

### Participatory design for accessible e-tourism: the case of people with visual impairments

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# PARTICIPATORY DESIGN FOR ACCESSIBLE E-TOURISM: THE CASE OF PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

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### **METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

- ► In the field of participatory design
- The methodology brings together the website "owners" and the target users throughout the design process. This way of working leads to a negotiation between the users' expectations and the "owners" communication strategy.
- ► In the field of participatory design with people with visual impairments
  - Focus group vs. observation
- Focus group creates a more relaxed environment where users do not feel "under study".
- There are not observers who draw conclusions from the users' ways of use but users who draw conclusions from their own ways of use.
- Focus group vs. including a person with visual impairments in the research team
- Focus group technique has the advantage of providing feedback from many and diverse users.
  - Dialogic prototyping vs. programmed prototypes
- Dialogic prototyping presents the benefits of a prototype that requires no programming (such as paper mockups): it is produced quickly and may be modified during the discussion.
- Dialogic prototyping validates the appropriateness of key elements for accessibility, such as names of hyperlinks, buttons and labels; alternatives for images; headers content; among others.
- The screen reader simulation made by the designer is more realistic than the narration of a scenario and allows the user to build a more concrete idea of the interface.
- ► In the field of accessible e-tourism
- Participatory design is a relevant perspective for developing accessible e-tourism because it allows providing not only accessibility compliant websites but also tourist information that is accessible from the user point of view.

### **CASE UNDER STUDY**

Participatory design including people with visual impairments to provide accessible e-tourism in the city of Rosario (Argentina).

### PROPOSED DESIGN METHODOLOGY It is performed under the focus group modality. In addition to the target users (users with blindness and low vision) and the website designers, the website 'owners" (Secretariat of Tourism of Survey of Rosario) are involved in order to listen to first-hand user feedback. The research expectations team fulfilled the role of designer and moderator. They invited users to give and ways of use their opinion on web accessibility barriers in general, on their ways of using the Web and on their expectations for tourist information. The designers together with the website "owners" made an initial design proposal taking into account both the Design proposal communicative strategy. The design proposal takes first the form of visual mockups, as it was done in the case Designers discuss the design proposal with users using the dialogic prototyping Getting an early technique. In the case under study, the design proposal was discussed with feedback some of the users with blindness who had participated in step 1. The definitive design is developed Development taking into account accessibility standards. The case under study is currently at this stage. • Users perform a test on the final version Final Test of the website in their daily work environments and report the results. This step was still not executed in the case under study.

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# **DEFINITIONS**

Dialogic prototyping: a kind of low fidelity and "Wizard of Oz" prototyping in which the designer simulates the screen reader reading and the user interacts orally.

Participatory design: a design perspective that aims to collaborate with end users throughout the design process, rather than designing for them.

e-Tourism: the promotion of tourism and its associated services via the Web.

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