Olga Revilla Muñoz

WCAG 2.0
made easy

Prologue by Emmanuelle Gutiérrez y Restrepo
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To my partner, accomplice, witness, victim and alibi,
who always supports my activities no matter how
crazy or how many they are.
Preface

December, 2008: Global financial crisis, I am fired, WCAG 2.0 are released. As a User Experience consultant with a great interest in accessibility, I took advantage of having plenty of time to read and study the new guidelines. I quickly realized they were so long and written in a so technical language that they were difficult to read and boring even for me, who was interested in them. Thus, to give back to the Internet community some of the knowledge I have received, I decided to review the WCAG 2.0 and present them in a more comprehensive way.

This book was born as a blog at oneguidelineaday.com. Every day I posted a sneak peak of my personal point of view of the new guidelines. But after a while I started working fulltime again, and time for the project was so much reduced that I joked saying I should change the domain name to one-guideline-a-month. I ‘finished’ it almost one year after the beginning.

If you know me a little bit, I am not the kind of person who finishes a project and takes some holidays to the next one, so I decided to review, correct, simplify and improve the contents I have already produced for the blog and turn them into a traditional, more romantic and less geek format: a book.

I have never been aware of the effort and resources required to publish a book in an independent way -even when you already have the contents. It is amazing how many different roles there are in the production process. In spite of all the time and effort spent, I really appreciate the experience of having done it. I have learned a lot of things on the way, and that’s enough for me.

Hope you find this book useful.
How to use this book

I always say that a product with instructions is a bad product, thus I do not want this book to have any.

This book is intended for people who already know something about web design, or at least have heard of WCAG 1.0. I have tried to avoid technical terms, but if you find a difficult one, you will probably find an explanation at the end of the book.

If you have read the WCAG 2.0, you will find parallelisms between the “sufficient”, “advisory” and “common errors” techniques in the guidelines and the “you must”, “you should” and “don’t do” sections in the book. They are similar, but not necessarily the same, as this book is intended for a practical and learning purpose. Please, if you are doing an accessibility audit, refer always to the original documentation, because this book is only my personal review and interpretation of the WCAG 2.0.

Besides, if you are an accessibility auditor, you can also find useful references at the end of the book as a ‘conformance claim’ layout, or a template for an audit.

Thanks

There are so many people I should thank that I fear I shall miss someone. First of all, my family, who taught me to never stop thinking and being critical about the things I experience. Thanks to my friends for forgiving my absences, although you know I’m always there. Especially thanks to Ana Matellanes for the editorial design of this book; Maite García for her wisdom in the editorial business; and Olga Santos for oversee all the processes: the kind of friends you don’t need to phone to know what they are thinking or how they are feeling.

I also want to thank all those people -teachers, students, bosses and clients- who allowed and forced me to go into accessibility in depth.

And, of course, thanks to those readers who subscribed to the RSS and email alerts for encouraging me not to abandon the project. I really appreciate your emails.

A great ‘thank you’ to all those bloggers who spend their time and effort to teach accessibility for free. I want especially thank Olga Carreras and Gabriel Porras for being a reference in accessibility for many of us.

But if I have to thank to an only one person for her dedication on web accessibility evangelism, this has to be Emmanuelle Gutiérrez y Restrepo, the coordinator of the SIDAR Seminar, the most relevant foundation to promote web accessibility in the Spanish-speaking world. Emmanuelle, together with the members of the Accesoweb group, has brought on some of the most interesting discussions on this subject since 1997. To thank for all this effort and help the SIDAR Seminar, a percentage of the price of this book will be donated to the SIDAR Seminar.

Another community that deserves my gratitude is Cadius. Although Cadius is not focused on accessibility, but on user experience, it has the ability of joining, both online and offline, the most interesting minds in web creation in Spain. You are so many, thanks to all of you.
I also want to thank those English-native speakers for forgiving my particular English. Despite the great effort made by Cecile Finat (thanks a lot, you are great!) to review the style, if you find any mistakes, please contact me at olga@itakora.com.

My second to last thanks are for the World Wide Web Consortium. I used to criticize it as an elitist and bureaucratic organization, but I admit that, without the W3C, the web will probably be a mess with no accessibility at all.

Finally, thanks to all those people who still dream about and work for a perceivable, operable, understandable and robust Internet.
Readers of this book will probably want to skip the prologue and go directly to the heart of the matter. Their pursuit is primarily practical; they will be concerned with solving doubts and developing skills and best practices. Their pursuit will no doubt, be satisfied through the following pages.

But such readers, described above, will not be the only ones who will find this book extremely useful, since its contents will cover the expectations and needs of a wide range of "users."

In "WCAG 2.0 made easy" Olga Revilla describes and details not only the basic concepts needed to understand the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. It explains clearly and directly the principles that underpin these, and clarifies certain concepts which are vital for developers and designers and also for web site managers or owners.

“WCAG 2.0 made easy” is not a mere transcription of the WCAG 2.0, nor intended to be read instead of these - which is no doubt recommended. It is more an elaborate summary of techniques that can be applied to each success criterion and guideline. It is written in a style and language that can be clearly understood by developers, information architects, interaction designers, and all those professionals and specialists that have emerged around content creation and Web applications.

The author, Olga Revilla, needs no introduction for the Spanish speaking public. With her blog "Itakora" she has earned herself a name as a consultant in User Experience. But this book is published in English and therefore will reach many readers who are not familiar with her work and presence on the Internet. It should be enough to know that Olga has a multidisciplinary background and work experience, which obviously contributes to her good work in the field of web design, and enhances her understanding of all the different topics covered by web accessibility.

“WCAG 2.0 made easy” will be presented during the SIDAR 2010 conference, ie, the Conference of Ibero-American Seminar on Disability and Accessibility, promoted by the SIDAR Foundation - Universal Access. Olga is a member of the SIDAR Seminar and therefore I am proud to introduce and support the publication of this work, as a further sign of the scope and progress made by members of SIDAR.
To be asked to write the introduction of a book is always flattering but also involves a serious commitment. You are expected to keep up with high expectations, not only as regards to your writing but also considering your contribution to the acknowledgment and promotion of the work. I hope I have at least met part of such expectations. And I hope that this brief introduction becomes a "prologue of prologues", without attempting to emulate Borges, confirming the well-deserved success and usefulness of this pioneering work as regards to its genus and origin.

*Emmanuelle Gutiérrez y Restrepo*

SIDAR Foundation Director
## Contents

### INTRODUCTION
- WCAG 2.0: What they are
- Conformance
- ‘Accessibility supported’ technologies
- Why should I use WCAG 2.0?

### PRINCIPLE 1: PERCEIVABLE
- Guideline 1.1: Provide text alternatives
- Guideline 1.2: Time-based media alternatives
- Guideline 1.3: Adaptable, present content in different ways
- Guideline 1.4: Distinguishable, separate background from foreground

### PRINCIPLE 2: OPERABLE
- Guideline 2.1: Keyboard Accessible, don’t forget users without a pointer
- Guideline 2.2: Enough time, don’t hurry up anyone
- Guideline 2.3: Seizures, be careful with flashing visual content
- Guideline 2.4: Navigable, focus on Information Architecture

### PRINCIPLE 3: UNDERSTANDABLE
- Guideline 3.1: Readable, easy to read, please
- Guideline 3.2: Predictable, be careful with reinventing the navigation standards
- Guideline 3.3: Input assistance. Errare humanum est

### PRINCIPLE 4: ROBUST
- Guideline 4.1: Respect the code

### TOOLS
- Checklist template
- Comparison WCAG 1.0 – WCAG 2.0
- Conformance claim layout
- Validators and tools
- Technical terms used in this book
- Flash techniques
Introduction
WCAG 2.0: what they are

On December 11th, 2008, after five years of work, the W3C WAI released the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0. They are an evolution of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 (WCAG 1.0), launched on May 5th, 1999, since they became a little bit outdated due to technological advances. Despite being outdated, many laws are still based on these guidelines.

The WCAG 2.0 have the spirit of trying to bring out a more accessible Web, introducing some changes in the previous guidelines. In this book, I will explain those resemblances and differences between them.
The four layers

The WCAG 2.0 are organized through 4 layers: principles, guidelines, success criteria and techniques to accomplish them.

Principles

They provide the basis for Web accessibility: the website must be perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust.

Guidelines

There are 12 guidelines under the principles, similar to those in the WCAG 1.0, but without conformance levels.

Success Criteria

Each guideline has one or more testable success criteria. There are 3 levels of conformance, similar to those on WCAG 1.0: A (lowest), Double-A (medium), and Triple-A (highest).

Techniques

Each guideline and success criteria has its own informative techniques. There are 2 categories that should be addressed: “sufficient” and “advisory”. The former meet the success criteria, but they are not mandatory: failing in a test procedure for a “sufficient” technique does not necessarily mean that the success criterion has not been satisfied in some other way. The later are suggestions to improve the accessibility of your web page. They are divided into General, HTML and XHTML, CSS, client-side scripting, server-side scripting, SMIL, plain text, ARIA and Flash techniques. In this book I explain all of them except the Flash techniques, which you can find the list at the end of this book.

The WAI had also documented some common errors, so we can learn how to avoid them.

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1 At the moment of the publication of this book there are 379 published techniques, but the WAI can change them in any moment.
The four principles

An innovation in the WCAG 2.0 respect to the WCAG 1.0 is the organization of the guidelines into principles. By accomplishing groups of guidelines you will succeed in a principle. The goal is to succeed in the 4 principles, because if any of them fail; users with disabilities will experience difficulties to use the website. The 4 principles and their guidelines are:

**The website must be “Perceivable”**

Our website might be visited by people with very different types of perceptive preferences and needs, but also by robots (search engines, translators...). Our information and user interface components must address this handicap. We must offer alternatives if there is a user who cannot use one of her senses.

- Guideline 1.1 Text Alternatives
- Guideline 1.2 Time-based Media
- Guideline 1.3 Adaptable
- Guideline 1.4 Distinguishable

**The website must be “Operable”**

Web designers must be aware of the different devices the users can handle to use the website, so they must design the user interface components and navigation elements in a way that everyone can “operate” with it. E.g. don’t limit user input to “mouse” or “pointers”.

- Guideline 2.1 Keyboard Accessible
- Guideline 2.2 Enough Time
- Guideline 2.3 Seizures
- Guideline 2.4 Navigable

**The website must be “Understandable”**

If our user doesn’t understand what we are talking about, or we make her feel lost, we have a problem. We must design our website, including the information and the user interface, in a friendly way.

- Guideline 3.1 Readable
- Guideline 3.2 Predictable
- Guideline 3.3 Input Assistance
The website must be “Robust”

This is the most-technology-dependant principle of all. It relies on the capacity of the website to be transmitted and interpreted by the user agents.

Remember that user agents are any software that retrieves and presents Web content, like browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari…), media players (QuickTime, Real player, Windows Media Player…), plug-ins (e.g. those that helps your browser perform specific functions), and other programs, including assistive technologies (pointers, magnifiers…). So you can deduct that we must create our website thinking of this plethora of software that help in retrieving, rendering, and interacting with the Web content. We must be aware of the evolution of these technologies in order to adapt our website to their new capabilities.

» Guideline 4.1 Compatible
Introduction

Success criteria levels

Do you remember that the guidelines are divided into different success criteria? Nice. Those success criteria are classified into 3 levels.

- **Single-A (A):** the lowest
- **Double-A (AA):** the medium
- **Triple-A (AAA):** the highest

They are similar to the WCAG 1.0 checkpoints’ priorities, but WCAG 2.0 stresses that all success criteria are important: The lowest level enables to access to the web pages’ content, and highest level enables their usability.

To decide the level for each criterion, the WAI has established these questions:

- **Is this success criterion essential?** If this criterion is not met, the user agents (including assistive technology) cannot reproduce the web page.

- **Is this success criterion applicable for every website**, despite its content, type of content, technology used...?

- **Can the content creators be able to learn how to meet this success criterion?** The WAI has established one week or less to acquire these skills.

- **How will this success criterion limit the functions or “look & feel” of the page?** This includes functionality, presentation, freedom of expression (everyone, including not tech-people should contribute), design or aesthetic.

- **Is there an alternative, indirect way if the success criterion is not met?**

One great point about WCAG 2.0 is that they provide a suggested way of testing each criterion. So, once you have tested the success criteria, you can state the conformance of your web page into 3 levels:

- **Level Single-A (A):** your web page satisfies the entire Single-A (A) success criteria.

- **Level Double-A (AA):** your web page satisfies the entire Single-A (A) and Double-A (AA) success criteria.

- **Level Triple-A (AAA):** your web page satisfies the entire Single-A (A), Double-A (AA) and Triple-A (AAA) success criteria.

Do you remember that a web page is a whole? So if your un-accessible web page has an alternate accessible version that fulfills the criteria, then you can say that your web page has achieved a level, but subject to certain conditions.
The WAI also warns:

» Although you get a conformance level (e.g. “Single-A”), **keep working** on making a more accessible website and publishing any improvement you make (e.g. “We are level A but we have also passed the following level Double-A criteria...”).

» Level Triple-A is pretty hard to get and maintain, so **be careful if you state** that an entire website is Level Triple-A, especially with certain content (e.g. a place where everyone uploads videos, but nobody keeps an eye on their subtitles).
Conformance

One interesting thing in WCAG 2.0 is that it specifies what type of material is subject to be declared as ok or not.

Conformance (or partial or non conformance) deals with the **whole, entire web page**. Fortunately, the WAI has included a very clear definition for web page: it includes not only HTML pages or linked CSS styles, but also the elements that are inserted into them, like videos, flash movies, games, sounds....

However, if there is a linked alternative for an un-accessible content that enables its accessibility (e.g. a “longdesc” document), it is considered as part of the web page, and allows reaching conformance.

If a web page is part of a process (e.g., a checkout in a shop), we have to audit the **complete process**. There is no sense in declaring that this shop is ok if the last step is not ok.

Remember that, if there is a un-accessibility information or functionality, like an Ajax-based application, you must **provide an accessible alternate version**, such as a non-JavaScript version. The key is to include this alternate version in a way that user agents (including assistive technologies) can understand it and use it.

Following the previous concept, the un-accessible **content or technology must not block the rest of the controls** (e.g. a flash movie usually traps the ‘focus’ on it, and it is pretty hard to use the keyboard outside of it). Remember also that the **technology used** for that page may be “Turned on”, “Turned off” or “Not supported” by the user agents (including assistive technologies). Keep in mind these four criteria (they will be explained afterwards), related to this concept:

1.4.2 Audio Controls

2.1.2 Keyboard Traps

2.2.2 Pause, Stop, Hide

2.3.1 Three Flashes or Below Threshold
Conformance claims:
how to tell everybody your web is ok

Once you have tested your web page, you will probably want to tell everyone that you have cared about accessibility. In WCAG 1.0 you had fancy logos, but they had a great problem: everybody could use them them regardless of the pages being accessible or not.

Nowadays, the W3C is unable to verify each website that uses the logo, so the WAI tries to fix this problem using the new logos with a conformance claim.

Both conformance icons and claims refer to a single web page, unless the webmaster includes explicit scope information explaining which pages are covered by the claim and the icon. These pages can be a series of pages (e.g. checkout process) or multiple related web pages (e.g. a sub-domain).

If you use a conformance claim, there is certain required and some optional information you should provide.

The Required Information

» The date of the claim.

» The guidelines you have followed: title, version and URI “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 at http://www.w3.org/TR/2008/REC-WCAG20-20081211/”

» The conformance level of the web pages: Level Single-A, Double-A or Triple-A.

» A brief description of the web pages, with the URIs or an expression that describes them.

» Web content technologies used (PDF, flash...) and, if they are turned off or unsupported, it will not conform (relied upon). A link to official software that can render this content is recommended.

Optional Components

You may include also in your conformance claim:

» Which success criteria your web page have passed beyond the level of conformance claimed. Moreover, include information about any additional steps taken that go beyond the success criteria to enhance accessibility.

» When non conformant technologies are used but an accessible & standard alternative is provided (not relied upon).

» Which user agents, including assistive technologies you have used to test the content.

» A metadata version of the specific technologies relied upon.

» A metadata version of the conformance claim.
At the end of this book you can find an example, but if you are really cool, you can conform to WCAG 2.0 without making any claim, because conformance claims are highly recommended, but not required. Although conformance claims help semantic search engines and semantic browsers to find and present contents, the best you can do is just to be good at your job!

### Third party content that I cannot control

Imagine you have done a great job in designing your website. Now, it's time for the users to add the content. But those users can be anyone, even from outside of your organization, so you cannot be everywhere everytime.

This point was a great problem with WCAG 1.0 conformance claims, so the WCAG 2.0 provides two options:

- If you **monitor and repair** the external-content errors on your web pages within 2 business days, you can use the normal claim of conformance.

- You can claim for a **statement of partial conformance** for those pages where, if certain parts were removed, they would conform. You can only use this partial conformance if that content is not under your control. The way to do it is by adding a list with the description of those parts that users can identify, with the following text:

  ```
  This page does not conform, but would conform to WCAG 2.0 at level X if the following parts from uncontrolled sources were removed.
  ```
How to write conformance claims

The conformance claim has several components, divided into 3 parts:

- What pages conform
- What technologies used are “accessibility supported”
- Optional components

WCAG 2.0 has thought about expressing conformance claims by using metadata. As this is an introductory book, we will just use the natural language to do it. You can find more information in the official WCAG 2.0 website.

1. What pages conform (Required)

   » If the whole site conforms, the ideal:
     “On [date], all web pages at [domain url] conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 at

     http://www.w3.org/TR/2008/REC-WCAG20-20081211/.


   » If only one page conforms:
     “On [date], the web page “[title of the page]” at [page url] conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 at

     http://www.w3.org/TR/2008/REC-WCAG20-20081211/.


   » If some parts of the site conforms, use regular expressions:
     “On [date], all web pages at

     [domain url/(folder1 | folder2)/.*

     conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 at

     http://www.w3.org/TR/2008/REC-WCAG20-20081211/.

» If some parts of the site conforms, use Boolean logic:

“On [date], web pages at

([domain url] AND [subdomain1 url])

AND NOT

([subdomain2 url] OR [subdomain3 url]) conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 at

http://www.w3.org/TR/2008/REC-WCAG20-20081211/.


2. What technologies used are “accessibility supported” (Required)

In the next chapter I will introduce what “Accessibility Support” means. Meanwhile, get the short idea: a technology is accessibility supported if that technology will work with user agents and assistive technologies and a technology is relied upon if the content would not conform if that technology is turned off or is not supported.

» Listed on a page: “The documented set of accessibility-supported content technologies relied upon for this claim is listed at [domain url]/technologies.html”

» Listed on the claim: “The technologies that this content relies upon are: XHTML 1.0 Strict, CSS 2.0 and JavaScript 1.2.”

» Subset of a list on a page: “The documented set of accessibility-supported content technologies relied upon for this claim includes XHTML 1.0 and SMIL from “January 2009 list” at http://www.example.com/accessibility/technologies.html#january2009”

3. Optional components

» Going beyond the level: “The following additional Success Criteria have also been met: 1.1.2, 1.2.5, and 1.4.3.”

» Technologies used (both relied and not relied):

“The technologies that this content relies upon is: XHTML 1.0 (Strict), and Real Video”

“The technologies that this content uses but does not rely upon are: JavaScript 1.2, CSS2.”

» User agents you have tested with: “The user agents, including assistive technologies, that this content has been tested with can be found at http://www.example.com/accessibility/test-technologies.html”

» This content was tested using the following user agents and assistive technologies: “Browser Name, Browser Version, on Operating System, with Screenreader Name, Screenreader Version”

29
‘Accessibility supported’
technologies

In the last chapter we talked about the technology that is accessibility supported and the technology that is relied upon in a website. But the scope of both terms is wider and more complex than a single-line definition.

WCAG 2.0 has tried to overcome a big problem found in WCAG 1.0 had: technology dependence. WCAG 1.0 checkpoints included many times the phrase “Until user agents allow...” or “Until user agents can...” But the WAI never updated the official document “User agent support for technology”. So we had a dead end.

The WAI has tried to overcome this situation making the WCAG 2.0 neutral to technology. But it has created another problem. As Joe Clark’s posted on A list apart:

“WCAG 1.0 were strongly HTML-specific. Everybody recognized that as a problem in an age when formats that blind people love to hate, like PDF and Flash, are slowly becoming accessible. So WCAG 2.0 had to be technology-neutral.

But in so doing, it imagined a parallel universe in which the vast majority of web content ceased to be plain-Jane HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. It envisioned a world in which lots and lots of Flash, PDF, and other, as-yet-uninvented formats were available and intended to be accessible. To accommodate this dreamworld, WCAG 2.0 were written and rewritten and re-rewritten to apply to everything. Along the way, it lost the ability to apply to the real things real developers work on every day—plain-Jane HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.”

To hell with WCAG 2.
www.alistapart.com/articles/tohellwithwcag2
I will try to explain the concept “Accessibility support with 3 examples”:

- If you include a **movie** in your page, how do you include the subtitles?

- If you include an **image**, how do you include the alternate text?

- If you include a **custom control** (e.g. a flash interactive movie), how do you include an alternative content?

The key is to include the alternative version in a way that user agents including assistive technologies can understand and use it.

So, what’s the big deal about it? Well, WCAG 2.0 has even thought on technologies that have not been invented yet. A **technology** is “**accessibility supported**” if that technology is designed in a way that user agents -including assistive technologies-, could access all the information they need to present the content to the user. Even the user agents and assistive technologies may need to be modified to support that technology.

When a web page uses some technologies that are **relied upon**, this means that the content will not conform if those technologies are turned off or are not supported.
The way we use the technology determines its ‘accessibility support’

Remember these categorical clauses? ‘Don’t do your web in Flash because it will not be accessible’ or ‘Avoid PDF, because a blind person won’t be capable to read it’. Industries contributing to the redaction of the new guidelines have adopted a tougher line protecting their products from legal barriers. So that’s why there is no mention about which technology is accessible and which is not, because it depends on the way that they are used and also on their evolution. E.g. you can use plain, strict XHTML but it is not well formatted, it won’t be accessible; but if you create your website with Flash and all the accessibility features on, it will be accessible.

This undefined situation makes that the W3C stand on a neutral ground as regards to technology, but not about its use.

Problems attached to this neutrality are:

• they cannot specify which or how much support there must be for a particular use of a Web technology to be classified as accessibility supported

• you can use web technologies in an un-accessible way, but you must provide an accessible alternative version

• you can use a technology in an accessibility supported way, but this doesn’t imply that all uses of that technology or all the versions of that technology are supported

Remember that we can only audit complete web pages, not technologies.

Unfortunately, we must trust anyone (individuals, companies, universities, vendors…) who document accessibility supported uses. The only requirement is to meet the definition of accessibility support. In any case, an individual author won’t be able to test all the possible uses, so there will be scattered documentation all over the web. And even worse, nobody will be capable to test all those tests. Can you imagine the lack of security this involves? The WAI warns:

“The Working Group anticipates that only documents that provide accurate information and benefit both authors and users will achieve market recognition in the long term.”

Understanding Conformance
Which technologies are ‘accessibility supported’?

So now, you will probably wonder which web technologies are ‘accessibility supported’ and which are not. And the answer is… nobody knows, not even the WAI! Here it goes, the most popular consultancy sentence used by consultants: ‘it depends’. How is this possible after spending 5 years developing the WCAG 2.0? Well, some reasons for this vagueness.

• **How many user agents** (including assistive technologies) must support a web technology so it can be considered as ‘accessibility supported’?

• **What if** a web technology is supported in one environment and not in other? You may only need a particular user agent, or a combination of many?

• **How many languages and dialects** must the user agent support to support web technologies?

• **Backwards compatibility?** E.g. imagine that 3D web navigation technologies arise. Old computers and software won’t be capable of showing that content. But that is not an obstacle to consider that this 3D technology (maybe) is accessibility supported.

• Unless you provide all your users with the proper user agent to display your content, users should have **different options** for accessing to that content, particularly if they cannot afford assistive technologies. Usually assistive technologies are expensive and not everyone can afford them. Besides, free or low-cost assistive technologies don’t have the same performance as expensive equipment.

So you can deduct that it is not easy to define which web technologies are accessibility supported and which are not. The WAI understands this problem and leaves it up to the community to select them. Yes, each company, government or association can evaluate. So prepare yourself for a bunch of resolutions. As the WCAG 2.0 says:

> “This lack of generally available yet robust assistive technologies is a problem that affects users, technology developers and authors negatively.”

Understanding Conformance
w3.org/TR/UNDERSTANDING-WCAG20/conformance.html
How to determine if a web technology is ‘accessibility supported’?

Let’s assume that nobody knows which technologies are and aren’t accessibility supported. Now what? Well, the WAI has tried to bring a definition, not very clear, but a definition after all:

“A web content technology is ‘accessibility supported’ when users’ assistive technologies will work with that web technologies; and when the accessibility features of mainstream technologies will work with that technology.”

Understanding Conformance
w3.org/TR/UNDERSTANDING-WCAG20/conformance.html

So if you want to decide by yourself if a web content technology is accessibility supported, you must check:

• The Web content technology is supported by user agents, including assistive technology, in the same human language as the web page.

• Users can get accessibility-supported user agents to support that content. This can be achieved by one of these:

  o It is supported natively in widely-distributed user agents or by a widely-distributed plug-in that is also accessibility supported (such as HTML and CSS).

  o You can control which user agents your users use to access your content, e.g., an intranet. Obviously, the user agent required and used is also accessibility supported.

  o You can easily download or buy the user agent. This process will not discriminate against people with or without disabilities.

Additionally, I suggest trying accsupported.trace.wisc.edu, an experimental database created by the Trace Center to explore an approach to collecting data on accessibility support for Web technologies.
Why should I use WCAG 2.0?

Maybe you are wondering if you should use WCAG 1.0 or WCAG 2.0. Here is a list of reasons to support your decision:

» Because they are the W3C official recommendation

“Although it is possible to conform either to WCAG 1.0 or to WCAG 2.0 (or both), the W3C recommends that new and updated content use WCAG 2.0. The W3C also recommends that Web accessibility policies reference WCAG 2.0.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0

» Because the WCAG 2.0 will be soon as legally mandatory as WCAG 1.0 are. Viviane Reding, member of the European Commission responsible for Information Society and Media proposed their adoption in October 2009. Besides, WCAG 2.0 are as applicable as WCAG 1.0.

» Because automatic validators already exist. In the Tools chapter of this book you can find a number of them.

» Because there is less place for personal interpretations, since clear techniques are suggested and associated proceedings that can be used to check if they are ok or not. They are similar to the test proposed in the Unified Web Evaluation Methodology for the WCAG 1.0 (www.wabcluster.org/uwem1_2). This makes them easier to use and to understand.

» Because the WCAG 2.0 applies to all the web technologies, not only HTML. You don’t need to provide alternate versions if the content is accessible in the native version. Read the “Accessibility supported technologies” chapter to know more about criticisms to this feature.

» Because the WCAG 2.0 ignores deprecated checkpoints. Just forget the “Until users agents” old statement.

» Because the WCAG 2.0 introduce new guidelines, especially for forms and multimedia content.

» Because there are clear rules to make a conformance claim.

» Because they will show who is really interested in accessibility.

2 The following motivations are an adaptation of the post ’10 reasons to use WCAG 2’ by Olga Carreras, in Spanish. olgacarreras.blogspot.com/2006/10/10-razones-para-pasarse-las-wcag-20.html
‘WCAG 2.0 made easy’ is an elaborated summary of techniques proposed by the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 to develop accessible websites. This book is written in a style and language aimed to be used by developers, information architects, interaction designers, content strategists... for a practical and learning purpose. This edition gathers the more up to date contents and considers the W3C Working Group note from October 14th, 2010.

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