Questions for Vendors: Company Accessibility Policies

January 30, 2023

# Overview

Asking your vendors about their company’s accessibility policies and the accessibility of their products reveals how accessible the products they provide will be. Accessibility should be included in all aspects of the company, from the organization and hiring policy down to their products. If the vendors don’t employ persons with disabilities and/or don’t have accessible policies, it is unlikely that their products are accessible. Alternatively, if the company has an accessibility team, which includes persons with disabilities, it is far more likely that their products are accessible.

**Note**: We mention the acronym VPAT (Voluntary Product Accessibility Template) in the questions below. VPAT is a report or document that describes how e-resources meet the revised 508 Standards for Information Technology (IT) accessibility (a USA law).

The questions are based on the Accessibility Considerations for E-resource Procurement in Public Libraries and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

# Questions to Ask Vendors

Consider asking these questions when procuring digital content and reading systems (e.g., e-libraries, websites, and apps).

1. Does the company/vendor have an accessibility department, team, or lead?
2. Is the content or e-resources (websites, apps, or reading platforms) that everyone uses accessible?
	1. If the product is not accessible, is the company recommending users with disabilities use a separate product?
3. Does the vendor know how and what accessibility features are included in their product?
4. If available, provide a copy of the company's most recent VPAT.
5. If available, provide a copy of any completed accessibility audit the company has undergone.
6. Do they have demonstrations of how the product works with assistive technologies?
	1. If yes, do they have documentation or guidelines about how the product works with assistive technologies?
7. How does the vendor/company handle accessibility requests/feedback from users?

# References

Accessibility Considerations for E-resource Procurement in Public Libraries. Accessible Libraries. Retrieved January 31, 2023, from https://accessiblelibraries.ca/resources/ procurement-public-libraries/

Web Accessibility Initiative. (2022, November 1). WCAG 2 Overview. Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). Retrieved January 24, 2023, from https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/