

## **Life Cycle Project Plan Outline: Web Sites and Web-based Applications**

Here are some tools to help with planning and checking for 508 compliance on web sites and web based applications. Please remember that every project is different and some projects must address multiple types of ICT and 508 standards. It is important to note that the checking the items on the checklist does not mean that your project is officially 508 compliant. This information serves as guidance to achieve 508 compliance but is by no means a prescription. These tools list common issues and things to look for during the life cycle development of a web site.

Use this outline to help guide you throughout the rest of the life cycle of your web site or web-based application. This outline is designed to help guide the overall iterative life cycle of the project. Using the outline will help guide you determine what steps, actions, etc may be appropriate to ensure 508 compliance for your web site or web-based application. Use this outline in conjunction with the Web Sites and Web-based Applications Checklist.

### **Plan: Establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with EPA's Section 508 requirements and policies.**

- Identify ICT components for this Web site or web-based application.
- Determine if there are any exceptions.
- Determine which 508 standards and requirements apply. 508 standards apply to Internet and Intranet sites.

#### **508 Standards that always apply:**

[1194.31 Functional Performance Criteria.](http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Functional)

(<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Functional>)

[1194.41 Information, Documentation, and Support.](http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Information)

(<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Information>)

#### **Determine what 508 Standards may apply:**

[1194.21 Software applications and operating systems.](http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Software)

(<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Software>)

[1194.22 Web-based intranet and internet information and applications.](http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Web)

(<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Web>)

[1194.24 Video and multimedia products.](http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Video)

(<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=12#Video>)

- Outline framework of project and identify 508 milestones, standards and requirements for project stakeholders (ex. set 508 testing milestones).
- Make room in project budget for 508 considerations (e.g., development of captions for audio/visual multimedia on the web site)
- Refer to appropriate toolkit checklists (each ICT type) throughout the life cycle for 508 issues to address during project development.

### **Do: Implement the work needed to complete the project.**

- If applicable, create solicitation bid. Include general Section 508 contract language and 508 standards for the ICT types identified during the planning phase.
- Develop detailed technical requirements for your Statement of Work (SOW) or technical direction (TD), project plan, or other applicable documentation that addresses Section 508. Include 508 standards for the ICT types identified during the planning phase (above). Refer to the checklists in the toolkit for TD suggestions.
- If there is multimedia, determine if it requires captions or a transcript.
  - Captions and transcripts provide the content as well as acoustic information such as descriptions of background sounds, and other important audio cues and context. Ex. Rumbling thunder, roaring water, fire crackling, no audio, or the use of the musical symbols to indicate music.
  - Captions are used when multi-media contains visual and acoustical information.

- Transcripts can be used when only acoustical information is provided, e.g., a MP3 or radio broadcast. Transcripts are also used to create captions, but it is not appropriate to just give a transcript on a web site or as a document or package with the multimedia.
- If you need captions for multimedia, decide if you want to use open or closed captions.
  - Closed captions means that the user can turn on the captions on their TV, VCR, DVD, Web site or computer.
  - Open captions means that the captions are automatically enabled and everyone can benefit immediately without having to turn the captions on.
- Develop and approve the content used in alt text for images. Approving alt text is an inherent government function and needs to be approved by EPA staff.
- Determine if you will be using forms, tables and other potentially complicated elements. Some of this information may not be capable of being fully accessible. In such cases, plan to provide alternative formats on the web site. Ex. You have a complex map and table on the web site with data. Provide the source file that has the data for accessibility.
- Refer to appropriate toolkit checklists (each ICT type) throughout the life cycle for potential action items. Not all items on the checklist will apply to the project.
- Follow additional EPA requirements for Web sites. This toolkit covers 508 only.

**Check: Monitor and measure processes, products and services against policies, objectives and requirements for Section 508 compliance throughout development.**

- Ask questions about 508 compliance.
  - During development ask “How are you/we making the project 508 compliant?”
  - At key project milestones ask “what was done to make this 508 compliant?”
- Periodically test for 508 compliance.
- Use checklists to monitor and measure process.
- Watch for complex components or issues during development that might require the consideration of Fundamental Alteration exception.
- Test all the executable buttons, features, etc. as changes are made to the site!

**Act: Take action to continually improve process performance.**

- Routinely use checklist to make sure that 508 standards are being addressed during development.
- Fix any problems before acceptance, delivery, or completion.
- Keep in contact with project/service stakeholders via e-mail, phone, etc. to make sure they have what they need such as the transcript to make captions, the alt text language for graphics, training, etc.
- Ask for clarification from stakeholders when needed.
- Document information about how 508 standards have been met.
- Manage, close out and archive project and 508 documentation. Others may be able to use this “historical” information when developing similar projects.

**Additional Notes or Resources: Additional background information such as definitions, training, US Access Board guidance, and other tips.**

- All additional EPA policies, procedures, standards, and guidance for Internet sites are found at [www.epa.gov/webguide/standards](http://www.epa.gov/webguide/standards).
- The Office of Public Affairs offers training on “Section 508, Accessibility and Web Design”. Some 508 standards are taken care of automatically by using the EPA template. The template is required for most EPA pages. This training is free, open to staff and contractors, and offered throughout the year. The training schedule and presentation is also available on the [www.epa.gov/webtraining](http://www.epa.gov/webtraining)
- Guide to the Section 508 Standards (Access Board):

- 1194.21 Software applications and operating systems.  
<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/1194.21.htm>
- 1194.22 Web-based intranet and internet information and applications.  
<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/1194.22.htm>
- 1194.24 Video and multimedia products.  
<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/1194.22.htm>