

The Power of Inclusive Design

Part 1: Better Experiences, Wider Reach

What if we told you that you could create a better experience, increase your business reach, *and* bolster your reputation as a socially responsible company—all through design?

You can.

How? By adopting the practice of inclusive design.

What is inclusive design?

Inclusive design “considers the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age, and other forms of human difference,” according to the Inclusive Design Research Institute.

Inclusive design is related to accessibility, but they’re not entirely the same. Accessibility is the goal—ensuring that products or services support each individual user’s needs and preferences. But inclusive design is the process to reach that goal.

Put another way:

“Being aware of this difference allows us to place the responsibility on what’s being made, and the people making it, rather than on whoever ends up using it,” says Matt May, Adobe’s head of inclusive design.

Isn’t accessibility enough?

While accessibility standards focus on making products accessible to someone with disabilities, a product produced by practicing inclusive design is usable by everyone.

Inclusive design honors the full range of human diversity and works toward the greatest involvement of everyone to the greatest extent. According to the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative, this includes:

- accessibility for people with disabilities (permanent, temporary, and situational)
- access to quality hardware, software, and Internet connectivity
- computer literacy and skills
- economic situation
- education
- geographic location
- culture
- age, including older and younger people
- and language

So, back to your business.

An inclusively designed website will not only be accessible to users with permanent disabilities, but will also generate higher engagement and conversion rates. And, in today's culture that values transparency and social responsibility, an inclusively designed deliverable certainly gives your business' reputation a boost.

4 Steps to Begin Practicing Inclusive Design

1. Recognize exclusion and design around it.
2. Design outside of your own idealized user.
3. Offer choice for individuals; there's often more than one way to complete a task.
4. Extend your solutions to everyone.

Inclusive design is good design. By practicing better, inclusive design, you develop improved experiences with greater reach.

To harness the power of inclusive design in your business, talk to us at grossbauer.com.

Stay tuned for Part 2 to discover how to design around exclusion.