

# The hidden CX strategy



How accessible digital experiences  
unlock wide-ranging growth

# Introduction:

## Experience is king

You know that experience is king. More than price or product, customer experience (CX) is now the top factor drawing and retaining customers across every segment. And those customers have higher expectations than ever. They've been Amazon-primed to demand instant gratification, complete convenience and frictionless experiences.

Savvy brand leaders know that any edge in experience — any way to stand out from the crowd with a more seamless, more intuitive and more accessible customer experience — can be an immediate and invaluable growth driver.

**Customer experience (CX)  
is the #1 factor driving  
consumer behavior**

### Expectations are higher than ever

Consumers demand experiences that are:



**Convenient**



**Intuitive**



**Seamless**

# Emerging CX strategy: Leveraging digital accessibility to unlock growth

As businesses in every sector look for CX strategies that deliver both rapid and wide-ranging ROI, forward-thinking brands like Apple, Google, Microsoft — the innovators shaping our digital future — are making digital accessibility a core priority. By making accessibility a foundational element of their customer experiences, these brands are unlocking wide-ranging business value:

\* U.S. Centers for Disease Control



## Capturing enormous market opportunity

61M Americans living with  
disabilities\*



## Creating next-gen CX for all

Convenient, intuitive and  
seamless — for all audiences



## Aligning with key business objectives

Enhancing SEO, connecting  
digital + physical CX, and more



## Driving brand allegiance

Connecting with value-driven  
consumers

# Growth driver #1: Opening the door to consumers with disabilities

Americans living with disabilities represent the nation's largest — and most underserved — minority group. This is pushing disability policy into the spotlight in political campaigns, and consumer brands are increasingly recognizing this enormous, underserved market segment — as evidenced by the encouraging trends of inclusivity in advertising and marketing campaigns. But advertising is just one small part of the equation — it's the customer experience that earns the sale, plants the seeds of loyalty and nurtures an ongoing relationship. And most brands are falling well short of expectations for a digitally accessible CX — in effect, leaving the door shut on an enormous market segment.

\* U.S. Centers for Disease Control  
\*\* American Institutes for Research



**Today**  
Make the sale



**Tomorrow**  
Ongoing loyalty



**Future**  
Invaluable word-of-mouth

## Key takeaway

Positioning your digital experiences at the leading edge of accessibility will unlock a nearly \$500B market opportunity.

## A big population...

**1 in 5 Americans** claim some form of disability including **61 million adults\*** and **22 million working-age adults\*\***

## ...with a big spending power

- **\$490 Billion** in disposable income\*\*
- **\$175 Billion** in discretionary spending\*\*

**80%**

of persons living with disabilities have **taken business elsewhere** because of poor accessibility\*\*

# Growth driver #2: Creating a next-gen digital experience – for all

As mentioned earlier, CX is now **the biggest driver of consumer behavior**. In fact, Gartner says that **2 in 3 companies are now competing primarily on the basis of customer experience**, and consumer research shows that buyers don't just seek out better CX — **they're willing to pay a premium for it**. As businesses work to implement CX strategies with broad appeal, savvy brands are recognizing a powerful synergy: accessibility is synonymous with usability.

## Accessibility is synonymous with usability

A common goal: a more intuitive experience for every user



**More human**



**More natural**



**More contextual**

# Building next-gen UX with accessibility as the foundation

By making digital accessibility a foundational principle of all UX design from the start, leading brands are building next-generation user experiences that stand out from the crowd with unique convenience, simplicity and ease-of-use that appeals to all consumer demographics.

## Key takeaway

The principles of accessible design deliver a more frictionless experience for every user — which stands out, increases engagement and drives loyalty.



### Example: Clean web design

The basic principles of digitally accessible web design center on clean design and logical site and page structure that makes it easier for people with disabilities to navigate your site — and allows screen readers used by those who are blind or have low vision to naturally digest the content of your site. But in reality, these qualities are in-demand for all users.



### Example: Captioning video/animation

Closed captioning of all video and animation content on your site is critical for audiences who are deaf or hard of hearing. But as audiences increasingly view video content in situations where audio is impractical (i.e., in open office settings, on public transit, while working remotely, when viewing sensitive content, etc.), enabling captioning of all content ensures that all users can experience your video and animation content, regardless of circumstances.

# Growth driver #3: Aligning with key business objectives

A better UX for all users is just one of the synergies driven by digital accessibility initiatives. Forward-thinking brands are leveraging accessibility strategies to support and complement a wide range of other top-level business objectives.



## Enhancing SEO

Text content — headings, keywords, alt text, etc. — is still the leading factor in SEO rankings. The foundation of web accessibility is nearly identical to modern SEO best practices. Prioritizing digital accessibility will directly support and enhance your SEO strategy.



## Bridging the digital/ physical gap

Enabling a seamless connection between online shopping and physical pick-up or delivery is at the crux of many businesses' digital transformation strategies. For decades, leading-edge digital accessibility has been working to build out strategies to give customers with disabilities the ability to seamlessly move from shopping and purchasing remotely, to picking up items in person, without requiring them to physically navigate the store.



# Big picture: Prioritizing digital accessibility or future-ready CX

As brands look for ways to position themselves to be ready for whatever the CX of the future looks like, historical precedent shows that the leading edge of accessibility today often becomes the general standard for tomorrow:

## Key takeaway

Prioritizing accessibility creates valuable synergies with key business objectives — and positions your brand for future-ready CX.



### Optical character recognition (text-to-speech)

First created to expand accessibility for the blind, today, optical character recognition (also known as text-to-speech or TTS) drives some of the most advanced apps in our world — from personal digital assistants like Siri and Alexa to the next generation of driverless cars.



### Blended curbs

A powerful example from the physical world: blended curbs at intersections were developed as a solution to increase accessibility for people who use wheelchairs. Today, blended curbs are mainstream standards of urban life, providing recognized benefits for all sidewalk users.



### Non-mouse-dependent navigation

More recently, many of the principles of web design that were created to drive accessibility through non-mouse-dependent web navigation are now foundational principles of mobile-ready web design.



# Growth driver #4: Driving brand allegiance

Consumers today not only have higher standards for experience — they expect more from the brands they choose. Studies and surveys continually show that consumers expect organizations to have a clear set of values — and seek out brands that align with their personal values. At a time when loyalty is at an all-time low and digital technologies create a physical divide between brands and consumers, this sort of emotional connection is worth its weight in gold.

As brand leaders work to signal a set of brand values that align with the values of their target audience, inclusivity is emerging as a brand value that resonates widely. Committing to digital accessibility signals your brand's commitment to delivering the most convenient and frictionless experience possible to all audiences — and tells consumers that they can look to you to continually invest in leading-edge technologies that create new possibilities and set new standards for digital experience.

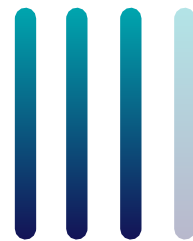
## Key takeaway

Demonstrating your commitment to digital accessibility establishes your brand as a vanguard in next-generation customer experiences — a valuable reputation any business would be proud to share.

## Consumers seek out value-driven brands

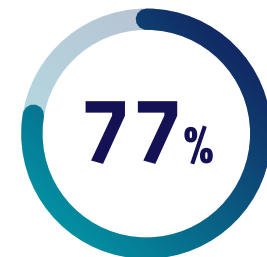


of consumers believe that it's important for organizations to **take a stance on social issues.\***



**3 in 4**

consumers say they're more likely to **give their business to organizations that align with their values and views.\***



say they're more **emotionally connected to purpose and value-driven organizations.**

\* Clutch Survey



# Learning from history

Over the past several decades, many aspects of accessibility — whether physical, digital or otherwise — have moved from emerging issue, to widespread concern and finally to mainstream standard. Sometimes, the driving force or key precipitator of adoption comes from new legal requirements, protections or enforcement. Far more often, the tipping point in adoption is the realization that the same technologies or strategies that enhance accessibility ultimately advance usability and convenience for all users and audiences.

## The opportunity is now

But while history shows the wide-ranging business value of enhancing accessibility, it also reveals an important lesson: The true opportunity — the greatest business value — lies in being an accessibility leader. That means adopting accessibility technologies and prioritizing accessible customer experiences before compliance requires it, before litigation forces the issue, and before competition and/or consumer culture demands it. By beginning to put new technologies and strategies in place today, you can capture the allegiance of an enormous, growing and largely underserved market segment. With the same technologies and strategies, you can rapidly move their CX forward for all audiences.

Today, brands in every segment still have the opportunity to capture the full business value of proactive digital accessibility. But that window is closing — and as anyone in the business world knows, there isn't great ROI in playing catch-up.

# Take the first step: Get your web accessibility score

One of the biggest challenges with web accessibility is that it's not plainly obvious to the typical user. Moreover, many websites today have done an excellent job of adding accessibility features — but they still have hidden gaps that ultimately create roadblocks for site visitors living with disabilities.

Here's the first step:

**Request your free content performance report**

With this free snapshot review, you can:

**1**

**Get an objective accessibility score for your website — and benchmark it against others in your industry.**

**2**

**Uncover your accessibility gaps — and get free tips for fixing these issues.**

**3**

**Gain additional insights on quality assurance and SEO performance of your website.**



Achieve your **digital potential**

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