BITS Digital Accessibility
Fall 2023 Report

October 2023

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May 2023 – September 2023

Bits

> **"** We rise to great heights by a winding staircase of small steps.
>
> **FRANCIS BACON**

✳ Brightwater

Agency

Engagement

Since May 2023, we have engaged with 25 agencies and business partners to test digital assets, educate teams about accessibility, provide technical and strategic consulting, and collaborate on key projects.

Key Engagements

Agency	Type of engagement	Project
Aging & Disability Services (ADS)	Consulting & Collaboration	Research Team - User Interviews & Accessibility
		Website Modernization and Accessibility Considerations
		Intake Form
BITS - Agency Success (AS)	Testing & Consulting	Global Application Issue Notification
BITS - CTDS Research	Training	UX Research & Accessibility
BITS - Digital Government and Operational Excellence (DGOE)	Training	Accessibility Basics & Development Best Practices
Office of the Governor (OTG)	Consulting & Collaboration	State Rebrand
Business.CT.gov	Testing & Consulting	CT Paid Leave
Connecticut State Library (CSL)	Testing & Consulting	Guided Chatbot Experience
State of CT Judicial Branch	Testing & Consulting	Clean Slate and Cannabis Erasure Infogram
CT.gov, multiple agencies	Testing & Consulting	Robin chatbot
CTDS Design & Tyler Technology	Consulting & Collaboration	Component Library Accessibility; Modernization Project Patterns
Department of Administrative Services (DAS)	Consulting & Collaboration	EEO ATDC - Response to Commissioner Porter
	Testing & Consulting	EEO ATDC Excel Spreadsheet
	Consulting & Collaboration	DAS Newsletter
	Testing & Consulting	Website Modernization and Accessibility Considerations
	Testing & Consulting	BMC Helix Helpdesk
Department of Developmental Services (DDS)	Testing & Consulting	Video Accessibility for STEP and Fourth Tuesday (2023)
Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)	Testing & Consulting	DECD Arts Portal User Experience
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)	Testing & Consulting	DEEP Air Quality Index API
Department of Public Health (DPH)	Testing & Consulting	WIC Application
Department of Social Services (DSS)	Testing & Consulting	ConneCT Pre-screening & Application for Benefits
Department of Transportation (DOT)	Testing & Consulting	Video Accessibility for CT DOT Jobs
Health.ct.gov	Testing & Consulting	myCT - Eligibility Prescreener (form & process)
Interagency	Training	TRB Presentation - "Screen Reader Basics & Live Demo"
Jobs.ct.gov	Testing & Consulting	Start Your Career; Compare Careers
Office of Early Childhood (OEC)	Testing & Consulting	Care 4 Kids Eligibility Screener & Application
Office of Policy & Management (OPM)	Testing & Consulting	Open Data Portal
	Consulting & Collaboration	Data Visualization Guidance Documentation
Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS)	Consulting & Collaboration	DEI&A for CT; user testing opportunities
Tyler Tech (Business Partner)	Consulting & Collaboration	Svelte and Shadow DOM for Web Components
Western Connecticut State University, CTDS Research	Consulting & Collaboration	User Journey Testing processes and possibilities

2023: Challenges Met

New State Digital Projects

Accessibility testing on strategic products and customer interaction points.

33

Issues Resolved

Remediation of Critical/Severe accessibility issues.

>100

Hours of Testing

Approximated number of hours used to test new digital products

266+ hours

Customer Impact

Number of customers enjoying more accessible State products

2.6M

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Current Efforts

Our ongoing digital collaborations at the State of CT continue to drive enterprise improvements in the realm of accessibility and inclusivity. These include higher accessibility standards for enterprise services like chatbot and the new state helpdesk; optimizing accessibility and inclusive design for agency websites; strategic consultation and development for internal teams and business partners; and many more.

Here are some additional goals we're pursuing.

- New Statewide Accessibility Policy for all websites and digital assets
- New State Accessibility Portal with self-serve content for State teams, businesses, educators, and families.
- Standardizing Accessibility KPIs, tracking and reporting of data
- Enterprise audits of agency portals for ongoing compliance
- Establishing usability and inclusivity standards to promote equivalent experiences in digital assets
- Cross-agency training through a BITS Area of Practice and Center of Excellence to help build autonomy
- Agency collaboration projects to standardize taxonomy, workflow processes, and tools
- Automated State testing solutions integrated with BITS technology teams and platforms
- Implementing a CI/CD pipeline to offer real-time compliance monitoring of key agency assets
- Increasing the automation of issue ticket creation and reporting
- Democratizing a statewide practice for accessibility improvements to bring Connecticut to WCAG 2.1 AAA / WCAG 2.2 compliance levels (highest in the industry)
- Expanding the State's support of non-English translations of websites from 8 languages to 46.

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Digital Forms

New online applications are built with accessibility as part of the process. Accessible forms are an important step toward providing equivalent experiences for groups who are historically disadvantatged. Here's how we're making an impact:

- Providing vital access to high-use services along with secure personal account information

- Making interactions faster, more accurate, more easily understood, and available in multiple languages on demand

- Allowing the data to be automatically captured and retained in a database for future use

- Fostering convenience for customers who are shut-ins or have little access to transportation, as well as customers who are unable to visit an agency during working hours

- Increasing participation and driving consumption for available services

Key Digital Form Improvements

- Care4Kids eligibility pre-screener

- Eligibility and application for State health benefits

- Career Finder assessment for job seekers

- CT.gov account login forms

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Next Steps

We've only 'touched the tip of the iceberg' so far yet have made great progress in our accessibility efforts thanks to the positive attitudes, dedication to inclusivity, and eager participation of our leadership and agency teams.

1

Document Baselines

Establishing a baseline compliance level for each agency will enable us to show improvement.
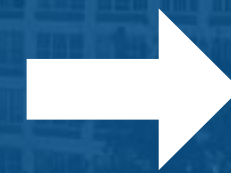
2

Build Community of Practice

For success & agency autonomy, everyone must own the accessibility of their work.

3

Establish a Single Source of Truth

To standardize practices across agencies, there must be a reliable source of reference.

4

Continue Iterative Improvement

Accessibility is not a one-and-done activity. We improve step-by-step.

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"Achieving digital accessibility means that we remove the barriers in design, content, and code that prevent users with disabilities from accessing or interacting with our websites, applications, documents, and communications."

Thank you for your support!

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