

The Online Shopping Habits of Consumers with Disabilities

and Their Implications for Businesses

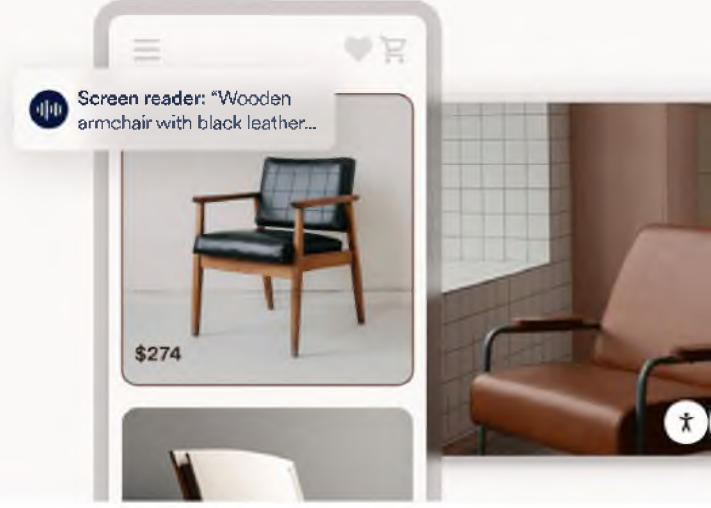
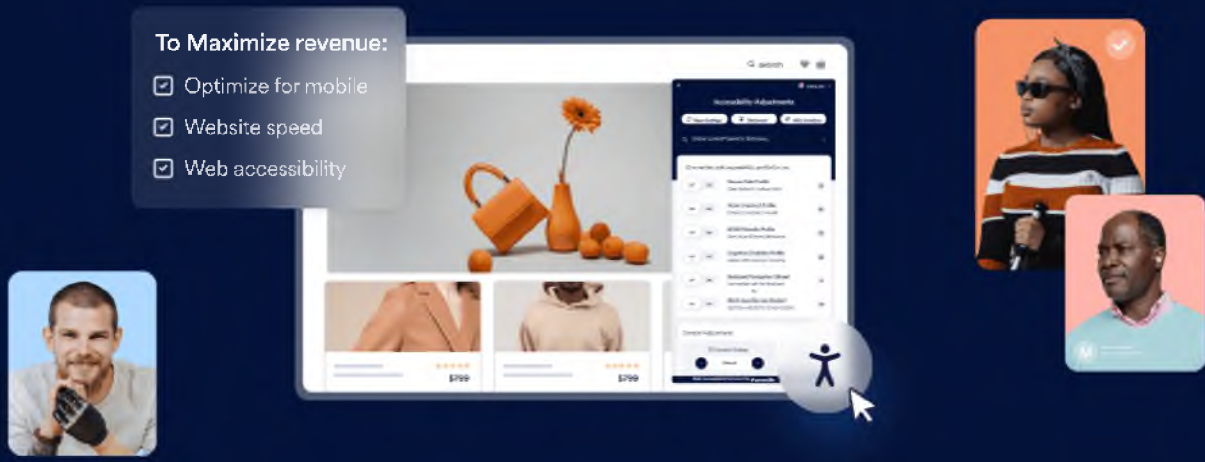


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People With Disabilities Are a Major Consumer Market

An estimated one in four American adults live with some kind of disability, a significant segment of the population consisting of some 61 million people. Their disabilities vary greatly, including but not limited to mobility disabilities, cognition disabilities, hearing disabilities, and vision disabilities. They therefore have differing needs and preferences when it comes to online shopping.



In addition to the community’s diversity and considerable size, shoppers with disabilities also have huge spending power, with a combined post-tax disposable income reaching nearly half a trillion dollars. Online retailers and eCommerce sellers who strive for business growth can’t ignore this major consumer market if they want to maximize revenue.

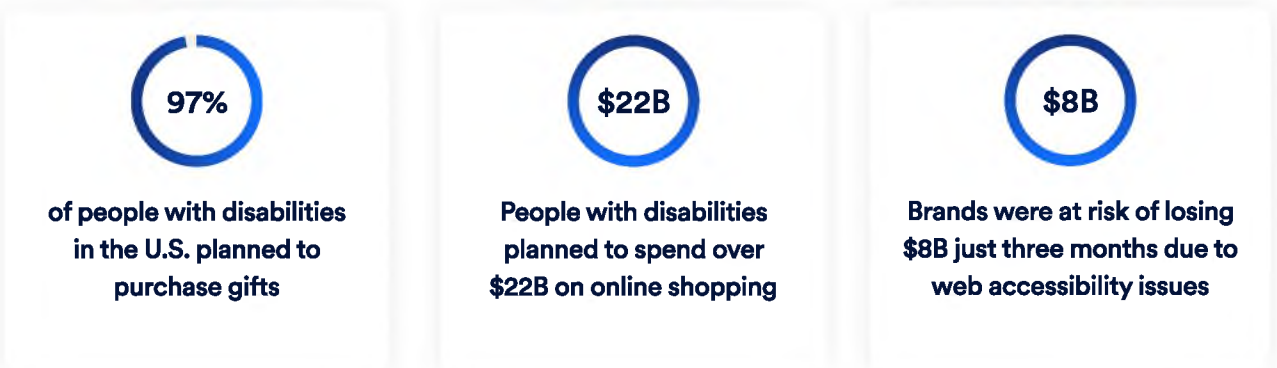
Is your online store accessible? Find out for free

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In fact, a survey conducted by accessiBe in collaboration with Open Inclusion in Q4 of 2023 revealed that beyond their substantial spending power, the disability community also has strong buying intent, rendering them a ready and viable consumer market. The majority of consumers with disabilities planned to buy gifts for their friends and family during Q4, with a projected online spending estimate reaching over \$22 billion in just 3 months.

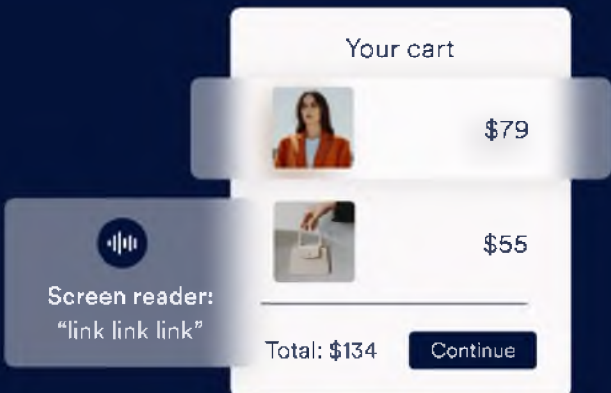
On the flip side, online retailers and eCommerce sellers who failed to provide an accessible shopping experience for consumers with disabilities risked losing over **\$8 billion dollars** during that time.

During Q4 of 2023:



Although people with disabilities make up an important and influential consumer market, they often encounter obstacles and barriers when shopping online.

This can prevent them from completing purchases, lowering businesses’ sales revenue and customer satisfaction.



Obstacles to Online Shopping for Consumers With Disabilities

“I was buying my wife flowers. I got frustrated because I was not able to continue to the next step and it made me frustrated that I had to visit a completely different website to get the order completed.”

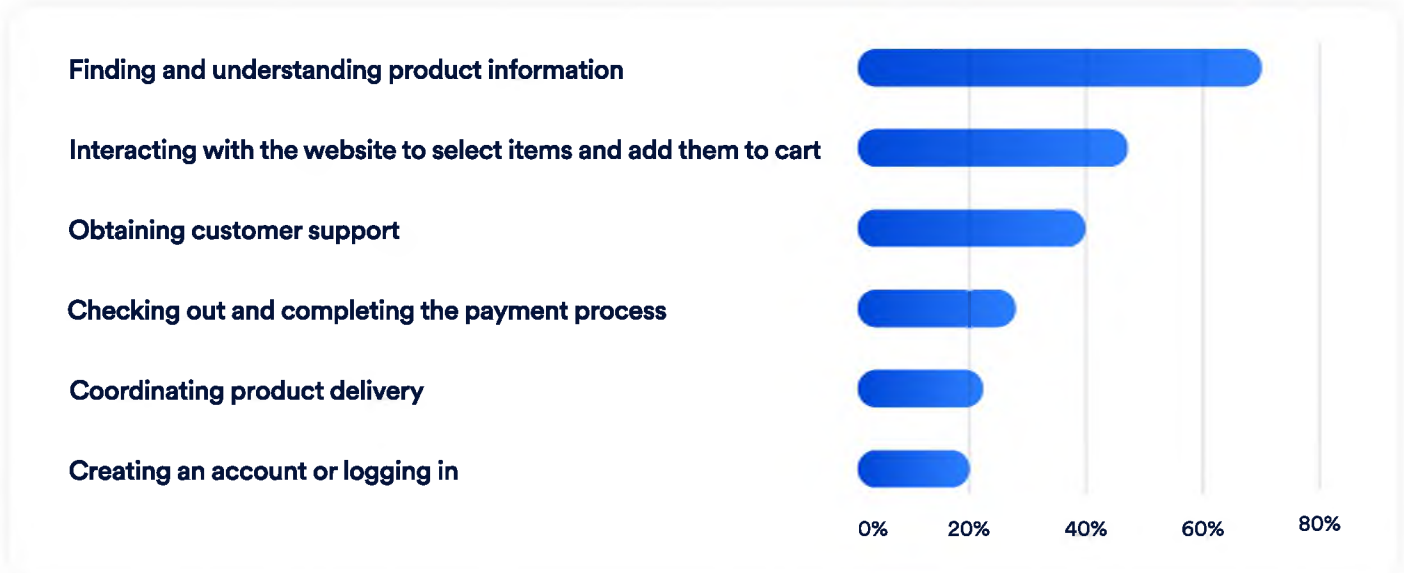
-Online shopper who is blind



Of 1,008 consumers with disabilities surveyed, **two out of three** reported having had difficulties making purchases online through websites or apps.

Accessibility issues occur throughout the entire user journey, often making it difficult for users with disabilities to complete purchases. Respondents highlighted challenges from the beginning to the end of their shopping experience, such as creating an account or logging in, interacting with the website, finding and understanding necessary product information, obtaining customer support, and completing the payment process, signaling a need for online business owners to make these processes more inclusive.

Key Obstacles in Respondents’ Online Shopping Journey



In order for eCommerce sellers to achieve success and maximize sales, it is imperative that they craft an intuitive and easy-to-follow user journey.

These findings underscore the importance of web accessibility in this context and the key role it plays in shaping user experience.

The Impact of Negative Shopping Experiences

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“Recently I tried to purchase something from a website that had an extreme amount of flashing ads, videos that I could not figure out how to stop, and the page took forever to load. Once it loaded, the item was out of stock and I was presented with a bunch more glaring ads for things not even similar. It was completely overwhelming. I felt frustrated enough to abandon the purchase.”

- Online shopper with mobility, dexterity, and cognition disabilities

The obstacles and challenges described above can have significant functional and emotional impacts on the user, leading to serious consequences for businesses in terms of loss of revenue, low customer satisfaction, and poor brand reputation. In fact, 94% of respondents reported negative impacts from online shopping experiences.

Emotional impacts mentioned by respondents include consumers feeling frustrated or angry, feeling uncertain about their purchases, and feeling like the website or app hadn’t been designed with their needs in mind.



Impact of Negative Shopping Experiences on Customer Satisfaction



These feelings often have adverse repercussions on sales as well. Consumers with disabilities who face accessibility obstacles while shopping online are more likely to abandon a purchase and even avoid using that particular website or app again.

Impact of Negative Shopping Experiences on Sales



Web Accessibility: A Solution for Consumers and Businesses

An accessible online shopping experience not only allows businesses to avoid the consequences of a poor customer experience, but it also brings with it a number of benefits. Simply by providing consumers with disabilities with an online shopping experience they can easily navigate and enjoy, businesses can boost customer loyalty, strengthen their brand reputation, and encourage repeat purchases.

Positive Impacts of Good Online Shopping Experiences



Important Accessibility Features

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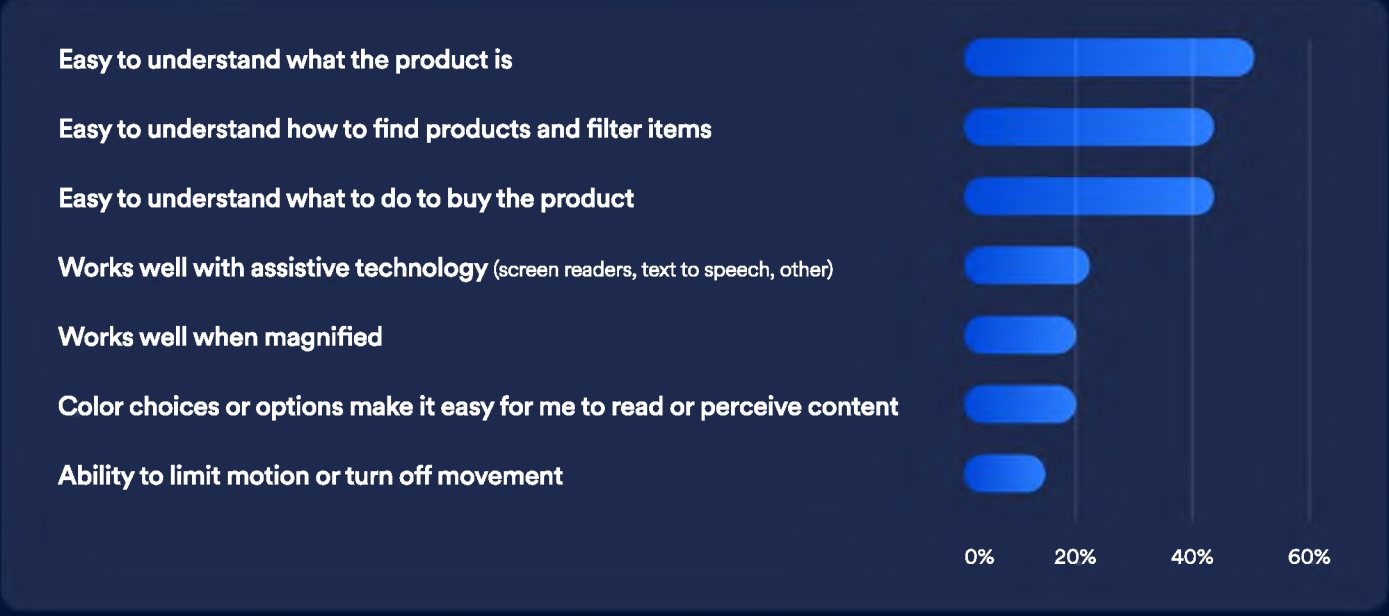
As a blind person I was really impressed to get an app that has voice input which makes it easier for me to purchase gifts. I felt fulfilled.”

- Online shopper with sight loss

There are a variety of accessibility features that businesses can include on their websites in order to improve the shopping experience for users with disabilities.

When asked which accessibility features are most helpful, customers most often emphasized the importance of ease of understanding. This includes features that make it easy to understand what the product is, those that help them find products and filter items, and features that allow them to figure out what to do to buy the product. It is also important for consumers that the website or app works well with assistive technologies and magnification.

Important Accessibility Features for Online Shopping



Implementing these and other features on a website ensures that consumers with disabilities have a positive, inclusive shopping experience. It enables them to complete their purchases easily and encourages them to buy more and return for future purchases.

Web Accessibility Solutions

Online retailers and eCommerce sellers seeking to improve the online experience of people with disabilities and benefit from making their websites accessible have plenty of options to choose from. Web accessibility solutions range from manual remediations to automated and AI-powered solutions.

Manual web accessibility remediation requires development resources and is often time-consuming and costly. Automated and AI-powered solutions, on the other hand, are affordable, quick and easy to install, and don’t require coding knowledge, giving website owners the power to implement accessibility solutions without long waits or extensive resources.

For more information on accessibility solutions and how they can improve your customers’ online shopping experience and benefit your business, schedule a [free consultation](#) with a web accessibility expert.

[Book your free consultation](#)

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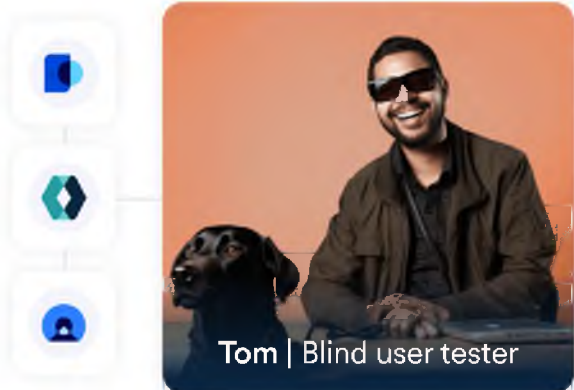
Eric B.

Accessibility Expert

Research Background

About accessiBe

accessiBe is the market leader in web accessibility, providing an ecosystem of accessibility solutions that enable businesses of every size to create and maintain accessible and compliant websites. These solutions range from integrated to native accessibility, meeting every business where it is on its accessibility journey.



Our products are developed with input from the disability communities that use them, so you know that all your website visitors will get the best experience.

They are trusted by hundreds of thousands of businesses around the world to help promote inclusion and comply with accessibility law and best practices.

About the Study

This study was conducted by accessiBe and [Open Inclusion](#) in order to gain a deeper understanding regarding the online shopping experience and habits of consumers with disabilities in the United States.

The conclusions are drawn from a survey of 1,008 consumers in the United States with a wide range of disabilities. They responded to a series of multiple-choice questions regarding their shopping habits, gift buying plans, and previous experiences with online shopping.

