

gosh, just two years ago now, Disinfluencer is a social enterprise, a certified social enterprise, so we help businesses and brands be inclusive. And by doing that, we offer paid... employment to people with disabilities. And we do that with our inclusive stock library, so we have aspiring artists that come to us, and we do their photos,

they get head shots and portfolio shots done,

so we can represent them for TV commercials and feature films.

Then while we've got them in the studio on set for the day,

we do some photos for our stock library.

And we also help...

businesses and brands market their inclusion

and give them some pointers on how to be digitally inclusive.

[Narelle] When you say...

you work with businesses on how to market their brands,

to be digitally inclusive,

what are you talking about exactly?

[Simone] What I'm talking about is, a lot of...

A lot of people I've worked with or I've come across,

and the reason I developed what I have developed is,

so it kind of started with the Canberra Airport.

We did images for the Canberra

Airport with our talent,

and I was speaking to the team, the marketing manager. Now the Canberra Airport, they have a sensory room. They changed the lighting through the whole airport. They have all these incredible... inclusive features, I guess you could say, but they're not telling anyone about it.

They're not marketing that as a thing about their business.

I know it's an airport and they don't need to market themselves,

but I guess as travellers who need those... sensory spaces or need that support, how would they ever know that that's an option for them, if they don't talk about it, and people don't talk about it, cause they don't want to upset anyone. I'm like, wait, you've created these... things and invested a lot of

money to have these things

for our community,

like, tell them.

So, that's kind of the stigma and barrier that I come in,

and I empower them to embrace the good things they've done,

and promote that like an aspect they'd promote in their busines,

and to hold it in power and be proactive about it.

[Narelle] Wow.

And that's an important thing.

Obviously, I go in and out of airports,

and I really don't know...

what they've done to make it inclusive

I have no idea because, as you said, you never hear about it.

So, what what are the steps they're taking to market it?

And what are the techniques and strategies they are using?

[Simone] So, basically it just starts with a conversation.

So, I usually come into their marketing team,

and I just take them through some basic accessibility tools.

And then I guess it's about showing them case studies of...

other brands and what they're doing to be inclusive.

So, I talk a lot about Apple.

Obviously Apple's a major brand,

but Apple have a thing called Above The Line,

and I can share some of these things I show the team.

So Apple, for example,

have accessibility embedded in all their products,

hardware, software, and it's Above The Line.

So, right now I'm

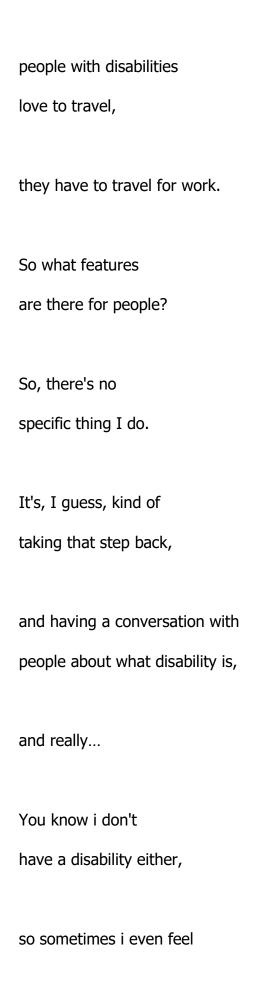
looking, I'm on my Mac, and I can see my accessibility symbol. It's not, like you just said, it's not something you have to go digging for to find. It's embedded front and centre to be accessible. And so I show them that, and obviously Apple's a big, a massive brand, so it's impressive, right? **Because Apple** have this thing where,

and it is called Above the Line, and I... empower them to think of their accessibility or inclusive efforts as an Above The Line feature that's not hidden away. So, I think that's the first barrier. Lots of people feel uncomfortable talking about disability. There's an array of reasons, and that's okay. Like I'm there to say it's okay if you don't know,

because people don't want to talk on a subject matter that they might not be an expert in, but it's not about... being an expert in... someone with low vision or someone who's autistic, it's about being an expert in marketing... the tools and resources that you've invested in to help people within the disability community to access your thing.

And the airports,

a lot of Australian airports have incredible things, and you see a lot now, especially with the hidden... the disability sunflower, because people with disabilities travel. Like, and that's not a big shock, right? And it's such a huge market. Like, I talk about the commercial aspect of what I do, but tourism is like on the top of the tree of...



that imposter syndrome but i want to say to people that... the disability community is busting to be included, and to be marketed to, so tell them. So, I think once i feel like they've had that conversation, and have a bit of knowledge and have looked at some, you know, business case studies, they feel confident in moving forward in marketing the thing,

without being connected or

having an association with it.

And that's kind of the first and the biggest barrier.

We have to get people over when it comes to disability.

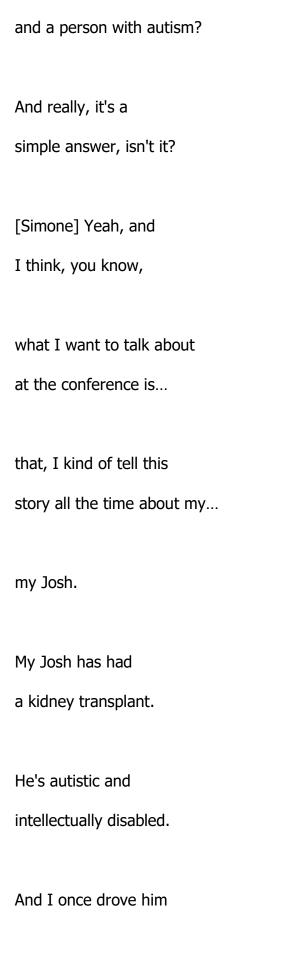
[Narelle] eah, and I agree with you. It's that awareness.

And the other thing I often find is people think it's so hard

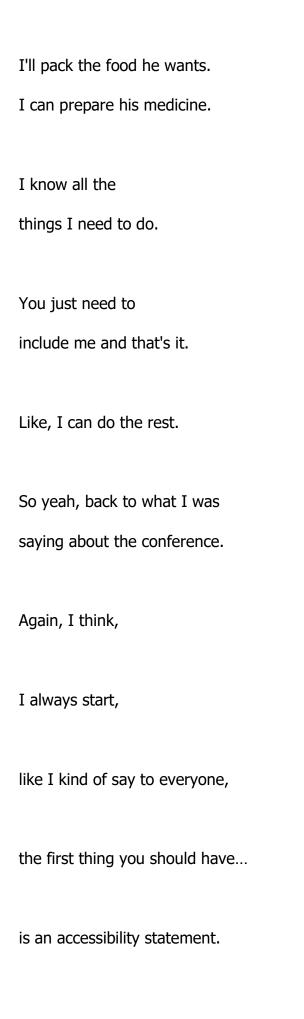
You know, this is going to be really complex to do.

How do you cater for a person with a vision impairment,

and a person with a hearing impairment,



from Wagga to Brisbane
e to go to a morning tea,
because he was invited and
he never gets invited anywhere.
[Narelle] Yeah.
[Meredith] But I also
say to people that
I just lost my
thought there, sorry.
Like
Like I know all the things
I need to do for Josh.
I know it all,
so I will drive him there.



So like you said about the PDF, you know, if that company had an accessibility statement... on their website you would have a point to call someone, or contact someone and go, hey, I need support with this thing, or I've had this experience with your online form, and let's have a conversation to fix it. Now, you shouldn't

have to do that. But I say that because... people don't know that that is an issue for you. And that's no excuse, right? I'm not saying that. But we can't just advocate empty handed. We have to bring solutions to the table. Like you said, you know all the things you can do. It's an easy fix, right? We just have to give people the tools, or the know-how how to do it.

[Narelle] And to know how to ask the right questions And I never blame people for not knowing, because, as I point out to everyone, currently in Australia, web development, coding, they're not taught... about how to implement the digital accessibility standard. So if you're not taught it,

how can you implement it?

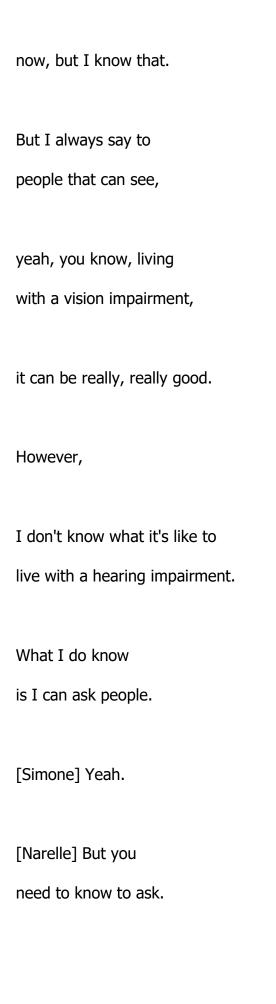
Seriously.
Everyone thinks, you know, Adobe Acrobat, you just
do this, do this.
Microsoft Word's a classic.
People are not taught about the accessibility menu there.
That is a useful menu that makes
your document more accessible.
If you're not taught about it,
and you don't have
time to go looking.
You know, you're in there to do a job,

You don't have time to... go and find something for someone that you've never met. Or you don't understand their needs because you can't live it. I always sit there and say, I've got sons with autism And I'll sit there and say, I don't know what it's like to be autistic. I know what it's like to be the mum of autistic kids.

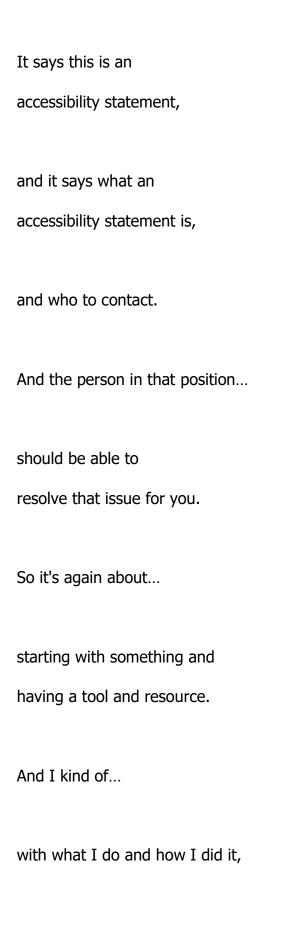
Well, they're adults

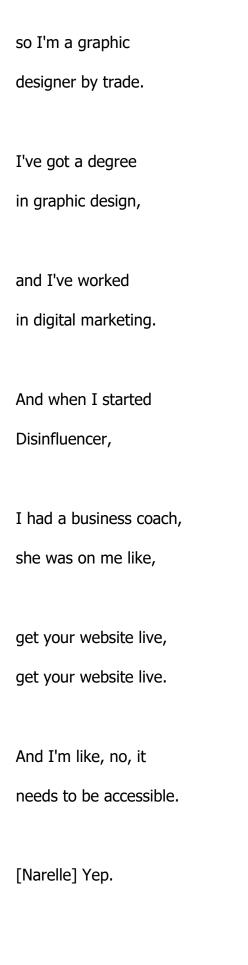
to get results,

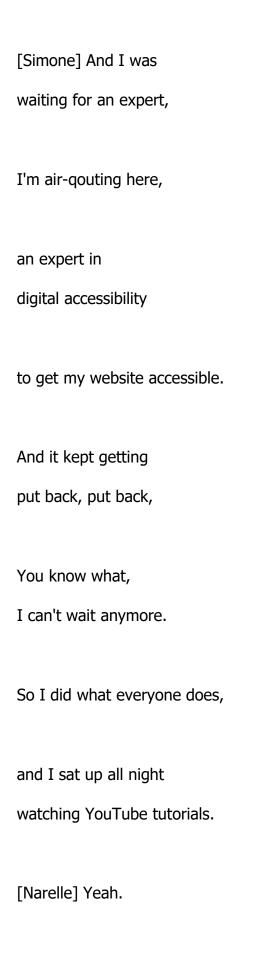
to be productive.



[Simone] Yeah, you need to know to ask and you need to have someone that you can ask that isn't going to fob you off. It's why I say the accessibility statement is really important. And a great example of, again, Above The Line accessibility statements is South by Southwest. They have their accessibility statement... in the footer of their website. So it's not just like accessibility statement click.

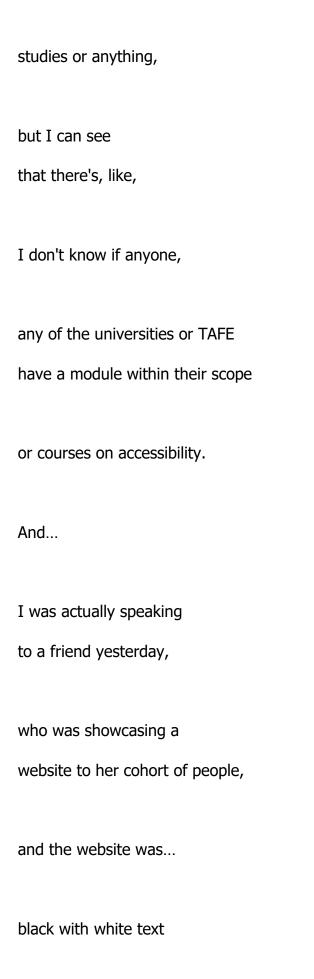




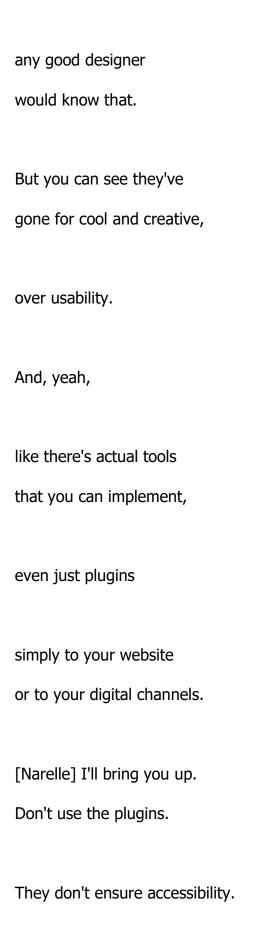


```
[Simone] I taught
myself and I didn't,
I'm a graphic designer.
So to your point,
I'm a graphic designer,
and I've never, like
from a very long time ago.
So, you know, but I've never,
accessibility design is
something I've seen evolve
or come of age
just as a consumer
But as a designer, I
haven't trained for a long time,
```

or done any kind of



and you couldn't read it. This is the thing about digital accessibility, where I come into it and you do as well. You know, accessibility design or digital accessibility... helps everybody. It's not just a separate little thing over here that's nice for a few people, it helps everybody. Now, as a designer, that's a big no-no,





No, I think, but that's just back to the point of,

you know, accessibility helps everybody.

Like you said, you had problems with your PDF.

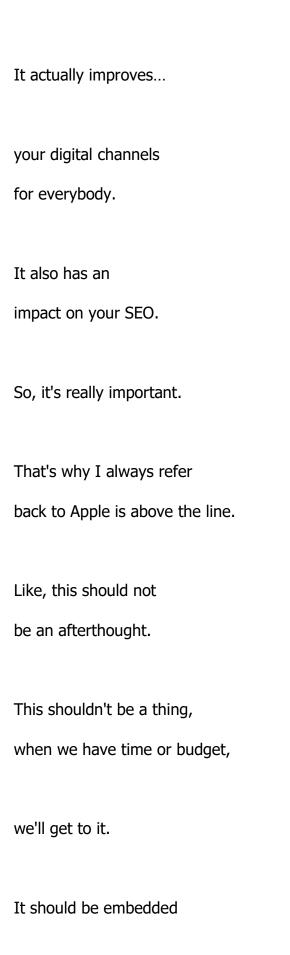
You know, that's a user problem that would...

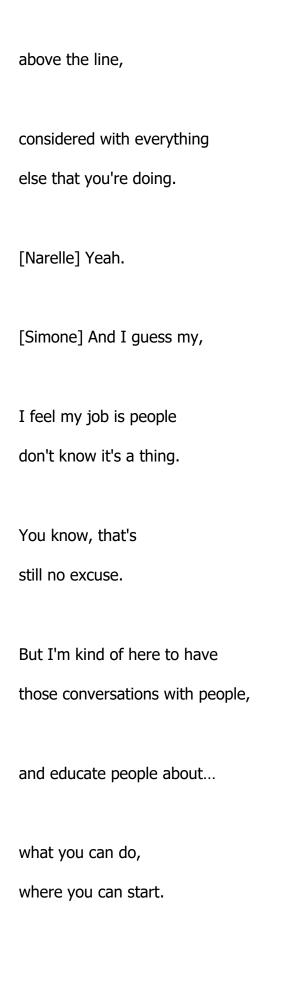
probably affect everyone that's trying to,

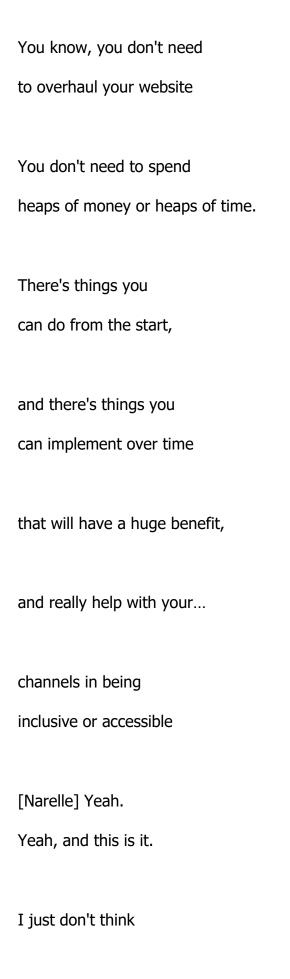
like you, filling out PDFs

that don't have anchor links and don't save work.

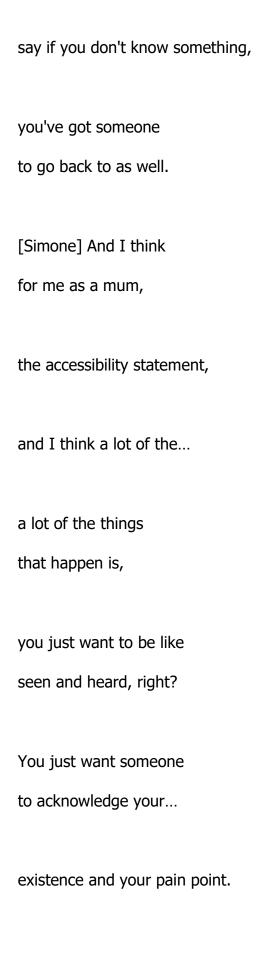
So, that's the whole point about digital accessibility.







people realise.
And the other thing I would add
to the accessibility statement,
is before you put the
accessibility statement up,
make sure you get it completely
tested by an actual auditor
that knows what
they're looking for.
Because then you're
coming up, you're starting
you know, on the
best foot, really.
And
you know, you can literally



I'm not going to come to you and ask you to redesign your website.

I'm going to come to you and say, hey, I've got this issue.

And you just want that acknowledged and actioned.

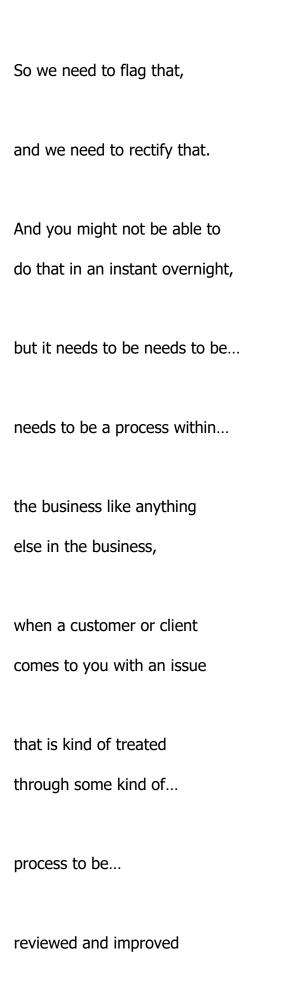
That's the whole point,

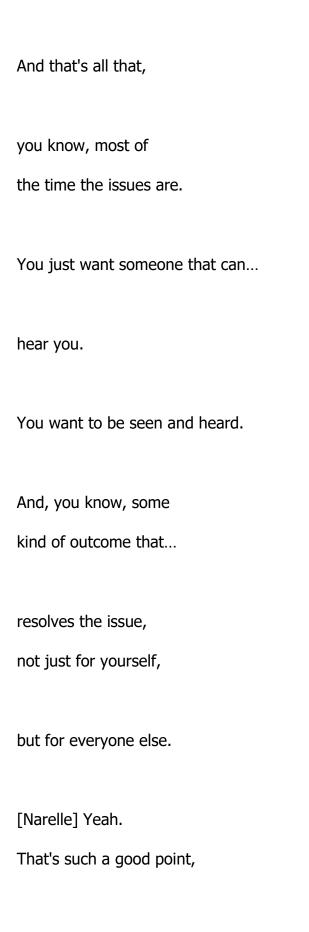
of the person on the other side of that should have some empathy

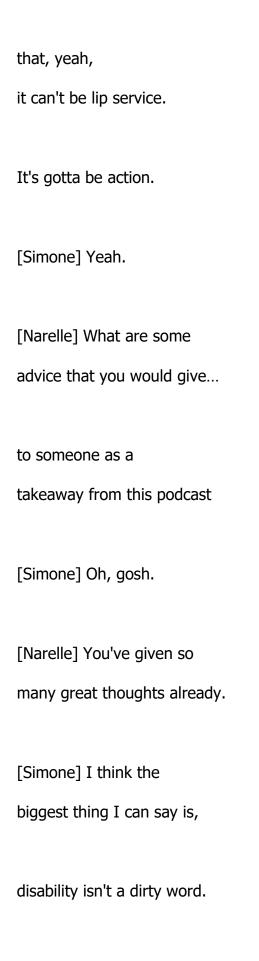
education and training to go, okay.

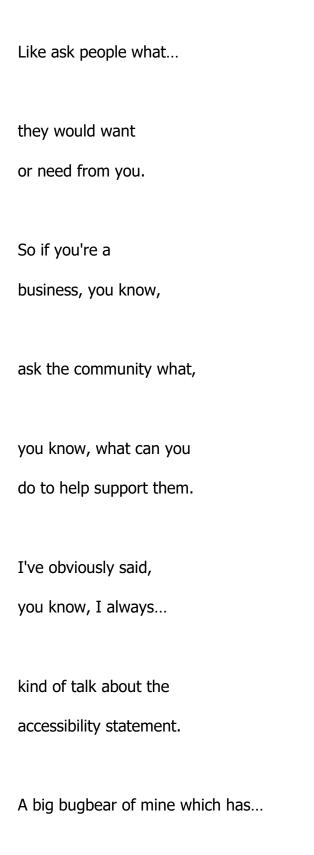
You know, we're not just going to take this as lip service,

we're going to, there's an issue here with our online form.





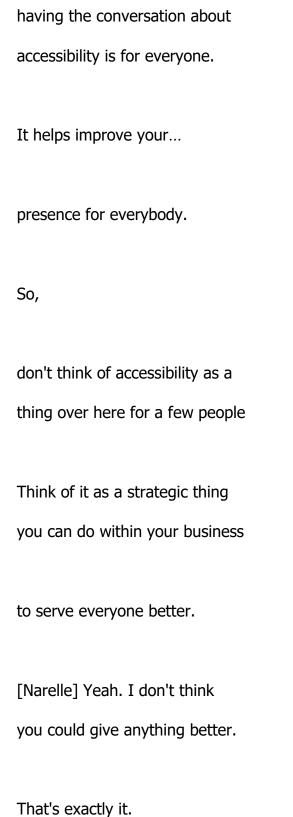




Ask people, don't assume.

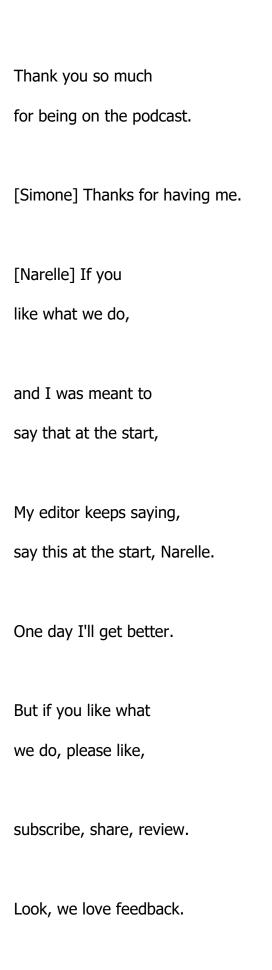
is captions on videos. I don't know about you, but I'm watching TV, watching my memes with no sound on because I'm multitasking. So, do you know what I mean? Like, if your video doesn't have captions, I'm not watching it. So that's not a, that's me as a consumer. You're missing my eyeballs cause I'm skipping your content. And that's what I mean about...

greatly dissipated



Simone, how can people stay in contact with you, or get in contact with you to keep the conversation going? [Simone] You can find me over on the gram at disinfluencer.co. Same website, disinfluencer.co. I'm on LinkedIn. I really try and have a positive outlook on stuff. In my day-to-day life, some days can be a bit of a battle, and Disinfluencer is about influence. I'm not here to...

I'm here to empower people, and I want people to have... a commercial lens when they look at disability, as in... people with disabilities are people just like you or me, and they are your customers, they're your clients. Market to them, advertise to them, and support us in our work so we can employ more people who have dreams of being stars. [Narelle] Well done, Simone .



We really do love feedback, so all feedback is good.

And we'll see you next time on the Digital Access Show.

[music playing]