Tips for Using WAVE for ADA Compliance

WAVE is the Web Accessibility Evaluator Tool, powered by Webaim.org. It is a free tool designed to help web content creators check their sites for certain basic levels of accessibility. This document provides an overview of some of the most useful ways in which WAVE calls attention to problems for a page’s web accessibility.

Please note, WAVE alone is not a comprehensive accessibility solution and should be used in conjunction with human spot-checking (and other tools for validation such as Compliance Sheriff). Open a ticket with Chris Doyle in DLI after the first time you use WAVE to verify the ADA health of your guide.

To use WAVE, to evaluate your LibGuides’ accessibility:

1. Navigate to the LibGuide that you wish to test from http://guides.temple.edu/
2. Copy the link to the LibGuide from the address bar of your browser, as shown below.

3. Go to http://wave.webaim.org/ to use the WAVE evaluator. Paste the screen-reader version of the LibGuide’s link that you just copied into the Web page address box of the WAVE evaluator tool, then hit “Enter.”
4. You will see the WAVE evaluation of your page, which uses icons to note potential accessibility issues. Below is an example of a WAVE evaluation of a LibGuide page, with WAVE icons highlighted with red arrows:
5. **Critical issues for ADA compliance that WAVE will NOT help you detect**

You **MUST** follow a WAVE check with a manual human check, to detect issues like these:

- **Inaccurate alternative text**
  - WAVE checks for the presence of alternative text but will not be able to detect if most alt text is misrepresentative of its image.

- **Videos without closed captions**
  - WAVE cannot detect whether or not a video has closed captions or how accurate those captions are.

- **Inaccessible Springshare box types**
  - Some box types built in to Springshare (for example, the Scribd box type) should be avoided, as they are inaccessible and cannot be made accessible by Temple University’s standards in a timely fashion.

- **Use of non-default colors in LibGuides**
  - WAVE will not report if non-default colors are used and may not report all color contrast issues that result from their use.

- **Lack of best practices for HTML formatting**
  - Content is easier to read and navigate when broken up into short paragraphs and bulleted lists. WAVE will not identify large chunks of text that do not adhere to these standards, but that will likely be difficult for users to read and understand on a screen.

- **For more information on how to prevent or fix these issues, consult the ADA LibGuide:**  [http://guides.temple.edu/ada](http://guides.temple.edu/ada).