

LILY BOND: Welcome everyone, and thank you for joining this webinar entitled Are You at Risk? Identifying Web Accessibility Gaps at Your Organization.

I'm Lily Bond from 3Play Media, and I'll be moderating today. I'm joined by Mike Paciello, the founding partner at The Paciello Group, which is an accessibility agency. Mike is cochair of the United States Federal Access Boards Telecommunications and Electronic Information Technology Advisory Committee, co-founder of the International Committee for Accessible Document Design, and was recognized by President Bill Clinton for his contribution to the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative.

He has a great presentation prepared for you today. We have about 45 minutes slated for that session, along with 15 minutes for questions and answers. And this webinar is being presented in conjunction with the Online Learning Consortium. And they wanted to let you know about a workshop that they're hosting in September, which you can register for on their website.

And with that, I'm going to hand it off to Mike, who has a great presentation prepared.

MIKE PACIELLO: OK, I think my screen is up and available. Lily, if you can confirm that everyone can see it.

LILY BOND: Yep, looks great.

MIKE PACIELLO: So thank you to everyone that was able to attend today. Apologies for missing last week, just a work-related concern there. But we'll get right into our presentation today. I have a lot of material to cover. I hope I can do it in 45 minutes or 46. We'll see what happens.

Are you at risk identifying web accessibility gaps at your organization? I really want to stress the notion of organization here. So we're not necessarily looking at any one particular industry, but we're looking at organizations. So you may be in a university setting, education, could be government possibly, commercial, industry, or even a nonprofit. Most of the principles that we'll discuss here today in terms of risk, gap analysis, and something I want to talk about in terms of a break with the norm where accessibility is concerned and accessibility thinking comes into play. So we'll look at those and try to move forward and see if we can create something that's engaging for you and elicits questions.

So the foundation stones of risk are probably not a surprise to most of you. Anyone that's

familiar with accessibility understands that accessibility laws and standards exist-- not just here in the US, for example, but international standards. The de facto standards where the web is concerned, whether it's a website, web application, web service, webinar, are the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. That's the WCAG. 2.0 version has been out for several years now and is promoted, designed, developed, and promulgated by the Web Accessibility Initiative office out of MIT, the W3C. So they've become more or less the de facto standards worldwide and internationally.

Now they are very closely aligned with Section 508-- the 2.0 standards, not so much with the current version of Section 508, which has been around practically since Moses, but more truthfully since 2001. And these particular requirements in the current version of Section 508 are more or less outdated. Some apply in principle. But they certainly have been replaced by the WCAG 2.0 requirements.

Section 508, as many know, is under revision. It is on its last legs in terms of that revision process at the government level. And about 2 and 1/2 weeks ago at the M-Enabling conference, the executive director of the access board, David Capozzi, informed the audience that it looked like it was going to be around October when the refresh would officially be released in terms of the new standard for government procurement.

Just a note about that-- I think oftentimes people get confused with what Section 508 actually does, what it mandates. It actually mandates federal agencies and organizations. By default, though, because it's a procurement standard-- that is, if you are a seller of your services or your wares or your products to the federal government, well, then you're pretty much going to have to fall into line and meet those requirements as well. So it is something to keep in mind.

Something else I'd like to just comment on just very briefly, oftentimes people talk to me about ADA requirements for the web. And while the ADA has an awful lot to do in terms of being an aid to individuals with disabilities in the United States, officially it doesn't mandate web accessibility. However, there certainly has been an awful lot of work that's been done, particularly spearheaded by the Department of Justice, in language that currently exists in the current form of the American with Disabilities Act to ensure that, frankly speaking, if you've got any kind of online digital presence whatsoever, you really should be focusing on accessibility to people with disabilities.

A couple of other things just to note-- again, where risk is involved here, the risk is, in the

United States, it's a lawsuit and governance models at that level. There's an awful lot in the news today about lawsuits that have been filed, especially over the last six to nine months. Certainly Department of Justice has had their own role in this area, particularly in Title II in education. So there's a lot of risk there for private industries particularly, not to mention postsecondary education and other organizations of like. So that's an awful lot where risk kind of lies.

Another interesting set of standards that I think are becoming more and more prominent in terms of emerging technology and digital technology is the 21st Century Communications Video and Accessibility Act. And there, while that particular act doesn't have explicit nor was it intended to have explicit technical standards, it has a foundation of principles in terms of design and development for emerging technologies and browser based technologies, advanced communications services, and products that exist and are common on the web today. So it's not unusual to see organizations starting to look at things like voiceover IP and their product support at that level. The gaming industry certainly has an interest in ACS and accessibility at that level too.

And finally there are a number of international standards in Europe, in Canada, in Australia, Japan, just to name a few, that again, by and large, default to the WCAG 2.0 standards for web accessibility.

When you find that you've been audited or analyzed, perhaps you do a little self-assessment. You often end up with a picture similar to what I have here on my slides. Which for those that are listening in on this particular presentation and don't have access to the slides or can't see them, it's basically a report. It's the notion of a report with fails all over the place, which is not uncommon in most deep level audits and analysis of web environments, web applications, web services particularly.

Or you may be faced in seeing the experience that this often happens to many of us. This picture that I have on my screen right now is a picture of a person who's kind of got that "oh my" effect after they've just been handed a 6,000 page auditing report. And the first thing they're saying, you're telling me I have 433 alt text to fix? So alternative text on images is not an uncommon or an unusual area where enhancing your web environment needs to be done.

Again, I think for those that are listening and have any experience in this field, quite often this is, ironically enough, not really that far askew from the kind of reaction that we often see in the

industry. Because frankly they just don't have accessibility ability built into their design development and organizational culture, which we will address in today's presentation.

And in fact that's where we're headed right now-- identifying web accessibility gaps at or within your organization. And again just to remind you, we're not talking here about any one type of industry or any type of vertical market or type of organization. The rest of this presentation-- the whole entire presentation-- is one that can be applied throughout any organization, including my own. So all of us have a responsibility to commitment, progress to accessibility in behalf of our colleagues and our friends in the disability world.

So first thing is I ask the question, what if we define accessibility as exactly that, making a commitment and demonstrating progress? What does it look like? What does that feel like? What would accessibility really look like within an organization?

Well it kind of goes to the thought of being mature from an accessibility standpoint. It's moving your organization and moving it forward, moving it above and beyond, frankly speaking, what compliance requires, along a maturity continuum such that you're building a culture-- an internal culture-- of accessibility. People, by and large, when we walk into organizations who may have just been approached about accessibility for one reason or another, don't really appreciate the fact that accessibility now is really designing for all people and developing for all people.

And yet, unfortunately, in terms of design and development and governance, it's really not well-known. And this is something that many organizations are struggling with and trying to deal with today. It's a gap-- it's a huge gap-- between those that know and those that don't.

So I have here at the start of this accessibility and maturity continuum. And at TPG, we've kind of narrowed it down through some work of my own folks. And I think I may have forgotten to give them credit. I wanted to just note that Sarah Horton and David Sloan, two folks on our TPG team, really helped to pull the bulk of this material together for me for today's session.

So part of that includes this accessibility maturity continuum. It starts with identifying the issues, then prioritizing them, injecting them, so to speak, and finally integrating them throughout the organization. Now, I'm not just talking about technical aspects of accessibility here. You're going to find that throughout today's presentation, we're going to be seeing how important it is to integrate accessibility into the very fiber and the very culture-- top to bottom, left to right, so to speak, across the corporation or across the organization.

So let's look at that first one in terms of identifying what do we mean what we talk about identify and the accessibility/maturity continuum. Well obviously we're certainly talking about identifying and repairing accessibility issues. Most likely those are based on standards compliance.

An interesting note about standards compliance-- while the W3C has done an awesome job through the Web Accessibility Initiative to establish principles and guidelines and standards-- ISO Standards in fact-- where accessibility is concerned, there's nothing to state that a corporation can't build its own internal standards. And in fact, many organizations do exactly that. They may take the encyclopedia, so to speak, of accessibility standards, examine them within the common structure of a standards organization within a company-- this is something that's very typical of many organizations-- and then build your own notion of standards.

So compliance can be at that level. But generally speaking, we know it to be something that is more akin with what the W3C has pulled together, and certainly what we see that exists today in the Section 508 refresh.

What's the driver? Well, again, that's going to be a key part of that decision process within your organization. It could be legislation. It could be reputation. It could be business benefits. We're hoping, frankly speaking-- and this is a big area that you see emphasized today-- we're hoping that there's a notion of improving user experience-- and we'll talk a little bit more about what that means-- and certainly user demand, right?

So we live in a digital economy. People with disabilities are using the internet and the web and all of the various niceties of it, in all of the utility of the web, including the Internet of Things, the web of things, smartphones, smart houses, sensory technologies. It is creating, by its very fabric and very nature, user demand, by natural circumstances, for people with disabilities. So that may in fact be a primary driver.

A good example would be is if you're a storefront and you have a web storefront, you're probably seeing more customer-service related requirements and needs by people with disabilities, because it's certainly much easier for a person who has, for example, a visual disability or a physical disability, mobility disability, to do online shopping than it is to get oneself out of the home, so to speak, and down to the local grocery store or consumer goods store. So these drivers are really critical to understanding what's the next step in establishing that accessibility/maturity for your organization.

Now, there are a number of activities that would be associated with identifying, again, and being part of the identification aspect of our accessibility and maturity. So it may be that you have to look at methodologies within an organization. You might have to look at samples to test.

Right now we are talking about testing for websites, web apps, web services, and things along those lines. So how do you go about testing, what's your process for identifying and auditing and analyzing a site? Do you have to samples to test? Can you use a sampling type strategy? It's a very common way of a very thorough approach. Do you have test samples that you can use against standards? Then you have some notion of recording and writing up those issues, and then going and moving forth on the full testing or recommending code fixes.

The deliverables associated with that aspect of the continuum is, you may get, like we saw earlier, a picture of an audit result spreadsheet. You might get something analogous to what we call accommodations report. So remember, if you use it kind of a sampling strategy-- if you, for example, work for an organization and you're pumping out millions of web pages-- maybe thousands a day, maybe millions in a year, maybe billions if you have an online organization analogous to an Amazon, a Google, a Facebook, and things along those lines-- certainly you can spider those sites. I mean, you could go through and test every site and every page and generate a number of-- a bug or error report that way.

But if you go through the sampling if you're developing your web environment using a common development environment, sampling usually works pretty well. And you're trying to feed this back to the developers who have a responsibility for ensuring the accessibility of your web areas.

So accommodations report usually is very helpful for them. It gives them a good mindset. For example, they're going to see, well, every form needs to make sure that it's properly identified and associated with its controls. OK, so I know that. I'm going to go through and look for all my forms to make sure that they've got the right HTML code to make them work. I think Jared Smith has tomorrow's discussion. And he'll talk a little bit more about how to go about doing that in a really fine way.

You'll want to look towards accessibility documentation, perhaps if you do have, for example, a relationship, a business relationship with a federal agency. Some of the states have

requirements around voluntary product accessibility templates, a report that basically says, here's the state of my application or my web service in terms of 508 compliance. You might consider helpdesk support, and then of course some sort of remediation support. All of these things kind of make up the deliverables in the identity and the identification of various web accessibility reports.

So here on my slide is just kind of an example of a spreadsheet that provides some analysis around a web environment. And you kind of get a notion of, its WCAG 2.0, level A. There's AA, AAA, depending again what your requirements and demands are. And we talk about headers and footers and homepage and call out the various technical standards there in terms of keyboard accessibility, seizures, timing and controls associated with those things. And your report might look like this.

Generally speaking, what you're really trying to do is you're trying to provide enough detail so that it's actionable. And that's really what you want. This report gives you insights into frequency as well as distribution of issues. It allows you kind of to pull together an estimate in relation to the impact. It may very well be that certain errors that are found that require some sort of remediation have less impact on the site, or maybe even where they're located, in terms of people and landing on your pages or use of that particular page, in some way or form. And then of course putting some kind of number to the amount of effort that would be required to enhance and remediate those issues. It also gives you some insight into the design, both at the UX standpoint and just from the standard UI design and code changes that are required to repair those issues.

Potential outcomes from that process-- accessibility is documented within the organization. If you have a third-party vendor or another organization who's chartered to fix those issues, they've got something they could rely on and look at. And then in turn the vendor or that other part of the organization can engage in consultancy or engages a third-party consultancy who are experts around accessibility to do retest and a revised notion of your accessibility documentation-- for example, a [INAUDIBLE].

OK, so let's talk about prioritization now. So prioritization is a notion of evaluation and repair activities based on real world impact. And that's a real critical aspect of your prioritization process.

So how active are organizations in researching difficulties faced by customers with disabilities?

So if you have an organization that has many organizations-- like say, for example, the US government, it's built upon one big government that has a number of different organizations. How active are they in researching difficulties? This may be a question that you just have to kind of do introspectively and kind of a self-assessment-- you know, so a lot of different levels, very, somewhat, not very, maybe not at all.

The context of that discussion is around the objects that you see on the bulleted list here on my slide. You may be involved with some legal obligation to provide accessibility. You may have some custom-built system fails to meet accessibility requirements. You may get involved or may have, for example, within your organization, a group of users with disabilities who are demanding accessibility improvements. It's not unusual, again, for example to be in a university environment or in a corporate environment or in a government environment where individuals with disabilities are there.

Whether they're self-identified is really perhaps not the big issue here. The point is if you have users, just like you have clients and customers, who are critical to your organization in one form or another, then it may very well be that you're starting to see some of them talk up the issue and the need for demanding accessibility, which relates to some of the activities.

How do you go about finding out what their needs really are? Well, it's not unusual for people to call up-- I do it myself-- customer service. I call up a number. I have a complaint or maybe I'm having a problem. And you know, I'm trying to describe what my problem is to someone on the other end. And that person's really trying to decipher what in the world I'm talking about.

And the same thing can be true in terms of web accessibility. Empathic design and empathic listening is absolutely crucial. So we recommend conducting contextual interviews.

CI is a usability methodology that goes back a long way. And it's a great way, actually, to be proactive rather than reactive. Because you start to learn how individuals, say for example, buy things, and what path, what route, what workflow they take in order to do that. The workflow and the paths that users with disabilities take are probably different from workflows and paths that users without disabilities have. So using CI as a method to understand that and why they do that will give you a huge, huge lift and advantage in the design development of your web environment.

Then you can create a sampling strategy based on the insights you get from those interviews. Very, very helpful, something that, again, I know in my organization we're very, very proactive

about in our UX group and really work with our clients to do that.

Some of the deliverables associated with a CI, for example, is you get this kind of same as identify activity. You get task-based sampling that you can provide that helps your designers and developers perhaps make some adjustments to their roots and their paths and their workflows, and most importantly, get first person perspectives. And in a report environment, that could be really telling.

In fact, a little bit later on, you'll actually see some of the comments of individuals and what they've made. Getting that kind of first person understanding and perspective of what the challenges are and what the barriers are in an environment, and then delivering successfully to that is a huge win for any organization.

Insights gained-- and again, taking this from a notion of prioritization of our web environment, your web environment, you gain insight into real issues that are encountered by users and individuals with disabilities. And as a result, accessibility issues are not surfaced in standards review. By that I mean things that typically wouldn't come up do show up, and now you see them. And in terms of the matrix of prioritization, you're able to figure out, OK, this is something big that I need to deal with. This is perhaps not as urgent or as critical, so we can address at a later time. Those are the kind of valuable insights that you get.

The outcomes are as noted here. You get to partner with user groups to improve accessibility. I know a number of organizations that do exactly that. We do. We have some great relationships with a number of user groups representing various disability constituency organizations and users. And it's a fabulous, a strong, a collegial working relationship. And we all have the same goal in mind.

We also get to focus, when you take this approach, on real issues that impact stakeholders. So that's a big one. And then of course you fix issues that are related to accessible user experience, or AUX as we like to call it.

So we've gone through identifying the problems. Now we've prioritized them. How do we get it in? How do inject this into our organization, into our development environment? Well, injecting accessibility is about best practices, frankly speaking. And it's not just around development. It's around design and development.

I find, ironically enough, having been in this particular area for 30 plus years, that those

individuals that I worked with long ago, back in-- we used to call it HCI, and then eventually it became usability, and now it's more user experience-- that we would talk about designing for all users, but only in terms of lip service. It really wasn't holistic user experience where people with disabilities were included in that large body. And I still find that that's true, by and large, by most design organizations.

The awareness factor is higher than it was certainly 10 years ago, five years, 10 years ago. But there's an awful lot that needs to go into it. So a good place to put this into is get it into your best practices documents and repositories.

So again, you ask questions upfront. What is the most important phase of the design develop process to address where accessibility is concerned? That's only something you can do. Is it strategy? Is it the corporate strategy and how they approach the development and design of their web environments, their web apps, their web services? Is it the design? Is there a flaw in the design and the methodologies associated with that? Maybe it's the content. It could be something, perhaps, in an e-learning environment or a digital library systems. It could very well be that the content itself needs to be relooked at in terms of its level of import in the design development process.

It could be the development. Very likely it's going to have some notion of development requirements there. And then of course even your QA is very likely to be affected. Again, we find that very, very few organizations truly understand how to test for accessibility.

And by that, I especially mean in terms of compatibility with assistive technologies that are common to the user experience of people with disabilities. They just don't know how to test for them. They haven't figured out that, perhaps again, getting in touch with users with disabilities, to get them involved in that testing environment, in that QA environment, to make sure they're testing properly and thoroughly, is a big win.

They haven't figured out, for example, that through this entire thing, there is a there is a lifecycle of development. There is design. There is strategy. There is development. There's QA. And through all of that, there's this threaded notion of accessibility that has to be woven in between each channel, so to speak.

So context, again, is really up to you. Does your organization understand the cost of remediation? And what happens if that remediation itself is ineffective?

Your organization has to know its own current processes and where the holes, where those gaps exist that don't support accessibility. Your organization then needs to seek to address accessibility early in the process and improve the process.

I want to see something else too because I think sometimes it gets confused. Many people, for example, see testing and quality assurance testing for accessibility as kind of this one-off type of way, like you do automated testing or you just do user testing, or you kind of do an expert review and analysis. None of those in and of themselves work perfectly by themselves. You need all of them to be closely integrated and closely woven into your design and development lifecycle process. And then you're looking at a more complete, more holistic solution.

So activities associated with this-- you can determine appropriate interaction points and methods. You can review and respond to design artifacts.

The deliverables come in many different ways. You might have user stories, design reviews-- say in terms of wireframe and style guides-- could be delivered in training around best practices, perhaps even code library reviews. We've done many of those. Those are usually very, very effective so that what you've got out of the box, in terms of your developers, is already meaningful and usable because it's been coded properly in terms of accessibility requirements there. And then some QA test design implementation at that level.

You get a number of different insights. You have optimal time to address accessibility design in development lifecycle. Roles and responsibilities with respect to accessibility are given. They come out with clarity. You start to see and can distinguish who has what role, who's responsible, and who's accountable for what aspect of accessibility within that organization. And then that leads you to developing appropriate and effective ways of communicating accessibility knowledge and do that knowledge share throughout the organization.

Outcomes-- you're addressing accessibility issues, and you're building-- and this is critical. You're building internal capacity. And that's really what you want to do. You don't want to be living off of TPG's knowledge for the rest of your life, right? You don't want a third-party vendor to be your total lifeline into the millennium of accessibility. What you really want to do is build accessibility into the fabric of your organization, bring down the cost, minimize any risk associated with web accessibility or software accessibility ability or ICT accessibility, as far as that's concerned.

The last area here is integration. So you want to have a goal or establish a goal of integrating

accessibility best practices into-- and I said this right out of the box-- into the culture and into your practice. You want to do a kind of break-with. And I'm going to talk about what that break-with looks like in just a few minutes. But you want to break with the norm. Don't be reactionary. Be proactive and integrate accessibility into your best practices.

So again, it takes you to some thought, who you are, and what your responsibility is, and how culture and practice is integrated into your organization. Government, finance, technology, education, health care, a number of different areas where we find organizations are receptive to this transformation and this integration of accessibility into the culture.

So some context-- advocacy groups may be complaining to your organization about digital accessibility. Maybe your own organization can't fix all its IT services where accessibility is concerned. Or it could be that you're a little bit further-- your organization understands that it has some problems. But it's a culture change. It's a perception. It's, well, I don't see a business value proposition around accessibility. What I see is lawsuits and lawsuit avoidance. You find out that there is a huge value proposition when it's properly integrated within the culture, and it's a big win.

This will result in various activities. We talked about performing gap analysis to understand your current state. Build some understanding around where you like to see your organization going, or maybe it is just a single website. And that's what you're responsible for, so you have some notion of what the future state of that website looks like. You get to access the gaps between the current and the future state and then find those holes and start the remediation path. That takes you into a roadmap report and then to an ongoing commitment and partnership throughout the organization.

It comes with a number of details-- definition of what the future state is and what you'd like it to be, where it should be, especially where compliance is concerned, right? You look at some of your assets and the opportunities supporting them, challenges and barriers that you're going to have to look at and address-- who's going to address them, why they should be addressed, how they'll be addressed.

And then you make sure they develop this roadmap so that you've got this notion of accessibility in practice. It becomes the foundation cornerstone for accessibility in your organization. And you ensure that your policies and your organization supported it.

A number of insights that come along with this-- perceptions of accessibility, responsibility

within an organization. They change. People start to value one another and value who we are, what we do, and our responsibility to one another. You gain great insight into governance models and the requirements, and you can advance that agenda within your organization. And then, of course, you can develop requirements for activities and change.

Outcomes-- you've got an organization now that makes a visible commitment to providing accessible IT services as a possibility. You have an organization that embarks on an initiative to address shortcomings in their existing services. And you have an organization that can establish policy processes that support accessibility in its services.

So "An Accessible Design Maturity Continuum" is a paper and presentation that David Sloan of TPG and our UX research lead has designed. I encourage you to research that. We have a great blog on it. But if you just go to the URL that's on this page, uxfor.us. Actually it's [ux for dot us slash mature dash it](http://uxfor.us/mature). And you'll see a great paper in that context.

So we're going back. Where is your organization currently on the accessibility and maturity continuum? Is it identifying around compliance? Are you prioritizing in certain targeted priorities? Are you injecting it? Are you already giving it some attention? And have you integrated it into the culture and practice of your organization? That's something only you can answer.

Accessibility process standards help you to engage your organization in activities that demonstrate commitment and show progress. So we encourage you to make a commitment to IT accessibility. It comes with accountability and it comes with responsibility. It may be that you have to designate a senior official for plain writing around the processes and the policies of the company. You may have to explain your corporate policy to staff. You may have to establish procedures to oversee the implementation of that act or policy.

You'll probably have to train your agency. You'll need to designate your staff as points of contact for agency, plain writing in terms of web pages and how things are well documented. And you may have to pull together and post-compliance page.

There are a number of different activities in that accessibility continuum. Leadership roles, particularly a CAO, Chief Accessibility Officer, is becoming very popular in organizations. You might look at a director of user experience, accessibility program leads, and accessibility specialist. But what you really want to do is establish an accessibility baseline and track

progress.

That may involve setting standards. It could be the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. It could be the 508 refresh. It could be the [INAUDIBLE] Accessibility Act. Wherever you are, whatever you do, you need to set a standard. You need to define a scope, teaching and learning, research, external communications of business processes, as well as internal communications and business processes. You need to foster a community of practice within your organization.

Integrate usability and accessibility-- don't separate the two. They work hand in hand. And integrate them into your existing IT facilities.

Tie accessibility ability into existing professional development and training activities that you have throughout your organizations. Build the culture. And then include expectations around accessibility awareness and skills in position descriptions.

So you get a notion of teamwork here on this particular picture that I have here on my slide. It's all about people working together, committed to making progress, and targeting success.

So as I head towards my conclusion here-- I'm sure the folks at 3Play Media are starting to bite their fingernails on my timing-- let me just go through this last couple of slides.

BJ Fogg, a well-known friend and advocate to accessibility, said, "There are two ways to creating lasting change-- taking baby steps-- and feeling good about that-- and changing your environment."

We're going to reverse the order here. We're going to talk about changing your environment. This is where I get a little excited. Changing the environment is about radical accessibility.

So I'm going to go through a couple questions. And all I want you to do is just think about the questions and some of the points that follow. What if, for example, we prioritized people with disabilities when making design decisions? With focus on people with disabilities, user experience activities focus on PWDs, People with Disabilities. Your accessibility activities are not isolated to quality assurance only. Your recruitment within your organization requires accessibility skills and knowledge. And there are no accessibility specialist.

Here's another question. What if accessibility was integrated into training and education programs? So with integrated accessibility education, accessibility now becomes a core

literacy, or digital literacy, as it says here on the slide. There are no accessibility majors or specialists. Wouldn't that be a novelty within your organization? Accessibility then becomes part of a continuing professional development. And there is no accessibility certification.

Why? It's built into the organization. We would like to get, those of us in the accessibility profession, those of us with disabilities, would like to get to a point in life where disability and accessibility become completely invisible and transparent, because they are just part of the fabric and the fiber of an organization at every level.

What if accessibility investment was for new products rather than fixing existing ones? There's a nice idea. So you have a focus on new products. You make the investment in resources for accessibility development. There are no such things as accessibility audits. The accessibility efforts focus on improving process. And there is no remediation of accessibility issues at all.

Again, just to cope BJ Fogg, "When people feel successful taking baby steps, they often find themselves wanting to make big changes, including their environment."

Look at what a couple of people have said along those lines. Becky Reed said, "We have an organizational mandate that UX won't hand anything to engineering that cannot be made accessible."

Rick Ferrie said, "If I could call it something other than accessibility, I would." So would I. "I'd call it design that works for everyone, or good design."

So that's what that accessibility/maturity continuum is all about-- identifying, prioritizing, injecting, and integrating accessibility into your organization. Thank you.

LILY BOND:

Thank you so much, Mike. Great timing. And just a really, really wonderful presentation.

So now we are going to get into Q&A. There are some questions coming in. And I want to encourage everyone to continue to ask them. We have about 15 minutes for that.

I wanted to mention a few webinars that we have coming up. As Mike mentioned, tomorrow we have a webinar on implementing and evaluating web application accessibility with Jared Smith from WebAIM, which will be a really great continuation of this presentation. July 29, we have a webinar with Yahoo on their corporate accessibility. August 4 we have a webinar on the of recent lawsuits on video accessibility. And on September 29, Lainey Feingold, who is an internationally recognized disability rights lawyer, will be getting a 2016 legal update on digital

access cases. You can register for those on our website.

So Mike, the first question we have here is, what's the best way to reach out to user groups to start integrating them into our design and development process?

MIKE PACIELLO: Excellent question. And I would just tell you to do the same thing that I did very early on. Generally speaking, there are local communities and local organizations supporting people with disabilities. You can look them up on the web. You could check with your local state agency or your local city agency. But you want to look for some of the more well-known organizations that could help you as well, say for example the National Federation for the Blind, the National Association for the Deaf, the UCP organization. United Cerebral Palsy has a lot of satellite organizations.

I would just go out, pick up the phone, jump on a Skype, tweet it. It's not too hard to find organizations supporting various constituency organizations with disabilities.

LILY BOND: Thank you, Mike. The next question here is, someone is asking if you said that the Section 508 refresh is now scheduled for October of 2016, and whether or not you have any other updates about that refresh.

MIKE PACIELLO: Officially what I said was that the executive director of the Access Board, David Capozzi, announced to the audience at the M-Enabling conference about two or three weeks ago-- oh, it's close to a month now already-- that it looked like the 508 refresh would become public in October, in the fall. That's as much as I can tell you at this point without getting myself hurt.

LILY BOND: Thanks, Mike. That's really exciting news. Thank you for sharing. Another question here is, how do you handle accessibility-- for example, captions-- on mobile devices.

MIKE PACIELLO: Boy, another excellent question. So the SEC as you know has a number of requirements and standards. In fact actually when I was down at the M-Enabling conference, they enlightened me on some best practices, even around mobile technologies, for caption display and standards that support them. It's still an area that we're working on. I can tell you that at TPG, we have a great collection of folks who are heavily involved in this particular area, have experience with having worked at the BBC where some guidelines and standards were created. So perhaps my best advice is contact us and we'll see what we can do to help you out.

LILY BOND: Thanks Mike. Someone else is asking, what is plain writing?

MIKE PACIELLO: It's a great question. Plain writing basically is a method of writing more clearly. It's a way of-- if you can imagine your worst nightmare in terms of complex jargon that is, say, for example-- or writing-- I could tell you three right off the top of my head-- government writing. Government laws are very hard to understand. Tax laws are almost impossible. Anything written by a lawyer is practically unreadable. And generally speaking, most things that are written by doctors.

So you get the idea of complexity. It's taking something complex and making it easier to understand. And that's what plain writing is all about. There's a whole government initiative, federal government initiative here-- initiative-- in the United States just devoted to plain writing.

LILY BOND: Wow, I didn't know that. Thank you. Another question here is, what do you do when content cannot be captioned or transcribed due to poor audio quality? Is the institution in violation at that point?

MIKE PACIELLO: That's a good question too. You've got a responsibility to users and to your audience. And I think first of all, you need to understand what the root cause of the poor audio is. Is it the actual audio stream? Is it somehow related to what's generating the captions? If that's the issue, I don't know exactly what it is that you're thinking about at that level.

Bottom line, in the worst case sample and as a foundation to captioning, you should at least be sure that you have a transcript of the event that can be easily downloaded, and preferably synchronized, if at all possible, with the video. That would be an ideal way. That at least ensures that a person who-- or the audio quality is bad, maybe just due to bandwidth. Or perhaps the more likely scenario, that it hasn't been properly synchronized, at least you've got a text transcript that gives you some information about what's being stated in the video.

LILY BOND: Thanks Mike. Another question here is, what is the number one issue you see when you do accessibility audits?

MIKE PACIELLO: That's the \$5 million question. Actually today, I believe that the number one problem that we see is user experience. We do not believe that designers and developers, at any level, really think about user experience when it comes to people with disabilities. So while it's very easy to run a website through an automated validation service, for example, or for something like an organization like TPG, where we do a lot of in-depth manual assessments, we're going to pick up the common problems with the images and forms and complex tables and error-handling

problems and things along that line.

The reality is that no one has really given upfront thought to user experience. So to me, it comes up in every analysis, every audit that we've done. And I believe today that is the number one issue to be resolved.

LILY BOND: Thank you, Mike. Another question here is, are there any international government agencies that have been particularly active in pursuing accessibility concerns?

MIKE PACIELLO: Well you know, I mentioned earlier the government in Ontario, Canada, has been very proactive over the last few years-- a lot of good stuff that's come out of Australia. I recently have seen some good forward thinking standards and governance models in India and in Japan. And of course the EU has been very strong in promoting standards around accessibility. And of the course the nationals that are associated with the EU usually support that and find ways to get to it.

LILY BOND: Thanks. Another question here is, do you recommend any compliance accessibility software, or do you have other tools and resources you recommend for performing an internal accessibility audit?

MIKE PACIELLO: Yeah, it's not likely that I'll make any of those recommendations, because the fact of the matter is, it's not any one single tool. It is a process that integrates the use of tools, the use of usability and UX processes, the testing processes, and manual assessments and auditing. You need to have those three, at least. I'm probably forgetting something in here. You need to have those three well integrated into your development lifecycle. And when you do and they are working well together, you get the biggest bang for your buck.

LILY BOND: Thanks, Mike. Someone is asking if you could talk about the role of recent lawsuits in defining web accessibility requirements.

MIKE PACIELLO: Well, if anything, it's building awareness. I've never been in favor of-- something that I've spoken on on a number of occasions is fear-based incentives. Unfortunately, the fact of the matter is, is that lawsuits do work. And in terms of disability and compliance along those lines, they've been effective. They've been head turners.

As a technologist at heart, I know, at every level, that the problems that are called out are solvable. And because of that, what I really think the issue here is just a matter of, as we

talked about here and today, it's about forethought. It's about building accessibility into the organization and into the culture so that these kind of actions, in terms of lawsuits, they kind of go away. They just become old hat and obsolete in and of themselves.

There are some nice methods, I think, as you mentioned, Lily, earlier. Lainey Feingold is going to be talking in a couple of months. Lainey is going to talk about structured negotiations, a very effective, more collegial, more professional way of getting the law, so to speak, involved and on your side and working with an organization to build towards accessibility.

But I think in general what it's primarily done is it's created fear. And while it may have moved some mountains, I wonder in the long run how fruitful it will be.

LILY BOND: Thanks, Mike. That's a very thoughtful response. Along the lines of company culture, someone is asking if you have any tips for injecting accessibility into company culture, whether accessibility should be a prerequisite or part of onboarding or professional development, or if you have any other suggestions.

MIKE PACIELLO: Well, I think all of those points are all valid. But you'll recall, in terms of injecting, in that continuum-- I'm not sure if you have my presentation slides up, Lily, so I'm just looking at what I have here-- the very first thing that you have to do as an organization is identify where you are in that continuum. If you have no clue-- let's say, for example-- take a pragmatic example. This is very common. Let's just say some firm comes and files or an organization files a lawsuit against you. You probably were caught by surprise. Hopefully you were caught by surprise, because if you knowingly knew that you were in that position, well, that's a different concern.

You need to identify where you are and how vulnerable you are in terms of accessibility. And from there you build a strategy and a roadmap, as we talked about, where you prioritize what needs to get done, when, and how. And that's really how you inject this and infuse this into an organization.

You've got to build your own company and corporate awareness. And that model's got to be dictated by someone, probably at the top. We talked about individuals and stakeholders. That may be a chief accessibility officer, might be a director or subdirector level. But it's got to happen there. And that's where change really starts to take place.

LILY BOND: Thanks, Mike. Looks like we have time for one more question. Someone just wrote in, are there any specific strategies for accessibility audits for educational institutions?

MIKE PACIELLO: I would imagine that most of my colleagues in the field, we all have our own process and methodologies. So I think to identify one specific method may not be the correct route. It really is a matter of first understanding, again, your development processes in your organization, and then building a roadmap and a strategy around that.

LILY BOND: Great. Thank you, Mike. And thank you so much for just a really valuable and thoughtful presentation. It was great having you here.

MIKE PACIELLO: My pleasure, Lily. And thanks certainly to the folks at 3Play Media for inviting me. It's been great to share some of the thoughts, frankly speaking, from my own team and staff and what they've learned and what they've been teaching for quite a bit now.

LILY BOND: Well, we really appreciate it. And just a reminder to everyone that you will receive an email tomorrow with a link to view the recording. And thank you, everyone, for joining. I hope you all have a great rest of the day.