Accessibility of BigBlueButton 2.6 (September 2023)

Blindside has utilized guidelines issued by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to implement functional improvements to BigBlueButton. Blindside is working to ensure that all our content satisfies Level A and AA Success Criteria set forth in WCAG 2.0 and WCAG 2.1, as well as EN 301 549. As part of those efforts, Blindside engaged David Berman of [David Berman Communications to audit, perform usability testing, and coach our developers](#) to improve accessibility.

We also plan to add an Accessibility FAQ with tips for how to best navigate and experience our site.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us.

While we strive to make BigBlueButton and our website as accessible as possible and to meet the WCAG 2.0 and 2.1 guidelines, some aspects of BigBlueButton do not yet pass. At present, BigBlueButton conforms to all WCAG 2.0 Level AA guidelines with these exceptions:

1. The conformance is limited to audience and moderator views: for presenters, whether the interface is WCAG 2.0 or 2.1 Level AA compliant or not depends upon the type of presentation they are making (as well as inaccessible content they may choose to present in the presentation pane).

2. The Shared Notes view/feature has limited accessibility.

3. The tutorial material is not accessible.

Also, third-party hosted content presented in the presenter frame is very possibly inaccessible, depending upon what the presenter has chosen to share. While we encourage our community to comply with industry-wide accessibility standards, we cannot enforce such standards alone.

A significant chunk of the development effort for version 2.6 went into making BigBlueButton more accessible, specifically for students living with full or partial visual challenges who use the JAWS for Windows screen reader.

If you notice ways we can improve the usability and accessibility of our products, please contact us!

The above [WCAG 2.0 Level AA accessibility statement was validated by David Berman CPWA](), accessibility expert from David Berman Communications ([davidberman.com]()), in September 2023.

Compliance analysis and opinion by David Berman

Overview

Blindside Networks is striving to create an accessible online experience for all users of BigBlueButton.

Blindside recognizes both the regulatory and usability benefits of complying with government standards for accessibility and so strives to both comply with those standards and use them as a guideline for making BigBlueButton more accessible for persons with disabilities and difficulties. In support of this, Blindside arranged a compliance analysis of how BigBlueButton fairs when judged against standards established by the government of the United States (Revised Section 508, ADA) and the WCAG 2.0 and 2.1 standards, and the IASR regulations established by the Government of Ontario's AODA legislation.

Blindside Networks requested that [David Berman Communications](#) of Ottawa, Ontario, apply standard tests used for accessible electronic documents to BigBlueButton. This report summarizes the findings and provides an expert opinion.

Methodology

In order to assess the overall accessibility of BigBlueButton we carefully selected a statistically-relevant and horizontally representative sample test path for automated and manual study, as well as assessing the overall structure and common assets of the product. We studied the pages in their publicly available state during 2023.

WCAG 2.0 and 2.1 accessibility expert opinion

It is my professional opinion that the provided test path for BigBlueButton meets or exceeds all applicable Level AA guidelines of the *W3C WCAG 2.0 Guidelines* and *the W3C WCAG 2.1 Guidelines,* with these exceptions:

1. The conformance is limited to audience and moderator views: for

presenters, whether the interface is WCAG 2.0 or 2.1 Level AA compliant or not depends upon the type of presentation they are making (as well as inaccessible content they may choose to present in the presentation pane).

2. The Shared Notes view/feature has limited accessibility.

3. The tutorial material is not accessible.

Section 508 accessibility expert opinion

For a VPAT expressing BigBlueButton's compliance with Revised Section 508 which points to WCAG 2.0 AA) and to EN 301 549, visit http://bigbluebutton.org/downloads/vpat.docx.

Usability testing

In addition, we have administered qualitative testing of the product by test users with substantial disabilities (blind, low vision, developmental, and mobility). All substantial issues discovered were brought to the attention of the developers.

David Berman, CPWA, RGD, FGDC
David Berman Communications
+1-613-769-5693
berman@davidberman.com

This document most recently updated November 2023.

Accessibility of BigBlueButton (HTML5 release)

Blindside has utilized guidelines issued by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to implement functional improvements to BigBlueButton. Blindside is working to ensure that all our content satisfies Level A and AA Success Criteria set forth in WCAG 2.0. As part of those efforts, Blindside engaged David Berman of [David Berman Communications to audit, perform usability testing, and coach our developers](#) to improve accessibility.

We also plan to add an Accessibility FAQ with tips for how to best navigate and experience our site.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us.

While we strive to make BigBlueButton and our Web site as accessible as possible and to meet the WCAG 2.0 guidelines, some aspects of BigBlueButton do not yet pass. At present, BigBlueButton conforms to all WCAG 2.0 Level AA guidelines with these exceptions:

4. For presenters, whether the interface is WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant or not depends upon the type of presentation they are making (as well as inaccessible content they may choose to present in the presentation pane).

5. The Shared Notes view/feature has limited accessibility.

6. The Closed Captioning featured has limited accessibility.

7. The tutorial material is not accessible.

Also, third-party hosted content presented in the presenter frame is very possibly inaccessible, depending upon what the presenter has chosen to share. While we encourage our community to comply with industry-wide accessibility standards, we cannot enforce such standards alone.

A significant chunk of the development effort for the 2.0 version went into making BigBlueButton more accessible, specifically students living with full or partial visual challenges who use the JAWS for Windows screen reader.

In the current state of assistive technologies globally, only certain screen readers can successfully interpret Flash applications with the interactive complexity of BigBlueButton. As such, those relying on a screen reader can only use BigBlueButton effectively using BigBlueButton's HTML5 version ... or, for the Flash version, only on a Windows device and only with either JAWS or Window-Eyes (no longer available for purchase) as their screen reader.

If you notice ways we can improve the usability and accessibility of our products, please contact us!

The above [WCAG 2.0 Level AA accessibility statement was validated by David Berman CPWA](#), accessibility expert from David Berman Communications ([davidberman.com](#)), on July 2 2019.

Compliance analysis and opinion by David Berman

Overview

Blindside Networks is striving to create an accessible online experience for all users of BigBlueButton.

Blindside recognizes both the regulatory and usability benefits of complying with government standards for accessibility, and so strives to both comply with those standards and use them as a guideline for making BigBlueButton more accessible for persons with disabilities and difficulties. In support of this, Blindside arranged a compliance analysis of how BigBlueButton fairs when judged against standards established by the government of the United States (Revised Section 508, ADA) and the WCAG 2.0 standards, and the IASR regulations established by the Government of Ontario's AODA legislation.

Blindside Networks requested that [David Berman Communications](#) of Ottawa, Ontario apply standard tests used for accessible electronic documents to BigBlueButton. This report summarizes the findings and provides an expert opinion.

Methodology

In order to assess the overall accessibility of BigBlueButton we carefully selected a statistically-relevant and horizontally representative sample test path for automated and manual study, as well as assessing the overall structure and common assets of the product. We studied the pages in their publicly-available state, at time points in July/August 2013, March/April 2016, February/March 2017, June/July 2018, and May/June 2019.

WCAG 2.0 accessibility expert opinion

It is my professional opinion that the provided test path for BigBlueButton meets or exceeds all applicable Level AA guidelines of the *W3C WCAG 2.0*

Guidelines, with these exceptions:

4. For presenters, whether the site is WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant or not depends upon the type of presentation they are making (as well as inaccessible content they may choose to present in the presentation pane).

5. The Shared Notes view is not accessible.

6. The Closed Captioning featured has limited accessibility.

7. The tutorial material is not accessible.

Section 508 accessibility expert opinion

For a VPAT expressing BigBlueButton's compliance with classic Section 508 (as opposed to the Revised Section 508 which points to WCAG 2.0 AA), visit http://bigbluebutton.org/downloads/vpat.docx.

Usability testing

In addition, we have administered qualitative testing of the product by test users with substantial disabilities (blind, low vision, developmental, and mobility). All substantial issues discovered were brought to the attention of the developers.

David Berman, CPWA, RGD, FGDC
David Berman Communications
+1-613-769-5693
berman@davidberman.com

This document most recently updated July 2019.