

[music playing]

[Narelle] Good morning,

and welcome to the  
Digital Access Show.

This week,

or these last few weeks, we've  
been looking at perceivability.

What is perceivability?

What are the effects of  
perceivability? And how does it,...

you know, bring in perceivability  
into your work

benefit people?

And we're going to do  
a little bit of that today,

and a little bit of crossover  
into the next principle,

which is operability.

In particular, the  
third guideline

which is seizures  
and physical reactions.

I want to introduce you to  
Anita Gover from TechAbility.

Anita is in Sydney,

and the reason we're doing this is  
Anita is holding a conference,

the end of February.

Yes, I'm one of  
the guest speakers,

but what we're going  
to talk about came up

as Anita was preparing  
for the conference.

Thank you so much  
for your time. Anita.

[Anita] Thanks, Narelle. Looking  
forward to talking through it.

[Narelle] Anita, can you  
tell me a bit about yourself,

and why you're  
running the conference?

[Anita] Yeah, sure. My  
business is called TechAbility.

We provide technology  
consulting services

to mostly NDIS providers,

some aged care and  
community organisations.

We do all sorts of things,

like IT strategies and  
software solutions.

We also help people  
with their websites,

and digital presence.

And so we've been doing  
that for about six years now,

and we're running a conference  
at the end of February,

called the Future  
Forward Conference,

which is focused on  
technology for NDIS providers

and exploring a range  
of different topics,

and one of those being  
digital accessibility,

which, as you said,  
you are presenting

and running a  
workshop on that topic.

[Narelle] Yeah. And  
it was interesting,

because as I was  
starting to prepare for it

and doing all that,  
you know, setting up my...

PowerPoints and things  
that I was going to use.

Your marketing team have sent  
me a PowerPoint presentation,

and when I opened it,

I actually had a physical  
reaction to the banner,

which is where the  
operability comes in.

It took me a couple of minutes  
to start having the reaction.

And the reason I was having  
the reaction was the colours,

and it was the lines, it was  
the design of the banner,

actually made me  
feel quite nauseous.

- [Anita] Yep.
- [Narelle] And so...

[Narelle] I quickly  
contacted you,

and...

you resolved the problem.

Can you talk us through,

like show the banner?

Obviously, I'm going  
to close my eyes.

You're the co-host. I'm  
handing over to you now,

and you describe things,

and I'll talk through the  
principles that we're looking at,

which is perceivability  
and operability as we go.

But I cannot look at the banner.

So you're the co-host.  
Off you go, Anita.

[Anita] All right. No worries.  
I'm going to share my screen

and show the banner in question.

So,

this is actually the web page.

I'm just showing the web  
page for the conference.

And the banner that we had was basically this image here,

which I'll zoom into slightly and Narelle can look away.

- [Anita] So...

- [Narelle] Yep.

[Anita] So it was this image that we have here,

which we still do have on the website,

but we've made some other changes to the website.

So the, the issue was around this banner here,

where we've got the words, Future Forward,

which are red on a black or dark gray background.

And they have a white outline around each of the letters,

and the letters are quite close together.

And that as, well, Narelle,

you can talk about what reaction.

I'll zoom out a little so it doesn't cause you any problems.

[Narelle] Yep.

[Anita] You can explain the reaction that you got to that.

[Narelle] Yeah. There is a...

a term called parallax.

Parallax is where you have thick lines and thin lines together,

and it can cause the eye to do funny things.

And that's basic.

I mean, normally it's moving at angles against each other,

crosswise.

Even though this is not moving,

when I zoomed it up a bit, 'cause I said, what does that read?

Zoomed it up, and then I started to get the effects of parallax,

which is headache.

I've got nausea,

and yeah, I just had to close my eyes,

because I could not keep looking at the words, Future Forward.

And then I thought, hang on here.

What does it actually read? Because I couldn't even read it.

All I could do was say, there's something there.

It's all these lines at odd angles.

And of course, because I was being physically affected,

I didn't click that there was  
the words, Future Forward.

So I will admit, I  
sent it off to a friend.

I said, quick, can you  
read to me what this is?

And she goes, it's  
really hard to read,

because the letters  
are slightly distorted.

And are they lengthened, Anita?

[Anita] Yes. They're long,  
kind of tall and narrow.

And you know what  
I find interesting?

Like, I was looking at it  
after we'd gone through this.

I was looking at it on  
quite a small screen,

and if I zoom out  
a bit even further,

it kind of almost  
looks like a bar code.

They're all like lines,  
and you know, they're,

they're very close together,  
and they are hard to read.

But yeah. So,

that's, you know, we,

I can talk through what we did.

[Narelle] Before we do that,

let me explain the principles.

So in perceivability,

there's a principle  
called distinguishable,

a guideline called  
distinguishable.

And that looks at font  
types, it looks at colour

it looks at,  
can you distinguish...

the information?

And obviously you can't in this,

because it can be hard to  
read the words, Future Forward.

[Anita] Yep.

[Narelle] Then we've got the  
seizures and physical reactions.

The interesting thing with the  
seizures and physical reactions,

there's three  
success criteria there.

One is, you're not to have more  
than three flashes in a second.

Well, this is not flashing, so  
it doesn't break that guideline,

success criteria.

The second is a very hard,

less than three, three seconds,

or three flashes  
or less in a second.

It's a very, very hard no,

whereas the first  
is three flashes,

or, you know, or less,

or, you know, there's a  
couple of other things.

So one is AA level

and the second is a AAA  
and the third is motion.

And it's all about animation.

So if you think of a GIF,

you know how you get those  
GIFs that move rather quickly?

Like we've just been  
through Christmas,

all those flashing  
trees that you get,

they can actually cause  
physical reactions as well,

which is why I never  
send out flashing tree GIFs,

or any of those,

because it can seriously  
make people sick.

So it's two areas of WCAG,

that, which is the Web Content  
Accessibility Guidelines,

that were broken,

even though it's not

specifically the seizures

and physical reactions, I had  
a definite physical reaction.

What did you  
do to fix it, Anita?

[Anita laughs]

[Anita] So my marketing  
team had a call with you,

and you talked through  
some ways to improve it.

And so what we did was  
we still are using that image.

It's much smaller.

We originally had that

whole banner as pretty  
much the width of the page.

So it was quite big. And...

we also, you were  
looking at a, at a slide,

a PowerPoint slide  
presentation where we used it.

We've removed it  
from there altogether.

[Narelle] Yep.

[Anita] On the website,

we changed that to  
reduce the size of that.

Still have the  
nice image there,

but, um,

we've, we've got  
much clearer text,

with the name of the,  
title of the conference.

And we did make a  
few other changes,

which were recommended by you,

in terms of accessibility  
on the web page.

Then we had a couple of other  
banners that we were using.

I'll bring those up.

We're originally using a  
banner, this banner here,

which I'll just  
increase the size.

It's quite big now.

[Narelle] There was  
contrast with that one.

[Anita] Yeah. So  
this one, even I,

I don't have perfect vision,

but even I sort of,

kind of, struggled with that

red on the dark gray background.

So we were  
originally using that,

and we decided after talking

through some of the

accessibility changes with you,

we decided to change that  
to a much clearer version

which is this one that we're  
now using across all of our...

marketing and signatures,

and all of our branding  
for the conference.

In a couple of weeks  
time. It's all going

to have that kind of format,

which is a lot clearer.

We're using clearer fonts,

and, you know, white  
backgrounds with the colours,

because our colour scheme  
is sort of red, black, white,

and tones around that.

You know, we have to be careful  
with the use of red, I think,

and how stark and bright  
that red is sometimes.

And in this original one,

it was a very bright red  
on a gray background.

Was a little hard to, to see,

whereas now we've used a

slightly darker  
red for the main...

main title,

on a white background,

which is, I think you'll agree, is a lot easier.

So yeah, we made a few changes like that.

[Narelle] How did you find that process of making the changes?

[Anita] Easy enough.

I mean, we, my marketing team are pretty cool,

[Anita laughs]

And they're keen to learn.

You know, I said to them, you know,

the industry that we work in,

yes, we're mostly dealing with

providers, NDIS providers, businesses.

However, many of our organisations...

employ people with,

you know, different abilities,

and they may employ people who are vision impaired,

or speech impaired or hearing impaired.

They could employ many different people in their organisations.

So it's important to us because  
of the sector that we work in,

and, and to me personally,  
you know, I have...

people in my life  
who have disabilities,

and I'm always mindful of,

you know, making  
things accessible.

So, you know, my marketing team  
were well on board with that,

to make sure that  
they could make

make the visuals  
that we're using

more accessible for everyone.

[Narelle] One of the things that  
often hear providers say is,

but it's the cost of it.

What's your comment?

[Anita] Really, I think  
to make those changes

I think my team kind  
of turned it around,

and it was really just  
a few little tweaks.

It wasn't like a major change.

It was a few little  
tweaks to improve it

and make it more accessible.

I don't think they spent  
more than half a day updating

and changing things  
to make it work better.

So it really wasn't a lot of...

additional time or cost to me,

to make that improvement.

[Narelle] Have you  
had a good response

to the improvement  
in the banners?

[Anita] Yeah, absolutely,

I did, a couple of  
other people said that,

that image that  
you had problem with,

they said, I find that  
really hard to read.

And also about that...

the dark gray background  
that we were using before,

that they thought it  
was hard to read.

A lot of other people have  
said, you know, I really like...

the clean and fresh  
sort of style of it.

And we were talking  
a little bit before about...

there's a balance you  
need to strike between...

accessibility and your brand.

You know, obviously  
we have a brand.

We have, you know,  
colours that we use,

and we have a design that  
we want to use, you know?

So you kind of have to  
strike that balance between...

what works for your brand

and, but also what can  
be accessible for everyone.

[Narelle] So, what  
we've done here,

are you able to apply the same...

into all of your work,  
the same ideas?

[Anita] Yeah, absolutely.

Yeah, totally. I , um, after  
sort of going through that,

we had some other, many other...

design and marketing materials  
that we doing for the conference.

Of course, you know, things like  
big banners for the conference,

and all that sort of stuff.

And our book,

you know, a program for the  
conference and things like that.

And I've made sure that,  
now the marketing team are using  
those accessible principles  
in everything that  
they are designing.

And, you know, I'm  
more mindful of it now too,

and checking  
over that as I, as I,

you know, do the  
proof, and you know,

approve the artworks  
and things like that.

But also,

you know, I've said  
to my web developer,

we need to redesign some of our  
other pages on our website to,

to fit these guidelines as well.

So that's certainly a  
task that they'll pick up on

once we, once we get through  
the, through the conference,

the heavy load of  
organising a conference.

[Narelle] Yeah.

So,

So the conference  
itself is NDIS tech.

[Anita] Yes.

[Narelle] Do you have many...

sponsors that are,

again into understanding

what we talk about all the  
time with digital accessibility?

Do you think it's a very  
common topic of conversation?

[Anita] Not enough,  
I don't think.

So I think you will have  
some great conversations

with some of the  
people at the conference,

in terms of the software  
vendors out there.

So there are a lot of  
NDIS systems out there.

You know, people call  
them NDIS systems.

They're a CRM type  
solution that a lot of...

organisations that  
work in the NDIS use,

and there's many  
systems out there.

And some of those sponsors  
will be at the conference,

but I think,

I don't see a lot of...

a lot of effort or thought  
given to accessibility

by a lot of these  
software solutions.

I see them all the time.  
I work with them all the time.

I recommend them  
to, to my clients.

And I do sometimes  
get clients who,

you know, they'll say to me,

we need to make sure  
that this system has...

certain, you know  
aspects of accessibility,

depending on their, their staff.

So some of their staff  
members may have,

you know, vision impairment  
or whatever, whatever it is,

they may need to have...

some accessibility factors  
in the software solutions.

Also, some of these  
software solutions will have

like a customer portal,

where their customers,  
who are NDIS participants,

will be accessing information

from their NDIS provider.

And therefore,

those, you know, they'll  
often be apps, mobile apps.

Those apps need to be,

to factor in that  
accessibility as well.

Because you're talking about

a whole range of  
different types of...

disabilities,

you need to make sure  
that they're accessible

by the participants.

So yeah, I don't really see  
a lot of thought put into it.

I hope that will change,

especially when it  
comes to customer portals.

But I think also there's,

there's more work

that a lot of the software  
solutions out there could do

to improve...

the digital accessibility  
of their, their systems.

They're all web-based  
systems, generally.

So,

there's a lot of work that  
they could do to improve those,

not having these  
tiny, little, small,

small print on screens  
and things like that.

[Narelle] I, actually, really  
agree with you, Anita.

I find it frustrating,

like the forms that  
we're expected to fill in,

you name it.

And obviously, the NDIS  
has a large number of forms,

and if they're not accessible,

that takes away our  
independence as well.

Obviously, I'm speaking  
from my point of view there.

Anita, what are some takeaways

that you could give  
to anyone listening?

What's some advice?

[Anita] I think, from a business  
owners, you know, perspective,

like, where I'm  
running a business

and I'm working  
very much in a sector

where there are  
people with disability,

I feel like it's really  
quite a simple solution.

You know,

in talking through what we  
needed to do for what we did,

it was such a simple change.

There were, there  
were not major changes.

It was tweaks.  
It was tweaking some things.

So I think...

the takeaway for  
me is really to just

have it in the  
back of your mind,

when you're designing  
these things, or you're

putting together documents,

or building a web page,  
whatever it is,

have these things in  
the back of your mind,

and you don't  
have to overthink it.

They're actually  
quite simple solutions.

And I think probably...

the other thing that,  
as I said a bit earlier,

be mindful of your brand.

You still need to  
maintain your brand

and you still want  
to have a nice style,

and nice designs  
and things like that.

But at the same time,

I think you can find a  
balance between that

and your. your accessibility.

[Narelle] Yeah.  
Well, you found it.

And you've ended up with  
a better product, actually.

[Anita] I think it looks better.

[Narelle] I love it. Yeah.

Look, Anita, how can  
people get in contact with you?

[Anita] So yeah, for contact,  
they can go to our web page,

which will be very  
accessible, I'm sure.

[both laugh]

[techability.net.au](http://techability.net.au).

Or email us at  
[info@techability.net.au](mailto:info@techability.net.au),

And you can find out  
about the conference,

if you'd like to  
come along to that,

in Sydney on the 24th  
and 25th of February.

And NDIS providers, aged  
care, community organisations,

we help with all things tech,

so they can reach out to us.

We have years and years  
of experience in the sector,

and we can help people  
find the right tech solutions,

implement their solutions,  
help with cyber security,

all that kind of stuff.

[Narelle] Thanks, Anita.  
Thanks for your time,

And thank you again  
for being so responsive

and being able to  
pivot so quickly to fix...

the problem, because it's  
a great solution you've got.

And that's us for today.

[Anita] Thanks, Narelle.

[Narelle] I love it.  
I love talking to you anyway.

[Anita] Looking  
forward to your talk

and workshop at  
the conference too.

[Narelle] It'll be fun.

[Narelle laughs] I  
intend for it to be fun.

So that's us for this week.

Please, like,

review, share, subscribe.

Tell everyone about  
the Digital Access Show.

We do all types of stuff.

We talk to all types of  
people with disability,

without disability  
in the NDIS sector,

in the disability sector,

all over the place.

And we'll see you next  
week. Thanks again.

[Anita] Thanks, Narelle]

[Narelle] Perfect.

[music playing]