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# Accessibility and the Digital Humanities

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By *Prof. Hacker*



[*This is a joint post by Jen Guiliano, who is the*
*Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities, and ProfHacker's own Ge*

*If you are interested in this topic, please fill out this survey: "Disability, Accessibi*
*Humanities."*]

Consider this a call to digital humanists generally and more specifically to the ɪ
different projects) who attended today's Project Directors meeting at the Natio
Humanities' Office of Digital Humanities:

**What is your project doing to address accessibility for people with disabilities**

Today's meeting is a gathering of project directors from the Digital Humanities Humanities Implementation Grants, and the Institutes for Advanced Topics in competitions. Each project gets just three minutes and three powerpoint slides and their concerns, so we're taking the liberty of publishing a blog post as a foll

Over the last several decades, scholars have developed standards for how best to and preserve digital information so that future generations of teachers, student may still use it. What has remained neglected for the most part, however, are th disabilities. As a result, many of the otherwise most valuable digital resources a are–for example–deaf or hard of hearing, as well as for people who are blind, ha difficulty distinguishing particular colors.

One of the central values of digital humanities is the importance of open acces scholars in the field would never use a proprietary format for preserving and sh because to do so would be to exclude those people who cannot afford or do no necessary software to use that format. However, few of us think twice about wh have chosen and the design choices we have made are excluding people with d inaccessible design choices remain a significant barrier to the digital humaniti disabilities. If our goals include–as they should–the ability to share our work wi audience as possible, then we should embrace universal design principles.

For the 2012-2013 academic year, the BrailleSC project and the Maryland Instit Humanities have partnered to extend WordPress–a system recommended freq the blind and low-vision communities by creating a plug-in that will allow anyo content to braille text. We've titled our efforts "Making the Digital Humanities

Why WordPress? WordPress is the chosen platform for "over 60 million people" digital humanities projects and centers to power their research and content de

deliver a plug-in that allows an integrated experience for blind and low-vision
digital humanities content.

And while this is an important first step, we're also using this project as an opp
development and design practices by keeping the following questions in mind:

- Are we building accessible sites and projects?There's much more work than t
- Are we delivering our content (code, publications, digital objects, digital tools…)
  blind and low-vision people?
- What do we need to know to integrate the work going on in braille and low-visior
  work we are doing as digital humanists?

People work in a digital environment with a wide variety of abilities and disabil
variety of hardware and software tools). Vision and its associated technologies
work.

So, we're inviting you to join us in learning more about accessibility this year:

**What is accessible design? What can we in the digital humanities do to impro
doing? And how can project directors evaluate projects and tools to recogniz
design and development?**

This entry was posted in Hardware, Profession, Software and tagged accessibility, digital
design. Bookmark the permalink.