



WHITEPAPER

360° Web Accessibility for Digital Agencies

Enhancing Your Clients' Websites and Digital Content for Compliance,
Accessibility and an Optimal User Experience

How Digital Accessibility Benefits Digital Agencies

Making digital assets accessible is not only essential for people with disabilities and critical for protecting clients from litigation, it's also smart business for digital agencies.

Agencies that produce marketing products built with accessibility in mind and vet for compliance with WCAG 2.1 standards:

- Increase product performance
- Foster brand loyalty
- Promote disability awareness

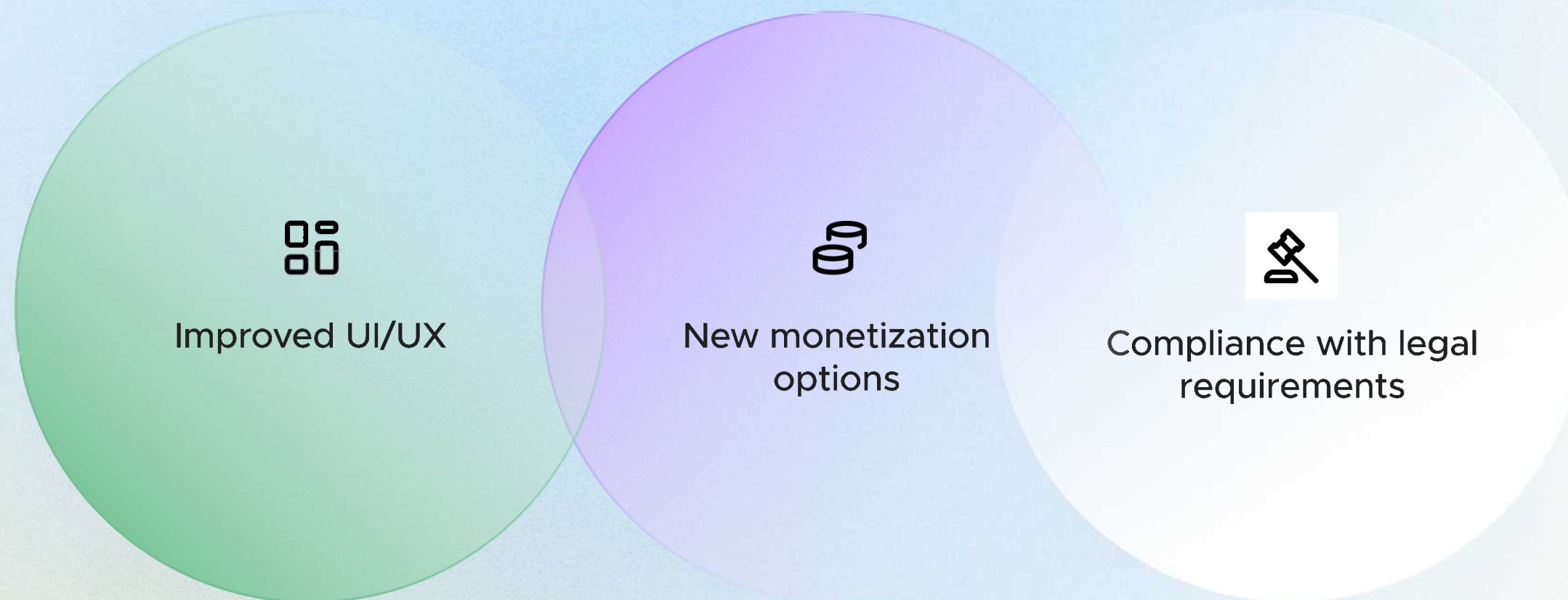
Improved User Experience Metrics

Digital accessibility is not primarily about compliance. Instead, accessibility ultimately prioritizes people and provides excellent customer experiences. Websites and digital content are accessible when intended outcomes are easy for everyone, whether to make a sale, generate leads, or provide a service.

This means there's a positive correlation between accessible design, user experience (UX), and customer experience (CX). Accessible websites can reduce bounce rates, increase session time, and prevent shopping cart abandonment.

A Unique Opportunity for Inclusivity & Accessibility

Digital agencies have a unique opportunity to innovate and stand out with inclusive and accessible online user experiences. With a winning accessibility solution and human intelligence, increase sales, empower clients with compliance, and optimize design & content engagement.



“Digital accessibility is no longer a choice; it's a requirement.”¹

Gartner Research

Why Digital Accessibility Matters to Agencies

As a digital agency, your top priority is to be a pioneer in creativity, technology and design. You're innovative thinkers, pushing the boundaries across client websites with high-level content, UX, and creative vision. But how inclusive, accessible, and legally compliant are the sites you create? And how much business value is falling through the cracks in failing to connect with broader audiences?

Creating accessible websites should be at the top of the agenda for agencies who want to stay competitive and legally compliant. When web accessibility isn't a core part of an agency's strategy, clients can miss out on hundreds of thousands of customers.

As a digital agency, you're responsible for building client websites that showcase their products and services, boost revenue, and drive exceptional user experiences. You must also ensure that the websites you create are continuously complying with the necessary legal components. In this guide, we share insights and actionable solutions for your agency to build websites that are accessible for everyone, inclusive of people with disabilities.

Who Should Read This Guide

Agency CEOs, UI/UX Managers, Operations Managers, Content Managers, Web Developers & Designers.

¹Gartner Research, 2023 Market Guide for Digital Accessibility

De-Mystifying Digital Accessibility

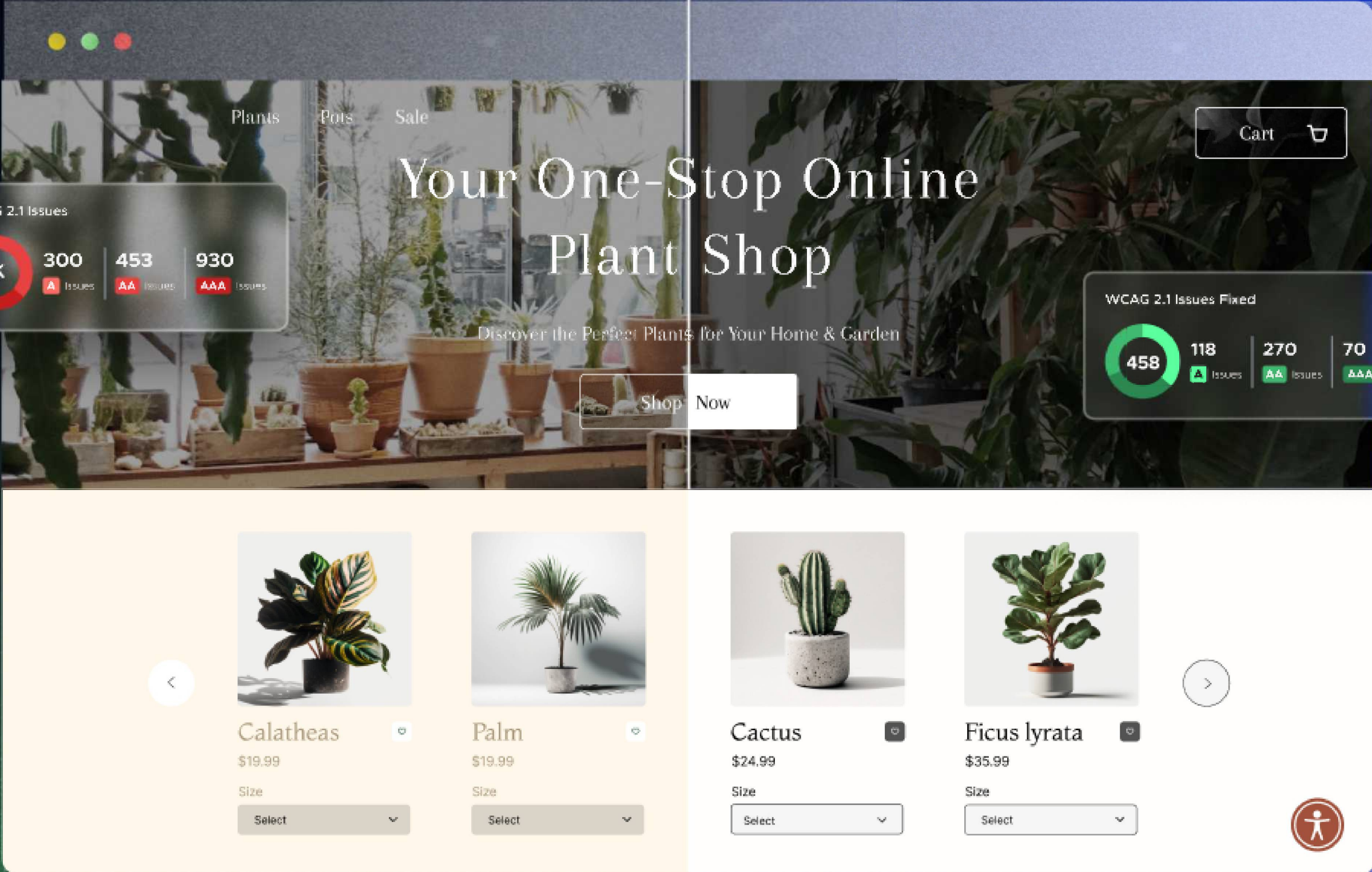
It's common for people to have a different understanding of digital accessibility and what it truly means. Often, individuals believe that digital accessibility only refers to web content or text.

Making sure your clients' websites are accessible goes far beyond text and includes a myriad of components from audio files, video, graphics, alt text, scripts, and code.

Digital agencies have a great opportunity to stand out from their competitors by making sure that their 'behind-the-scenes content' is accessible and usable for a more diverse range of people.



Accessible E-Commerce At Its Finest



The screenshot shows a website for a plant shop. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Plants', 'Pots', and 'Sale', and a 'Cart' button with a shopping cart icon. The main heading reads 'Your One-Stop Online Plant Shop' with a sub-heading 'Discover the Perfect Plants for Your Home & Garden' and a 'Shop Now' button. Below this is a grid of four plant products: Calatheas (\$19.99), Palm (\$19.99), Cactus (\$24.99), and Ficus lyrata (\$35.99). Each product has a 'Size' dropdown menu with a 'Select' button. Two accessibility overlays are present: one on the left showing 'WCAG 2.1 Issues' (1K total, 300 A, 453 AA, 930 AAA) and one on the right showing 'WCAG 2.1 Issues Fixed' (458 total, 118 A, 270 AA, 70 AAA). An accessibility icon is visible in the bottom right corner of the product grid.

WCAG 2.1 Issues

1K	300	453	930
A Issues	AA Issues	AAA Issues	

WCAG 2.1 Issues Fixed

458	118	270	70
A Issues	AA Issues	AAA Issues	

Plants Pots Sale

Cart

Your One-Stop Online Plant Shop

Discover the Perfect Plants for Your Home & Garden

Shop Now

Calatheas \$19.99

Palm \$19.99

Cactus \$24.99


Ficus lyrata \$35.99

Size Select

Size Select

Size Select

Size Select



The Legal Case for Accessibility

Why You Should Care

Digital technology has become a necessary part of our lives and should be a guiding practice for every decision a digital agency makes when building, developing, and optimizing websites. It's important to acknowledge that the legal landscape in the digital accessibility space has intensified, propelling businesses to create inclusive digital environments, addressing moral and legal responsibilities.

The risk of facing legal action related to website accessibility is rising. Agencies that fail to offer accessible design are putting their clients at risk. By delivering non compliant websites and content, agencies could also end up facing accessibility-related lawsuits and demand letters - specifically related to Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

Due to deficiencies in federal law and a lack of clear guidance on accessibility standards, plaintiffs usually have the advantage in these lawsuits. This has led to organizations opting to pay thousands of dollars to settle and avoid protracted, unfamiliar legal ordeals.

This legal landscape has resulted in just 30 law firms filing 99% of all web-related ADA lawsuits, often using serial “click-by” plaintiffs and copy-and-paste complaints. With these lawsuits on the rise, it's likely that your clients will look to you for WCAG compliance services that help them meet legal requirements.



ShortPoint Helps 350,000 SharePoint Sites Achieve ADA-Compliance

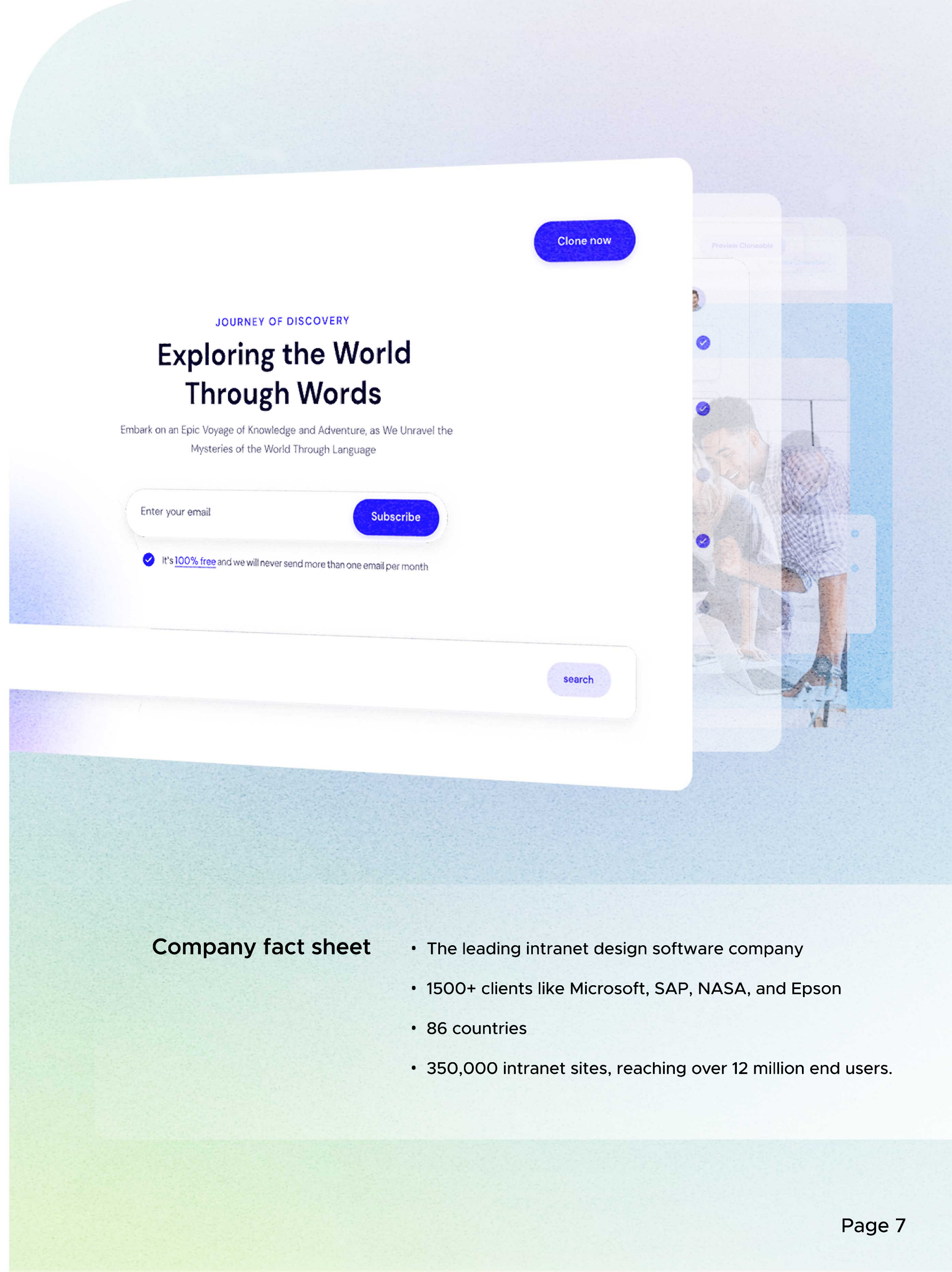
The Legal Challenge

In 2021, ShortPoint began receiving many requests from current and potential clients inquiring about accessibility solutions that could help them make their intranet sites ADA-compliant and fully accessible for employees and teams. ShortPoint's clients include several government agencies and educational institutions that must meet Section 508 regulations and satisfy other international accessibility laws.

The Journey To Accessibility and Results

The company was determined to leverage leading accessibility services instead of building its own solution from the ground up. To maintain its user-friendly appeal, ShortPoint wanted these accessibility solutions to be available with a simple click through their platform's user settings page. They partnered with UserWay to launch a fully integrated on-platform accessibility solution.

ShortPoint has reinforced client confidence by expanding services to support equal opportunity and employment regulations required through the ADA, ATAG 2.0, EN 301-549, and Section 508. According to ShortPoint, accessibility has helped them stand out among their direct competitors.



Company fact sheet

- The leading intranet design software company
- 1500+ clients like Microsoft, SAP, NASA, and Epson
- 86 countries
- 350,000 intranet sites, reaching over 12 million end users.

✦
“Businesses can expect to recoup an estimated **\$16.8 billion** ✦ in lost revenue by integrating web accessibility solutions”

Forbes



Can Accessibility Increase Conversions?

The Business Case for Accessibility

Why You Should Care

In the U.S alone, there are 61 million residents with disabilities, presenting digital marketing agencies with a great opportunity to help their clients achieve accessibility compliance, while also mitigating business risks. Accessibility failures cost agency clients millions in potential views, sessions, conversions, and sales annually. Marketers invest significant resources to capture attention, pique interest, and promote their clients. With so many elaborate marketing strategies and techniques now available to attain optimal click rates, views, and conversions, it's not easy to gain competitive advantage.

An Untapped Source of Revenue

The digital marketing landscape is not a level playing field but there are huge benefits to implementing digital accessibility for client websites, which remain an untapped source of revenue and profit. It's important to remember that your clients will be in different stages of their business growth, they may have limited budgets, and their resources may be slim. Regardless of the challenges, it's up to agencies to help their clients cut through the noise, stay on the edge of innovation, and outpace their competition. Marketing firms that take advantage of these accessible design opportunities can quickly set themselves apart from competing agencies.

The new focus for modern, forward-thinking agencies is to ensure your clients' websites fulfil legal, societal, and moral responsibilities. Website accessibility strongly connects to higher customer engagement, retention and conversion rates; it's the agencies who prioritize accessibility for their clients that will stand the test of time, and improve their digital footprint. Trust us, your clients will thank you.

Digital Accessibility Enhances Performance, UX, Engagement and Sales

The Challenge

With a mission to provide inclusive and engaging online user experiences, industry leading website developer, Natural Intelligence (NI), manages customers like Top10.com and BestMoney.com. The product team at NI was ready to adopt a powerful accessibility solution for innovative, intuitive, interactive, and exciting digital experiences for millions of global end users. Increasing sales, engagement, and site performance was critical. While other accessibility solutions fell short of delivery, Userway's solution empowered Natural Intelligence to benchmark industry standards with a competitive edge.

The Journey to Accessibility and Results

Prioritizing quality assurance, accessible, and inclusive UX to deliver next-level performance, compliance, and innovation, Natural Intelligence adopted UserWay's AI-powered Widget 4.0. Numbers speak louder than words.

KPIs prove NI achieved increased earnings per click (EPC), earnings per visit (EPV), and click through rates (CTR), while bounce rates dropped. Accessibility delivers enhanced engagement with improved product-to-consumer matching, as credibility drives growth and increases sales bottom line.

Company Fact Sheet & Key Results

- Founded 2009, 60-person strong product team
- NI manages and simplifies decision making of online consumers for leading brands
- 50 million consumer decisions made annually on NI's websites worldwide



+1.0%

Click-rate increase



-0.5% Decrease

in bounce rates



+2.4% Increase

in Earnings Per Click



+3.5% Increase

in Earnings Per Visit

Presentation Multimedia Supporting Accessibility on Hundreds of Dental & Orthodontic Websites

The Challenge

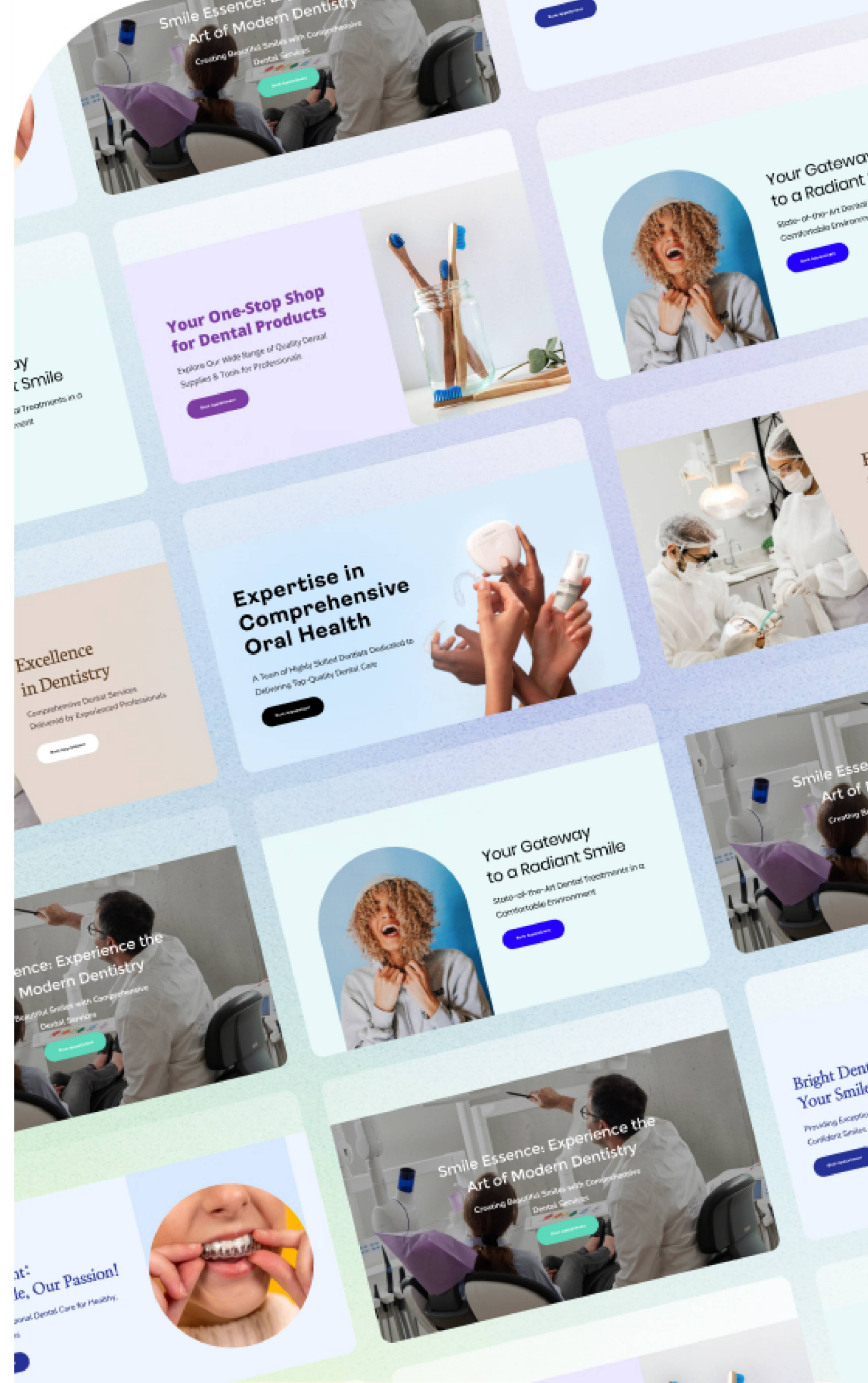
The owner of Presentation Multimedia began searching for a web accessibility solution in 2022, after learning how other agencies' clients were being sued for their website designs that violated the Americans ADA, EN 301-549, and the AODA.

The Journey To Accessibility And Results

The agency moved forward with a UserWay partnership, which empowered Presentation Multimedia to deliver a critical service to clients that reduces the legal liabilities of their web services, helping them comply with WCAG 2.1 AA.

Company Fact Sheet

- A digital marketing agency in Peekskill, New York.
- Founded in 2002
- Clients throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe
- The company manages the online presence of 100 practices, including web design, development, advertising, and search engine optimization



Discover the H1 Latest Sneaker Trends

Browse through the latest trends, exclusive releases, and timeless classics from top brands, and find your perfect pair to step up your shoe game.

H2



ALT

Stylish sneaker with vibrant orange laces, featuring a comfortable, cushioned sole and modern design, perfect for an active lifestyle.

Can Accessibility Improve Our Design Standards?

The Design Case for Accessibility

Why You Should Care

According to Forrester, in failing to address inclusive web design, businesses miss out on revenue from customers with disabilities who have approximately \$1.9 trillion in disposable income. Organizations have begun to recognize this opportunity, and more than 60% of businesses now have an executive-led commitment to accessible products².

UI/UX flaws will affect all your clients' website end-users and visitors. Marketing agencies should design client assets that include all end-users, including those who are blind, vision or hearing impaired, deaf, cognitively impaired, and have motor disabilities.

Despite accessibility laws and design principles being in place for decades, most websites are still inaccessible. WebAim's 2022 annual report³ on the top one million websites shows nearly 97% of home pages have detectable WCAG 2.0 errors. A recent analysis by UserWay showed that only 13 of the Fortune 500 companies (a mere 2.6%) had no severe accessibility violations on their websites.

Digital access challenges include:

- Low-contrast text
- No alternative descriptions for images and video
- Broken page structure & design
- Buttons, links, and tools usable with a mouse only
- Missing labels for forms

² All I Want For Christmas is An Accessibility Expert, Gina Bhawalkar, Principal Analyst, Forrester, 2022

³ WebAim Million Report, 2022

CMS Max Leads 2,000 eCommerce Sites to ADA-compliance

The Challenge

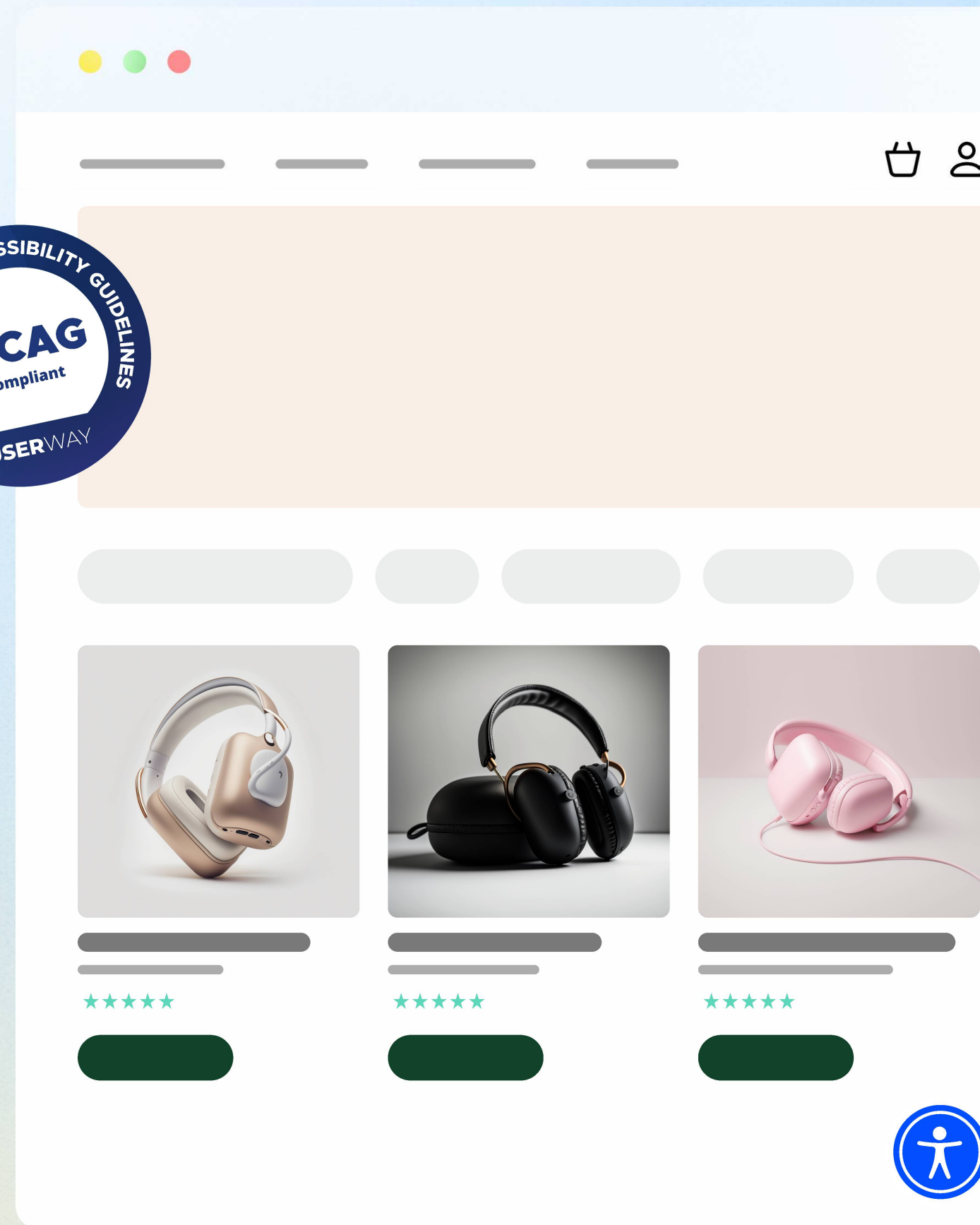
CMS Max collaborated with UserWay to help its 2,000 eCommerce clients to create storefronts that are usable and responsive to people with disabilities. The platform also implemented code restructuring within its pre-designed page themes to make them more compatible with screen readers and keyboard-only navigation.

The Journey To Accessibility And Results

With their initiative to deliver accessible solutions to clients, CMS Max experienced increased growth and sales on their platform. They also saw a 56% increase in customers seeking accessible website-building platforms, with traffic across websites increasing by 18%, and bounce rates dropping by 12%.

Company Fact Sheet

- A web and eCommerce platform that allows customers to manage their websites with little to no programming experience.
- Over 2,000 eCommerce storefronts



Become Champions of Accessibility

Accessibility is a critical component of business to you and your clients. Your agency is uniquely positioned to help narrow a widening ‘accessibility gap’ through your services, presenting huge opportunities to drive client revenue and retention.

As the social consciousness and legal awareness around accessibility moves into the spotlight, now is the time for agencies to drive accessibility goals for their clients. Now is the time to become champions of accessibility for your clients, fostering their business growth, helping them adhere to compliance guidelines, incorporating inclusive design and driving sales.

After all, your clients’ main business objective is to connect with as broad an audience as possible, staying ahead of the curve and the competition. With the right accessibility solutions at your fingertips, your digital agency is well placed to help.



Why UserWay for Digital Agencies?

UserWay is a global digital accessibility leader, committed to enabling the fundamental human right of digital inclusion. UserWay solutions are trusted by more than 1 million websites globally. AI-powered technologies, combined with human-in-the-loop processes, help websites more readily achieve compliance with accessibility standards, such as WCAG 2.1 AA, EN 301-549 and Section 508 regulations, as required by US and international governmental and regulatory bodies.

Gartner recently recognized UserWay as a top technology vendor in the AI-powered accessibility space in Gartner's 2023 Accessibility Market Guide. UserWay was identified as a leading vendor in several key areas, such as the UserWay AI-Powered Accessibility widget, Accessibility Scanner, Audit, Managed Accessibility and Userway for MS Office.

Visit us at [UserWay.org](https://www.userway.org) to learn more about our accessibility solutions and how they can help your organization and end-customers meet these requirements.

Bibliography

[Gartner Research, 2023 Market Guide for Digital Accessibility](#)

[All I Want For Christmas is An Accessibility Expert](#), Gina Bhawalkar, Principal Analyst, Forrester, 2022

[WebAim Million Report, 2022](#)

[Understanding The Importance Of Web Accessibility](#), Lesa Seibert, Forbes Councils Member, Forbes Business Council, 2023