

DISABILITY, CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Prof Andrew Jakubowicz,
CCS/Faculty of Arts and Social
Sciences/Communication/Social
Enquiry, UTS

Introduction

A work in progress – ideas about accessibility, social inclusion and Australia’s love affair with the mainstream/ [Cultural diversity news](#) experience

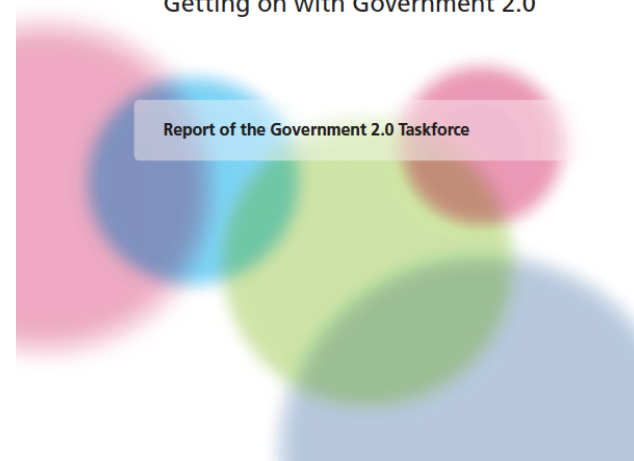
With Gov 2.0 focusing on accessibility as an issue, the politics of the term become increasingly apparent. What Gov 2.0 does not mean is accessibility as it is understood by the disability or the ethnic movement. What are the political & social issues raised by web 2.0 for social groups with less economic resources and poorer cultural capital in relation to new media & the Internet, especially as these constraints affect political access to information and decision-making, within the context of deliberative democracy (one ostensible driver for Gov 2.0 innovation)?



Engage

Getting on with Government 2.0

Report of the Government 2.0 Taskforce



- **The technologies associated with web 2.0 are critical in setting possibility parameters within the continually transforming public sphere in cyberspace; they produce both enabling and disabling outcomes. Drawing on theoretical work in media studies, cultural studies & disability studies, and the practical experience of developing a communications platform that has been required to meet W3C web accessibility initiative user agent accessibility guidelines (UAAG 2.0), the paper will then address some of the key questions posed by the Usability Professionals' Association May 2010 conference, "Embracing Cultural Diversity – User Experience Design for the World".**

Universal design politics...

- **One of the key propositions to be tested concerns the way in which the burgeoning use of social media for eliciting user needs may, in an environment of marginalisation of minorities, further isolate such groups and reduce the purchase they have on government. These are significant issues for agencies & organisations working with the (resource, cyber-cultural, linguistically isolated, technologically unaware) “poor”.**

1. A little more about Gov 2.0

- Trigger for the paper – the possible meanings of accessibility
- Accessibility as a condition of information
- Accessibility as a potential of users
- Accessibility therefore as a relationship between government and community
- “Digital citizenship” is the ability to participate in society online..... [it] encourages what has elsewhere been called social inclusion” (Mossberger et al. Digital Citizenship, MIT Press, 2007.)
- “The philosophy of Gov2 is to encourage participation at all levels by a wide cross-section of the community” (Kingston [2010 online](#)).

- “the burden of the Task force’s message ...is that ‘non-sensitive’ data should be freely available, open, machine readable etc.” ([N Gruen Gov2.0 TF chair](#))
- [Engage report : Getting on with Govt 2.0](#) Dec 2009
- Rec 9 Accessibility:
 - a. Full compliance with WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)– whichever version is mandated by govt
 - b. If not compliant provide timetable to compliance
 - Only ref to “multiple languages” is in OECD principles, and not referred to by TF as an accessibility issue

A conversation about accessibility

- The Gov 2.0 blog and the issue of participation
 - Jakubowicz arguing report [misses the point](#) on accessibility
 - Collins [responds that TF is concerned](#) and well-meaning even if issues not mentioned
 - Bostock [argues that A, E and D issues are the forefront](#), especially in video.gov.au in pulling down walls of discrimination
 - Jakubowicz says its [not whether people are aware](#) but how they define the issues and what they do in advancing the accessibility agenda
 - Clark [agrees that the report is appalling](#) on the issue of enhancing social democratic participation; “access is an active process where Governments and services must reach out and actively engage with the citizen”.
 - Davies [says the technologies](#) “are, by their very nature, democratising”, and that the Social Inclusion agenda is the way to go to cover the issues.

AHRC guidelines

- [Gladman](#) on changes to Australian guidelines:
 - accessible web design should ensure that all users can access the content regardless of their location, experience or type of computer technology – particularly users with disabilities. Web content designed without consideration of accessibility will often have access issues for people with disabilities or technological limitations. Whilst accessibility of web content is often aligned with catering to disabled users there are significant benefits for the majority of users if content is accessible.
 - [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG) are a requirement, particularly for publicly funded web content

The political challenge of moving from web 1.0 to 2.0

- Access – eg challenges such as user generated content; flash video; mashups;
 - Disability
 - -ve Visual cues; video content; audio; rapidity; less access to technology; lower educational levels
 - +ve Community building; asynchronous; iPhone apps (eg Autism); engagement; non-text possibilities
 - Cultural diversity
 - -ve language; bimodal patterns of education; translation issues; complexity of mainstream delivery
 - +ve community building; non-text possibilities;
 - Poverty
 - -ve no technology; low literacy; under-developed verbal skills
 - Potential for learning and skill acquisition; opportunity to participate

W3C on moving from WCAG 1.0 to WCAG 2.0

- [W3C provides detailed advice](#), including worked examples
- [WCAG 2.0 Quick Reference List](#)
 - 1.1 Text Alternatives: Provide text alternatives for any non-text content so that it can be changed into other forms people need, such as large print, braille, speech, symbols or simpler language.
 - [1.2 Time-based Media](#): Provide alternatives for time-based media.
 - 1.3 Adaptable: Create content that can be presented in different ways (for example simpler layout) without losing information or structure.
 - 1.4 Distinguishable: Make it easier for users to see and hear content including separating foreground from background.
 - 2.1 Keyboard Accessible: Make all functionality available from a keyboard.
 - 2.2 Enough Time: Provide users enough time to read and use content.
 - 2.3 Seizures: Do not design content in a way that is known to cause seizures.
 - 2.4 Navigable: Provide ways to help users navigate, find content and determine where they are.
 - 3.1 Readable: Make text content readable and understandable.
 - 3.2 Predictable: Make Web pages appear and operate in predictable ways.
 - 3.3 Input Assistance: Help users avoid and correct mistakes.
 - 4.1 Compatible: Maximize compatibility with current and future user agents, including assistive technologies.
 - Conformance Requirements

Video content: how to engage?

- Adobe Flash – [OK to create](#) but what about imported content?
- Looking at [CulturalDiversity News](#) where we see all of these issues emerging -- a YouTube video made by Chinese TV with Chinese subtitles, English labels, and English text short summary, but no transcript or signing version.

Embracing Cultural Diversity – User Experience Design for the World

- Culture is critical to success - Designing Cancer.gov en Español to dispel myths and leverage cultural beliefs for a diverse U.S. Latino population. This case study presents research methods, findings, and challenges in creating a successful culturally appropriate website for U.S. Latinos.
- From International Observations to Cultural requirements - Integrate or Tailor Cultural Differences in User Interface Design: Tailoring applications for each country a product is shipped becomes prohibitive in cost. Through international observation research, key cultural and technological adoption patterns can be assessed. In this presentation, we will discuss when, how, and why we should or should not integrate these key requirements into a single user experience.
- Establishing Cross-Cultural Collaboration in the Field of User Centered Design: A process of establishing collaboration between a German and an Indian UCD service provider is presented, built on principles of modern communication theory: By following 5-phases gradually common ground was reached, allowing both partners to control the growth of trust and mutual understanding – eventually to deliver successful cross-cultural UCD projects.
- Social media and user research: Organizations are starting to use social media to listen to customers. How do they determine who to listen to? How should organizations use social media to make decisions about products and services? Social media presents exciting challenges for user experience researchers, so it's essential to share emerging methods & strategy.