



The 2017 Accessibility Conference:
**Becoming a Catalyst
for Inclusion**
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Inclusive User Testing

Transcript from the 2017 Accessibility Conference

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Slide deck: rosel.li/Guelph



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ADRIAN ROSELLI:

Hi, everybody,

I know we will be talking about inclusive user testing. At the bottom of the slide (inaudible) I will post the slides. I will show this again and I will tweet with the hashtag. You will have many opportunities, even after this talk.

I've written some things, done stuff on the web since 1993. I have a website and blog and lots of crazy talk on there. You can follow me, at your peril. This is an overview. I have broken this talk into nine different chance. I am giving this talk for the first time. I love to talk about code. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License - <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

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I'm not talking about code in this talk. This should be really interesting for me. Maybe more than you.

How many people do usability testing? OK, that is good. Having polled people before when I was planning the store, a lot of people don't do user testing of any kind. I know it is a term that can mean different things. In the context of what we're talking about here today, people seem to understand user testing because (inaudible).

Now that we have that out of the way, I will run through each of these and try to give you some good examples and things to think about. I will try to fit in question to them. This is my first time. I don't have the three hours I thought I had. You all think that is funny. That is unfortunate.

First we will talk about basic concerns, things to think about before you start doing testing. This photo – I read this photo. I kind of like it because it does a couple of different things. I think, at some level, it addresses the whole disability tourism. The guy playing soccer is wearing a mask. It implies he is probably not visually impaired. This is from an organisation called Save the Dream. They tried to promote education and inclusivity through sport.

This is a nice high-profile thing in Qatar. It's high-profile because the ethics are well-known, at least in that country. Whether we think this is disability tourism comes down to your perception of the goals. That is probably what I wanted a bit more about when we're talking about those concerns. When you are doing testing with user disability, you're not bringing them into the room because you want to learn about them, you want to learn about the disabilities and how they do things. I say that because I have seen that happen.

How do you do these things? What do you normally do? That is not the purpose. When you are starting any kind of user testing with people with disabilities, you want to make sure any remediation or a mediation work is already done. Order testing is done. Your site is developed, compliant, passes all the checks. It is ready to go. We are not testing for access of. We are not bringing people in to test for accessibility. That should be done. Make sure right off the bat you understand this is a different process. Again, not disability tourism. You want to make sure all stakeholders involved understand this.

I say this also because you will have managers and participants and organisers and people running the studies and writing the scripts who don't necessarily understand it is user testing.

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That is it. You are doing the tests. Some will have disabilities, someone.

These slides with the bullets will be available to you later. Normally I have slides with full bullets. The next thing to think about – planning.

This image I grabbed it from somebody who is working on learning how to sign, using American sign which, try to figure out how you describe a space and somebody in this phase. It is somebody struggling, having sketch notes on how people relate to one another, potentially what I think the person was doing was transcribing what is being signed. They are trying to map out if it makes sense. It is a dual medium – planning.

As you are planning for this thing, you need to review your tests and format. You need to consider how you are doing your testing. There are different ways people do disability testing and different methodologies for it. I won't dive into those because I think that is outside the scope of what we are trying to cover. I don't have the time. It is more important to have a good handle on the process and methodology. If you're doing a structured test, an informal test, on-site or mode, you can't make this up on the fly. But the structure in place and fold in the different users. Make sure you understand how many participants. That is important for scheduling.

It is also important when you consider (inaudible). Have you got a structure? How many people will come in? (inaudible)

I think payment is really, really, really important. Real cash payment is potentially a best approach. I understand that is a process that can be broken into (inaudible). Your participant should be rewarded for the time they are giving the stop you are learning valuable things off their time and effort, and experience and background.

When you're testing users with disabilities, there in mind there is an additional burden to participate. They can't in many cases hop in the car and drive down the freeway and show up to your testing facility. There are additional transportation costs. They have to get a cab or some other kind of assistance, get a service animal. They may have to take time off work. This is assuming they are not already unemployed.

In the disability world, there is a lot of unemployment and underemployment. For them to take time is a greater relative burden than somebody who has a normal day job like mine, where I sit

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in my house all day, eating snacks in front of my laptop.

As you are budgeting, as you are putting a program together, be prepared to pay the participants who have disabilities potentially even more and make other accommodations for them. I think it is important if you do gift cards, so a Visa Cash card might be handy because they can potentially spend it anyway.

If it is a Target guest card, it might not be on their bustline or whatever the case may be. Pay attention to the way you compensate them. In my opinion, pay them, pay them a lot and make sure you are compensating them for the time and effort, transportation and the extra burden, extra effort, time off work, etc. I am passionate about this and am fortunate to have clients who have understood this. The best is when the participants are pleasantly surprised at how much money they are given.

That means they are potentially a participant for life going forward. Think about the venue. This photo is a pretty straightforward example of a terrible (inaudible). To be fair to the photo, I don't think it is normally for a wheelchair. It is a great image. This is from someone in the Czech Republic. I have not been there. I haven't encountered these in Europe.

Your venue has to be accessible. This is kind of a given. If you contract with a third-party lab where they give you nice facilities where you can come in and set up a quick and and have snacks and other things, you need to make sure it is accessible. That includes not just the building, but the entire route to get there. Is it on a bus route? Is it on any kind of route? Is it available otherwise?

I had an experience about six months ago where young woman took the bus to get there and had to walk about a mile to get to the building. She didn't say that. She walked on a sidewalk (inaudible). I walked her to a bus stop because she was blind and the bus stop was nowhere near and no one had made any considerations about how difficult it might be to get there if you don't have a car. Any kind of transport service, even wheelchair accessible parking, regular accessible parking must be nearby. Ideally meet them at the door. Don't just tell them to meet you at the door and come up to the 18th floor. Meet them at the door. Ring them to the space.

Don't make it any more difficult for them than it needs to be. It costs effort and energy as well as time. You also don't want to be a joke. Meet them at the door; bring them upstairs, where ever you do the testing. Remember, they may have service animals. You should have a relief area for the service animals. You can't expect somebody to bring a dog into a space for two

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hours and there is no where for them to take the dog. They need to have a place they can go. If the building doesn't like the idea of the dog in the garden, (inaudible). It is better for the garden and certainly the dog.

This photo is from a Maryland Flight Centre. This camp is in NASA. They had no opportunity to go through the facility. I mention this is because a blind camp is an example of an organisation that already has identified people who have certain disabilities and already has some trust and connection with them. When it comes to recruitment, if you are in Maryland, Greenbelt Maryland, maybe you should give them a call. Maybe they would have people willing to participate. The general just with recruitment is don't go out on your own trying to find people with disabilities but look to a community of support organisations.

There ready have trusted relationships, and if you can create a trusting relationship with those organisations, you have a conduit to all potential resources you want. Maybe they will help you. In most cases, they will. They will help you demographics, target specific people. They have (inaudible). If the organisation with which they participate give them a call and says, "Are you willing to do this?" And there is money, that is a whole different conversation. And give contextual support overall. They understand and you understand. If you continue to grow this, you can create latent chips with organisations that can have benefits. You can start to participate more regularly.

In reality, it makes sense. It is easier, it is (inaudible) and it makes things that much easier. How are we doing? Can everybody pick up my pace? (inaudible)

Accommodation. This images of a sin not a real scooter. It is the best representation of one that I can find. That was free for me, using my slides.

I think that when you consider the users you will have, you need to be prepared to make accommodations. Those shouldn't feel like anything special. You should be building any extra time but every test. It is a different thing for me to pop onto my computer and jumped to a website. It is a few keystrokes and I am there. If you're talking to a blind user and someone has a motor impairment, etc, that is a long process. When you start to add the tasks up, it takes a long time. Build that time into the overall scenario. If you have a tester that has escorted more than one participant to the bus station, it is good to have that extra time.

We have now. It took us 30+ minutes with one of our people. You need to allow participants to

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be late. They don't control the bus schedule. They are doing the best they can. They also don't control other transport services. They might it a struggle finding a handicapped spot, might need to pause because the dog has to stop, and (inaudible). A lot of them will be late. Don't stress about that. Therein mine service animals and canes and scooters and walkers simply do not play well with (unknown term). Tripods (inaudible) and dogs like to wind themselves around those things. You will find a dog will sweep a tripod in no time, unintentionally. You will find canes will get tangled in cables and cords.

You will find wheelchairs will roll over something and get caught a little bit and pull a monitor offer table. I'm not saying you need spare monitors, but that might not hurt. Service animals need space under table to lie down. It needs to be clear of cables and other uncomfortable things. Your seating needs to also consider the people participating. We had a seat that was tiny, with tiny, narrow arms that I could fit in and I was the only one that could fit in. We had people coming in with equipment and their own seats. It wouldn't work. We couldn't position things the way we needed. Be prepared to offer different seating options.

We found out quickly that having wheels on a chair can be dangerous for a lot of participants. Be prepared to have seats without wheels, with arms. You and your participants shouldn't constantly bump into the equipment and get knocked over or get wrapped in it.

The attack. This photo is somebody using a mobile phone and there is a camera pointed at it and the projection is next to it. This seems a good setup. But it might not work. There are two different things to consider. When we talk about mobile, a lot of testing places want to put the phone into a rig. That rig has a camera arched over the top. If you have seen people who have low vision use a phone, they usually hold it up to the eye at some point. That camera, that contraption won't work. There is a whole lot of use that won't work with those rigs. Be prepared to not use any rig. None.

My best experience was plugging a phone in so it would be displayed on a secondary monitor. And pointing a camera at the monitor and the person. You don't need to see everything a person is doing, but if you have a camera pointed at a monitor, so we can see what is on the screen, we can see the person interacting with the device. We can get some sense of what is happening with their hands. On the screen, we can see what is happening in response to those interactions.

Having two cameras is even better if you can have one pointed at the person and another one

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that is plugged into the device. For mobile, don't use that. If you are doing computer testing – laptop or whatever – let your participants bring their own kit. I say kit because I'm talking about a collection of stuff, not just a laptop. They might have their own keyboard, some assistive technology. Give them time to set it up. Don't mess with it. It is important they can't mess with the user configuration. Don't do it.

That being said, there will be cases where you need to mess with the user configuration. This can be scary for your participant because this machine, in many cases, is their lifeline. It might be how they order groceries, how they do their job, interact with friends, call for help. If you mess with their machine, plug-in a monitor, ask permission. Ask permission to duplicate the screen, ask permission to plug in a different keyboard, for every step you do and be prepared to roll that step back. When a person leaves, that machine, that phone, that laptop, should function in exactly the same way as before. Make sure what was there as a technical capability to support the weapon.

If you don't think you can do it, if you have somebody coming who has equipment you don't operate, that is OK. Camera at it and do the best you can. Don't mess with the machine if you don't know how to restore it. That is really important. That is often forgotten. Even changing the reading speed, switch it back. That really causes some panic when it gets low. For somebody like me, I have to slow it down a lot. When they leave and want to start doing their work, they won't know-how to switch the speed back. That's just example. It's something you need to be prepared to do.

I appreciate you all staying awake, by the way. I really do.

(Laughter)

We will talk about the process. This image is somebody signing a release form. I don't recommend you use one for your usability studies. It doesn't capture everything you want. It is a terrible joke. I tried.

Note to self – rewrite this. Here is a funny thing about the process that goes into it – it is not all technical. The biggest thing that I found that surprised me on my first test that shouldn't have is the people who were participating did not read the agreements they were sent. We sent them these beautifully formatted and marked up documents, totally tested and ready to go.

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I was surprised how many of them said that they did not read them. OK. That has nothing to do with a disability. They just had other stuff to do. I can appreciate that. I was a little startled but prepared to sit down and read the document, the entire thing, out loud, three pages, go. Three pages, to be precise, legal wording. You need to be prepared to do that. You can't expect them to have done all the paperwork in advance. And you can't expect them to have no questions either. Be prepared for that.

I had mentioned I had some notes, (inaudible) and using the second monitor. As you're testing, as your users are going through a screenreader, bear in mind they might load the page and don't interrupt. Let the screenreader do its thing. The user will decide when he or she is ready to ask a question. If somebody is listening and you start to talk, they will miss something, which means you have spoiled the task. Not only have you made it difficult, but you have for the test because you may have distracted them from some critical piece of information they were relying on, but you might not know that. Let the screenreader do its thing. Any other assistive technology, don't interrupt them, let them get comfortable, let them experience the page and let them do what they need to do.

You might want them to follow those. Be prepared for them to not follow those. Be prepared for them to listen to the entire page. If they have a screen magnifier, let them do that. If you try to mess with that, all you're doing is messing with the test. Your users will make mistakes. This is true, regardless of disability. If you have already done user testing, you will know this. Let them off the hook. Be prepared in the scenarios that you have a group of users more accustomed to apologies for doing things wrong. Any mistakes are not their fault. Even if they take a laptop, throw it across the room, light it on fire, it is not their fault. Something in the software is to blame. It is not their fault. Let them off the hook. You want them to feel comfortable, it is OK for them to make mistakes because, after all, that is what you are testing. Make it OK for them to make mistakes. It is a really valuable interaction you won't get if you make them feel they have made a mistake and need to apologise.

These are the bullets that cover things I have said which you will be able to read later.

OK, so we're down to the... (inaudible) I don't even know how many sides I have. How hilarious is that?! He hasn't fallen asleep, has he?

(Laughter)

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Here's the thing about testing with people with disabilities – the very fact they are participating and you want them to participate at some level means you are gaining information about their personal health situation. In the States we have this whole thing where we have to deal with the information in a secure way and there are privacy rules. This doesn't fall under that because they are willing to do it. You should be prepared to treat everything they tell you as confidential. They might want to share with you how they came to have the condition they have. That is great. Don't start recording until they are done. Make it clear when you start recording. When you turn on the camera that you are about to turn it on. Have these conversations all you want but don't put it on the record, don't make it part of the write-up, don't put it in the reporting's and don't say anything else. It is not relevant. Treat it as confidential.

When you are doing your reporting later, when taking all this data and handing it off to somebody, if you use a name, that is fine, but do what you can to try to disconnect it from the person, from the disability. We want to try to at the very least operate under the highest ethical standards, which is a requirement when doing this testing. You want to make the participants feel you're not doing this tourism, you are not taking the information and using it for other purposes. The recruiting organisation will often be able to guide you on some ways you can have conversations. You might need to know something about the disability. You can ask them, the organisation you partner with. They might have guidance, some prewritten stuff, especially if they have done this before. You can lean on that, wherever possible, and then you don't need to stress about what is appropriate to ask, etc.

Those are the bullets related to it. I am wrapping up here.

I have this life that says we have time for one long winded, self-indulgent question that relates to nothing we have talked about. It turns out we have a lot more time. This is so crazy. I will put up the closing slide and repeat the URL, and the slide will appear later. It is: rosel.li/Guelph

At this point we have 14 minutes for questions.

SPEAKER:

I was wondering if you could give examples. If you have change the way you have approached solutions.

ADRIAN ROSELLI:

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Let me give you an example that I am in the process of writing that is long winded, but I think it is a nifty example. I will address this all to the room because it is to everybody. We had somebody come in who is using Firefox with a PDA. She opens the site and starts to work on it. There are things missing from the site. Nobody knows why. Until I managed to squeeze around and look at the laptop and see her version of Firefox is running at about 300 unknown. She does know this. She did not. Because it was running at about 300 pixels wide, it had triggered (unknown term). This particular client had things that were different in the mobile version of the site than on the main site.

So we're telling her that go to this thing and says this and push this thing. She was saying it was not on the screen and she did not see it. Everybody was panicking. She was on the run screen. I looked. Guys, maybe we need a longer conversation about the files. You cannot guarantee the user, even on a laptop, knows whether she is running on a full screen or not. Doing accidental user testing, the mobile version on the site on a laptop, was not expected, it was valuable for the client to consider what they would do about the disparity between the mobile and desktop versions. It was very valuable.

SPEAKER:

You mentioned bring people into usability labs. Do you (inaudible) how is a setup different?

ADRIAN ROSELLI:

Going into somebody's house, there are two variations. One is going to the organisation with whom you partner. That is great. Going to the house is a totally different experience. You need to make sure you understand about parking, where you can go, which flat is theirs. If they're letting you into their space, they are trusting you in some way. (inaudible). I have found everybody is incredibly accommodating. When we are working with blind users, they can often (inaudible). I thought that was quaint. It made me feel terrible. I did need the light. I did not how to say it without it feeling awkward.

We get to where they do the work, it will be tricky. Every scenario will be different. There will be a dog food bowl near the laptop. Their back will be near the wall, so no room behind them. Every scenario can think of, it will make the testing difficult, but will also be valuable when you see the space they are normally doing the things. You might not recognise how loud it is. You might not realise they don't have a lot of room. Getting the extra banking form may be a pain in the butt. Does that answer the question? Thank you.

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SPEAKER:

(inaudible) to do all it people (inaudible).

ADRIAN ROSELLI:

We always have tasks will stop in a building time for sitting back and seeing what happens. The tasks are valuable. Can you login? Can you find where your form is? Can you download the information? That is the whole reason you are there. I like to build in free time. I want to see them use the site. In doing that, I have discovered lots of different ways people (inaudible). She kept swiping through and was confused by. And then I saw a woman who was a professional screenreader and flew through it. I only discovered this because I sat back and asked them to surf the site and do the things that interested them.

We didn't put that into the testing plan, but when we came out of it, it was a valuable lesson. Maybe we should not use a table in that way. Even though it wasn't complex, some users would struggle. The answer is both. We do both. I've talked before about making sure you have plenty of extra time to stop if the people can stick around and what a chat or play around some more because you have run out of time, by all means let them. Any information you can gain is valuable. Certainly they have earned it – any money you pay them.

SPEAKER:

(inaudible)

ADRIAN ROSELLI:

They do because if you go with the Nielsen model, you only need five people to run the user test (inaudible), but if none have a disability of, it won't be a good group. I would rather have groups of people from each... And I hate to say the types of disabilities because it is a broad-spectrum. But if you can get each classification of the disability, you will have a much better experience. I would say the five number is great. I want five different blind users, five different deaf users, five people with learning disabilities. Each will give me a ton of information about expectations and how those users navigate the software with different skill levels.

Once you start to do that, you will find you don't need five of every one. Now you can start to thin those numbers out. Until an organisation has some familiarity and experience, more numbers of each category are good.

SPEAKER:

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I'm wondering about (inaudible) when you (inaudible)

ADRIAN ROSELLI:

Making sure they're relevant to the users. It doesn't matter as much, unfortunately, because there are some people starting these sessions that want to validate they have done a thing or see how a thing forms. They are bringing people in specifically to say, "Does the login process work? Does the download process work?" In that context, it is important.

That being said, if you have a more open study and you want to see how it sits – throw it against a wall and see if it sticks – a different conversation, most things still apply. Make sure your scripts are relevant. I've done tests where we have said that we have launched a new thing and asked people to take a look and see what they think. You get lots of disparate information. It depends on who has commissioned the test and the goals of it.

SPEAKER:

We have a gift for Adrian. Thank you for coming and for the great, practical information. Thank you, everybody, for being here.

(Applause)

ADRIAN ROSELLI:

Thank you.

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