[music playing]

[Narelle] Hello,

and welcome to another episode
of The Digital Access Show.

Yes, I keep using
another episode.

That's predictability,

which is one of the guidelines

of the Web Content
Accessibility Guidelines.

Here at The Digital Access Show,
we talk about communication.

We talk about usability,
we talk about accessibility.

Because, after all,

to be a usable document,

whether it's a

website or a document,

it needs to be accessible.

Not every accessible
document is usable.

Trust me, there's that line.

And our guest today
knows that line really well.

And I met Tracey,

Tracey Hayim from
Metamorphosis Design,

through another lovely
lady, Jackie McRae.

Tracey has actually
attended a training,

a few training
sessions that I did

on the Web Content
Accessibility Guidelines,

And more to the point,

Tracey is a graphic

designer with a difference.

Tracey, thank you so

much for coming on.

[Tracey] Thank you.
Thanks, Narelle.

Thanks for having

me on your podcast.

It's really an honour

to be with you

and actually also an

honour to have learnt…

the rules around

accessibility and web design.

I think, which is very valuable

for any graphic designer

who is designing

a user experience

for their viewers.

We don't know who they are,

so therefore we need to
make sure that the design will…

cater for everybody.

So thank you for having me.

And also just to say,

actually, Jackie McRae
invited me and introduced me,

and she's from CopyCred

and I value, actually, Jackie's,
um, working with Jackie,

because Jackie takes the
words and the communication

and simplifies it,

for accessibility,

which is essential.

And then what I would do is do
the visual side of the experience.

- [Narelle] Yeah.
- [Tracey] That's my focus.

[Narelle] That's what I wanted
you to tell people Tracey.

Tell them a bit about yourself

and why you got into the
web content accessibility.

And what was it about it that
you said, I need to learn this?

[Tracey] Okay, so,

I think, Narelle, for me,

ever since I studied graphic design
from the very, very early days.

And I start with,

actually, my first…

competition I ever won,

was for the School of
Autism in South Africa.

They were looking for a poster
to communicate what autism was.

And in those days, I'm talking
now, maybe 35 years ago,

or even more,

there was not much
education on what autism was.

But I had gone to school where
I saw children who had autism

and walked around.

And I then decided, well,

what was my concept that
I would communicate with?

And I kept it
really very simple.

I said, they can see, they
can smell, they can touch.

They can do all that we
can do. They're human.

It's just the way and
the nuances of how they,

they process things.

And I've always actually been…

passionate about that is,

how do you help somebody
who's struggling in life

to feel connected and engaged

in humanity,
in living their life?

How do you do that?

And I think perhaps even

I might be even ADHD.

And so I know for me that

often if I go into a room,

or even if I go online,

or I watch a presentation,

and I see it all

being very chaotic,

where things aren't aligned,

or there's blurry background,

something that irritates you,

I go, "It needs to

be cleaned up".

[Narelle] Yeah.

[Tracey] I'm almost a little

bit like a garbage collector.

You know, and so, people go,

how do you think my design,

what does my design look like?

And I go, and they say, I'm
so sorry. I said, don't worry.

Dump all the content
you want on your page,

because people, but a
design eye, there rules around it,

is how do you simplify it?

And that simplicity of
removing and taking away…

is what the art of design is.

And often,

the artist of design
is simplifying,

simplifying so that it is…

easy to process.

Because people have…

very limited absorption

of information.

So a regular person has like…

four milliseconds to

absorb visual information,

which means you

need to then simplify.

And we think that we

want to be creative beings

and have such beautiful things.

You know, creativity

is about adding this

and I like Canva, and I

want to add an extra effect on,

and I want to put in,

oh, let's try this tool.

And it becomes like a…

a big hodgepodge,

because you've tried all
the little special effects.

But actually that is
what causes anxiety,

and allows people to,

you don't realise it's like
walking into a spacious room

or a gallery.

People walk into a gallery

and they see a beautiful piece
of artwork on a white wall,

and it's as simple as you see
the artwork on the white wall.

And that's called curation.

But actually, every space
that somebody goes into,

whether it's a website,

you want them
to feel that as well.

You want them to feel
that when they go in,

it's simplified.

And I'm passionate about
that as a designer, because…

it allows people to see
the message clearly.

So you have to know what is the
message you want to be saying,

and remove everything else,

like a stop sign.

[Narelle] So, when
you did the Web Content

Accessibility Guideline
training with me,

because that's one of

the things that, really,

I remembered about you

when we did the training,

is you were all

about simplification.

And really that's what we're

talking about with the Web,

WCAG as the nickname is,

simplifying things,

because the more complex,

the more stuff you throw at it,

it does become

overwhelming, I like that idea.

And I like the words you

used, anxiety creation.

And I think, you know,

we've talked about that before.

So WCAG, in your mind,

simplifies and refines.

[Tracey] Absolutely.

It gives you kind of also

boundaries and rules…

around what,

so whatever you've studied,

the web rules are boundaries.

And,

actually, if you think about it,

everybody in this world

thrives around boundaries,

but it's understanding

the person and the viewer

and the audience who's

going to be reading it.

Who is the person

going to that website?

[Narelle] Yeah.
[Tracey] Right?

So,

and I think we've even
discussed it, Narelle, is that…

we don't make assumptions that
everybody processes the same way

and perceived
things the same way.

But actually,

I think the systems that
we've been grown up to believe,

that you should even
develop at four years old,

you should be doing this,

or even six months,
you should be crawling.

Actually, if we had

to look at the big

I'm really talking universal,

if you took out this time,

actually, people are learning

at very different times,

even on a spiritual timeline.

And so if we took away

these rigid rules around it,

and got to understand a

person and an individual…

more than we do,

we will understand

how people process

and what they need.

And I think then it

comes back to design,

because design of a website,

or design of a
house, for example,

all needs to be about
the understanding

and the intention of what
it's going to be used for.

[Narelle] So is that looking at,

so the first principle of WCAG
is perception, perceivability,

and is that really what
you're talking about?

Where the other three,
which is operability,

understanding, well understanding
will come into graphic design,

but robust,
operability and robust,

really about the implementation,

where perceivability is
really about the perception

and the design of the website,

along with like the
four guidelines in it,

which is text,
alternative, time based,

adaptable and distinguishable.

Is all of that part of the
graphic design area?

[Tracey] Yes. I think
you've got to understand

and see how people perceive

understand a person
or your audience.

It comes back to that.

And I think in,

in our world right now,

I honestly think that there

is just so much content,

so much happening.

So many new little

tools that we can use,

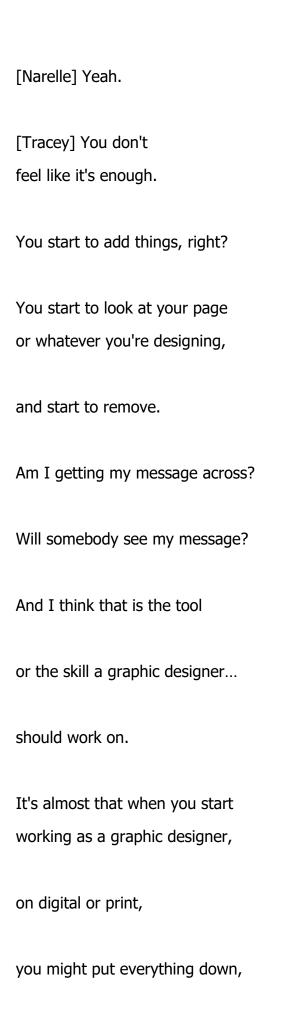and it creates an excitement,

and yet it creates an overwhelm.

So what you have to always do is

perceive who is your audience,

and sit back and remove

things so that it's clear.

I think that when

you are designing,

when you're feeling anxious,

for example, as a designer.

[Narelle] Yeah.

[Tracey] You don't
feel like it's enough.

You start to add things, right?

You start to look at your page
or whatever you're designing,

and start to remove.

Am I getting my message across?

Will somebody see my message?

And I think that is the tool

or the skill a graphic designer…

should work on.

It's almost that when you start
working as a graphic designer,

on digital or print,

you might put everything down,

and then you've got to step

back from the canvas and go,

can you see the real message?

What is the real message?

Have you cluttered it?

I do this on a regular

basis when I design.

I might put everything

down, and then I go back,

and I step back from

the canvas and, and I say,

am I getting my message across?

And often it will be that you

need to remove a lot of things,

and change contrast

for example. You might have

the most important sentence,

for example, on your

screen, you've got,

I'm just going to

remove my timer.

You've got accessibility

and The Digital Access,

I'm just trying to

so I could read it,

The Digital Access Show, right?

Now, if that was put into a

dark background, turquoise

with the same font on that

turquoise instead of on white,

it would not be

accessible for anyone.

[Narelle] Okay. Yep. I

get what you're saying.

[Tracey] You're not seeing

the most important thing is you,

and the name of your
podcast or your show.

Do you agree? Like that
is what's so important.

[Tracey] So I often…
[Narelle] Yeah.

[Tracey] What I
often say to people is,

they will present what
they've been designing,

and I go, you're
showing me so much.

But actually, this
is all about you.

Remove all the other stuff.

Let me see your particular,
even if it's your logo.

So it's taking
away a lot of things

and keeping the most important
information on the page.

That is great design.

[Narelle] Tracey, when
you're setting up,

like when you're
doing a project,

so you're implementing the
accessibility guidelines now,

and I know from other
conversations we've had,

one of the things that I
keep saying to people is,

you understand
what you've written.

You understand your message.

Does the person

that you want to…

reach with that

message understand it?

How do you bring that

into graphic design?

Because everyone's different.

If you say I'm designing for

a woman in mid 50s who's doing,

hang on, that woman in mid 50s

might have a vision impairment,

hearing impairment, she

might be in a wheelchair.

Who knows? No one knows.

You think when they're doing

profiles and things like that,

that people tend to do

when they set up a project,

they create the ideal

profile target candidate.

Should that be done in

a project, in graphic design?

What should you do?

[Tracey] Definitely should be,

and I'm going

to say this to you,

and it's a very important

part of the design process,

is the research.

[Narelle] Yeah.

[Tracey] You have to go back.

So Narelle, I did that

with Jackie's website.

I designed it with the,

with the understanding

and learning from the course

However, I went back to

you to clarify a few things.

I think it's essential to have

people with, who are varied

and different types of people

looking at the

site for research.

Is it working?

Because that should be

part of the design process.

[Narelle] Okay.

[Tracey] Right? So, yes,

I understand the design

elements should be simple,

that's what I've studied,

but part is to actually

check in with the rules

and guidelines of…

what we learned about
contrast and colour.

[Tracey] But also…
[Narelle] Yeah.

[Tracey] Test.

[Narelle] Yeah.
[Tracey] Test, is it working?

And get feedback,

which is part of
that design process.

So everybody has
to work together.

So, is the language working?
Is the visual working?

And then test it out.

Because perception

is a lot of things.

It's, perception could be
that something's flashing,

and irritates, and it…

stirs some emotional,

underlying, emotional
trauma in a person.

Or it could be that they,

they can't read it,

So I do, I do believe

that the research and…

part of the design
process should be

that you have a very
strong awareness…

for web accessibility,
for all abilities.

[Narelle] Yep.

[Tracey] Because actually,

I, I, I'm short of hearing.

So for me,

that's a disability, right?

I manage. I love working online,

because I can hear better,
actually, when I'm,

when I'm working,

versus somebody at
the end of the room.

So yes, that's something
I go, you do need to design

with all kinds of
people in mind,

that it is, they

are able to see it,

hear it,

manage it if they
can't do any of those,

is, it's got to come
as a voice over.

All those tools are absolutely

essential in designing
as a graphic designer.

The more empathy you have,

and the more understanding
of how different we all are,

the more successful
you'll be as a designer...

working on web design
that is used by everybody.

It's gotta be accessible.

[Narelle] This is, you know,

every time I do this show,

something comes up
and I learn something.

And I've never really
thought about graphic design.

And it's silly that I haven't.

Graphic design and the
perceivability principle…

of accessibility guidelines.

And they are married,
they are such a tight…

knit thing.

And you would, if you're not…

keeping the two married,

then you're not going to have
a design that's usable, is it?
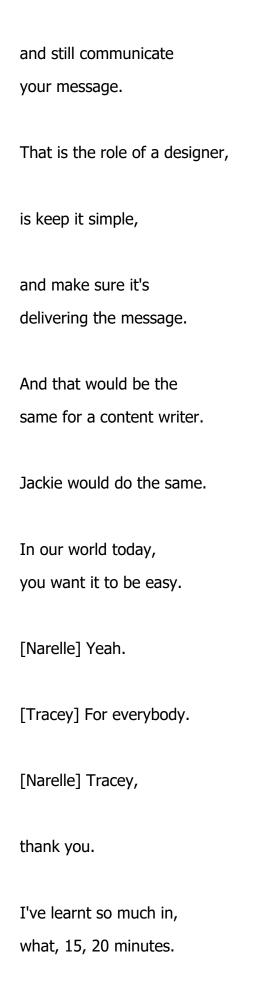
[Tracey] Absolutely.

I, I, I believe that
those basic principles

that are part of
web accessibility,

are almost aligned with…

the basic design,

design principles,

[Narelle] Yeah.
[Tracey] And…

[Tracey] They are not something
everybody in today's world know.

And they designing websites
because it's quick and easy,

and they are not
considerate of it,

unless they're using a

platform like Squarespace,

which has got really simple,

simple templates.

But do they know this?

Do they actually understand…

very simple design principles?

[Narelle] Yeah.

[Tracey] And I don't
know if a lot of people do.

That's my passion, is that I
go, you don't understand design,

and you can see, like even
if you look at your page,

or even if you understand
the Zoom logo, it's very simple.

Great design is very simple.

Great…

user experience is very simple.

It's not cluttered.

Take away, take away is
my, remove.

[Narelle] Tracey,

what are a couple of points?

I mean is that your advice

to give to people, take away,

keep it simple?

[Tracey] Definitely.

It's take away all
that at the absolute…

minimum is there,

with,

and still communicate
your message.

That is the role of a designer,

is keep it simple,

and make sure it's
delivering the message.

And that would be the
same for a content writer.

Jackie would do the same.

In our world today,
you want it to be easy.

[Narelle] Yeah.

[Tracey] For everybody.

[Narelle] Tracey,

thank you.

I've learnt so much in,
what, 15, 20 minutes.

How do people get in
contact with you, Tracey,

to keep the conversation
going, because…

the points you've made are just,

I'm going to go back and
look at the guidelines again,

because obviously I work
in them all day, every day,

but it's just adding a
different set of eyes.

It's changing my…

perceptions about
the guidelines. It's…

How do people keep the conversation
going with you, Tracey?

[Tracey] AAh, well
you know what,

I am on, suppose

to contact me would be…

easy now is, I would say,

metamorphosisdesign

consultants.com.au.

You can…

book a chat with me.

You can have a look at what

products and services I have.

And I do have a

brand starter kit,

which actually, to me, is

essential for any business.

Because when I design, I design

it with accessibility in mind,

is a logo, brand, should

be very simple,

and very reproducible

on print or digital.

And part of that would be

designing it that

it is easy to read,

and, um,

communicate your message.

That is what my role is

from a visual perspective.

So then I would

go to my website.

[Narelle] Thanks, Tracey.

Thank you so much for your time.

So that's today's episode

of The Digital Access Show.

You can find us

on Apple podcast,

Spotify, Amazon,

YouTube,

or the DASAT
website actually has…

a list of all the shows
that we've done so far.

Coming up soon, we're actually

going to be creating
a YouTube channel,

just for The Digital
Access Show,

just to make it a bit
more easy to find.

And we'll see you next time.

Have a great week.

Bye, bye.

[music playing]