

# Accessibility Certification

## ACCESSIBILITY CERTIFICATION HIGHLIGHTS

- Independent recognition of your organization's accessibility efforts.
- Reduced legal liabilities through advocacy-group sponsored certification.
- Positive Public Relations opportunities improve brand image.
- Higher revenues through increased public sector sales and marketing to people with disabilities.

## SELECT CUSTOMERS

- Organizations that have received Accessibility Certification include:
- Social Security Administration
  - Wells Fargo Bank
  - Hewlett-Packard
  - Documentum
  - VISA International

## ACCESSIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Accessibility Certification of IT systems provides your organization with powerful marketing benefits, independent validation of your accessibility efforts, and legal protection. This program run by the National Federation of the Blind (NFB)—one of the largest advocacy groups for people with disabilities—certifies that Web sites, Web applications, software and hardware that meet its criteria are accessible to people with visual disabilities. Once your organization has created accessible IT systems, Accessibility certification helps leverage the benefits of your investment in accessibility.

Accessibility Certification provides many benefits to your organization, including:

- **Reduce risk of litigation** - Inaccessible IT systems prevent full access to information and services by people who are blind or disabled. This can lead to anti-discriminatory suits by employees or users who cannot perform essential job functions. Advocacy groups are actively pursuing legal actions to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities by targeting inaccessible IT systems. Accessibility Certification provides impartial validation of your organization's accessibility effort.
- **Boost revenues** - Many public sector markets including U.S. Federal government agencies are required to purchase accessible technology. Accessibility Certification creates a strong competitive advantage and gives government procurement officers confidence that they are purchasing accessible technology. In addition, organizations maintaining accessible IT systems will acquire more business from people with disabilities. There are currently over 54 million Americans with Disabilities controlling \$175 billion in discretionary income.
- **Promote a positive brand** - Accessible IT systems demonstrate your organization's commitment to meeting your customer's needs. Accessibility Certification enables consumers and advocacy groups to easily recognize your organization's accessibility efforts.

## WHO USES ACCESSIBILITY CERTIFICATION?

Accessibility Certification enables your organization's marketing, sales and management teams to exploit the business benefits of accessibility. In addition, Accessibility Certification allows legal and compliance teams to ensure that your organization is making reasonable efforts to reduce its accessibility risk.

## WHERE DOES ACCESSIBILITY CERTIFICATION FIT IN THE PROCESS?

Accessibility Certification is the final phase in your organization's accessibility initiative. Accessibility Certification recognizes the accessibility of your organization's IT systems, and is part of the Assure phase. Accessibility Certification is renewed on a regular basis to ensure the ongoing accessibility of your organization's IT systems.



Figure 1: The Accessibility Certification Seal from the National Federation of the Blind (NFB).



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## BUSINESS BENEFITS OF ACCESSIBILITY

Achieving accessibility offers important benefits:

- Avoid costly litigation
- Increase public sector sales
- Enhance brand
- Lower help desk costs
- Improve product usability

## CONTACT SSB

To learn more about how SSB can help your organization achieve accessibility, contact us today to speak with an Accessibility Expert.

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## HOW CAN MY ORGANIZATION BECOME CERTIFIED?

The best way to prepare for Accessibility Certification is to work with SSB Technologies to make your organization's IT systems accessible. SSB Technologies co-founded the Accessibility Certification program in conjunction with the NFB and has the most experience in guiding organizations through the process. As the first NFB-approved Accessibility Consultant, we are the most qualified partner to work with to receive Accessibility Certification.

Accessibility Certification is the final step in SSB's accessibility solution. Our unique Assess, Address, Assure™ solution integrates the business and technical tools necessary for achieving and maintaining accessibility. SSB works with your organization to develop an action plan that achieves the appropriate level of accessibility, and results in Accessibility Certification. The crucial steps are:

**Assess** - SSB begins by assessing your organization's business goals for accessibility as well as the current status of your IT systems. This analysis identifies your organization's highest risk areas, and is used to develop a prioritized plan to obtain the highest return on investment.

**Address** - Using a plan mapped to business requirements and processes unique to your organization, SSB works with your team to achieve the appropriate level of accessibility for your IT systems. SSB's experience, expertise, and powerful technology ensure the success of your implementation project.

**Assure** - Once your organization reaches its goals, SSB can provide help maintaining the accessibility of your IT systems over time. SSB's monitoring and certification offerings ensure the ongoing accessibility of IT systems, enabling your organization to increase its market share, decrease help desk costs, and enhance brand.

Developed over years of experience with over 400 public and private sector customers and over 600 successfully completed consulting projects, the Assess, Address, Assure solution transforms accessibility from a business risk into an ongoing competitive advantage for your organization.

## WHY ACCESSIBILITY CERTIFICATION?

Accessibility Certification helps all organizations leverage the benefits of accessibility to reduce legal liabilities, increase revenues, and enhance brand. For example:

- **Hardware and software manufacturers** selling IT systems to public sector markets can increase revenues through marketing accessible products. Accessibility Certification helps these organizations win competitive procurements by providing independent validation of product accessibility.

- **Public sector organizations** including **U.S. Federal government agencies** are required by laws such as Section 508 to maintain accessible IT systems. Accessibility Certification demonstrates to the public that the organization has complied with this requirement.

- **E-businesses**, including **Financial Services companies**, risk lost revenue and anti-discriminatory legislation for maintaining inaccessible IT systems. Accessibility Certification provides defense against these legal liabilities.

## ABOUT SSB TECHNOLOGIES

SSB Technologies provides solutions that resolve the revenue loss, punitive damages, and compliance risks created by inaccessible Information Technology (IT) systems, including Web sites, Web applications, software, and hardware. SSB's proven Assess, Address, Assure™ solution integrates the business and technical requirements necessary to transform accessibility from a liability into a competitive advantage. With over 400 public and private sector customers, 600 successfully completed projects, and award-winning software, SSB has the experience and expertise to ensure that your organization reaches its accessibility goals.

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