

Corporate Communications Services

Environmental Scan

The high level issues identified for Corporate Communications are as follows:

- To analyze and help research the best possible strategy, or software for making The Regional Municipality of York's website more accessible with the W3C consortium criteria (e.g. Content Management Software with accessibility features built into it, high level strategy or policy that dictates levels of accessibility that must be achieved with the current software);
- Empower persons who are blind or have low vision to use screen reading software to access information that is important to them with automatic up to date refreshes;
- A centralized telephone contact for the website so persons who are blind or have low vision can talk to a Regional employee to get information that may not be accessible on the web; and
- To review the writing styles of the departments that post to the web and determine guidelines around literacy levels and how to incorporate such guidelines into daily web development for use by persons with cognitive disabilities.

Our Customers

Corporate Communications is responsible for communicating Regional issues and services to external and internal clients, as well as to the general public. Corporate Communications is also responsible for the layout and dissemination of information over the Internet and Intranet in a manner that is compatible with screen reading software used by persons who are blind or have low vision. Any documents produced by Corporate Communications will be made available in a format or font size that would be most accessible for a person with a disability.

Accessibility Statement

Corporate Communications Services is committed to increasing staff awareness to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training offered corporately. This type of training will educate our staff on how to properly manage requests from people with disabilities in a respectful and accommodating manner.

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Corporate Communications Services

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements – 2007

Barrier Identified (Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice or facility)	Barrier Type (Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)	How the barrier was addressed (Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier)
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
A centralized phone service will be piloted to give full support to persons with disabilities while web issues are resolved.	Technological, Informational	Sensory	The new phone service has been implemented and is available for persons who are blind or have low vision while web issues are being resolved. An alternative contact needs to be added in order to provide coverage.
The Content Management Strategy (CMS) software will be reviewed to determine what strategy is needed to maintain an accessible web site using the new CMS updated software.	Technological	Sensory, Cognitive	The CMS software will be reviewed in late fall 2007 to determine the value of performing an upgrade in conjunction with the Regional portal that is being suggested. Corporate Communications, with the help from IT, will evaluate the new software for performance enhancement and accessibility options. Accessibility criteria, as laid out by the W3C consortium, will be used to determine the level of accessibility that will be achieved or could be achieved with the suggested software. Recommendations will be given with respect to accessible design and navigation by Corporate Communications.
Some web pages that have tables, charts and photos etc. are not accessible to screen reading software.	Technological	Sensory, Cognitive	Creation of guidelines and standards to address issues of accessibility on certain web pages via direct telephone are planned for completion in late fall 2007. These guidelines will address branding and graphic standards as well as how accessibility standards will be incorporated into the Regional administrative processes (what to do when a person with a disability requests information or service from the Region).

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Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Increase the level of accessibility of Regional web pages by creating an Accessible Content Management Strategy moving forward.	Technological	Sensory	The new CMS software package was reviewed for accessibility components, including accessibility barriers related to reading PDF files, as well as determination of the best system to guide the users in the creation of accessible web pages. Accessible page construction training is being set for late September early October 2007.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	4 staff members completed the course in 2007.

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Corporate Communications Services - 2008

Barrier Identification for 2008

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2008. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Research to determine if technology used to provide information directly to a user's computer is compatible with screen reading software.	Test feed and software with screen reading software.	This will be reviewed February 2008 through to April 2008
Web review (Contact Management System): • option of having an automatic Font Size Icon/link placed on the site. How it will work with CMS? • contrast control of text on the Regional Municipality of York's website.	Research by Corporate Communications partnering with Information Technology services.	2008

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2008

Barrier Identified (Indicate where the barrier was found)	Barrier Type (Indicate the type of barrier - physical, architectural, informational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice)	Disability Type (Indicate the type of disability affected by the barrier - physical, sensory, cognitive or other)	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier (Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier)	Means to prevent/remove the barrier (Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier)	Indicators of success (Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing and/or preventing this barrier)	Timing (The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set in 2008; the nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Navigation of the Regional Municipality of York's website.	Informational, Communicational, Technological	Cognitive Sensory	It will be easier for people with cognitive and sensory disabilities to find information on the Region's website.	Implementing the Google search function will enable all, including people with disabilities, to get information quickly without having to navigate the whole website.	There will be a greater number of people accessing information via the search function reducing the number of requests for information.	February 2008
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.	2 members of the Corporate Communications staff will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2008