Government Information for Everyone

Ways to Increase Accessibility of Federal Depository Library Collections

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October 24, 2018
“Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.”

-James Madison
Parallels

Blue Mailers. Library of Congress. CCO 1.0
“The people have a right to know what their agents are doing or have done, and it should not be in the option of the legislature to conceal their proceedings.”

-James Wilson of Pennsylvania
U.S. Constitution Article 1, Section 5

Government Printing Office established 1861

History of Access

Distribute government information in a variety of formats

Source: A Visit to the Government Printing Office, 1956
Federal Depository Libraries, 2018. Source: https://arcg.is/1rS480
Recent Progress

• 1994
  • GPO Access Act
• 2010
  • ASERL Centers of Excellence
• 2018
  • HR 5305 - FDLP Modernization Act
History of Access for the Blind and Visually Impaired

1830s
- Early State Institutions
  - Boston
  - New York
  - Philadelphia

1900s
- Libraries with Tactile Print
  - Detroit
  - DC
  - Cincinnati

1930s
Overcoming Barriers with Technology

- Tactile print – braille
- Large Print
- Talking books
- Magnifiers
- Screen readers
Government Information in Print
Reference in the Analog Era

- Specialized indexes
- Monthly Catalog
- Shelflist
- Pulling from closed stacks
Identifying braille items

Shelflist card indicating shared housing

1984 braille document at UF
Government Information in the Print Era

From Print to Electronic

Electronic versions

– Not physically inaccessible
– Not organized by SuDocs classification
– Keyword searching in full text
Congressional Record downloaded to a tablet.  
Awareness
Screenshot of CGP in the web accessibility evaluation tool indicating areas that are barriers.
That All May Read
Library Service for Blind and Physically Handicapped People
Observation

• Status Quo: accessible in general
  – Mobility issues within building
  – Access aids in disrepair
  – New technology adoption
Programming


Accessible Slides

• Limit words per line

• Large sans serif fonts

• High contrast graphics and color combinations

• Built in accessibility checkers
Inclusive Presentations

- Use a microphone
- Say everything on the slide out loud
- Prepare ahead of time
Partnerships and Outreach

• Government Agencies
  • Florida Bureau of Blind Services
  • Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities

• Institutional Support
  • Disability Resource Center

• Nonprofit Organizations
• Public Libraries

  – Braille resources – Depository copies

  – Bulk items – maps, etc. in large print or braille
Sources & Photo Credits:

- Ostergaard “Accessibility from Scratch: One Library’s Journey to Prioritize the Accessibility of Electronic Information Resources” *The Serials Librarian* 69:155-168, 2015
- Lazar & Briggs “Improving Services for Patrons with Print Disabilities at Public Libraries” *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community Policy*, vol. 85 no 2, pp. 172-184
- Chris M Pinkoson, *Accessible Online Environments*, University of Florida course code UF_ITT216_ILT

Photographs by Sarah Erekson, except where noted.