



A Comprehensive Buyer's Guide to Digital Accessibility:

Compliance, Protection, & ROI



Executive summary

Choosing the right digital accessibility solution is critical to the longevity of your business. While a comprehensive solution can open doors to various benefits, an incomplete solution can cause reputational and financial consequences, leading to lawsuits that cost up to \$100,000, lost revenue, and customer alienation. Yet, 96% of websites remain inaccessible, proving traditional solutions — automation-only tools or costly consulting — fail to scale effectively.

To bridge the gap, businesses will benefit from an approach that ensures the highest possible compliance while lowering the risk of legal action.

This scalable, sustainable solution delivers 300% better legal protection than consulting and 400% better results than automation alone.

Digital accessibility is more than compliance — it's a growth opportunity. With 1.3 billion people worldwide experiencing a disability and \$13 trillion in spending power, accessibility efforts boost market reach, SEO, and user experience. Companies investing in accessibility see \$100 ROI for every \$1 spent.

Find the right digital accessibility solution with our guide.



Digital accessibility: minimize legal risk with proactive compliance

Digital accessibility isn't a checkbox — it's a continuum. Compliance exists on a scale, and ensuring your website meets legal and regulatory requirements requires an ongoing commitment, not a one-time fix.

If you're reading this, you likely understand the importance of choosing a digital accessibility solution that reduces legal risk and supports long-term compliance. With accessibility lawsuits on the rise and regulatory scrutiny increasing, organizations must take a proactive approach to accessibility — one that doesn't just identify issues but actively mitigates risk.

Choosing the right accessibility solution is critical to protecting your organization. While accessibility requirements vary across industries and geographies, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) remain the recognized global standard.



The right solution should help you:

- ✓ Reduce legal exposure by addressing accessibility barriers before they lead to complaints or lawsuits.
- ✓ Maximize WCAG conformance with an approach that goes beyond automated scans.
- ✓ Ensure continuous compliance by keeping up with web updates, new content, and evolving legal standards.
- ✓ Save time and resources with a scalable solution that doesn't require constant manual oversight.



Ignoring accessibility puts your organization at legal and financial risk. Website accessibility lawsuits can cost businesses anywhere from \$5,000 to \$100,000 per case, and settlement costs don't always protect against future claims. Lawsuits have targeted businesses of all sizes and industries, and companies without a structured compliance plan often struggle to defend themselves.

Choosing the right accessibility solution for your business is critical. Not only does it mitigate against these financial risks, but can scale with your business. While inaccessibility is prevalent across the web, we're here to help with the accessibility issues across your web pages and mobile apps.

Let's be clear. When it comes to digital accessibility, there is no silver bullet — but there is a gold standard. This guide considers the pros and cons of different accessibility solutions and educates business owners on the approach that maximizes compliance and lowers legal risk.



Traditional approaches haven't worked at scale

96% of website homepages are still inaccessible to people with disabilities — and that number has not changed dramatically in the past decade. Websites are constantly changing, and ensuring accessibility across all these updates doesn't scale without a mature accessibility plan in place. A recent study through AudioEye found an average of 297 errors on any given webpage across 15,000 tested pages.

The implications here are staggering: Our collective approach to accessibility solutions isn't sufficient, doesn't scale, and, quite frankly, isn't working. To quote ADA legal expert Dan Goldstein, “I am convinced we are losing ground — that technology is developing more rapidly than accessibility is progressing into the technology world.”

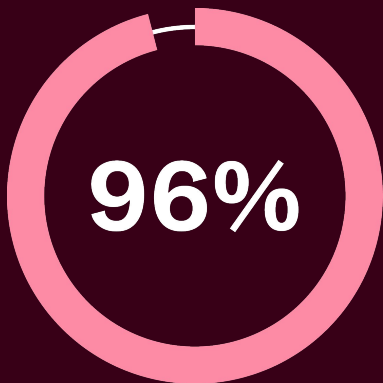
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Many companies look for a band-aid solution when confronted with accessibility issues, hoping to check the box and move on simply. However, accessibility is an ongoing initiative. Every update, refresh, and rollout of new content requires an always-on solution. If companies are to maintain compliance, they need a solution that can continually scan their site without sacrificing the depth needed for true digital accessibility.

Traditionally, accessibility solutions fall into two camps: automation and consulting. Let's explore the pros and cons of each approach.



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Accessibility solutions: automation vs. consulting

Typically, companies and industry experts have divided accessibility solutions into two approaches: automation or consulting.

The automation-only approach relies solely on automated tools and technologies to identify and fix accessibility issues on websites or digital platforms.

The consultation approach involves working directly with accessibility experts to assess, strategize, and (sometimes) implement custom solutions tailored to meet compliance standards. While both approaches have advantages, they also have limitations.



Automation

PROS :

Ongoing. Automation runs in the background, continuously monitoring to find and fix common accessibility issues.

Scalable. Automation code can be placed on every webpage, making it scale with the size of your site.

Resource-light. Very few developer hours are needed to implement accessibility fixes provided through technology.

Cost-effective. AI-driven solutions cost less than the labor and hours of a consultant or in-house developers.

CONS :

Limited. Automation can only identify up to 50% of accessibility issues, generally leaving the more severe barriers undetected.

Unresolved issues. Not every accessibility issue identified by technology can be fixed by automation.

Some legal risk. Automation alone cannot achieve full compliance. In fact, when used alone, it can create a false sense of security, opening businesses up to unexpected lawsuits.

A few things to note here:

- ◆ Not all AI-Automated solutions are created equal. Some automated accessibility solutions test for 20 or fewer WCAG criteria, while others can test for 30+. Look for a solution that can identify and fix as many criteria as possible through automation.
- ◆ Some accessibility companies market that an automated solution will guarantee 100% compliance — this is false. In fact, [the FTC recently fined accessiBe](#) for misleading information overstating the outcomes of using their tools.



Consultation

PROS :

Broad analysis. Human testing can identify all WCAG criteria, offering more detailed reports than automation alone.

Context-aware. Consultants are able to appreciate and navigate nuanced content.

Customized recommendations. Where automation operates on an algorithm to find and implement fixes, consultants can work with businesses to customize their approach to accessibility.

Real-world testing. The human touch often comes with real testing with assistive technology to ensure your site is usable by people with disabilities.

CONS :

Higher cost. Consulting has a double cost: the consultation hours and the developer's time and labor to implement recommended fixes.

Time-consuming. It can take days or weeks for a consultant to finish their analysis and list of recommended fixes.

One point in time. By the time engineers pick up a consultant's finalized report, the site may have undergone updates, and the report may no longer apply to the current user experience.

Scalability. Because of the time and cost, consultants often don't review every page on a site.



A few things to note here:

- ◆ Most consultants identify issues but leave it to the company to implement changes. This is crucial to keep in mind for any company selecting a consultation-only approach, as the true cost will involve additional developer hours and resources, and some internal accessibility expertise.
- ◆ The average time to fix one website is 88 developer hours, including the time to audit a site, implement fixes, and retest for accessibility standards and WCAG conformance. To put this into perspective, if the average implementer can make source code fixes and works 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year at an annual wage of \$100k, you would still need 40 million implementers working for an entire year at the cost of \$4 trillion USD to fix half the websites on the internet. That's not even accounting for the 22 million hours needed each day to fix newly created websites. In short, a consultation-only approach does not efficiently solve accessibility for an individual company, let alone accomplish accessibility at scale.



Many companies rely solely on automation or consulting, but both approaches have significant limitations.

- ✦ **Automation** alone misses nuanced accessibility barriers, leaving companies vulnerable to lawsuits and reputational harm.
- ✦ **Consulting-only** solutions are expensive, slow, and often fail to scale with a growing business or evolving website.

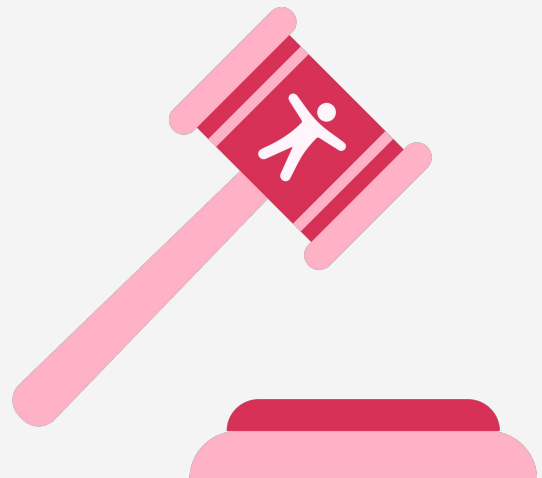
Choosing a piecemeal approach exposes businesses to risks that can lead to significant financial and legal consequences. Businesses need the customizable, real-world approach of a comprehensive solution.



The gold standard: A comprehensive approach to accessibility

When it comes to digital accessibility, there is no silver bullet — but there is a gold standard. This three-pronged approach combines the power of AI-driven automation, expert testing, and developer tools to deliver a solution that is scalable, sustainable, and provides maximum compliance.

As measured by legally valid claim rates, **AudioEye's hybrid approach is 300% better** than any traditional consulting approach and **400% better than automation-only competitors.**





The three-pronged approach

1

AI Automation is always on, continuously monitoring to detect common accessibility issues as they arise. Running in the background reduces manual intervention and saves developer hours. AI systems can be regularly updated to test for more WCAG criteria.

2

Expert testing from accessibility experts, including people with disabilities, conduct real-world testing to identify complex issues that automation alone cannot detect. They ensure your site is compatible with assistive technologies to ensure an accessible web experience. Our experts provide custom fixes for more complex accessibility issues — not just recommendations — and more efficient use of resources, resulting in a better setup to scale.

3

Developer tools address accessibility issues early in the software development lifecycle (SDLC) to implement fixes directly at the code level. This proactive approach creates a sustainable, long-term solution that minimizes future costs and risks associated with accessibility issues.



Maximum compliance in digital accessibility comes from combining the best of both worlds: the scalability and efficiency of automation with the expertise and nuance of human consultation. While automation can quickly identify and fix common issues, expert testing ensures complex barriers are addressed — creating a comprehensive, proactive approach that reduces legal risk and adapts as your digital environment evolves. This hybrid strategy is the key to maintaining strong, sustainable accessibility over time.

The future of accessibility

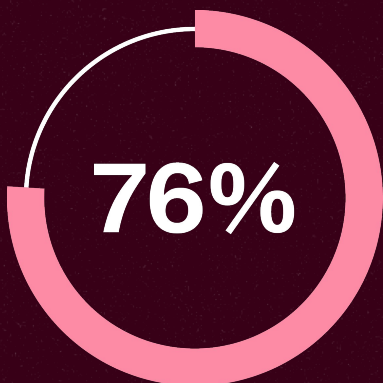
New legislative requirements and deadlines pressure companies to deliver accessible, compliant experiences. As someone tasked with finding the right approach, you need something that blends the speed and scalability of automation with the precision and depth of consultation — and somehow fits within your budget.

The Gold Standard is the only approach that combines scalability, efficiency, and the human insight necessary to create a genuinely accessible internet.



However, the benefits of digital accessibility go beyond compliance. More than 1 in 4 people experience a disability, roughly 28.7% of the population. This means a digitally accessible web experience:

- ◆ Expands your market reach.
- ◆ Boosts conversion rates.
- ◆ Increases bottom-line revenue.
- ◆ Enhances SEO performance through improved web structure and readability.
- ◆ Elevates brand trust and loyalty.
- ◆ Improves usability for everyone — including people with disabilities.



76% of Value 500 companies have invested in accessibility solutions. Those who ignore this will miss the competitive edge of implementing accessibility practices. Businesses that adopt a comprehensive approach not only reduce risk but also see measurable benefits.



Babylon Marine [Local Travel]:

Successfully defended in precedent ADA case. Case dismissed with \$0 penalty and no settlement cost.

Olive Street Design [Marketing]:

Experienced 7% revenue increase after setting digital accessibility standards.

Kasasa [Financial Services]:

Captured additional 15% in incremental revenue by leveraging accessibility solution.

Digital Marketing Agency [Marketing]:

Saved an average of 6 developer hours per client after scaling accessible services with AudioEye.



The time to act is now

Accessibility isn't just a legal requirement — it's a business imperative. As legal pressures increase and consumer expectations grow, companies that adopt the Gold Standard will set themselves apart as leaders in digital accessibility.

As you interact with accessibility vendors, here are the top 5 questions we suggest you ask any accessibility provider — including us!

1

How does your solution account for all 56 WCAG criteria? How many will you be able to report on?

2

Will your testers provide me with custom fixes?

3

How often do you test for and report accessibility issues? Does your report include actionable insights we can take to ensure accessibility compliance?

4

Do you offer any accessibility tools to support our developers during the software development lifecycle?

5

How successful are the legal claims that users of this solution receive?



Don't wait until your business is at risk. Combining automation, human expertise, and developer tools allows you to achieve accessibility that scales with your business and delivers real value.

Start your journey toward accessibility excellence today with AudioEye. Schedule a [free accessibility audit](#) with AudioEye to identify your business's key opportunities and reduce risks now. With the Gold Standard, you'll gain peace of mind knowing your business is protected and accessible for all.



**Achieve and maintain
website accessibility**





About AudioEye

AudioEye exists to ensure the digital future we build is inclusive. By combining the latest AI automation technology with guidance from certified experts and direct input from the disability community, AudioEye helps ensure businesses of all sizes — including over 126,000 customers like Samsung, Calvin Klein, and Samsonite — are accessible and usable.

Holding 22 US patents, AudioEye helps companies solve every aspect of digital accessibility with flexible approaches that best meet their needs. The comprehensive solution includes 24/7 accessibility monitoring, automated accessibility fixes, expert testing, developer tools, and industry-leading legal protection.

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