in the design of technology, you really improve it for everyone and decrease, mitigate, the human error that's happening.

I think a lot of folks have heard of the curb-cut effect, and how, back in the 1950s, in Kalamazoo, Michigan, it was meant to really help the war veterans in wheelchairs and so forth. And of course, as we all know today, we all benefit at various times with a curb cut where the curb meets the sidewalk and so forth.

So I think, if you embrace universal design and accessibility design, providing the broadest range of equal access to the digital landscape, you just have a better design. And therefore, the human error, the risk that comes along with cybersecurity, is somewhat mitigated. But aside from that, I'm not an engineer and I can't speak to specific details.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you. And then one other attendee question referencing something that you said earlier on-- you had linked accessibility to carbon footprint. And they're interested in any references or resources you have for helping to either make or support that business case to stakeholders.

**STEPHEN FRAMIL:** Right. Well, quite honestly, this was where, in building our accessibility program here at Merck, I was doing my own research with a very well-known search engine. So the information is out there. I think it was something along the lines of the carbon footprint of the airline industry is 2.3% of the total, whereas the digital carbon footprint is 3.8%. So the metrics are out there on your search engine of choice.

And of course, that's what we were looking to curate, bring together, as we were making our business case for increased accessibility at our company.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you. And Jim, we had presented this question-- or a similar question-- to Steve earlier, but I want to hear from you. Do you have any tips or tricks that you've sort of learned along the way for getting budget or buy-in for accessible media?

**JIM FOX:** Yeah, definitely. You get executive buy-in. Typically, it trickles down. So if you can convince towards the top, you get buy-in as you proceed.

Basically, you need to demonstrate to that executive how implementing captioning or simultaneous interpretation, for example, will benefit them and their organizations. So we talked about how that benefits earlier.

And then, also, Steve mentioned the EBRGs, the Employee Business Resource Groups. Merck has a capability network as an EBRG group. So they're a global inclusive network for people with all disabilities and their allies. So by working with them for feedback, use cases, it's a good way to build that foundational support for your business case.

**STEPHEN**

Yeah, and if I could just add another thing about-- and I could remember having these discussions with folks within various EBRGs and of course D&I. And the discussion was, how do we really push forward with whatever our EBRG is? And this was around the capability network that Jim mentioned.

**FRAMIL:**

And this is where digital accessibility is actually a very tangible thing to advance the interest and agenda of D&I and the capability network, where you can actually-- it's doing things in the digital landscape to improve equal access. That's a very tangible thing that I think can really bring to life DE&I and related business resource groups.

**ELISA LEWIS:**

Thank you. And then Steve, you had touched on this a bit earlier, but we have an attendee question that asks about whether there are sort of primary categories that you've segmented accessibility into for the company to help provide ownership and guidance, examples being physical access, digital, IT, HR, communications, and so on. But the second half of the question is, how is this ownership structured? And they were wondering, do you have a council that you lead?

**STEPHEN**

So yes. Yes to all that. Going back to the question, I mean, accessibility, broadly, we've got workforce accommodations, that's led by HR; you have facilities, and that's, of course, by our facilities management; and then, of course, the digital accessibility, which is cosponsored between HR, IT, and commercial.

**FRAMIL:**

But within each of those areas, when you think about the what, we've got a roadmap with a growing number of workstreams really taking our digital landscape and trying to progress accessibility for it. So let me just break that down. Of course, we've got our external websites and mobile apps. That's one workstream. We've got our internal sites. That, of course, is more for the workforce audience. We have various marketing communications, whether it's email banner ads, so forth.

Our systems and platforms, that's another workstream in terms of our systems of record, how we conduct business as a company. Supplier management, as I mentioned before, is another workstream ensuring that accessibility is in the contracts, and assessments, and RFPs.

Electronic documents, mainly PDFs, ensuring that all of our electronic documents are accessible. And using our policy for records and information management lifecycle to when a document is up for renewal to ensure that the next time it is renewed, it is accessible. So it's kind of a common sense way of remediation. And then, of course, we have our workforce tools, our everyday tools that we use, whether it's Office 365 and things like that.

So now, in terms of our external websites, and mobile apps, and things of that nature, it's not our IT organization that owns them. It's really the business unit that would own their particular site. And so they are responsible for the cost of doing business of their digital asset. And so that's where the responsibility lies. And of course, the enablement is with IT helping that out.

In terms of a council, we do have the Digital Accessibility Leadership Team cross-organizational to be able to provide that steering, that direction, that sponsorship, and be able to make decisions. I think one example that is out there in the public for everyone to see, if you got to merck.com, go down to the footer, you'll see the accessibility statement. You can click on that. And that is the result of our leadership team coming together and saying, OK, what do we want to say in terms of our corporate accessibility statement for the public at large?



And so really looking to a leadership team to provide that guidance, that sponsorship, and that decisioning at the high level. And then beneath that, we've got an action working team that really drives forward with an array of initiatives, including design, accessibility design-- that's a new initiative that's gathering momentum at the moment-- and among many others.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you. And Steve, maybe you can kick us off with answering this next question. And Jim, certainly feel free to add any additional thoughts. Do you have any thoughts of what should be included in either a digital or a general accessibility policy? And how are you ensuring that people with disabilities are a part of the conversation?

**STEPHEN FRAMIL:** That's a great question. In terms of the scope, I've always said this is probably one of the most far-reaching policies that the company has. And so it has ones and zeros here in scope, basically, all the way from, obviously, websites to-- I think I mentioned all of them out there-- our various workstreams. So our scope is very, very large.

In terms of the decisioning, bringing that together, our policy was created by a cross-organizational group that I led. But also going back to what I initially said at the beginning of the call here was where our thought leadership came from. And that really is derived from our Disability Inclusion Strategy Council, and really bringing that perspective as to the why. Why are we doing this in the first place? And I think, as we go forward, I think using-- bringing in folks with various disabilities to provide that real perspective will be invaluable.

One thing I can comment, when we do our manual testing of our website, our partner, we do use-- have individuals with disabilities using assistive technology tools to do the testing on the digital assets. And so we are bringing in that perspective in the testing aspect of our implementation and remediation. I'll turn it over to Jim though.

**JIM FOX:** Thanks, Steve. And I can answer the part about how are people with disabilities brought into the conversation. So it's really three points. It's requirements gathering-- what is it that's not available now, and what do you need or want to make the experience better? We also include them during our proof-of-concept testing. So we develop a solution, we prove it out before we launch it. And then we tweak it if we don't get it just right.

And then, finally, the third one is continuous feedback. So whether it's through various internal social channels, or through exit surveys that we have at the end of every webcast, there's an opportunity for people to provide feedback. So it actually is a good lifecycle loop there.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Great. Thank you both. And there's another question for each of you. Maybe Jim, if you want to kick us off. But how do you stay up to date on accessibility regulations and best practices, as Merck or either of you as individuals part of any groups? I know Steve, you had mentioned Disability:IN. But yeah, go ahead, Jim.

**JIM FOX:** So, staying current. So I am not an industry expert on the law and compliance issues. So this is where we have great partners. Some may call them vendors, but that's an understatement because they truly partner with us to provide a better solution. So by leveraging our partners.

And I'm also part of professional associations as well where you benchmark with other peers doing the same thing that you are, but just for other organizations. What are they doing? How can-- we always try to be the leader in what we can provide, but we are always open to what is the next best thing to keep us fresh, current, as well as available. I want to say compliant, but comprehensive communication.

So-- you can cut that last comment out because I stumbled on it. But it is truly the all-inclusive nature. How can we bring it to you better, faster, cheaper?

**STEPHEN  
FRAMIL:**

I think--

[DOGS SCRATCHING AT DOOR]

Sorry for the dogs out there. I think that's one of the-- as we've grown this program at Merck over the last, just really last two or three years, the-- it didn't start off-- this was part of one of many things that was part of my particular role. And also, really kind of working in a matrix fashion across the company.

And I think this is where it's really exciting at Merck is where we're really recognizing the need to have kind of a centralized office, as it were, for accessibility, and to be able to provide that, allow for that bandwidth for staying current, rather than being reactive, being proactive. That would be an area that I would love to spend more time.

I see it as it comes across the news feed when a new bill gets introduced into Congress, whether-- a bicameral bill, recently, with Tammy Duckworth and another Congressman, around accessibility. And I think, very soon, various laws and legislation that are going to be put in place that really bolster accessibility.

Some countries-- and of course, we're a global company. So in other countries, they have laws in place, Canada with its law as of January 1, 2021. I know Israel has some legislation that's very particular to accessibility. But the idea of having the bandwidth. And it looks like Merck is moving in that direction, which is very exciting to kind of have that centralized seat of authority and an office, as it were.

And of course, it's really-- inasmuch as possible, I try to get involved in various think tanks such as Disability:IN to learn from other large companies and get ideas. And I think that's been critical to what we've been trying to do here at Merck. So I'm always on the lookout for those various opportunities.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you. And as we begin to kind of wrap up the conversation today and get into final housekeeping notes, I'm hoping we can end on the question, what does accessibility mean to you? And Steve, if you want to go ahead and get us started and then hand it over to Jim.

**STEPHEN  
FRAMIL:**

Well, that's a very, very good question. And when I started accessibility-- I didn't start it at Merck. It was sort of presented to me. And we started to build the program. But then, after there's time to reflect a little bit-- I've had multiple careers in my life. And my background is not in IT, it's not in technology, it's not in pharmaceuticals, it's not in bio life sciences. I have a doctorate in music.

And in a previous life before this, I had created an inner-city music conservatory where its mission was to make great music accessible to everyone. And that's where I realized, this accessibility theme has been around with me personally for quite a while. And I continue to do that today in other various music ventures that I still have going, where it's really wanting to break down the barriers of demographics and everything to make sure that everyone has equal access to music.

And so it was an easy connection for me when Digital Accessibility at Merck was like-- in spirit, it is very similar. It's like, we're just creating-- making sure equal access to our digital landscape. And so I think it's one of those personal epiphanies that one has when you think, hey, this accessibility thing has been on my mind for many, many years now.

And so that's where I-- that's what it means to me personally. I think equal access for anything is kind of where I'm coming from.

**JIM FOX:** Thanks, Steve. To me, being accessible is to make and distribute content that we create, in the most consumable way, while also recognizing that not everyone is able to consume the content in the exact same way. So it's keeping your mind open as to your different audience types and their specific needs.

**ELISA LEWIS:** Great. Thank you both for sharing that. Thank you, Steve and Jim, for a fantastic discussion. Thank you to our audience members for some great, thoughtful questions coming in. And thank you to everyone for joining us today.

**JIM FOX:** Thank you.

**STEPHEN** Thank you very much. Pleasure.

**FRAMIL:**

**ELISA LEWIS:** Thank you.