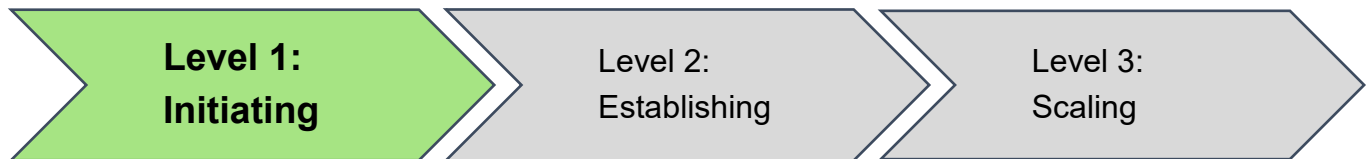


Your Action Plan: Initiating Accessibility at Your Organization.

You are currently at Level 1: Initiating. Advance your organization's maturity by focusing on the three key actions described below.



1. Create and sell the business case.

Identify the strategic priorities you'll align accessibility to. Common priorities include mitigating risk, improving CX, reducing costs, reaching new markets, competitive differentiation, and aligning to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) commitments.

Tip: Gather your team and conduct an [Empathy Mapping](#) exercise. Discuss and capture the goals, needs, and motivations of the executives you need to convince. Speak directly to those motivations in your business case. Then, apply best practices of user-centered design, like testing early prototypes, to gather feedback on your business case. Seek input from colleagues in IT, Finance, Diversity & Inclusion, and other areas to make sure your arguments are resonating.

Here are links to studies, resources, and data to reference in your business case:

- Return on Disability's [2020 Global Economics Of Disability report](#)
- [World report on disability](#) from the World Health Organization and the World Bank
- Deque's article [The business case for accessibility](#)
- [Click-Away Pound survey report](#)
- [Business case resources from the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\)](#)
- UsableNet's [2020 analysis of digital accessibility lawsuits](#)
- Forrester blogs: [Digital Accessibility Enters the Spotlight As A Business Priority](#) and [The Billion-Customer Digital Accessibility Opportunity](#)

2. Lay the foundation by building awareness.

Lay the foundation for accessibility to take hold by educating employees on the “why” behind accessibility. Teach them who accessibility helps, how people with disabilities use websites and apps, and what are examples of accessible and inaccessible experiences. A effective approach is to create an “Accessibility Essentials” presentation, and share it with anyone who will listen!

Tip: Sharing stories of customers and employees with disabilities is a particularly impactful approach for teaching employees about accessibility. Add some short video clips, such as a clip of a blind person navigating your company’s product with a screen reader, to your “Accessibility Essentials” presentation.

Resources:

- 81 educational sessions from the digital accessibility conference [axe-con](#).
- [Posters from the UK Home Office](#) highlighting accessibility do’s and don’ts.
- [Microsoft’s Inclusive Design Toolkit](#) — the “persona spectrum” is a great tool for teaching employees about how accessibility helps everyone.
- Use these [web accessibility perspective videos](#) from the W3C to demonstrate the benefits accessibility brings to different people.
- The [WebAIM Million study](#) includes information about the current state of accessibility. Their [screen reader survey](#) has helpful data to share with the teams building experiences. For example, talk about how 69% of screen reader users navigate using the headings on the page to illustrate how critical it is that headers are done right.

3. Evaluate existing experiences using free tools.

Begin measuring the current state of accessibility for your organization’s products. Do this by using free tools to evaluate and identify issues. Highlight example issues in your business case and awareness training to make the point that there is a lot of work to be done.

Tip: Pick one product, identify the top tasks customers come to that product to complete, and start there. Collaborate with your product, UX and analytics partners to identify what those top tasks are based on existing research and data. Or check out [Gerry McGovern’s Top Tasks method](#) for an approach to understanding tasks most important to customers.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of free accessibility testing tools:

- For scanning pages:
 - [Deque’s axe DevTools browser extension](#)
 - [Wave](#)
 - [Google Lighthouse](#)
 - [Deque’s axe-linter for VS Code](#)

- For evaluating color contrast and use of color
 - [Color Contrast Analyser tool \(CCA\)](#)
 - [Deque's Color Contrast Analyzer](#)
 - [Stark plug-in](#)
 - [Contrast for macOS](#)
 - [Color Oracle colorblindness simulator](#)

Ideas and advice from other organizations at this stage.

Attendees shared these tips and pieces of advice during the webinar where we introduced this action plan:

- “Try and establish accessibility champions in each group.”
- “Use videos, like the WAI perspective videos, to demo the benefits for all.”
- “Share small tips or things to do in Slack.”
- “Tell stories to engage people on accessibility.”
- “Without strong, consistent, executive sponsorship policies fall flat. All the more reason why motivation for accessibility should be beyond policy, legal, and compliance.”
- “Usability testing is a great way to build empathy and awareness within the organization.”
- “Never give up. It took us 2.5 years to get executive buy-in and budget allocated. But we did it!”



Congratulations! You have advanced your organization's digital accessibility maturity. It's now time to move on to Level 2: Establishing.

Need more help?

Deque has helped initiate, establish, and scale accessibility programs at organizations of all sizes, across industries. [Contact Deque for a free consultation.](#)