

## 10 Accessibility Mistakes Digital Teams Make (And How to Fix Them)

Most accessibility issues aren't caught until after launch. By then, they're expensive to fix. Here are the 10 mistakes we see most often and how to prevent them in your workflow.

- 1. Not validating color contrast in design tools (before handoff)**  
**Fix:** Check contrast ratios in your design software while designing. A 4.5:1 ratio for body text, 3:1 for large text. Don't assume it passes WCAG, test it.
- 2. Treating alt text as a checkbox task**  
**Fix:** Alt text describes the image's purpose in context, not just what it shows. Include relevant text in images as part of your design, not as an afterthought.
- 3. Skipping keyboard navigation testing**  
**Fix:** Tab through your site or app. Every interactive element should be reachable via keyboard. If you need a mouse to navigate, your users who rely on keyboards will be blocked.
- 4. Creating PDFs without proper tagging**  
**Fix:** PDFs fail accessibility at the tagging stage, not the design stage. Set up structured tagging in your design tool before exporting. It's a workflow step, not a cleanup task.
- 5. Using images of text instead of actual text**  
**Fix:** Screen readers can't read text inside images. If you need styled text, use actual text with CSS styling, not image placeholders.
- 6. Not testing at different zoom levels and screen sizes**  
**Fix:** Test at 200% zoom and on mobile. Text that wraps unexpectedly, elements that overlap, or buttons that become unreachable are common accessibility failures.
- 7. Overcomplicating form labels and instructions**  
**Fix:** Labels should be clear and associated with form fields (not just placeholder text). Instructions belong above the field, not hidden in validation messages.
- 8. Ignoring heading hierarchy**  
**Fix:** Use H1, H2, H3 in logical order. Screen reader users navigate by headings. Random heading levels confuse the document structure.
- 9. Testing accessibility only with automated tools**  
**Fix:** Automated tools catch maybe 30% of issues. Test with actual assistive technologies (screen readers, voice control, switch devices) or with people who use them.
- 10. Treating accessibility as a final QA step**  
**Fix:** Build accessibility into your workflow from the start. It's faster, cheaper, and more effective than retrofitting. Train your team on accessible patterns before they design.

### The Pattern

The teams that ship accessible content don't have better intentions, they have better training. They know accessibility patterns before they design. They test with real users, not just tools. And they treat it as part of the workflow, not extra work.

Eliquo's eLearning library was built specifically for creative and web teams. We leveraged our 24 years of workflow-based training to create WCAG skills courses your team will actually use.



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