Transcript for Accessible Wizard for Office 2007

Kendall: OK, can everyone see my PowerPoint that I have up now?

Student: Yes, I can see it.

Kendall: My name is Kendell Welch, I am the Chief Technology Officer of Virtual 508 LK4 Corporation. We are going to be discussing the Accessible Wizard for Microsoft Office 2007 that is available to all GSA employees. Let’s get started.

The big question we need to ask ourselves when we are talking about accessibility is why are we doing this? There is a pretty simple answer to that question. Personally we need to ask ourselves, “What is accessibility?” The answer to that question is ensuring that information is available to everyone regardless of physical impairments, learning disabilities, etc. In order to do that, we need to provide information clearly. We will learn as we move forward in this training how the Accessible Wizard helps you do that. It really does a lot of the work for you.

Providing information clearly is just a part of what the Accessible Wizard does, it also provides well-formatted information which allows various assistive technologies such as; screen readers and that sort of thing, which we will be talking about here to provide access to all our users. It is important to realize that accessibility is not perfect. It is in it’s infancy, technology based and it is evolving all the time. We like to say here at Virtual 508, the only perfect solution for accessibility issues would be a cure for all disabilities. Obviously, that is not something that is not feasible, and we are certainly not in the medical industry here at Virtual 508, but we are happy to assist you in anyway we can. As long as there are disabilities, accessibility is going to have to evolve and support people with disabilities. In the meantime, we will do the very best we can to assist you. Virtual 508 is constantly updating its products.

I am going to show you the newest version of Accessibility Wizard that is available. It has some minor updates prior compared to the previous versions. Part of the reason as to why we are doing this is Section 508 Rehabilitation was passed in, I believe 1997, in addition to the US Rehabilitation Act of 1972. It basically says that all Information Technology, (IT) has to be made accessible to persons with disabilities. I think it is important to point out that a number of states such as; Illinois, which has the Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act, California, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and a whole bunch of other states passed similar laws that apply to their state agency. Section 508 only applies to federal agencies. Why is it important that all these states pass these laws? Because they do one or two things: (1) follow Section 508 and apply it to our State Agency or (2) they have similar guidelines to Section 508. They are definitely some other resources related to accessibility, one would be the WCAG, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines from the World Wide Web Consortium shortened W3C, that it is a similar guideline to Section 508, except it is an open standard. That standard, the WCAG is developed by the Web Accessibility Initiative which is a “Think Tank” based out of Switzerland, or somewhere. They put the guidelines together for WCAG. There are some other tools, for instance the University of Illinois, who Virtual508 who has a very close relation with, offers a free tool called the “Functional Accessibility Evaluator” which is used to test web pages to see how accessible they are. It can fix problems just like the Accessible Wizard tool that I am going to show you today.

They are also some other tools out there. They are some additional advantages to providing acceptable content other than just support for the disabled. Obviously, that is the primary goal. By providing accessible documents, we are adding compatibility of using screen readers. Screen readers are used by a person with a visual impairment. It literally reads the text out loud to the user, so the visually impaired user would know what is there and potentially interact. Certainly, it does not apply to just visually impaired people. Also, often overlooked, are learning disabilities like dyslexia which is a learning disability which does not mean the person is illiterate. When they read the text in their mind they jumble up the letters and they have a lot of trouble with what they are reading. So, if they were to use a screen reader and simultaneously hear it out loud and it could help those people absorb that information much better. It also allows us to use proper scaling, called zooming. I am going to show you an application like this. So obviously, we here at Virtual508 work hard to make sure that our pages are accessible. They are clear sections, titles, sub sections, and body text.

A person with a visual impairment might not need a screen reader they might want to zoom in to make the text bigger. For example, when you zoom in this page, it does not allow various parts of the page to be layered on top of one of another. That is because this page was designed, proper, clear, and well formatted. This is also important.

I am now going to jump to the last point of cross platform. Let’s say you or someone who has a blackberry or i-phone and you want to check the web content. The body will be able to display the information to the user, because it has to shrink the screen and relay the information to the user. Also, if someone is using a Macintosh it would allow them access. We are cross platform with many screens and many different devices. It is also important with different Content Management Systems, basically web systems, to add different things such as a blog, an online classes. We run into few compatibility issues. The structure is already there, but the users add information.

As, I said before, we are specifically working with Accessible Wizard for Office 2007 today. Originally, developed at the University of Illinois, Department of Rehabilitation and Education Services. The first version was released seven years ago. The Older Wizard Version (2003) was strictly exported for documents and did not make any changes to the documents. What this meant is that when you wanted to create an accessible document you had to start over each time. That is not the case anymore with version 2007, which is a fundamental upgrade, in the sense that it fixes the native documents and fixes the accessibility and people can share their documents and export their document’s to html or web pages when they are ready. This means that if you don’t have your Accessible Wizard for Office 2007 installed yet (I am going to tell you how to install the Wizard in a minute), you can’t fix the document and make the accessibility changes. However, when you modify the document from the source, the accessibility changes you make will remain in the document without having to redo any saved changes via the Wizard.

As I just said, the Wizard allows modification of native documents, sharing of documents and allows exports. We have a major upgrade every six months to a year for the software. We just had one in mid June at GSA.

There are two ways of getting the newest version of the Wizard. You can request installation through the IT ServiceDesk Software Catalog by going to <http://itservicedesk.gsa.gov/>. You can also submit your ticket request through the ITHelpDesk at 1-866-450-5250. If you have any problems acquiring the software, please feel free to contact Quentis Scott at quentis.scott@gsa.gov and she will be happy to help you. My email is kendellw@virtual508.com.

Student: Can you say that again please?

Kendall: Excuse Me?

Student: What is the name of the software again?

Kendall: Accessible Wizard for Office 2007

Student: Thank you

Kendall: Is there any other questions? Can everyone still hear me?

Students: Yes, Yes

Kendall: We are now going to start doing some things in the Accessible Wizard for Office 2007. I am going to start creating a document. The very first thing I am going to create is a simple document, add some text, and add a picture. This is about as simple as it can get.

In the upper right hand corner in Microsoft Word and this is the same in Powerpoint, there is a check accessibility button generated through the Wizard software. We want to check the accessibility of these documents. Alright, click the button and the Wizard scans my document and shows some potential problems. There are three parts to this Wizard which are described on the right hand display box. The top display shows us a picture of the problem that the software identified as non-accessible, and directly below it shows us a description or suggestion on how to fix it. In this case the text states “This image does not convey meaning…., Please check an image from the box below.” Basically, this display is like a photo. If we have someone that has a visual impairment, we need to provide a description of the photo so this information is picked up by a screen reader.

What’s important to know is the Accessible Wizard does not do anything that you could not do by hand it just helps you keep track of all the errors it finds. It is important that you know you could fix these errors by hand, if you remember how to do this using accessibility tutorials and guidance found on Insite at <http://insite.gsa.gov/portal/content/500453.> By right clicking on the image, you get a dropdown menu. Select the option “Size.” The “Size” menu provides a dialog box with a menu option for “Alt Text”. Select “Alt Text” and type in a description of the image. If I do not want to remember how to do this every time I want to add a description to an image, I can use Accessible Wizard to do it for me. At the bottom of the Accessible Wizard there is a fixed section. We are going to start with selecting an option for the type of image we are working with. In this case, we select “Informative Image”, and click Next.

The Accessible Wizard allows you to type in a description. When this is done, click OK. The Wizard now identifies this problem as fixed. The Wizard enters the text in the proper place in the document for me and I did not have to remember how to do it. It’s done for me automatically.

Moving on, you notice in the Header, there are no Titles in this document. It is important to realize they should be defined into sections. In Word, you use styles; we will be using a lot with styles. The first thing we should do, every document should have a title and be documented. I could fix it by hand of course. I am going to go ahead and do that. The Wizard has identified no more problems. We feel good that our document is highly acceptable. We are still in Microsoft Word. Now we want to export this document and create a webpage. I am going to show you, publish to HTML. You can choose a place to put it, click finish. Here we are; here is our document. You noticed that the color is different. This is a problem with Microsoft Word. This text is used as a default color in Word, in order to fix this, select color, and pick color black. Resave HTML with a new color. Why would we care if we use the Microsoft export? So we don’t have more source code in the page. It would be a mess and a lot bigger than it is. This extra code causes compatibility problems with other systems and applications. Let’s go back and do more with our document, going to add headers, sub header A, Sub Header B, we should be using our Styles. I am going to purposely make a mistake. Run the Accessibility Wizard, and you will notice the potential problems. Heading 2 is before Heading 1, you want the order to be proper. You have two options, you can let the Accessible Wizard, click change and it automatically changes the headers in the proper order. You may like the color or font. This has to do with Microsoft Word, not the Wizard. Right Click on header, hit modify, change the font (make it bigger, underline), you will notice that both headers changed, not just one. Alright, Now, I know that at GSA you do a lot of Charts. Charts can be somewhat problematic. We are going to add a simple chart by using the default that it gives us. Obviously, maybe not obviously yet, if we run the Wizard on it, it will find a problem. It is a good idea to add a descriptive to the chart, please click the button below. This is a visual representative of something. If someone with a visual impairment comes to this, they will not be able to determine what it is in the chart, so you will need to add some extra information to do this, the Wizard will help you do this. Enter Next, Enter Chart Title and it wants summary of Chart, I am going to say “This represents three categories…” Click Next. The Wizard is asking us to right click on the chart and Edit Data and then it says, highlight the cell and copy them to the clipboard, Click Next. There is a number of ways to copy, just copy and paste. What you notice is that the Wizard will take the Data on clipboard and clip finish. The Wizard has done a lot of work for us. If you right click on the chart, it centered the Title and it has created a chart for us, a Textual chart of the data is represented. This is very important from an accessibility stand point. We actually had to take this next feature out of the latest version, but will eventually add it back in. Let’s add a table, no matter what size. I am going to show you, what not to do, what most people like to do, is to merge cells. What you noticed is we separated this table into two tables and this is a problem with someone with a visual impairment using a screen reader and they will not be able to tell what data is with what table. What we should do is to create a different table. That is just a best practices thing, keep that in mind when you create your documents.

If you ever use “Track Changes” if you go back and run the Accessible Wizard, remember this is only on the Home Tab. It will give you a Warning: This causes changes in unpredictable ways. It actually copies the changes and puts them in the document and it causes confusion for the Wizard because it sees the new and old changes. I will see if I can demonstrate this. I’ll go back and run the Accessible Wizard, notice “Track Changes” is still on. Click no for this demo. Just going to add some alt text as we have been doing. A lot of times you will double. The point is to turn “Track Changes” off when running Accessible Wizard.

Starting Powerpoint. Go to homepage, click Accessible Wizard and it finds two problems and it is showing No Text in Title. You could just do this yourself or use Wizard, click next. Enter Text, click next. Click Accessibility and Run again, you will notice no errors. The point is that if you notice a text box, you need to have text in the box otherwise it will confuse the screen reader. So, delete the text box, or add text. Another potential issue, Going to add an image, Run accessibility, you will notice the same error as in Microsoft Word, Add Alt Text to this picture, Adding Alt text to Powerpoint is different than Word, so keep this in mind, click ok. Click Next for next picture. Run Accessibility Wizard, all problems seem to be gone. If you ever saw group images in the past when running accessibility, we took this feature out in the update because it did not make sense to group images. You might want to go back and re-check your documents or slide shows and make sure those grouping errors do not cause any problems. Let’s create a slideshow. It takes a few seconds to create a webpage in power point , lets add a design to make it look better (adding images), lets publish it, export and make it HTML. xhtml is stricter than html but in case this comes up, there is really know difference.

Here is our HTML, this is highly accessible to screen readers, etc. Let’s review the source it is only 52 pages long, it is a very valuable tool. It is very accessible and distributable.

OK.. I think this is all I have today

Any questions?

Student: Kendell, when we are creating Powerpoint, we just use that feature when we want to put them on the new CMS feature and copy the code from it? Is that what you are saying?

Kendall: No, you just copy the file. We had to find a place to save it. I’ll save the file and pop open a new window. Just copy the file and save as a webpage, find a place to copy it, save file. We then export it, it creates four other files with the images. This is the actual HTML files that create the webpage. You are going to copy these four directories into one. Here are images for various backgrounds. There are no style sheet’s, there is a way to customize this with Java. What a lot of people do is to make them one file by zipping them up and sending them to someone if necessary. A lot of your Learning Management Systems and your Content Management Systems will allow you to upload all the files. It is your discretion, if you are uploading to a server, you might not want to do this. You are dealing with a standard web page.

Kendall: Does that answer your Question?

Student: Yes

Student Linda: Hi, this is Linda in Region4

Kendall: Hi Linda

Linda: I found the thing for how to save as a web document and stuff, it gives you a choice as a single file web page, a web page, or a web page filtered, What is the difference and what do you recommend?

Kendell: I do not recommend any of them.

Linda: Go to start, just under save as...just let go, don’t hold it, don’t choose nothing from the side, go to drop down, and scroll down

Kendell: OK, you know what i just did I did not scroll down far enough earlier.

Linda: What is the difference? What do you recommend for the 508 format?

Kendell: I would not use any of these! I would use the Accessible Wizard.

Linda: What about what you mentioned earlier concerning save as?

Kendall: OK.. we will do that here. I will show you what I was trying to show you earlier, we will just do the standard

Linda: OK, with the amount.

Kendall: We will just use Microsoft Word to do this.

Linda: That would help, I appreciate it.

Kendall: No problem. No problem

Kendall: With Microsoft Word for example, it does not automatically pop up. Here is a Microsoft Word Version of our document, it looks pretty good, if we look at it, if we look at the source, what you will see, it is enormous.

Linda: Yeah.. It is putting in a lot of extra space.

Kendall: You will notice it is enormous, it is adding a lot of extra stuff. This is where it becomes problematic.

Linda: Yeah

Kendall: You see it is 1500 lines

Linda: Now do it the other way

Kendall: Now I’ll show you exporting with Accessible Wizard. Let me go back and fix this. This problem with the color? Remember that the famous color with the Headings title

Linda: Right

Kendall: Fix the color, export it again. Wish there was a way to fix that, but no way.

Linda: Yeah, a word sign

Kendall: Word is just wrong. That is all it is! Alright, here we go. This is our Accessible Wizard version of our document. There is some minor difference in display but if we look at the code here… There is fair amount of code, 300 lines versus 1500 lines. This is why you want to use the Wizard. You don’t want to create web pages using the save as function in Word or Powerpoint.

Linda: So, it is basically the large source code file.

Kendall: All kinds of reasons, yeah!

Linda: Thank you for showing that

Kendall: No problem. Thank you for finding it.

Kendall: You are welcome, Anybody Else?

Student: Hi, I have a question, previously back before the Accessible Wizard was available to us, we had Powerpoint presentations that we finally made available online; but it was a lot of heartache to make them accessible

Kendall: Yeah

Student: Part of the problem is when we created them they were not created with accessibility in mind. Part of the problem in the creation process of the Powerpoint presentation, the sequencing of how you add content to an individual slide of how the content was actually read, I want to know if that is still the case with the Wizard or if we don’t need to worry about it anymore or keep it in mind.

Kendall: In all fairness, I don’t have a 100% answer for you on that. There are a lot of things you can do in Powerpoint. The Accessible Wizard for instance, the title of your slide will be prior to any content. Content will be in order. I will say… Let me jump back into here. Let me insert a new text box, around here, it should when I export this, the screen reader should read this first, this second, the images, it should, it is worth checking.

Student: Is that because that is the sequence in which they were created or the physical location?

Kendell: I believe it is a physical location thing. You know, I will check into that for you. You know, it could be the order that they were created? I will have to look into that for you. That is a good question, but I don’t have the answer for you now. I am sorry I don’t’ have the answer for you right now. I will look into that for you.

Student: That’s ok. A lot of times you know you might want to say something in a certain manner, and with multiple contents on one slide and you have to shift around, and obviously in an ideal world it would be a little bit easier than that, and you would not need to worry about that kind of stuff, but there is a lot of interesting things to think about when you create.

Kendall: You have to keep in mind that computers are actually kind of dumb, know what I mean?

Student: Yeah I know

Kendall: OK… I will look into that for you. If you want to shoot me an email, I will try and get back to you.

Student: Sounds Good!

Other Student: Is it possible for you to send an email to the class as well? I would also be interested in that answer as well?

Kendall: Unfortunutly, I don’t have your email address. If you would like I can send all the answers at once if you send me an email first and then I can send emails to all of you.

Other Student: Thank you

Kendall: No problem. Anyone else

Student: Kendall, if you could just show your email address on the screen?

Kendall: Had it on there, and took it off, there you go!

Student: Thank you

Kendall: No problem. Alright if there are no more questions, I will go ahead and wrap this up! I appreciate you taking the time to learn about the Accessible Wizard, and I hope that moving forward you are more successful in creating accessible documents and distributing those, and obviously following the guidelines you are required to follow. Again, your first point of contact is Quentis Scott at Quentis.scott@gsa.gov and you obviously can contact me at kendellw@virtual508.com and you know we will do everything to help you. Hopefully you won’t run into too many problems. Hope this training course was useful to you, and Have a good day!