

NEW

NIB SERVICES SECTION 508 ASSURANCE



NIB Services Section 508 Assurance provides conformance and usability testing, validation, and remediation services for websites, portals and applications; electronic documents; and legacy applications.

As a recognized national leader in the blindness field with the mission of increasing employment opportunities for people who are blind, National Industries for the Blind (NIB) launched a new service to address software, systems and website accessibility and usability conformance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

MEETING THE FEDERAL MANDATE FOR SYSTEM ACCESSIBILITY

Section 508, an amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, mandates that all electronic and information technology (IT) systems, including websites, which are developed, procured, maintained or used by the federal government, must be accessible to people with disabilities. It is essential that all users, with or without disabilities, have the ability to access the same information, including images and media files, and to perform common tasks, such as buying merchandise or filling out registration forms.

To ensure that technology is accessible to all users, the federal government mandated that federal IT initiatives incorporate assistive technologies, which include:

- Screen magnifiers
- Large-key keyboards
- Alternative input devices such as touch-screen displays
- Oversized trackballs and joysticks
- Speech recognition programs
- Text readers

Legislation to complement and facilitate Section 508 enforcement includes the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and other sections of the Rehabilitation Act.

NIB Services Section 508 Assurance supports recent executive orders to increase hiring of federal employees with disabilities and to deliver information and services to citizens through federal websites.



To learn more about NIB Services Section 508 Assurance, call 1-866-573-3748, email services@nib.org, or visit www.nib.org.



TARGETING CUSTOMER NEEDS

The NIB Services team not only checks for conformance with the law, but evaluates for usability. First, the team uses automated testing tools, then manual testing is conducted by a team of blind and sighted IT accessibility specialists using assistive technology. NIB offers three levels of support, applicable not only to the federal government, but also to state/local governments, academic institutions and commercial companies:

1

508 Conformance and Usability Assessment. This basic level of service assesses an organization's existing client and web-based applications, websites (Internet and extranet), and electronic documents to determine 508 conformance and usability by individuals with disabilities. Following the assessment, a report from the NIB Services team details how the application meets Section 508 guidelines and includes a structured evaluation of the usability of the site, system or document by individuals with disabilities. The report identifies deficiencies and provides recommendations for remediation that may include process changes, use of alternative tools, or systemic application modifications.

2

508 Conformance and Usability Assessment and Remediation Project Management. In addition to the basic usability assessment level of service, this service level includes assistance from the NIB Services team with implementing the recommended remediation activities.

3

508 Conformance and Usability System Development. At this level of service, the most comprehensive solution set, the NIB Services team is engaged throughout the application development life cycle. The team ensures the integration of 508 conformance and usability standards at each step of the development process to complete the final application.

Through the second and third levels of support, the NIB Services team establishes a long-term and strategic relationship with the customer, implementing NIB's repeatable, quality, standard processes and test plan.

INCREASING EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND

Section 508 compliance supports NIB's mission of enhancing the opportunities for economic and personal independence of persons who are blind, primarily through creating, sustaining and improving employment. NIB and its 90 associated nonprofit agencies across the nation serve as the largest employer for people who are blind, who provide products and services to the federal government through the AbilityOne Program.

Accessibility to systems, websites and technology levels the playing field for people who are blind, creating greater opportunities for career growth.

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