HashiCorp

An Introduction to Digital Accessibility

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Hello there!

- Senior Software Engineer, Design Systems
- Framework Core Team, Ember.js
- Invited Expert, W3C WAI-ARIA
- Board Member, VetsWhoCode

https://noti.st/melsumner

HashiCorp

Today's Agenda

1. Intro to WCAG
2. The Meta of Accessibility
3. State of Accessibility
4. Roles & Responsibilities
5. What's Next?

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Accessibility is a Journey

Passion, Patience, & Persistence

What is WCAG?

01 Intro to WCAG

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

3 levels
4 categories
13 guidelines
78 success criteria

3 levels

A
AA
AAA

A
AA
AAA

4 categories

Perceivable

Operable

Understandable

Robust

13 guidelines
78 success criteria

“Accessible”

“Best Practice”

“Compliant”

“Conformant”

“Accessible”

“Conformant” == voluntary

“Compliant” == mandatory

“Best Practice”

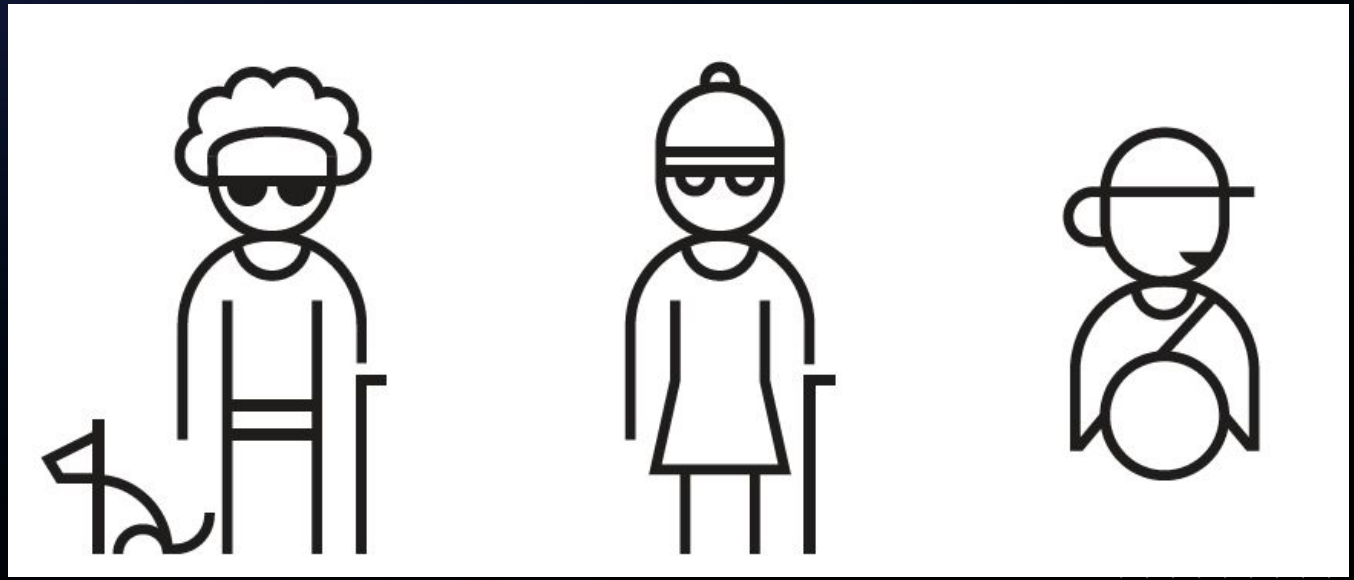
Updating our mental model

You have a disability

You don’t have a disability

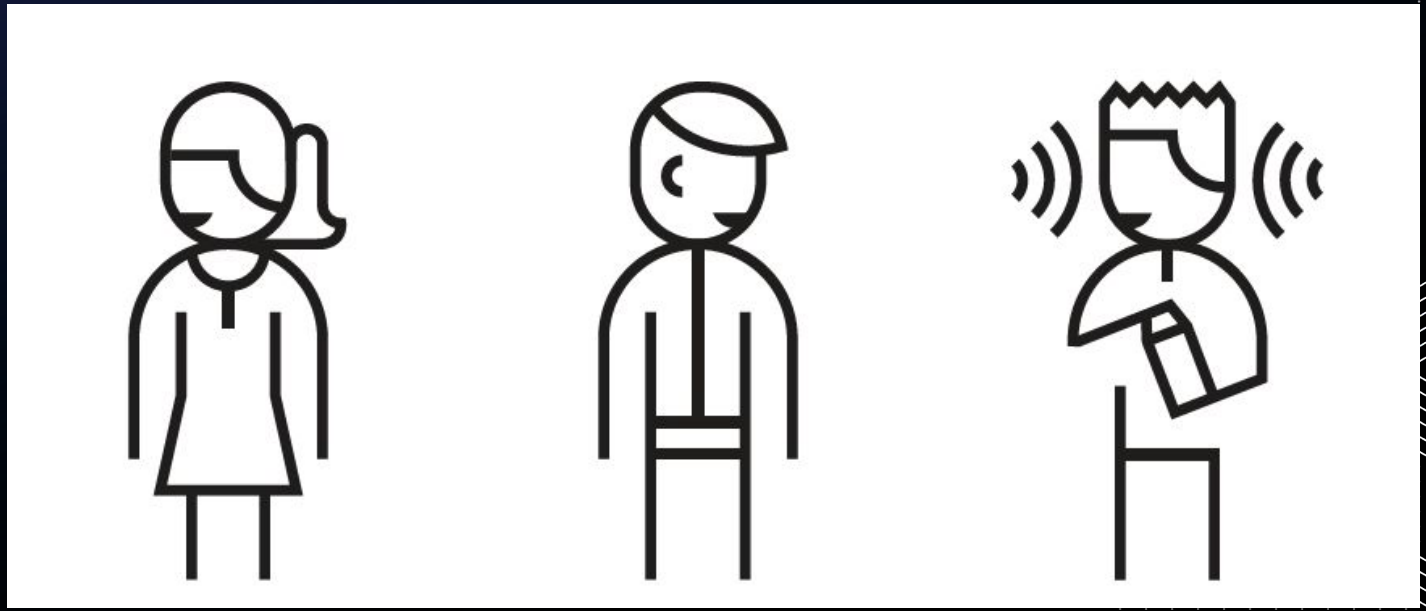
“I can’t see the screen”

02 The Meta of Accessibility



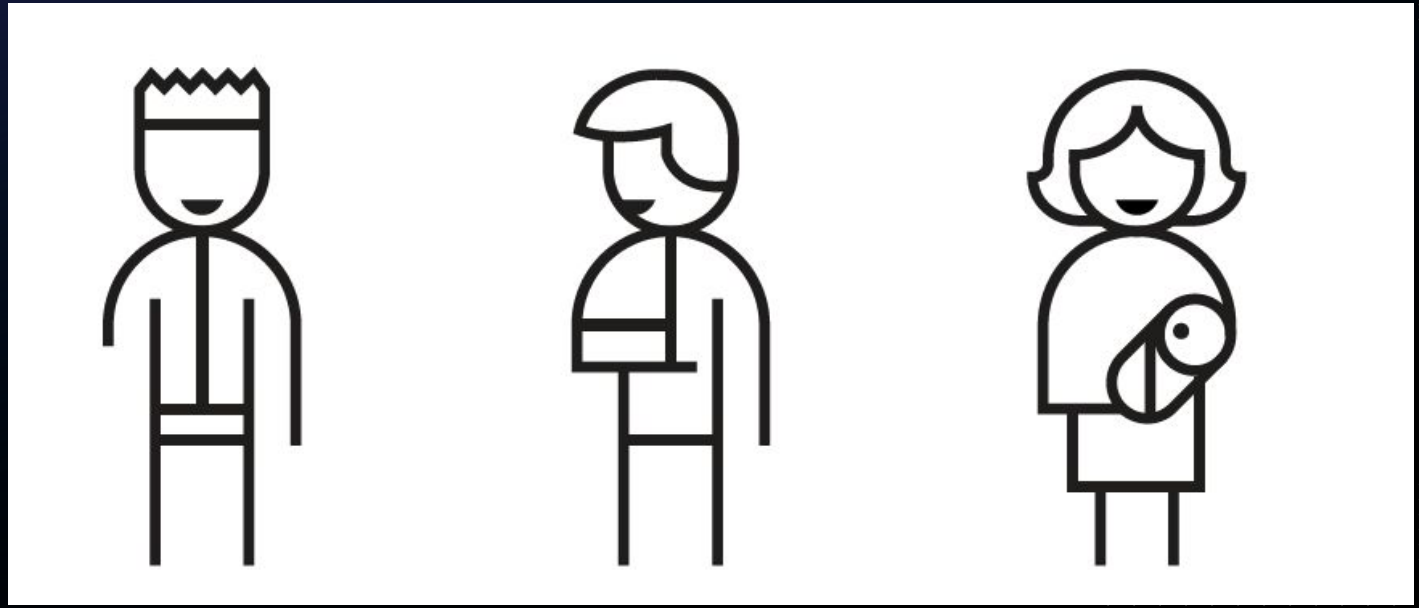
“I need captions”

02 The Meta of Accessibility



“I need keyboard shortcuts”

02 The Meta of Accessibility



Outdated thinking:

You have a disability
You don’t have a disability

Updated thinking:

Mismatched interaction; may be permanent or situational.

“Solve for one, extend to many”

State of Accessibility

The WebAim Million

- 50,829,406 distinct accessibility errors
- Average of 50.8 errors per page
- 7.7% Increase in DOM elements
- 96.8% of home pages had detectable errors

Preventable Accessibility Issues

- Low contrast text
- Missing alt attributes on images
- Empty links
- Missing form input labels
- Empty buttons
- Missing lang attribute on html element

We have a long road ahead of us.

Roles & Responsibilities

04 Roles & Responsibilities

“You didn’t ask for accessibility.”

“You didn’t ask for sugar in your cookie.”

Leadership

- Vocalize accessibility as a priority
- Ensure it is included in budgets

Technical Writers

- Use clear language
- Use consistent phrasing

UX Designers

- Simplify the user experience
- Make context and purpose clear

Visual Designers

- Think beyond minimum color contrast requirements
- Plan for zoom (browser zoom, text size zoom)
- Make sure interactive elements are large enough
- Try to think in proportions, not pixels

QA Testers

- Navigate with the keyboard only
- Use tools to test for color-blindness
- Differentiate between visible focus and screen-reader focus
- Test zoom up to 200%

Engineers

- Use semantic HTML as much as possible
- Have conversations if you receive designs that aren’t accessible
- Explore the automated tools you have at your disposal
- Identify the differences - app-level a11y concerns, ds-level a11y concerns

What’s Next?

Handy Browser Extensions

- Microsoft's Accessibility Insights
- Colorblindness Emulator
- aXe DevTools

HashiCorp Design System

https://go.hashi.co/design-system

05 What's Next?

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You do not require permission to create accessible products.

Thank You

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