

# NextGen Legal

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**Note:** While this guide may help you navigate the process of choosing a web accessibility service provider, outlining the core offerings you should consider and what makes a vendor stand out as reputable and effective, this guide does not constitute legal advice nor create an attorney-client relationship. This is a reference document not intended to supplant legal advice and you are encouraged to seek legal counsel for these issues.

## WHLA Guide: Selecting the Right Web Accessibility Service Provider

Ensuring your digital assets are accessible is crucial—not just for compliance with laws like the ADA but also for providing equal access to all users. This guide will help you navigate the process of choosing a web accessibility service provider, outlining core offerings to consider and what makes a vendor reputable and effective.

### Core Product Offerings of Accessibility Companies

#### 1. Toolbar Overlays and Automated Solutions

- Be cautious of solutions that promise "instant compliance" with ADA or WCAG. True accessibility requires a comprehensive approach, as many aspects cannot be fully automated.
- While overlays may provide user-friendly enhancements, they do not ensure full WCAG compliance and are often viewed negatively by accessibility advocates.

#### 2. Automated Scans

- Automated scanning tools are useful for quickly identifying a range of accessibility issues, though they typically detect only about 25% of potential problems. They serve as a good starting point for ongoing monitoring and maintenance.

#### 3. Manual Audits

- A thorough manual audit by accessibility experts is essential. Experts review your website or app to identify compliance issues in core functionality, content, user flows, and page layouts.

- Audits provide detailed reports that highlight specific issues and offer guidance on remediation.

#### **4. Remediation Services**

- Post-audit, remediation involves making the necessary code or content adjustments recommended in the audit report to resolve identified accessibility issues.

#### **5. Technical Support and Training**

- Continuous support to implement code-level changes, along with training for your team on accessibility best practices, is essential for maintaining compliance.

#### **6. Documentation**

- Many providers assist in creating accessibility policies, statements, and certifications, such as VPATs (Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates) or ACRs (Accessibility Conformance Reports), to document compliance efforts.

### **Evaluating Potential Vendors**

When researching accessibility service providers, consider the following factors:

- **Experience:** Look for providers with a proven track record in accessibility.
- **Dedication to Accessibility:** Ensure the provider specializes in accessibility rather than treating it as an ancillary service.
- **Client Education:** Choose a provider that helps you understand your compliance needs rather than offering only a quick fix.
- **Transparency and Realistic Promises:** Avoid companies that guarantee 100% ADA compliance or make similar claims.
- **Client Engagement:** A good provider will take the time to understand your specific needs and digital assets.

### **Questions to Ask Potential Providers**

- Ask about their approach to both meaningful and decorative images, as proper alt text use is crucial for accessibility.
- Inquire whether they can issue a conformance statement if only part of your site is compliant.
- Understand the difference between a VPAT and an ACR, as both pertain to accessibility conformance reporting.

## **Final Selection Tips**

- Compare multiple providers to get a comprehensive view of the market and identify who best meets your needs.
- Be cautious of pricing that is significantly lower or higher than average; exceptionally low prices may indicate a lack of thoroughness, while very high prices may not equate to better quality.
- Discuss all potential costs upfront to avoid surprises.

Selecting the right web accessibility service provider is a significant decision that impacts not only compliance but the overall user experience on your digital platforms. By following these guidelines, you can partner with a provider that meets legal requirements while enhancing accessibility for all users, regardless of their abilities.

**For further guidance on ADA compliance or assistance in finding a reliable service provider, consider reaching out to specialized accessibility consultants.**