
Kings County
Standards & Guidelines for Departmental Web Sites

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07/20/2001

General Information

This document is available online at www.countyofkings.com/documents/websitestandards.pdf

Information Technology Department (ITD) maintains the official government website of Kings County. The site can be accessed via either of these Web addresses:

www.countyofkings.com
or internally at
www2.countyofkings.com

The ITD Web Development Team's responsibilities include:

- Developing and maintaining the "common areas",
- Designing and developing websites for Kings County departments, agencies and programs,
- Updating information on the various websites,
- Ensuring all websites comply with Kings County standards, policies, and guidelines.

In order to ensure compliance with Kings County standards and policies, the ITD web team must be included in the planning and development stages of all sites.

A department or agency wishing to create a new website, or to significantly enhance or redesign an existing site, should begin by contacting the ITD web team. Web sites can be designed and developed by the web team, or by another party, such as an outside consultant, or the department's own staff, but the web team still needs to be involved.

As technology changes, these standards will be modified to reflect these improvements.

The ITD Web Team uses Macromedia's Dreamweaver to create and maintain the County's web pages.

The County's web server platform is Microsoft 2000 Advanced server for web server software and Ultraseek server for cataloging and searching the entire website.

ITD Web Team

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Website Development Process: Site Developed by ITD Web Team

This section outlines the steps the ITD Web Team takes to design, develop and maintain departmental websites.

Note: If you are having anyone other than ITD develop your site, please read the next section.

1. The requesting department notifies the ITD web staff of plans for a new web project - a new site, a site redesign, or a major enhancement such as implementation of an interactive database application. The requesting department must designate a liaison to the web team for this project. This process is for development of a new site or when an existing site is going through a major revision. The purpose of this process is to prevent unnecessary redesign and development because a site doesn't meet county standards and guidelines. It is not intended that this process be followed for minor changes or when content is changed or updated. An ITD web team representative will be assigned to the project and will develop the site.
2. **Initial Meeting. Before the site is designed**, a meeting is held to review the needs and plans for the site, to review any existing site, and to discuss schedules and deadlines. This will allow the ITD web representative to inform the client department about standards, guidelines, ADA compliance, and, in the case of redesigns, existing materials and applications. Any existing elements from the department (logos, images, preferred colors, etc.) should be brought to the ITD Web representative's attention at this meeting for incorporation into the site design. At this meeting, ITD should be informed **of the projected date for launch of the site**. Attendees: ITD web representative, departmental representative.
3. **Design Review.** After the initial site design a requirements document will be written and, optionally, a prototype may be built. A meeting will be held to review the requirements document and the prototype that includes the design, including the navigation structure, layout, and "look and feel". Design elements need to be finalized **before content is added**. Graphical elements take more time to create and change than text elements. If changes are requested after construction of the site has begun, the projected launch date can be significantly delayed. This meeting allows the departmental representative to provide input on design, look and feel and make a decision on graphical elements of the site before content is added and the entire site is constructed. After approving the design, the department representative will provide any remaining content and the site will be completed. Attendees: ITD Web team representative and departmental representative.
4. Either during or at the completion of development, depending on the size and scope of the project, the site will be loaded to the test server. The ITD Web representative will inform the departmental representative of the location of the test site for review by the department. The ITD web and department representatives will review the site for functionality, adherence to standards, usability, "look and feel," and performance. As part of the testing process, the ITD web representative will run validation and checking software on the site. These can include InFocus, LinkBot, Bobby and some manual tests. The site is also viewed in Netscape, as well as Internet Explorer. Note: The department representative is responsible for validating the site meets functional requirements.
5. A Web Site Review meeting is held to discuss results of the testing. Attendees: departmental representative, ITD web representative, and members of the ITD web staff. This meeting will be held within 10 days of the date the site is put into test.
6. Revisions are made, based on review.
7. The ITD Web representative and departmental representative review final changes. It is either approved for launch, or sent back to Step 6 for further changes.

8. The ITD web representative will take the site from the test environment and makes it accessible to the public, establishing links on the appropriate pages and inform the department representative that the site is in production.

Website Development Process: Site Not Developed by ITD Web Team

If you are having ITD develop your site, please read the previous section.

This procedure is for websites designed and developed by anyone other than the ITD web staff, whether employees of other County departments or outside consultants. It corresponds with the Checklist for Designers submitting Websites. All steps must be completed before a site will be posted. Note that some of the steps may be iterative, i.e., repeated more than once. This process is for development of a new site or when an existing site is going through a major revision. The purpose of this process is to prevent unnecessary redesign and development because a site doesn't meet county standards and guidelines. It is not intended that this process be followed for minor changes or when content is changed or updated.

1. The requesting department notifies the ITD web staff of plans for a new web project - a new site, a site redesign, or a major enhancement such as implementation of an interactive database application. The requesting department must designate a liaison to the web team for this project, and notify ITD who they would like to develop the site: ITD staff, other County staff, or a consultant. An ITD web team representative will be assigned to the project.
2. Initial Meeting. **Before the site is designed**, a meeting is held to review the needs and plans for the site, to review any existing site, and to discuss schedules and deadlines. This will allow the ITD web team to inform the client department *and the designer* about standards, guidelines, ADA compliance, and, in the case of redesigns, existing materials and applications. At this meeting, ITD should be informed **of the projected date for launch of the site**. The discussion should include the ongoing responsibilities of maintaining and updating the site. Attendees: ITD web representative, departmental representative, and any designers that will be working on the site.

Note: This meeting is optional for departments developing their own sites. These issues will be covered during Design Review for those departments and designers that have already developed sites for the county. However, ITD recommends creating a written requirements document to be used by the developer as a source document for building the site.

3. Design Review: After the site is planned but not built, a meeting is held to review the design, including the navigation structure, layout, and "look and feel," **before content is added**. This will ensure that the design is in compliance with county standards and guidelines before the entire site is constructed. Attendees: Web and departmental representatives and designer(s).
4. Site is built.
5. The Department submits the site files for uploading or the designer uploads the files (using FTP) directly to the test web server and informs the ITD web representative that the site is available for testing. The department then requests a Web Site Review.

Sites may be submitted several ways depending on the size. Always contact the ITD Web Team to determine the best way of submitting your site. Smaller sites can be emailed to the Webmaster email account as attachments. Be sure to state in the email the name of the department or agency and if any of the files being sent need to reside in sub-directories. Larger or more complex sites can be "zipped" and submitted by email, floppy disks, zip disk or CD ROM (all disk media must be DOS formatted. Please see "Supported Formats" for more detailed information).

6. The site is loaded to the test server within one working day of submission if loaded by the ITD representative. The ITD web staff will review the site for adherence to standards, usability, "look and feel," and performance. Note: The designer and department representative should test the site for functionality

Website Development Process: Site Not Developed by ITD Web Team (Continued)

(If you are having ITD develop your site, please read the previous section)

before notifying the ITD web staff that the site is ready for testing against county standards. As part of the testing process, the ITD web representative will run validation and checking software on the site. These can include InFocus, LinkBot, Bobby and some manual tests. The site is also viewed in Netscape, as well as Internet Explorer.

7. A Web Site Review meeting is held to discuss results of the testing. Attendees: departmental representative, designer, and members of web staff. This meeting will be held within 10 days of the date the site is submitted.

Disclaimer: This meeting is optional for departments developing their own sites. However, departments are still required to evaluate their site against the Web Site Review Worksheet. Implementation of sites without a formal Website Review that are found to be non-compliant with county standards or that have repeated functional problems will result in mandatory Web Site Review meetings.

8. Revisions are made, based on review.
9. The ITD web representative and/or departmental representative will review final changes. It is either approved for launch or sent back to Step 8 for further changes.
10. The assigned ITD web representative or department representative will move the initial site from the test environment and make it public. The assigned ITD web representative will establish links on the appropriate higher level pages and inform the department representative and the designer that the site is in production.

Web Site Review

The purpose of the Web Site Review is to ensure that websites designed are compliant with county standards and guidelines, and provides constructive feedback from multiple sources to allow for broader perspective on usability, layout, look and feel, and accessibility.

Participants should include ITD web team members, the site designer(s), and the department representative. The ITD web team manager and the site designer manager(s) are excluded from the review. This is a peer process and is meant to be an open dialogue.

The Review consists of two parts:

- I. A Compliance section that indicates the status of the site revealed by software checks and any compliance issues found. Objective feedback is based on tools such as: InFocus, Bobby, LinkBot and some manual testing. Macromedia DreamWeaver has a downloadable extension called “508 accessibility”, which will automatically check your site for ADA compliance. Testing the site in Netscape, as well as Internet Explorer is also performed.

Compliance issues **must** be addressed before the site will be published.

Requests for exceptions to standards will be brought to the ITD management for resolution.

- II. The General Feedback and Comments section is where the team can provide feedback on usability, layout, look and feel, etc.

The Feedback and Comments are recommendations only, and modifications are at the discretion of the designer and department contact.

Submitting an Update

While not all departments will be developing and maintaining their own sites, in most cases it **will** be the responsibility of each department to maintain content on their pages. Therefore, it is the responsibility of client departments to ensure the accuracy of updates, changes and/or additions to “live” sites. Departments are responsible for designating a responsible representative to approve and, when appropriate, update content on the department’s site. It is also the responsibility of client departments to provide the necessary training required to maintain content on the department’s site. As required, ITD can assist departments with identifying training solutions.

Instructions if the ITD Web team is updating your site:

1. Email your update to the webmaster.
 - ✓ Do not submit your updates to an individual on the web team. The webmaster email is read during working hours every workday. If you send you update to an individual, it could delay the posting if that individual is out for any reason.
 - ✓ In the subject line, state which department the update is for.
 - ✓ In the body of the email, state clearly what section the updates are for and be sure to give the exact URL (address) whenever possible. Make all instructions plain and clear. If you are attaching files, list the name of each file and what it is.
 - ✓ Always include your name and phone number in the email so the webmaster can get a hold of you quickly in case of questions.
 - ✓ Name your attached files using a descriptive filename with a 3 (three) letter extension. The three-letter extension should correctly identify the file. Typically these are:

.doc for Microsoft Word documents

.jpg for JPEG type graphics

.gif for Graphic Interchange File type graphics

.htm (please note: we don't use the .html extension so please name your files with the .htm extension only)

.zip for a zipped archive of files (NOTE: This is the PREFERRED METHOD for sending multiple attachments in one e-mail.)

Note: When sending files with long names or if your sending large quantities of files, please use archiving software, like WinZip, to zip up the files. This will help preserve your files names and help expedite the posting process.

2. If not already done, a copy of the site will be copied to the development server. A copy will be installed on the production web server and you will be notified via email that the site has been implemented.

Instructions if the ITD Web team **is NOT** updating your site:

1. First, if not already done, install a copy of the site on the development server.
2. Install the site on the production server and notify the webmaster via email of major enhancements or changes that have been made to your site.

Word Processing Guidelines

Common Word-processing Practices that are Problems in Conversion for the Web

When sending documents created by Microsoft Word for posting on the web, you need to be aware of some of the common word processing techniques that do not translate well to the web. To ensure your documents convert looking as close as possible to the original, just follow the guidelines listed below.

1. **Using the tab key or multiple spaces to center or position text.** Tabs and multiple spaces don't translate to the web so any text using these will become left aligned. Use the "center" or "align right" command.
2. **Using a hard return (the Enter key) or soft return (space + enter key) to force a line break at the end of each line within a paragraph.** This will cause the lines to break at the wrong places on the web page. Use Enter only at the end of a paragraph; the software will wrap the lines automatically.
3. **Adjusting the margins to create indents.** Increase Indent instead.
4. **Using tabs or spaces to create two or more columns.** Tabs and multiple spaces don't translate to the web. If a column format is required, use a table.
5. **Pressing Enter between lines that you want to be single-spaced (items a list, lines in an address, etc.).** This will create double-spacing between the items when translated for the Web. If you want single-spacing between the lines, use a "soft return" (hold down the shift key while you press the enter key) to create a "line break" rather than a paragraph break between them. It will look identical. Use the Enter key only at the end of a paragraph. For example, if you wanted the address paragraph below to appear single-spaced, as shown, instead of pressing Enter after "Center" on the first line and "Department" on the second line, you would press Shift-Enter. This would create a new line without making a new paragraph.

Kings County Government Center
Information Technology Department
1400 West Lacey Blvd.
Hanford, CA 93230
6. **Using text boxes.** Conversion tools will ignore any text within a text box. Type the text in the body of the document and use the usual formatting methods (bold, indent, etc.) or type the text in a table and use borders.
7. **Mixing "manual" and automatic numbering or bulleting.** Be consistent with one or the other: Either use the Format; Numbering and Bullets feature on Word for the ENTIRE document, or type in all the numbers manually for the ENTIRE document.
8. **Placing titles and page numbers (items repeated on every page) in the body of the document.** Place such items in a header or footer. If they are typed into the body of the document, they will show up in the middle of the text of the web page.
9. **Using the "small caps" font style.** Text formatted with small caps will inconsistently translate into all caps, all lower case or an unattractive combination of both.

Word Processing Guidelines (Continued)

Common Word-processing Practices that are Problems in Conversion for the Web

10. **Using WingDings or DingBats to create bullets.** These don't translate to the web. If you want bullets, use the bullet feature in the formatting menu.
11. **Using WingDings or Dingbats to create a check box.** It does not translate to the web. If you need a check box, please *contact the web team* for formatting options.
12. **Using hidden text, revision markings, or "sticky notes."** These will all show up when the document is converted, so be sure to remove them before sending the document to the webmaster.

Be aware that the web has a portrait orientation. Any document formatted in landscape will be converted to portrait. For better results, try to format all documents to be posted to the web in portrait orientation.

Please *alert the web team* if you have used footnotes and endnotes in a document, so they can be preserved.

Required Content

The County of Kings graphic template in the left side and upper portion of every page, providing a link to the County's home page and including the code alt="Link to CountyofKings Homepage".

File name:

<http://www.countyofkings.com/images/countylogosm.gif>

Link to:

<http://www.countyofkings.com>

Alt tag: Link to County of Kings Site

The three items shown at the right should appear at the *bottom* of every page:

[Employment](#) | [Business Opportunities](#) | [Board of Supervisors](#)
[About Us](#) | [Departments](#) | [Home](#)

©2001 County of Kings. All rights reserved.
08/01/2001

1. The standard navigation bar, which provides links to these pages.
2. A copyright line, in this format:
©2001 County of Kings. All rights reserved.
3. The date the page was last updated.

For entities within the County of Kings Government, a custom template is created for each department with the relevant links on the left navigation bar.

For entities outside of the County of Kings, which are hosted on our web-server, please include the following links:

Links to:

<http://www.countyofkings.com/index.htm>

<http://www.countyofkings.com/bos/index.htm>

<http://www.countyofkings.com/departments.htm>

<http://www.countyofkings.com/info.htm>

<http://www.countyofkings.com/links.htm>

If you are using DreamWeaver4, we use library items for the logo and navigation bar and will email them to you for insertion into your site.

As part of an ongoing compliancy issue with state 508 accessibility standards, please include the following on your pages as well:

Alt tags: with descriptions of each graphic or link function.

Navigation: "previous" and "next" buttons for multiple pages of information. The graphic for these rollover images can be found at:

http://www.countyofkings.com/images/previous_button1.jpg

http://www.countyofkings.com/images/previous_button2.jpg

http://www.countyofkings.com/images/next_button1.jpg

http://www.countyofkings.com/images/next_button2.jpg

Supported Technologies on the Kings County Website

Supported:

- Java applets (client-side)
- Javascript
- Cgi-scripts (case by case basis)
- Client-side image maps
- Audio (case by case basis)
- Video (case by case basis)
- Cascading Style Sheets
- Layers
- Microsoft Word documents (.doc format) or documents in Rich Text Format (.rtf) with an alternative version -- HTML or text only -- to comply with accessibility standards.
- Adobe files (PDF format) with an alternative version -- HTML or text only -- to comply with accessibility standards.

Not supported:

- Java (server-side)
- Server side JAVA
- Any technology requiring a third-party software or plugin except PDFs
- Sites created with FrontPage
- Sites created with Microsoft Publisher
- Server Side image maps

Discouraged:

- Use of large animated .gifs
- Splash Pages

If you are planning on using any technologies other than those mentioned above, please contact the ITD Web Team.

You may submit files to the Webmaster in any of these formats:

We prefer DOS or Windows formatted media (zip, floppy and CD ROM only) and PC files.

Office applications:

- MS Word 97
- MS Excel 97
- Power Point 97
- WordPerfect

Desktop publishing and graphics:

- Quark Express version 4.0 for Windows
- PageMaker 6.5
- Adobe Acrobat 4.0
- Adobe PhotoShop 5.0+ *
- Corel 9.0 *

** send, original files, not jpg or gif images of the files.*

*NOTE: If you are using a later version of any of the above software you MUST save your files to the earlier version of the software that we support.

Graphics files in the following formats:

- Jpg
- Gif
- Png
- Eps
- Tif

NOTE: these can be created in a variety of software programs as long as they are saved as one of the types of formats listed on the left. If possible, provide 16 bit files, since this is the current Web standard.

- Bmp

Coding Requirements

When creating or updating your own site, please comply with these requirements:

Requirement	Do	Don't
All graphic images on your web pages must be coded with an appropriate Alt tag that clearly describes the graphic.(ADA Compliance section) If the graphic is a link to another page, the Alt tag should state which page it will link to.	<code></code>	<code></code>
Include a meaningful document title for each page.	<code><title>KC Health Dept</title></code>	No description at all.
All HTML pages should be saved using the .htm extension, not the .html extension.	index.htm	Index.html
The primary page in each directory should be called index.htm, since that is the name set as the default on our web server. **	index.htm	
Pages must be viewable by Netscape 4.0 or higher and Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher.		

**If you are creating web pages for any of our other servers (the Intranet or other servers), please contact the Web Team for required defaults.

External Link Policy

Government Sites - You may include links to federal, state or local government entities.

Non-Profit Sites - Links to the websites of non-profit organizations will be allowed after 1) verification of their non-profit status and 2) a site review by the ITD Web Team to ensure the site does not violate any County policies.

Commercial Sites - Links to commercial sites will be allowed under these circumstances: “Credit line” to a consulting firm who developed a site or graphic(s) or sponsors of public events and other providers of free services.

Copyright Policy

If the content, news articles, graphics, photographs—even the design—of your pages were not created by Kings County employees or through a contract and created for Kings County use, then you must get an appropriate legal release from the content creators or copyright holders. Please see your agency's general counsel for guidance in obtaining these releases.

You will need to send us these releases with your new or updated submission. Failure to submit releases, when applicable, will result in your submission being returned to you.

Directory Structure

There are no hard rules on directory structure, but we do have some suggestions. Use an images directory to hold the graphical elements of the site. If there is a large amount of content, create directories to help organize the material. Some suggested directories are agendas, minutes, resolutions, materials, reports, bios, forms, and meetings.

Vanity Domain Names

We can provide a personalized 3rd level domain name for the countyofkings.com domain if you desire. You may choose any legal name to identify your website. Spaces and non-alphanumeric characters are not usable. However, dashes (-) may be used. For example, planning.countyofkings.com would point to the planning department's home page.

Accessibility Standards (ADA Compliance)

ITD is committed to the universal accessibility of information made available through the Kings County Website. The Board of Supervisors has urged all Kings County agencies to adhere to accessibility standards.

The standards below are the ITD standards used for site development and are the starting point for a Countywide dialogue for standards adoption.

Guidelines for HTML Pages

- Appropriate Alt-tags must be used to contain full descriptions of gif's or jpeg's within html pages.
- Animated graphics or images should not move continuously as they can cause problems for users with cognitive reading problems. Let the animation run through 4-5 times then stop in a meaningful place. Always provide appropriate Alt tags for graphics.
- Use client-side map and text for hotspots.
- In links, use text that makes sense when read out of context. For example, don't use "click here.", "here", "more", etc.
- Make sure there is sufficient contrast between background colors and images and text.
- For graphs and charts, summarize or use the "longdesc" attribute to describe the content..
- If using scripts, applets, and plug-ins, provide alternative content in case active features are inaccessible or unsupported.
- If using frames, provide a non-framed alternative. Use NOFRAMES and meaningful titles.
- When using tables for layout, make line-by-line reading sensible. Do not use embedded or nested tables.

Guidelines for Other Formats

- All documents will be posted in a format that is capable of being viewed as text or html. This enables sight impaired individuals to use reader software to hear the text.
- Every file posted as a PDF or in a proprietary format (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) shall have a label identifying the format, within the link to the file. PDF's will have a link to the Adobe PDF Help page at <http://www.adobe.com/support/techguides/acrobat/main.html> which includes links to Adobe's accessibility information.
- Files posted in PDF must have an HTML or text alternative. If submitting a PDF, please provide the source documents (Word files, Power Point, Excel docs) for conversion and posting.
- Adobe Acrobat PDF format may be used when content is by its nature graphical, such as images or maps. There may be other situations in which this is the only available means of presenting the material.

Kings County Accessibility Standards (Continued)

In these cases, if possible, the originating agency should provide the information as text, html, or another format that can be converted to create an html version, to be presented along with the pdf version.

If this is not possible, then the html page containing the pdf link should describe what is in the pdf, and include information on an alternative way of obtaining the information, such as the name and phone number of a departmental contact.

In each of these situations, a dialogue between ITD and the requesting agency will take place to:

- Evaluate the need to invoke an exception.
- Explore options looking to the future to provide the means for equal access to information.
- Determine the means to inform the disabled of how to gain access to the information.

Appendices

Checklist for Designers submitting Websites

This checklist corresponds with the procedures for a designer submitting websites. All steps must be completed before a site will be posted. Note that some of the steps may be iterative, i.e., repeated more than once.

County Agency: _____

Contact Name: _____

Contact Info: Phone: _____ email: _____

Designer Name: _____

Contact Info: Phone: _____ email: _____

Other: _____

		Date	ITD Initials		Department Initials
1.	Department notifies ITD web staff of plans for a new web project	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	Initial Meeting: Site Launch Date _____ Comments and/or notes on back _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	Design Review:	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	Site is built.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	Department submits site files for uploading to test, and requests Web Team Review.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	Site is loaded to test server (within one working day of submission).	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Software Checks		Pass	Fail	
	LinkBot	_____	_____	_____	
	InFocus	_____	_____	_____	
	Bobby	_____	_____	_____	
	Manual Tests	_____	_____	_____	
	Browser compatibility issues on back _____				
7.	Web Team Review: Meeting within 10 days of posting of site to test server.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8.	Revisions are made, based on review.	_____	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____	_____	_____
		_____	_____	_____	_____
9.	Final changes are submitted, with request for launch.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10.	Web rep reviews final changes. Comments and/or notes on back _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11.	Site is launched.	_____	_____	_____	_____

Page 1 of 1
Web Site Review

Agency: _____ Date: _____

Client Representative: _____

Site Location _____

Attendees:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

	Pass	Fail
ADA	_____	_____
Layout	_____	_____
Logo/Nav Bar	_____	_____

Compliance: Site Overall

Specify:

Resolution:

Compliance: Specific Pages

ADA	Logo/ NavBar	Layout	Page	Problem	Resolution

Other Comments:

Web Site Review

Agency:

Date:

Location (if applicable):

General Feedback and Comments:

ADA Accessibility Guidelines Checklist

Here is a checklist based on the W3C accessibility guidelines.

Priority 1 Checkpoints

- **Images & animations.** Provide appropriate alt tags conveying content or function of graphics.
- **Image maps.** Use client-side map and text for hotspots.
- **Hypertext links.** Use text that makes sense when read out of context. For example, avoid "click here."
- **Color Contrast.** Make sure there is sufficient contrast between background colors and images and text.
- **Page organization.** Use headings, lists, and consistent structure
- **Graphs & charts.** Summarize or use the "longdesc" attribute.
- **Scripts, applets, & plug-ins.** Provide alternative content in case active features are inaccessible or unsupported.
- **Frames.** Provide a non-framed alternative. Use NOFRAMES and meaningful titles.
- **Tables.** Make line-by-line reading sensible. Do not use embedded or nested tables.
- **PDF Files.** Provide an accessible alternative.
- **Multimedia.** Provide captioning and transcripts of audio, and descriptions of video.
- **Check your work.** Validate. Use tools, checklist, and guidelines at www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT.

