

3Play Webinars | Baking Accessibility into Your Event Strategy

SOFIA LEIVA: All right. Well, thank you, everyone, for joining me today for the webinar "Baking Accessibility Into Your Event Strategy." My name is Sofia Leiva, and I'll be presenting today. I am the marketing programs manager here at 3Play Media. And so I manage our webinar program, our in-person conference ACCESS, and our conferences that we attend. So today I'll be sharing a lot of what I've learned throughout the days. And I also encourage you to use the chat icon to share any tips that you may have or thoughts.

On today's agenda, we're going to cover what is accessibility, so some basic terms. Maybe look at the laws around accessibility. Then we'll talk about how to actually design accessible events from what you should be doing while planning, during your event, and then afterwards. And then we'll leave time at the end for Q&A.

So first, let's start by defining accessibility. In order for something to be accessible, it must offer an equivalent experience to everyone, including those with disabilities. And this can refer to the physical locations. So for example, the venues where we host our events. But it can also refer to online accessibility. And here, with online, we want to make sure that all the electronic information we're putting out there is accessible and offering an all-encompassing experience to those with disabilities to prevent any level of exclusion.

On this slide, I have the words accessibility written out. And then I have an arrow that points to an acronym that goes A11y. You'll often see accessibility referred in social media as A11y. This just means that there's 11 letters between the A and the y of accessibility. And it also stands for being an ally to the accessibility community.

I want to take a brief pause and look at the accessibility picture. When it comes to events, it's really important that we make our attendees feel accommodated and feel like they can truly enjoy the event. Some brief stats. There are 360 million people who are deaf or hard of hearing, 205 million people who have some kind of vision loss, and then 190 million people who have some kind of motor disability. And so today, we'll cover how to create inclusive events to help accommodate those.

But I also want to share what I have here on the graph, which is an image by Microsoft. And this represents the persona spectrum, which was created to show the mismatches and motivations across a spectrum of permanent, temporary, and situational scenarios. And it serves as a tool to sort of help foster the empathy and show how a solution that is inclusive scales to a broader audience.

So like I mentioned, this graph represents permanent, temporary, and situational scenarios. A permanent scenario would be something like we have here, which is someone with one arm, or they may be blind, or they may be deaf or non-verbal. A temporary situation or scenario may be if you have a broken arm, or a cataract, an ear infection, or laryngitis.

And then a situational scenario would be if maybe you're a new parent and you're holding your baby so you don't have as much mobility in your arms, or you're a distracted driver and you don't have full visual mobility at the moment. Or maybe you're a bartender in a really loud environment, and then maybe you're speaking or you have a heavy accent, which makes it maybe a little bit difficult for people to fully understand what you're saying. Everyone has abilities and limits to those abilities. So when we design for people with permanent disabilities, we're actually designing to benefit people universally, which is a really beautiful thing.

So let's briefly talk about the laws around accessibility and events. And I want to preface this by saying that I'm not a lawyer so please consult your legal counsel to ensure that you're meeting the laws and which ones apply to you. My purpose here is just to provide a general overview of the laws that we should be aware of.

So in the United States, the one that you probably have heard of is the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the ADA. And this law is an anti-discriminatory law that applies to both physical and digital content. One thing to note is that while it was initially intended for physical locations, over the last couple of years and due to the advent of the internet and the way we use it, it's being applied to digital content more and more, so we do need to be mindful of our websites and our online events.

The Americans with Disabilities Act basically states that places of public accommodation-- so this can be the facilities where we're hosting our events or the online platforms we're using-- need to make sure that they provide an equivalent experience for people with disabilities. We also have the Architectural Barriers Act. And this essentially just requires that our buildings are accessible and built in an accessible manner.

In Canada, I like to point out the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Obviously, this applies only to Ontario. But it's one of the most comprehensive accessibility laws in the world. And it actually has clear standards for both public and private sectors on what they need to do in order to ensure that their programs are accessible. There's also the Accessible Canada Act. And then in the UK, we have the UK Equality Act, which is also an anti-discriminatory law that basically tells employers what they're required to do to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities.

I want to talk briefly about WCAG, which stands for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. These are essentially international guidelines for making our digital content accessible for all users. And while this isn't a law, they're often referenced in a lot of lawsuits and laws around the world.

There's certain versions of WCAG. So the most frequently mentioned is going to be WCAG 2.0, because that's what was available when the laws were written. But now I believe we're about to get WCAG 3.0. When using these guidelines, it's best to look at the most recent version because it's been optimized for the technology that we're using.

So WCAG is a great tool to use for our online websites and online events because it will serve as guidelines for what we should do in order to ensure that the online content we put is accessible. There's three levels to accessibility. So there is level A, which is going to be the baseline level of accessibility. This is typically not considered enough to be compliant, but it's a good start.

Most laws and most organizations are going to want to aim for level AA, which is a nice middle ground. This is what's mentioned most in lawsuits. And then we have level AAA, which is the highest level. And this is going to require more development, a little bit more time to implement. But if you can achieve this level of accessibility, you're doing an awesome job. I'm going to link in the chat just a resource that we've created around WCAG if you want to learn more about it. And yeah, like someone mentioned in the chat, WCAG 2.2 is work draft released in May 2021.

So let's talk about what we need to do to design accessible events. And before I get into this, I'd love to know in the chat, what kind of events are you currently designing. Are you doing in-person events now, are you doing hybrid, or are you solely doing online events? Feel free to type out in the chat.

So I see some people are doing hybrid, virtual, all three, a lot of online, a lot of all three. Great. Well, hopefully, today you get tips for both of these. And here at 3Play, we're also doing all three as well.

So I want to start first by talking about what we need to consider when hosting in-person events in terms of the venue. On this graph-- I'll get to the image in a little bit. But first, let's start by one of the first questions that we should ask. And it is, is your venue-- does it have an elevator or a ramp?

This is important especially for people who are using wheelchairs but also can be helpful for people in maybe temporary situations where maybe they're on crutches or even someone who has a service dog. There's a lot of great reasons why we should have elevators and ramps in our event. And here you want to look out that there's ramps in the main entrances. And then you also want to make sure that the elevators are working.

You also want to look that there's working buttons for wheelchair users. And these are those buttons that you press and it automatically opens the door. If your venue doesn't have this option, then I recommend that you either prop the door open or have someone there to open the door for anyone who needs assistance.

You also want to ask if there is braille for the building names, and room numbers, and entrances. And if there's not, it's also helpful to have staff scattered around the venue helping to guide people and helping to tell individuals what exactly this room is for and what session they're going to.

So like I mentioned on this slide, I have an image. And we have here a revolving door and then an auxiliary door which is basically just a door that you open and close. Revolving doors aren't accessible, so you want to make sure that you have an alternative like the auxiliary door or a different entrance.

When it comes to accessible venues, you also have to look at accessible bathrooms. So on this slide, I have an image. It's basically a blueprint for what a standard accessible stall is. And this is a wheelchair accessible stall

Essentially, it needs to have bars. There needs to be enough room for someone with a wheelchair to be able to pop in and out. You want to have doors that swing outwards and maybe even have alternative doors. You want to make sure that your venue has an accessible bathroom. And most venues that are ADA compliant will have an accessible bathroom.

Another thing to know about bathrooms is you want to make sure they're close to where your sessions are going to take place because you don't want to have to send someone to another building in order to access the bathroom. It's just not a great experience.

With bathrooms, you also want to make sure you have gender neutral bathrooms. And if there isn't one in the building, then you want to see how you can accommodate to make one bathroom or a couple gender neutral.

Now let's talk about the space that we're looking at. So on this slide, I have an image of what is called an accessible route. And this is basically just showing what we need to consider for making sure that we have enough room, particularly for someone who is in a wheelchair, to get around comfortably. So in an accessible space, we need to make sure that there is enough room for everyone to sit down. And then also, especially because of COVID, we want to make sure that there's enough room for people to have personal space or to be able to social distance.

In terms of hallways and doors, we want to make sure that there are wide hallways and then also wide doors so that someone in a wheelchair can get through or maybe someone with a service dog can also get through comfortably. It's also important to ask if service dogs are allowed. Some buildings may not allow that, and that could be a big no-no to passing from that venue. And in the image, it basically just states how the door should be at least 80 inches wide and then also ample space on either sides.

Next, we want to look at the accessible parking situation. And so you want to make sure that your venue has accessible parking. If it doesn't, you want to take the time to block out sections that include accessible parking.

So on this slide, I have a building and then different parking lots. And you'll see in the front of the building, we have a zone for passenger unloading, which is important to have. And then the accessible parking spaces are also noted. And they're close to the sidewalk. And there's ample room in the parking spaces. And in the next slide I'll show the difference between an accessible parking space and a regular parking space.

Another really important thing around transportation to your venue is you want to make sure that it's accessible to get there, so looking at all the routes to get there and noting them on your website, so noting to your individuals that they can get there by bus, taxi, and subway and linking to those options and how they can do that as well as noting the accessible routes to get to your venue, which Google Maps actually helps out a lot with this. It will link to wheelchair accessible routes to get to the venue. So I highly recommend that you use Google Maps or link it in your website.

So like I said, here is an image of the difference between an accessible parking space and a regular parking space. You'll notice that the accessible parking spaces are wider. And they have crossed off sections just because it allows ample space for someone to unload. A standard parking space is going to be much narrower, so you want to make sure that in your accessible spots you do have that space for people to unload comfortably.

Now let's talk about the actual event layout of your event. So like I mentioned earlier, you want to make sure that there's enough space to move around, but you also want to make sure that you have enough space between the rows of the sitting. This is so that people can move around comfortably. And also if someone has a service dog, it gives them a lot of space to have that dog comfortably sit while they're watching a session.

You also want to make sure that you have wheelchair access at tables, so making sure that your registration tables and your food tables are at an appropriate height and making sure that maybe you're doing dining style seating, making sure that there's some spaces where someone with a wheelchair can go through and sit there, as well as in your actual event venue maybe leaving some blank spots for someone with a wheelchair to sit comfortably.

When it comes to chairs, you want to opt for chairs with high backs because this helps to accommodate people with balance issues. And then you also want to make sure that everyone can clearly see the layout of the presentation from anywhere they're sitting as well as any videos that you're showing and any signage that you have around. You want to make sure that it's big enough for people to view, distinguish, and actually use.

Lastly, you want to make sure to save accessible seating spots. And key here is you don't want to separate them from the group. So you don't want to have a section for accessible seating. That's just not great. So what I like to do is I like to scatter and save a couple accessibility seats around the venue hall. And so it gives people options for where they want to sit. I usually do some in the front and some in the alleyways. It's much more comfortable.

A really key thing here is to confirm everything days before your event. And what I mean by this is to check in maybe two to three days before the event and make sure that the elevators are working properly and that there is not a lot of construction going on by your venue, things like that, so that if there is something you can communicate to your guests immediately.

Now let's talk about what we should consider for digital platforms. Let me know in the chat what sort of platforms do you use in terms of digital presenting. So for example, here at 3Play we use Zoom. So I see a lot of Zoom, Google Meet, On24, Microsoft Teams.

Yeah. There's a lot of really great platforms out there that we can use. The one caveat with event platforms is that a lot of them aren't accessible. So you do have to grill them to see what features they have and then provide alternatives when possible.

So an accessible platform is going to be keyboard and screen reader accessible. Keyboard accessible means that someone can tap through or navigate the website by using solely their keyboard. And then screen reader accessible is going to be that someone can use a screen reader and actually know what elements they are on as they navigate the website.

We also want to make sure that your digital platforms are mobile accessible. Especially if you are hosting an in-person event and you have a mobile app, you want to make sure that that is accessible. You want to make sure that the language you're using throughout your digital platform is easy to understand. You want to make sure that your forms are accessible. And this is important, so we'll cover in the next slide in more detail. And then any videos that you publish on your website should also be accessible. And we'll talk more about that at the end.

It's great practice if you can ask your vendor if they have a VPAT, which essentially stands for a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template. This is something that a lot of people in the educational industry ask for because it is a requirement-- or it does reference Section 508, which is the law here in the United States. And essentially, a VPAT will just explain everything they've done to ensure that it meets the standards of Section 508, which references WCAG level AA, WCAG 2.0. So if you can't ask for a VPAT, you can use the WCAG guidelines to gauge the accessibility of the platform.

Now let's talk about accessible forms. This is really important, whether you're hosting an in-person, hybrid, or online event, because this is how people are going to register. So we need to make sure that they're accessible. On this slide, I have a really great image by the Home Office UK, which goes through the dos and don'ts of what forms should have. And I'll cover those in a little bit more detail in a bit.

So accessible forms are going to be easy to understand, to complete, and to submit. So what I mean by this is that they should have a clear navigation order. So you don't want to have something like first name, email, last name. That makes no sense. So first name, last name, email.

You want to make sure that there's instructions and cues. Particularly if there is an error, you want to make sure that you clearly tell the person that they made an error on the form, so by either having a tooltip and highlighting where the error was made as well as not letting them advance until the error is fixed. And then you also want to make sure that people have enough time to actually complete the form. So you don't want to give them two minutes and then have the form expire. Instead, maybe 10 to 15 minutes and then provide warnings or count sounds for how long they have to submit the form, or if you can, maybe just not have a limit at all.

So like I mentioned, the image on this page has the other dos and don'ts of forms. So for example, a do is to make large clickable actions instead of demand position. So for example, the image here is we have a large place to click the Yes button versus a small little circle to click the No or Yes button.

You also want to make sure that you give form field space. So you don't want it to be cluttered where you have first name, last name together. Instead, have everything go on a different line with as much space between each of the form fields.

You want to make sure that it's designed for keyboard or screen reader accessibility. And you want to make sure that it doesn't have a lot of dynamic content like a lot of dropdowns or things like that, which makes it really hard to deal with.

You also want to make sure that it's designed for mobile and touchscreen in mind. So a lot of people are actually now using their mobiles to register for things so that's really key. And like I mentioned, you don't want to have short timeout sessions.

Lastly, you want to provide shortcuts. So what I mean by this is not have users have to type in a lot of things. If you can have something that starts to automatically fill their address, that makes it infinitely easier and a better user experience.

Now, one thing I love to do is to include accommodation requests in the form. So there's several ways that you can ask for accommodation requests. So you can either have an email where people can submit it. But if you include it in the form, it's going to be top of mind for them and make it infinitely easier to actually submit a request.

On this slide, I have an example of what you can make your form look like. So it says, "I will need the following accommodations in order to participate." And then the individual would be able to check each of the options.

So for example, captioning, or front row seating, a scent-free room, lactation room, diet restrictions, et cetera. And then it also has a space for them to type in any further accommodations that we may have missed. Like I said, you can either do it in this format where you list certain accommodations, or you can also have just an empty space where someone can write what they need. But having a dropdown will make it easier for you, especially if you have a lot of requests coming in or a big audience.

Some common accommodation requests that you may get is, for example, a sign language interpreter. So this is someone who speaks sign language. And typically, for a one hour session, you can expect to have two interpreters. And best practice with sign language interpreters is to place them at the very front next to the speaker if possible and spotlight them so that everyone who needs them can see.

Other requests may be a CART or live captioning. This can either be for in-person or virtual events. If it is a virtual event, then you want to look for an option that actually has the captions natively placed inside the platform. That's just a better user experience. But if you can't do that or if you're in person, then you can also provide a link to the caption so that people can view.

Dietary accommodations are something that has become more and more common. If possible, I would make your venues already include the most common requests, which are dairy, gluten, vegetarian, and kosher. And then if there's any additional ones that come in, you can just work with your event venue to make sure you're meeting those. And then lastly, the mobility side-- you want to make sure that the venue itself is accessible. You have designated parking and seating, particularly if someone does request it, and that you accommodate service dogs.

Now let's talk about the actual accessibility accommodation and what you should be doing when telling this to your event attendees, because it is really important that you let them know what accommodations you are providing ahead of time. So one way you can do this is you can have an accessibility clause. And this can be something that you include in the footer of your website where you basically state, we're making this event accessible. We're providing captions, dietary accommodations, such and such. You can also include it in an FAQ section. So have a question like, what are the accommodations that you're providing, and get more specific there.

I also recommend that you include it in your emails. So if the event will be captioned and it's virtual, then I would include in every email, this event will be captioned. And then you can go a step further and actually create an accessibility statement for your event and include that as a link in your website so that people can clearly see your goals, and what you're doing, and even how they can get in touch with you if they require further accommodations. Like we talked about earlier, it's good practice if you can include it in your form. But if you can't, have a designated email that you can monitor and make sure you communicate that email to your attendees.

I also want to point out that it's a really great idea to have a space in your form for someone to include pronouns. This you can include in your badges. And that's just a really awesome way to create a more inclusive environment.

One thing that I've learned is that it's key to set accommodation deadlines. And typically, you want to set it at least three weeks before your event. So say something like, please submit me your accommodations before such and such date. That just gives you ample time to find a great accommodation.

And I highly recommend that you work with the person who requested the accommodation. So for example, if someone requests sign language interpreters, work with them to see which interpreters they prefer so that you can try to get those for them. If an accommodation request does come in afterwards, then try your best to help accommodate that. But having a deadline just kind of helps the planner inside of you feel a little bit better.

Lastly, you want to try to send an email at least before the event, just to make sure that everyone who does require an accommodation knows what accommodations you will provide. So list out there how to get to your event, what accommodations you're going to have, and then, if they do require any additional accommodations, how to get in touch with you about that.

So now let's talk about how to design accessible materials. And here I talk mainly about digital content just because it is harder to make printed copy accessible. If you do have printed copy, I highly recommend that you have digital alternatives ready to give out and ready for people to download when they need.

When it comes to digital content, you want to make sure that you have proper headings. So this is the structure of your content. So make sure that there is a title, which is an H1, and then subsequent titles would be H2's or H3's. So that structure needs to be really clear.

You also want to make sure that it's screen reader-accessible. So PDFs are often not accessible, so I recommend using tools like Microsoft, which actually has an accessibility checker, to help you make sure that you're meeting all the requirements. You also want to have alt text, which is-- basically describes the important visual elements that are in the form or presentation.

So for example, if you have graphs, I would make sure that you describe what those graphs are and why they're important to the content that you're providing. If you have something like I have in the slide, which is a blue circle on a black box, this is decor. It doesn't really add to what I'm saying, so you would I need to describe that.

I want to briefly talk about color contrast. This is something that I see a lot of marketing materials sort of miss. And so here, WCAG 2.0 level AA actually requires a contrast ratio of 4.5 to 1. And you can use tools like the color contrast checker, which I'll link in the chat, because this you can use as you're building your content. And it will tell you whether the text is a good contrast with the background.

So an example of this would be how I have on the slide, which is white text on a black background-- although that can be really harsh, so I often recommend going with an off-white or an off-black. But that has high contrast, and it makes it easy for someone to actually-- or someone who's colorblind to actually see what is happening. A low contrast would be something like using a light text on a light background. So here I have a white text on a yellow background, and that's a little bit harder for someone who may be colorblind to see.

Some other design no-nos are that you don't want to use color as the only means to convey information. So what I mean by that is, if you have a paragraph where it says, click the blue button if you agree or click the red button if you disagree, no-- if you do want to use colors, then make sure you label that button yes and the other one no.

On this graph, I have an example of a form which has the fields-- it's showing an error, and it has the fields highlighted as red. And if you're colorblind, that could be really hard to really see where the error is. So what I would have done is I would have included information below where the errors are made just to indicate or remind the person where they should go back and fix everything.

Another design no-no is to embed text in images. And what I mean by this is, for example, I have an invitation to an event by who, what, where, and their image has all the information-- the image has the text actually embedded into it, so all the information is on that image. And while, yes, you can include alt text to describe what the image has, that isn't the best experience, so you want to make sure that the text on the image is actually below, or somewhere else, or even just on the email, instead of being on the image, if that makes sense.

So now let's talk about what we need to consider during our event. When building the agenda, we want to make sure that we schedule plenty of breaks throughout the day. So typically, I like to schedule breaks in between each session, give attendees 10 to 15 minutes to gather themselves, go to the next section, or even use the restroom.

I also like to include two longer breaks in addition to our one-hour lunch break-- so one in the morning and one in the afternoon-- which can serve as a networking break-- usually 30 minutes or so. That's just a really nice-- so that attendees can get to know one another or just recharge after the session.

You don't want to schedule sessions that are longer than an hour and a half. That's just very daunting, and it can be really hard to remember what is being said. And a study by Bizzabo, which is an event platform, actually found that sessions, especially online, should last about 45 minutes. That's the optimal for an online environment.

Next, we want to allow attendees to build their own schedule. So what I mean by this is a couple weeks before the event, allow attendees to actually start either building their own schedule themselves or have the full schedule placed so that they can plan out their day. If you have a tool that can do this, that's even better. And I would make sure to always provide really detailed descriptions of the presentation, what they can expect, and then also go further as to categorize each of the sessions either by level of difficulty or by topic.

Now I want to talk a little bit about tapping into universal design for learning, but really the learning pyramid, which is something I recently discovered. So when building out presentations or creating your agenda, I highly recommend that you present sessions in different ways. So what I mean by this is you can have a lecture presentation, but also have a lot of interaction throughout the presentation, and then also maybe even do breakout sessions afterwards.

The learning pyramid is something that I recently discovered and makes a lot of sense to-- it basically shows you how we learn. At the very bottom, we have 90% of people learn by teaching others. We learn 75% by practicing what we're doing, 50% by discussing it with other people, 30% by having demonstrations, 20% by using audiovisual tools-- so like images or video-- and then, at the very bottom, 10% by reading, and then lecture.

So this was really eye-opening, because most of the presentations-- I'm a little hypocritical here, but most the presentations are lecture style like this. And while it can be hard in a virtual environment, what I'm trying to do with our events is to incorporate more breakout sessions after each session so that we can tap into the discussion and teaching others element of the learning pyramid.

If you agree with this, let me know in the chat how you typically learn best, because we'll probably see a wide range of how people find that they learn best. So if we can tap into each of these different elements, then we can create better sessions that are going to actually be impactful. So let's talk about accessible presenting.

One key element with accessible presenting is actually having accessible slides. So what this means is, of course, using good color contrast, and then also having readable fonts. It's typically recommended to use non-serif fonts, just because those are easier to read than ones that have the little lines on top.

You want to make sure that the presenter takes time to describe any important images on the slide. So if they do have graphs, they should describe those. And if they show videos, then they should have audio description or be captioned. And then they should also take the time to read out any poll questions that they're asking, as well as comments coming in through the chat, if they ask a question.

And then, if you're in a live environment, you want to make sure that you repeat the Q&A question that has come in just because, a lot of times, people may not be able to hear what someone has asked. And so restating it is going to provide a better experience.

Next, we want to make sure that we use accessible and inclusive language. And importantly, as someone mentioned here, is that we read out any acronyms that we have, because we shouldn't assume that everyone knows what everything means. And then make sure that the presentation is to your audience's knowledge.

It can be hard to gauge the knowledge of the audience sometimes. One thing that I've started to do in our last event is to ask a question in the form-- like, how comfortable are you with accessible content or what's your expertise in accessibility. And that was really helpful to pass along to our presenters.

One thing I didn't note here, but should be key, is to make sure that you show your presenters best practices for presenting. So in our 101s with the presenters, I make sure to go over these and let them know, if there's going to be anyone with a disability in the audience, that they should be mindful-- that, if someone is blind, they should be really mindful of reading out everything and making sure that they describe everything on the slide. I also include some guidelines in the speaker guide, so I recommend that you try that as well.

I have something called an accessibility contingency plan. I'm not sure why I called it like this, but what has happened at some of our events is that, even though we asked for accommodations, someone may show up who has a service dog or who may be in a wheelchair that we didn't know about. So you want to make sure that, if you do-- if you are really proactive with the accessibility of your event, then it should provide a really seamless experience.

But if you didn't plan, then I recommend having accessibility helpers who are people who can help answer any questions and guide any audience-- or any guests who need help or assistance. I also make sure to have a list and get in touch with the people who have requested an accommodation just so that I can check in with them when they arrive at the event and make sure that they know-- if they've asked for a dietary accommodations, then they know where to find that, et cetera.

Another key element is to train your team. So everyone who's going to be at the event should be versed in the accommodations that you're providing and then what accommodations people have requested, so that any individual who needs help can go to any of your staff, and ask, and get an informed answer.

It's also important to verse your team on best practices. And these are some tips from Vision Australia on how to approach someone who is deaf or blind. And the approach is to approach them, greet them and walk up to them, ask if they need any help, and then assist if they do require assistance. But if they don't-- don't get offended if they don't, but do let them know that you're there if they need any help.

So let's briefly talk about our post-event considerations. And in here, I'm mainly going to be talking about accessible video. Raise your hand if you give out your recordings of your sessions to your guests afterwards. Yeah, I see a lot of hands raised. That's a really great practice, especially because, like we saw earlier, it can be hard to learn everything by lecture. So being able to revisit the sessions is a much better user experience.

What goes into accessible video, number one, is captions and transcripts-- and live captioning, if you have live events. Captions for pre-recorded content should aim to have a 99% accuracy rate. And typically, what this means is that, if you're using automatic captions, that's not going to be accessible. There can be a lot of errors in there that can affect the comprehension of the content, and so it's really important that you at least take the time to review the captions and make any edits.

Audio description is an accommodation for blind or low vision individuals, and essentially, it describes the important visual elements in the video. So to envision this, think of a radio host describing a baseball game on the radio. So it's very descriptive. You can close your eyes and visualize what is going on in the video.

Typically, if your presenter does a really great job of describing what's on their slides and the visual components, you may not need audio description, but if you have any promotional videos or marketing videos, I highly recommend that you add audio description to those. And then an accessible video player is going to be one that's screen reader and keyboard accessible, and it also supports closed captioning and audio description.

I want to briefly talk about the benefits of captioning, just because we've seen an incredible uptick in individuals captioning their content. And it's just a really great tool to increase engagement and ensure that your audience is understanding what is being said while they're watching the presentation.

So a study by Ofcom actually found that 80% of people who use captions aren't deaf or hard of hearing. So if you use captions just on the regular, let me know in the chat window. I definitely do because, especially if you're watching Netflix, it can be really easy to know what's going on in the video.

A study by the University of St. Petersburg, Florida found that 98.6% of students find captions helpful. So especially if you're hosting sessions that are really educational, having captions is a game-changer.

A study by Biteable found that 64% of marketers say their videos perform better with captions. And this is a recent study done on 2020 video, so it just really shows the impact of captions. Especially if people are watching on the go or watching in a really loud environment, that's just a really great alternative. And then a study by the Academy of Marketing Science actually found that captions improve brand recall, verbal memory, and behavioral intent.

My last point here is just to talk briefly about translations. This is another area that we've seen an increase in, especially as we're creating more online video. Instead of having to recreate the video that you are creating, it's so much easier to actually get it translated, and that can help you reach a wider audience.

Some interesting stats by YouTube-- they actually found that 80% of their views were coming from outside the United States and that eight out of the top 10 countries with the most YouTube users were coming from non-English-speaking countries. There is a really big opportunity there to share your content with a global audience.

Best practices to keep in mind with translations is opt to use a professional service, just because the automatic translations can be notoriously bad. And like we saw-- or like we talked about earlier [INAUDIBLE]. Before we leave, I'll link to the session-- or the slides so that you can [INAUDIBLE]. But I also recommend-- or I'll also say that, tomorrow, we'll have released the slide deck so you can easily access these. And then we'll also link everything in an actual page that you can access.

So we have a couple of minutes for Q&A. I'll try to get to as many as I can help answer today, but I do want to say thank you, everyone, for joining me today and for listening to my lecture presentation. I hope you got a lot out of it.

So we have here, "How do you treat live captioning's accuracy rate in comparison to pre-recorded video accuracy?" So with live captions, the accuracy is always going to be lower, just because it is happening in real time. You'll notice that there's a slight delay. So typically, we see accuracies that range from 80% up to the 90%, 95%, I believe.

It can get really accurate, but with live captioning, you have to make sure that you have a clear audio source, only one speaker, just because that's going to help improve the accuracy of the live captions. And then, with pre-recorded, like I mentioned earlier, you do want to aim for that 99% accuracy rate.

So we have here a question. "Does Zoom's auto live captioning make it a viable alternative for CART?" So CART uses-- it's real-time captioning that uses a human stenographer. And typically, if you're using a human, the live captioning accuracy is going to be a lot higher.

So if you're able to afford a stenographer, I highly recommend that you use the CART solution or one that involves humans in the process, just because it's going to have a greater level of accessibility. When it comes to caption accuracy, there's not-- not many laws will tell you the level of accuracy or the percentage that it should be, but you do want to provide the highest that you can, just because it's more accessible and a better experience.

So we have a question here. "Is it acceptable to have wheelchair entrances be along the outside edges only?" I would say that, as long as it doesn't have a completely different experience, so it's not a nuisance, for someone with a wheelchair to get inside, then sure. And maybe have another registration table there, too, and a lot of signage to let them know how to get to the presentation. You don't want to alienate anyone who needs an accommodation. That's just not good, so make sure that you are as inclusive as possible and provide as good of an experience as you can.

We have a question here. "Does 3Play have any information on DIY audio description?" So yes, we do, and I will make a note to also include that tomorrow. Typically, with audio description, like I said, if you can be really descriptive in your presentation to all the important visual elements, then that's a great workaround.

If you weren't, then you can do your own by either adding in just the audio descriptions afterwards-- so you would have to download the audio and then make sure that you go back in and describe it. You can also do description transcripts, where you write in the descriptions in between the pauses, but it is best to actually have an audio that reads out the audio descriptions.

So someone is asking, "If compliance guidelines vary by country to country or other regions, do we need to follow the guidelines of every region we broadcast, or just where we are located?" So like I said, I'm not a legal expert, so I'm not entirely sure on the answer to this. I would think that you need to follow the ones of your country predominantly, but if you can be proactive with accessibility, like we talked about earlier, an inclusive event is going to provide a better experience for everyone, not just people with disabilities.

Someone is asking-- and this will be the last question I answer, since we're almost at time-- they're asking, "Is there an expectation for deaf or hard of hearing attendees to bring their own equipment for live captioning a live speaker, or should this be provided? And if provided, are there equipment recommendations?"

I'm not sure legally. Maybe someone in the chat can let us know, but it's definitely, I think, on us as the event planners to provide those accommodations. And so you do want to make sure that they don't have to do anything extra in order to participate in the event. Your event should be-- provide a seamless experience for them.

And in terms of the equipment, I would say you could do, like I said, a tablet or a phone and stream it there. You can stream it up on the screen-- although that may be hard to see, so having the option to use a tablet or a phone is a lot better. And then there is some technology out there. I'm not familiar. And I know someone in the chat also asked, but if I can get the name, I will try to also post that tomorrow with the recording.

And someone here has said, "It is the requirement of the event planner to make sure the event is accessible." And then someone else commented, "For Android mobile devices, they use the Live Transcript app." All right, well, we're right at 3 o'clock here Eastern. I want to thank you all again for joining me today. And yeah, I hope you all have a great rest of your day. Thank you so much for joining me. Bye.