

A group of people are seated around a table in a meeting room, engaged in a discussion. The image is overlaid with a blue filter. The text "Unlocking Inclusivity" is centered over the image, with a thin orange underline under the word "Inclusivity".

Unlocking Inclusivity

Delivering Accessible Events in Higher Ed

cvent

Today's Speakers



Susan Summerlin Nye

Education Solutions
Marketing

Cvent



Stephen Cutchins

Senior Manager –
Accessibility

Cvent

Poll

Which area of the university do you represent?

- Enrollment Services
- Academic Affairs
- Student Services
- Alumni & Advancement
- University Events
- Other

AGENDA

- What is a Disability & Accessibility?
- Why Accessibility?
- Accessibility Concepts
- Accessibility at Cvent

Meet Stephen Cutchins

- Mother was an amputee
- 2 cousins with Cerebral Palsy
- Tourette Syndrome
- Father of two
- ~18 years in accessibility
- Army paratrooper, rock climber, motorcycle racer, avid cyclist



What is a Disability?

A Disability is a Condition of the Body or Mind

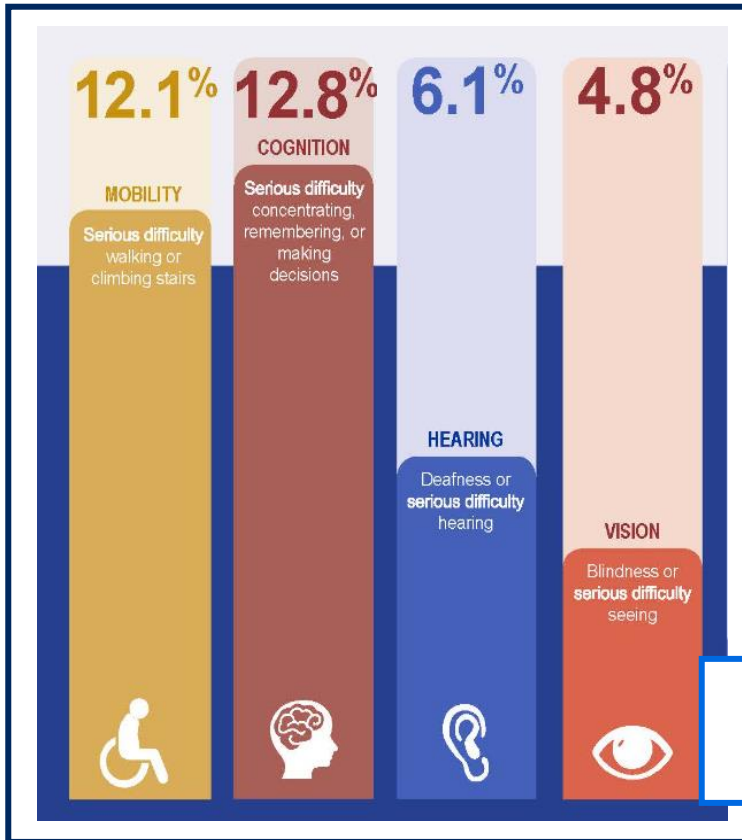
A disability is any condition of the body or mind that **makes it more difficult** for the person with the condition to **do certain activities *and* interact with the world around them**.

There are many types of disabilities, such as those that affect a person's:

- Vision
- Movement
- Thinking
- Remembering
- Learning
- Communicating
- Hearing
- Mental health
- Social relationships



A Diverse Group with a Wide Range of Needs



According to the World Health Organization, disability has three dimensions:

1. **Impairment** in a person's body structure or function, or mental functioning; examples of impairments include loss of a limb, loss of vision or memory loss.
2. **Activity limitation** such as difficulty seeing, hearing, walking, or problem solving.
3. **Participation restrictions** in normal daily activities, such as working, engaging in social

...includes challenges attending events!

What is Accessibility?

Accessibility Helps People with Disabilities

When we talk about **Accessibility**, we mean ensuring that electronic content is accessible to **people with disabilities**, often by use of **assistive technology**.

What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology (AT) **increases, maintains, or improves** the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities.



Yes, There are Standards!

Event follows the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA

<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>

W3C Recommendation

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 - 1.3.2 Meaningful Sequence
 - 1.3.3 Sensory Characteristics
 - 1.3.4 Orientation
 - 1.3.5 Identify Input Purpose

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1

W3C Recommendation 05 June 2018

This version:
<https://www.w3.org/TR/2018/REC-WCAG21-20180605/>

Latest published version:
<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>

Latest editor's draft:
<https://w3c.github.io/wcag/21/guidelines/>

Implementation report:
<https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG21/implementation-report/>

Previous version:
<https://www.w3.org/TR/2018/PR-WCAG21-20180424/>

Previous Recommendation:
<https://www.w3.org/TR/2008/REC-WCAG20-20081211/>


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Loretta Guarino Reid (Google, Inc.)
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Wendy Chisholm (W3C)
John Slatin (Accessibility Institute, University of Texas at Austin)
Jason White (University of Melbourne)

Please check the [errata](#) for any errors or issues reported since publication.

See also [translations](#).

This document is also available in non-normative formats, available from [Alternate Versions of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1](#).



Why Accessibility?

27% of the US Population Has a Disability

Up to **1 in 4** adults in the United States
(27%) have some type of disability



Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/disability.html>

There is a Legal Mandate



Americans with Disabilities Act states that colleges and universities are obligated to provide students with disabilities equal and integrated access to higher education.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination based on disability and requires that the needs of students with disabilities are met as adequately as the needs of students without disabilities.

Dear Colleague Letter: Accessibility Legal Framework & Enforcement



U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division



U.S. Department of Education

Office for Civil Rights

May 19, 2023

Dear Colleague:

We write to make you aware of the Justice Department and Department of Education's ongoing efforts to address barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating in online services, programs, and activities that colleges, universities, and other postsecondary institutions make available to students and the public.

Online Accessibility Challenges

Many colleges, universities, and other postsecondary institutions increasingly rely on their websites and third-party online platforms to provide services, programs, and activities to members of the public. This includes courses on learning platforms like edX, Coursera, and Kadenze, as well as podcasts and videos featuring **lectures, conferences, sporting events, admissions information, graduation ceremonies, and other events** on social media and third-party platforms like YouTube, Spotify, and Apple Podcasts. This online content is a service, program, or activity of the college, university, or other postsecondary institution, but **much of it is often inaccessible to individuals with disabilities.**

Legal Framework

Two Federal laws, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), require colleges, universities, and other postsecondary institutions to **provide equal opportunities to people with disabilities in all their operations, including equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from online services, programs, and activities.**

Enforcement Actions

The Departments of Justice and Education have used their enforcement authority to address inaccessible online services, programs, and activities provided by colleges, universities, and other postsecondary institutions.¹⁰ For example, on December 2, 2022, a Federal district court approved a **consent decree** between the Justice Department and the Regents of the University of California that requires the University of California at Berkeley (UC Berkeley) to make public online content on its websites and other online platforms accessible to people with disabilities. This includes BerkeleyX courses, university websites, and videos and podcasts on its YouTube, Apple Podcasts, and other third-party platforms. UC Berkeley will also revise its policies, train relevant personnel, designate a web accessibility coordinator, conduct accessibility testing of its online content, and hire an independent auditor to evaluate the accessibility of its content. More information about this case, including the Justice Department's letter of findings, complaint, and

Dear Colleague Letter: Accessibility Legal Framework & Enforcement



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Dear Colleague Letter: Accessibility Legal Framework & Enforcement



U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division



U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights



Berkeley

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

PRESS RELEASE

Justice Department Secures Agreement with University of California, Berkeley to Make Online Content Accessible to People with Disabilities

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THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

NEWS | ADVICE | THE REVIEW | TOPICS ▾ | CURRENT ISSUE | VIRTUAL EVENTS | STORE ▾ | JOBS ▾ | 🔍

\$150,000 Settlement Reached in Blind Florida State Students' E-Learning Suit

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Colgate University ADA Website Access Class Action Lawsuit Overview:

Colgate University failed to design its website so that it would be fully accessible to blind and visually impaired individuals, a new class action lawsuit alleges.



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Accessibility Reaches Beyond those with Disabilities



Many don't have an official disability but still need digital accessibility.

This includes:

- Those with limited or low vision
- Users with cognitive limitations
- Multi-lingual users
- Those getting older
- People with temporary disabilities

Accessibility Concepts

Some of these are concepts to help us understand.



“Dear Mister Rogers, Please say when you are feeding your fish because I worry about them. I can’t see if you are feeding them, so please say you are feeding them out loud.” –Katie, age 5.

Father’s note: “Katie is blind, and she does cry if you don’t say that you have fed the fish.”

Visual Disabilities

“I am blind.”

“I have limited vision, so I can see but not very well.”

“I am color vision deficient (aka color blind).”

(Affects 8% of men and 0.5% of women)

“I have cataracts, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy...”



Visual Disabilities – Roadblocks & Solutions

I can't see your content.

→ I use a screen reader or Braille display.

I am unable to visually follow the mouse cursor, so I cannot use a mouse.

→ I must use keyboard-only navigation.

I am unable to see what is happening in videos.

→ I require audio descriptions to understand content.

I cannot differentiate red errors from any other text.

→ You must use words to describe errors, like “**First Name is required.**”

I have difficulty seeing small fonts or small controls.

→ You must avoid small controls and/or I use browser zoom and magnification programs.

Visual Disabilities – Links

Register: [Click Here](#)

Create an account: [Click Here](#)



[Register](#)

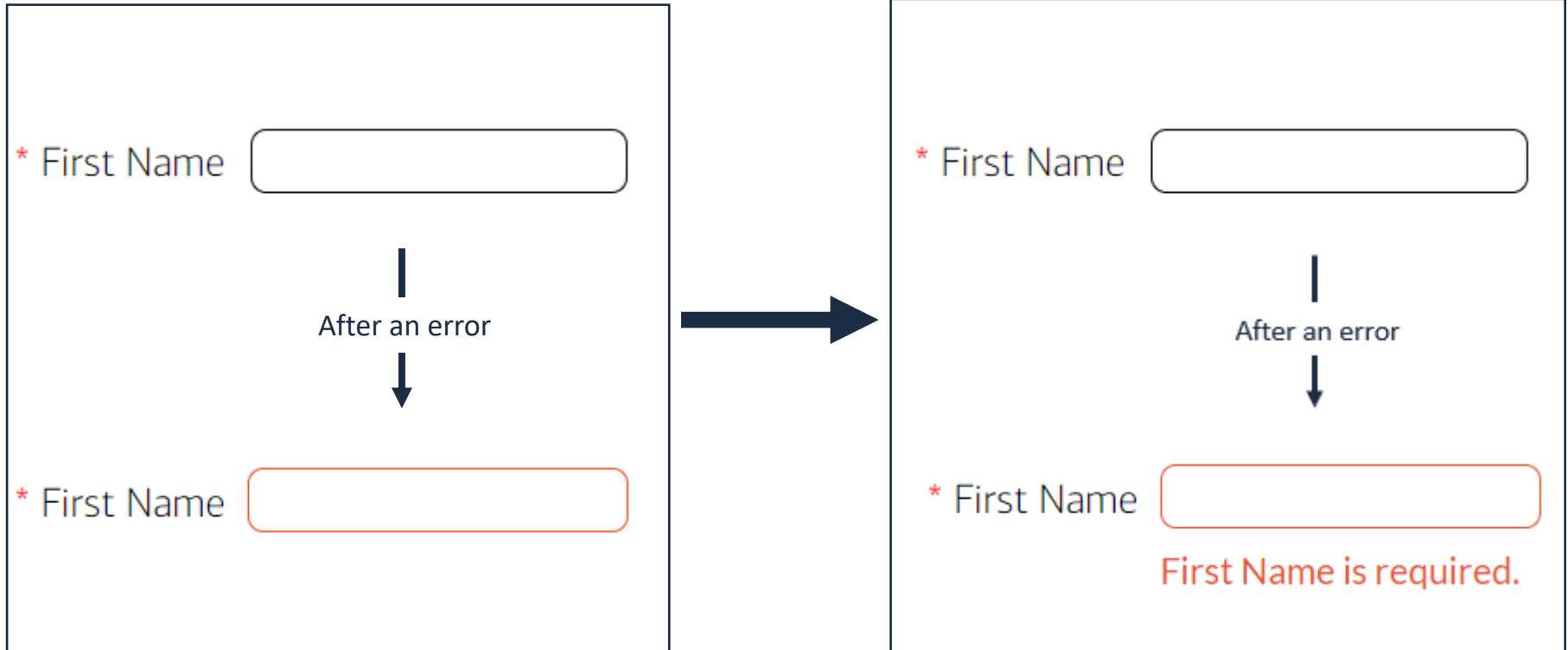
[Create an account](#)

Thousands of planners source their meetings through the Cvent Supplier Network. With CSN Advertising, you can put your message in front of them as they decide which destinations, venues and event services will receive their RFP. [More](#)



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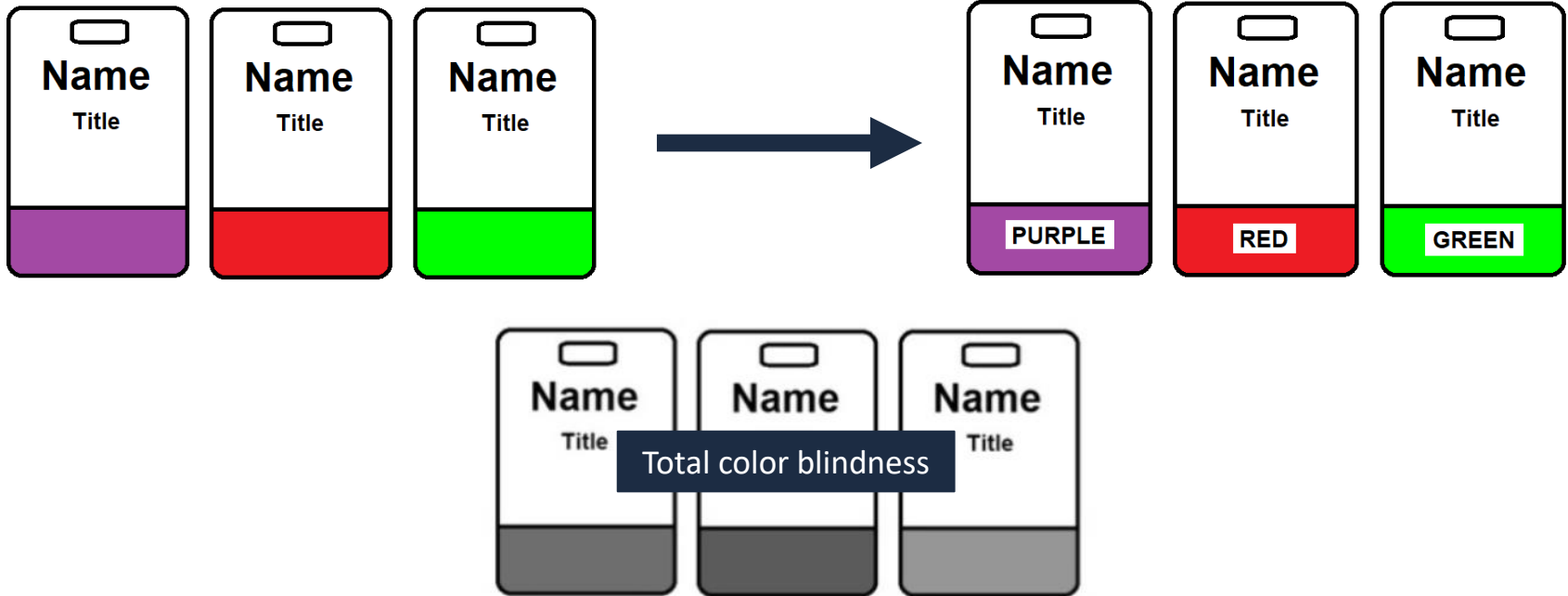
Visual Disabilities – Show Error Message in Red



Visual Disabilities – Colored Status Icons

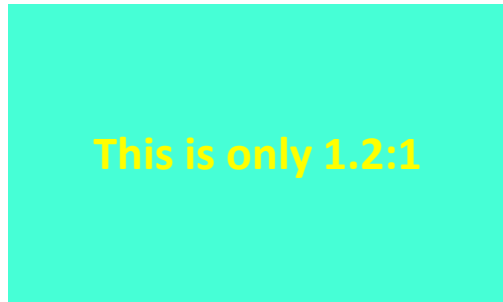


Visual Disabilities – Break Out Groups



Visual Disabilities – Poor Color Contrast

Ensure at least 4.5:1 contrast between text and background



Attendee Hub Designer

Theme


Last update: Mar 21, 2022 5:13 PM [Update page](#)

Customize your theme


Colors

Here's where you make the website and app your own by tailoring the colors to your brand.

MAIN COLOR

This color shows up the most, so we suggest using your main branding color. 


ACTION COLOR


This color shows attendees that something is interactive. Since it's an accent, we suggest using a vibrant color and avoiding light colors like white, light grey, and yellow. 


ADDITIONAL COLORS

Choose your colors, then apply them at the page level.

This is your website's background color.

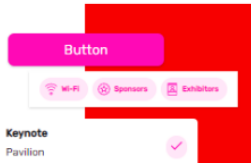
Color 1 

Color 2 

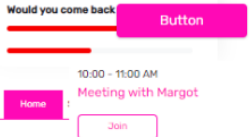
Color 3 

Attendee Hub Theme


Event App



Attendee Website

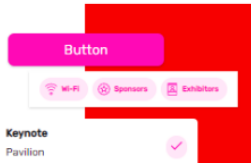


Capital Modified

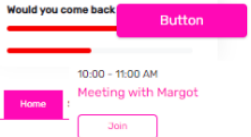


[Change theme](#)


Attendee Hub Theme



Attendee Website



Capital Modified



[Change theme](#)

Image Alt Text

- Assistive technology does not interpret images.
- Alternative Text (“alt text”) allows users of assistive technology to understand the purpose of an image without being able to see it.
- Not a literal description, focus on the image intent. **Context is everything!**
- Less is often more. Generally, no more than 2-3 short sentences.
- Mark decorative images as such (alt=“”)

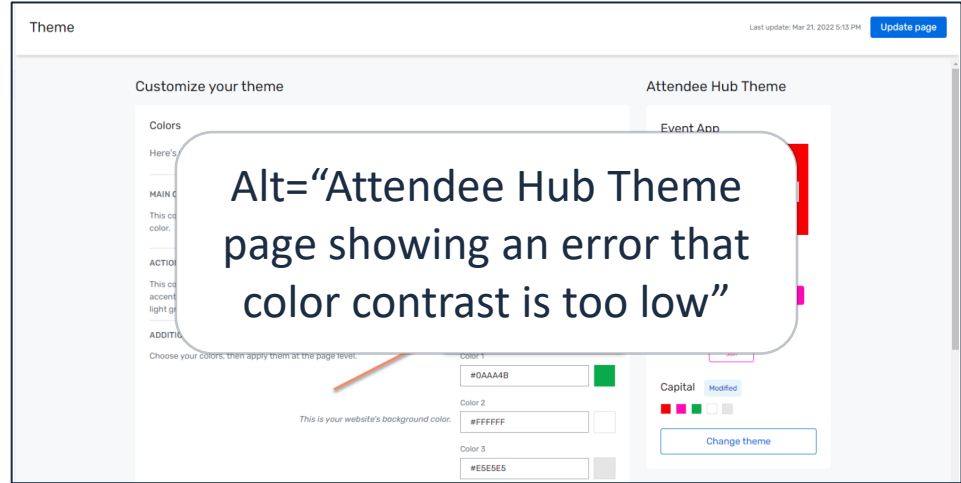


Image Alt Text – Context is Everything

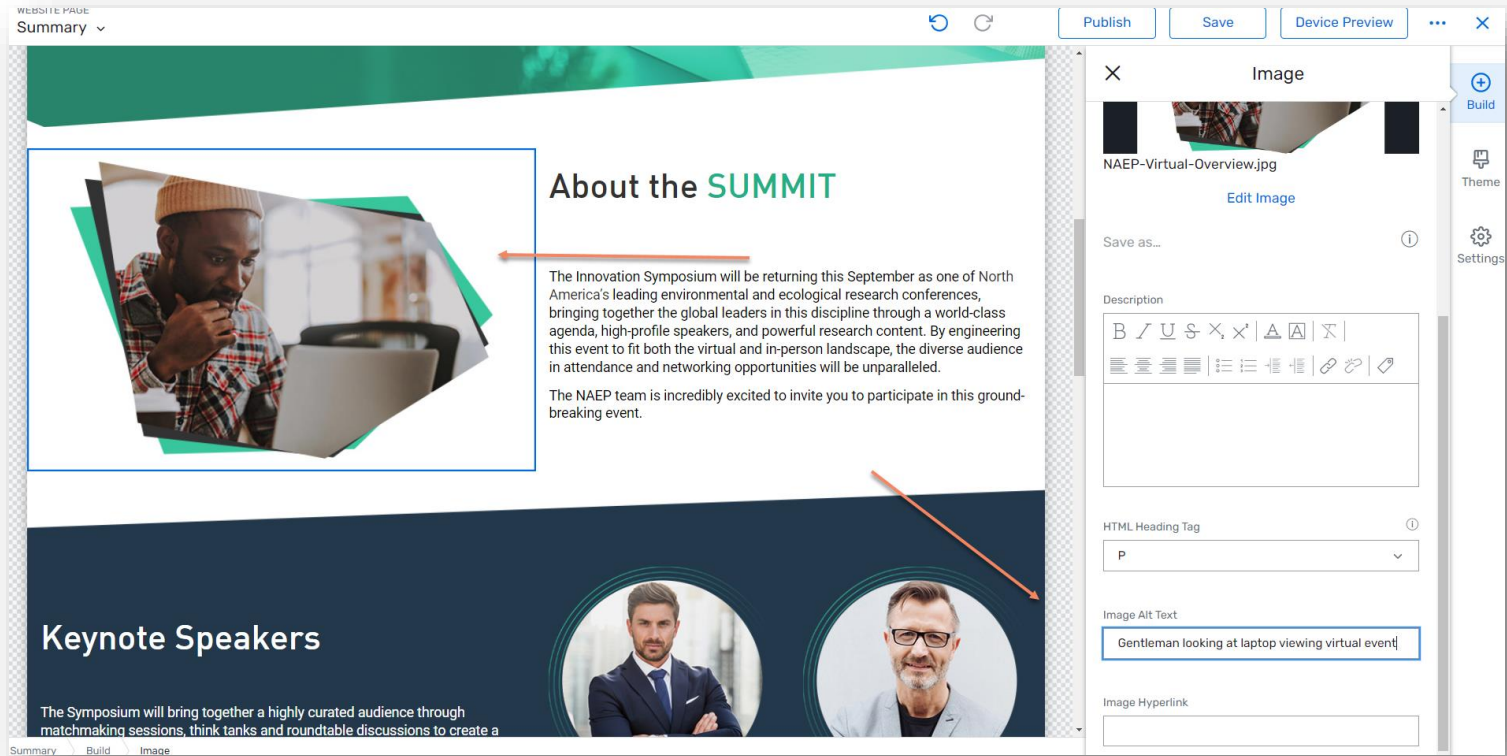
- Allergy website: **“Ragweed can produce up to 1 billion pollen grains per season.”**
- TV manufacturer’s website: **“TV image of a flower showing vibrant differences between yellow and green.”**
- Image used for aesthetic reasons, or page includes textual description: **alt=“”**



Event Website Designer

WEBSITE PAGE Summary

Refresh Save Device Preview



About the SUMMIT

The Innovation Symposium will be returning this September as one of North America's leading environmental and ecological research conferences, bringing together the global leaders in this discipline through a world-class agenda, high-profile speakers, and powerful research content. By engineering this event to fit both the virtual and in-person landscape, the diverse audience in attendance and networking opportunities will be unparalleled.

The NAEP team is incredibly excited to invite you to participate in this groundbreaking event.

Keynote Speakers

The Symposium will bring together a highly curated audience through matchmaking sessions, think tanks and roundtable discussions to create a

Image

NAEP-Virtual-Overview.jpg

Edit Image

Save as...

Description

HTML Heading Tag

Image Alt Text

Image Hyperlink

Summary Build Image

Hearing Disabilities

“I am Deaf.”

“I have severe hearing loss and require hearing aids.”

“I have mild hearing loss and may have difficulty catching every word you say.”



Hearing Disabilities – Roadblocks & Solutions

I am unable to hear system prompts.

→ You must provide visual cues in addition to audible prompts.

I am unable to hear voices in multimedia presentations.

→ I require captions to understand spoken words.

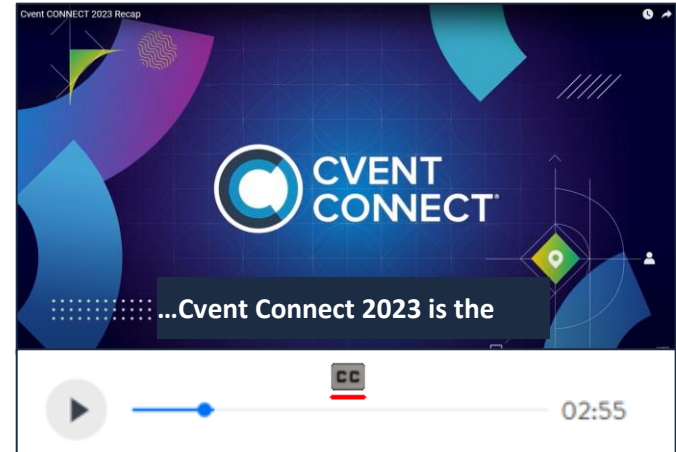
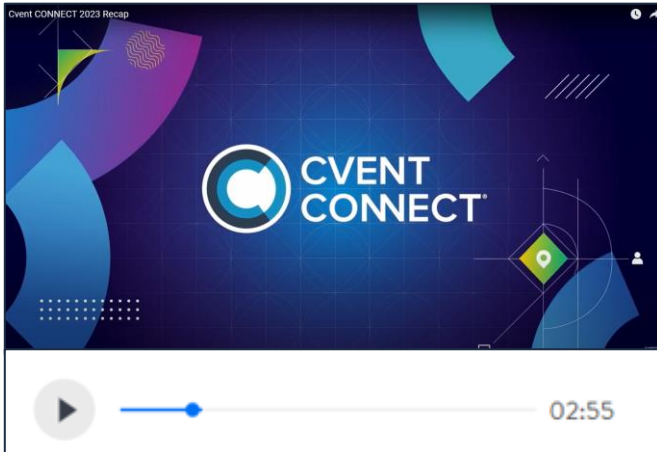
I am unable to hear relevant sounds in multimedia presentations.

→ You must include sound effects in captions.

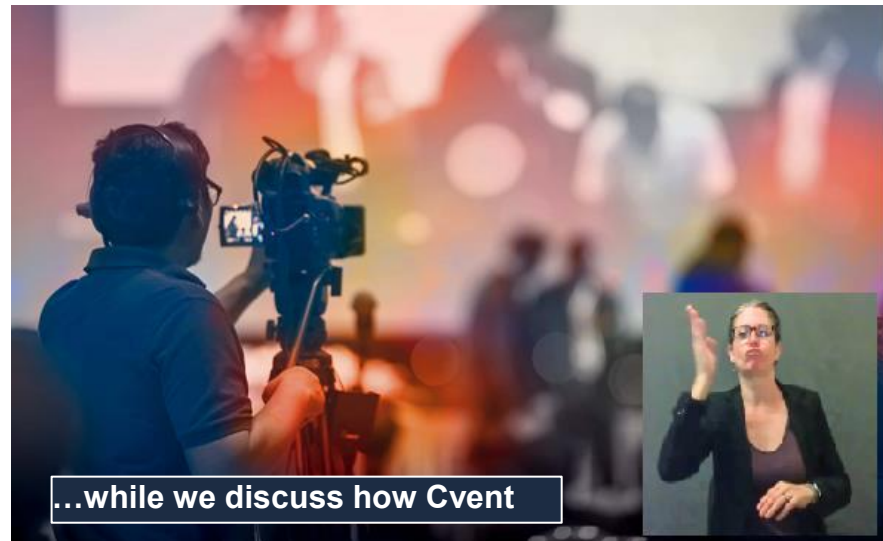
I am unable to communicate verbally (in person, during meetings, over phone to help desk, during interviews, etc.).

→ I may require sign language interpretation, speech-to-text, mobile apps, etc.

Hearing Disabilities – Captions



Hearing Disabilities – Live Captions and Sign Language Interpreters



Hearing Disabilities – Help Desk

Contact us: 1-800-555-1212



Contact us:

Phone: 1-800-555-1212

Email: support@cvent.com

Chat: [Start a live chat](#)

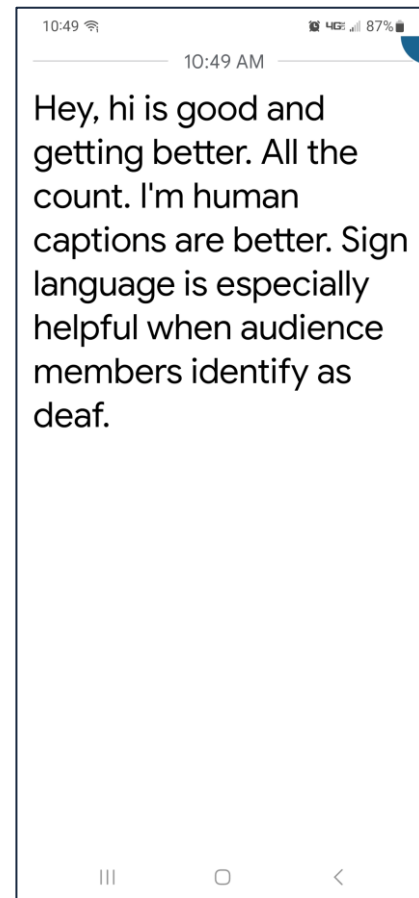
Apps are Great!

- Apps like Microsoft Translator are very helpful.
- Start a “Conversation” and you can speak while the Deaf person types on your own devices.
- Also useful for language translation.



Captions and Sign Language Interpreters

- AI is good and getting better all the time.
- Human captions are better.
- Sign language interpretation is especially helpful when audience members are Deaf.
- “Book vs. movie”
- Reserve front seats for Deaf attendees.
- Minimize background behind sign language interpreter (prefer dark/black background).
- Sign Language Interpreter should be well-lit.
- There are many different signed languages.



Physical Disabilities

“I have difficulty using a mouse due to a physical disability.”

“I can’t use a mouse OR a keyboard and must use a sip-and-puff device.”

“I have tremors, so I lack fine motor control.”

“I broke my arm skiing and have to wear a cast.”



Physical Disabilities – Roadblocks & Solutions

I am unable to use a mouse.

- You must ensure that all controls (buttons, links, radio buttons, checkboxes, form fields, menus...) are both accessible and usable by keyboard and that I can visually track focus.
- **Lack of keyboard accessibility is the #1 accessibility roadblock!**

I am unable to perform complex keyboard commands.

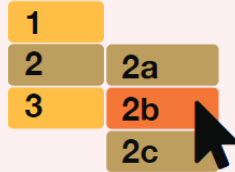
- You must avoid complex, multi-key commands on websites.

I require space for my wheelchair (and/or service animal, white cane, etc.).

- You must consider wheelchair access and space for service animals in the office, during interviews, at events, etc.

Physical Disabilities – Flyout Menu

make dynamic content that requires a lot of mouse movement

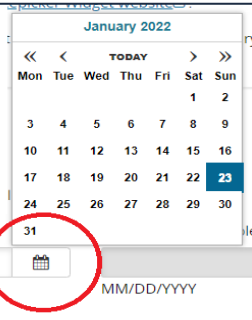


design for keyboard or speech only use



In addition to ensuring that controls like flyout menus work with a keyboard, it is also helpful to add a delay (if possible) before the submenu appears to assist those mouse users who may be lacking fine motor control and may inadvertently highlight another option with the mouse.

Calendar controls



If tooltip information is important for mouse users then it is also important for keyboard users.

Username: ?

Tooltips

Option 1

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Custom dropdowns

Physical Disabilities – Crowded Spaces



Physical Disabilities – Beware of Cocktail Tables & Tablecloths



Speech or Language Impairment

“I am unable to speak.”

“I have a speech impediment, so my words are not clear.”

“ I have ALS and am losing my ability to speak.”

“I have a hearing impairment that also impacts my ability to speak.”



Speech or Language Impairment – Roadblocks & Solutions

I have difficulty accessing voice-input menus on phone systems and conversational speech-input programs like AI chat bots.

→ You must provide options for key entry or full menu bypass

I have difficulty communicating with help desk phone support.

→ You must ensure that help desk support is also available via other options (chat, website, mobile app)

I can't talk to the people at your registration desk.

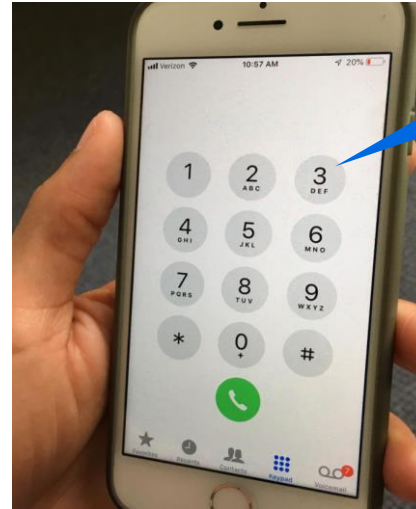
→ I use apps

Speech or Language Impairment – Voice Input

“Please describe the purpose of your call”



...or press 1 for...



Speech or Language Impairment – Help Desk

Contact us: 1-800-555-1212



Contact us:

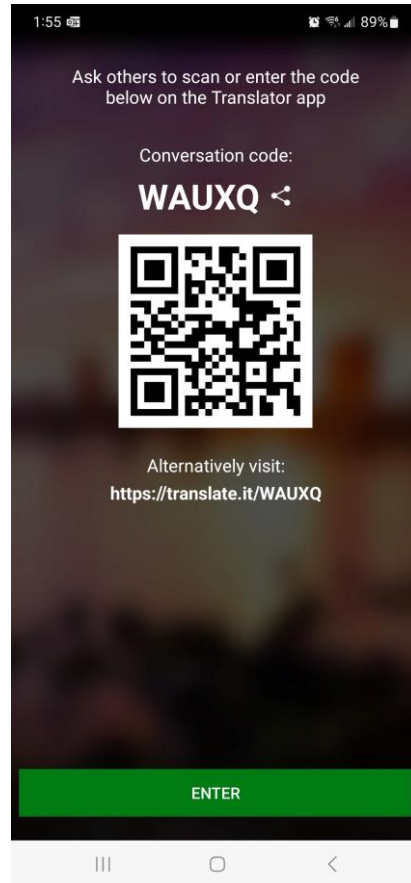
Phone: 1-800-555-1212

Email: support@product.com

Chat: [Start a live chat](#)

Apps are also great!

- Apps like Microsoft Translator are helpful!
- Consider having preinstalled for Registration personnel



Mental Health, Intellectual, and Learning Disabilities

“I am on the autism spectrum.”

“I experience depression.”

“I have dyslexia.”

“I have OCD.”

“I suffer from anxiety.”



Mental Health Struggles are Driving College Students to Drop Out

40%

Of undergrad students currently enrolled had considered dropping out in the past 6 months.

20%

1 in 5 adults in the US lives with mental illness, and young adults are disproportionately affected.

50%

Half of young adults ages 18-24 have reported anxiety and depression symptoms in 2023



Mental Health, Intellectual, and Learning Disabilities

Roadblocks & Solutions

Complex websites confuse or overwhelm me.

- Use simple, easy-to-use navigation and layouts.

Overpowering use of color distracts me.

- Avoid bright, contrasting colors.

Use of complex figures confuses me.

- Include descriptions and write in plain language.

“Walls” of text are hard to read.

- Use simple sentences and bullets.

I often feel overwhelmed at in-person events.

- Offer opportunities for smaller groups to chat
- Deliver some content online via a webinar or on-demand video

I appreciate a quiet space to recharge.

- Have a dedicated space that’s quiet, comfortable, and calm

I’m not comfortable speaking up or asking questions.

- Offer alternative ways to communicate like online chats and online Q&As

Mental Health, Intellectual, and Learning Disabilities

Large Blocks of Heavy Text

use large
blocks of
heavy text



use images
and diagrams
to support text



Avoid justified text like this which can be hard for people with Dyslexia to understand.

Mental Health, Intellectual, and Learning Disabilities

Lots of Information in One Space

put too much
information in
one place



keep content
short, clear
and simple



Mental Health, Intellectual, and Learning Disabilities

Force Me to Remember



Mental Health, Intellectual, and Learning Disabilities

Make Me Guess

You have errors in submission!



Please correct the following errors:

- **Last Name is required**

Mental Health, Intellectual, and Learning Disabilities

I Need a Break

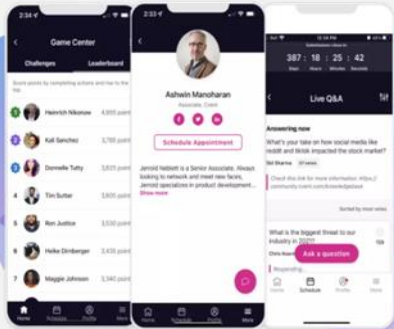
- Low sensory rooms
- Rest areas
- Ample break time between sessions
- Lighting
- Sound
- Fidget devices

Mental Health, Intellectual, and Learning Disabilities

I Get Overwhelmed at In-Person Events

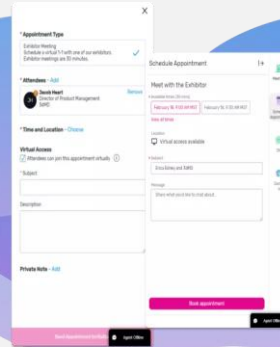
Offer your audience multiple ways to engage.

Mobile Experience



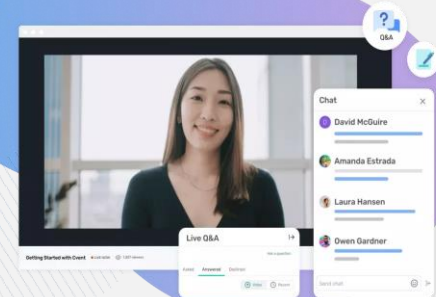
Maps, Schedule, Chat,
Q&A, Gaming

1:1 Appointments & Small Group Experiences



Opportunity to get
questions answered

Webinars



Pre- or post-event or a
stand-alone event

A group of people are seated around a table in a meeting room, engaged in a discussion. The image is overlaid with a blue filter. The text 'Accessibility at Cvent' is centered over the image, with a thin orange line underlining the word 'Cvent'. Below the title, the question 'What are we doing?' is written in white. At the bottom center, the 'cvent' logo is displayed in white.

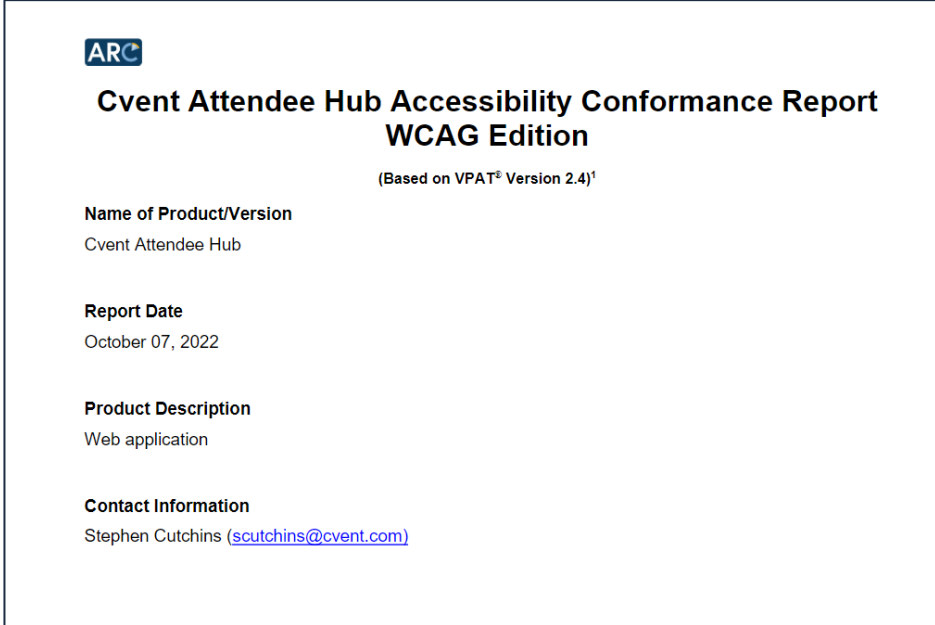
Accessibility at Cvent

What are we doing?

cvent

Voluntary Product Accessibility Template

- VPAT - Voluntary Product Accessibility Template
- ACR – Accessibility Conformance Report
- Created for client delivery and publicly available
- Often mandatory
- Created per product
- Cvent uses an independent third-party accessibility firm



The image shows a screenshot of an Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) for the Cvent Attendee Hub. The report is titled "Cvent Attendee Hub Accessibility Conformance Report WCAG Edition" and is based on VPAT Version 2.4. The report includes the following information:

- ARC** logo
- Cvent Attendee Hub Accessibility Conformance Report WCAG Edition**
- (Based on VPAT[®] Version 2.4)¹
- Name of Product/Version**
Cvent Attendee Hub
- Report Date**
October 07, 2022
- Product Description**
Web application
- Contact Information**
Stephen Cutchins (scutchins@cvent.com)

VPAT Timelines


VPATs completed:

- Registration
- Attendee Hub (Web)
- Attendee Hub (iOS and Android)
- Interactive Floorplans
- OnArrival
- Cvent Webinar
- Meeting Request Form and Access Portal

In progress (Dec 2023):

- Survey
- Speaker Resource Center
- Passkey
- Cvent Studio

Expect 2-4 VPATs ~every 6 months


Cvent Attendee Hub Accessibility Conformance Report WCAG Edition
(Based on VPAT® Version 2.4) ¹
Name of Product/Version Cvent Attendee Hub
Report Date April 19, 2023
Product Description Web application
Contact Information Stephen Cutchins (scutchins@cvent.com)

Cvent is Recognized as an Accessibility Industry Leader

ASSOCIATION / ON THE FLY / ON TAP / MEDICAL / SITES & VENUES

MEETINGSNET

July/August 2022
MEETINGSNET.COM

CHANGE MAKERS 2022

Celebrating individuals whose initiative and innovation are advancing their organizations and the meetings industry.

1/46

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MPI Unveils Docuseries on the Resurgence of Meetings and Events

Going Places | 08/09/2022
Visit KC Welcomes Kathryn Taylor as National Account Manager

2022 Meetings Trendsetters

August 2, 2022 | Meetings Today Editors

The meetings and events industry has undergone transformative change, and these 20 industry professionals have helped to keep pushing forward through the chaos. From DEI and sustainability to reinventing their events, and striving to maintain some semblance of normalcy as the world around them bears the brunt of an invasion, these colleagues have risen to the challenge. Congrats to the Meetings Trendsetters class of 2022!

MEET INSPIRED.
Flexible, sun-soaked space at center Strip.

MEETINGS TODAY

10. Stephen Cutchins

Senior Product Manager for Accessibility // Cvent

CONTRIBUTION: Leading meetings tech giant's drive to ensure accessibility

When Cvent makes a move, the effect can ripple throughout the meetings and hospitality industry. Thus, its decision this year to hire a senior product manager for accessibility is a welcome sign that the industry is placing a priority on serving the needs of many who were left out of the conversation. According to Cutchins, around a quarter of adults in the U.S. experience some type of disability, and around 20% globally. As he has spent the last 15 years helping primarily IT-focused companies achieve their accessibility-related goals, and with a reach as long as Cvent, with its myriad products touching every type of meeting, this ripple perhaps signals a sea change throughout the industry.



Related content

- [Cvent's Perspective: Making Meetings Accessible to All](#)

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dish business Pay no upfront equipment costs.

NEWS
Are Your Guest-Facing Technologies Accessible to the Disabled or Impaired?

By Victoria Copans - May 20, 2022 11:28am

Cvent is working hard to make its own products more accessible and hopes the rest of the hotel tech industry will follow suit.

Michal Christine Swisher
Senior Editor (Photo)

Live Design | LED Shows | SLIVE Event | Digital Signage Experience

XLIVE B2B Experience | Fan Experience | Meta-Active

NEWS
The Role of Event Tech in Improving Accessibility Standards Across the Industry

By Victoria Copans - May 20, 2022 11:28am

accessibility | event tech | Cvent

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By Tom Harkin & Elizabeth West

meetings TODAY
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Cvent's Perspective: Making Meetings Accessible to All

May 18, 2022 | Tyler Davidson

GAAD Global Accessibility Awareness Day cvent

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly one in five people in the U.S. have a disability, so making sure your meeting or event is inclusive to all is paramount importance.

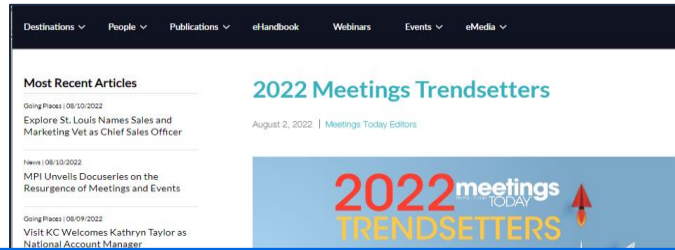
May 18, 2022, in Global Accessibility Awareness Day, so we sat down with meetings tech titan Cvent to talk with their new senior product manager for accessibility, Stephen Cutchins, and senior director of product management, Carl Ashikh, to discuss the strides and challenges the meetings and events industry has experienced in ensuring everyone is included.

Learn about cutting-edge accessibility tech from Cvent and beyond, and how our industry and world is rapidly changing for the better by including more voices in the conversation.

Listen to the episode:

Podcast Special With Cvent | A Global Ac
May 18 - Meetings Today Podcast

Cvent is Recognized as an Accessibility Industry Leader



10. Stephen Cutchins

Senior Product Manager for Accessibility // Cvent

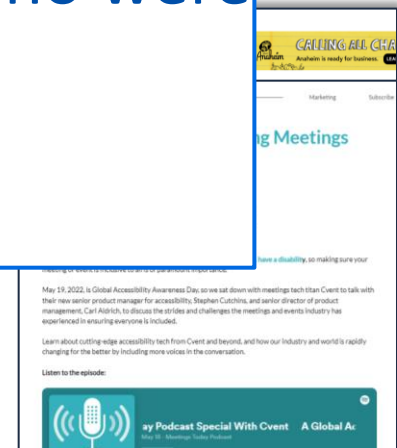
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“...a welcome sign that the industry is placing a priority on serving the needs of many who were left out of the conversation.”

Meetings Today
2022 Meetings Trendsetters
August 2, 2022



Feedback from CSUN Assistive Technology Conference



“I’m having my post-con meeting on Monday with our Cvent account team. As in years past, **there are no issues to report.**”

Feedback from National Federation of the Blind



Cvent was “the only realistic option when it came to accessibility.”

THANK YOU!

Stephen Cutchins

Senior Manager-Accessibility

scutchins@cvent.com

