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Challenges in Injecting Accessibility into the Software Delivery Lifecycle

CSUN Assistive Technology Conference
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Introductions

Michele Lucchini, Vice President - Products, UsableNet

Michele oversees the strategic product development initiatives focusing on ensuring UsableNet's services and technologies support clients in their digital accessibility program. Leveraging his 20+ years of experience, Michele is also the co-author of *Content for Everyone: A Practical Guide for Creative Entrepreneurs to Produce Accessible and Usable Web Content.*

Jeff Adams, Vice President - Accessibility Operations, UsableNet

Jeff advices companies around the world on best practices in website accessibility and integrating accessibility into their processes. He's been with UsableNet for more than a decade and not only consults with UsableNet clients, but also leads the development of the company's educational programs. In addition, Jeff's a creative entrepreneur and co-wrote the book *Content for Everyone: A Practical Guide for Creative Entrepreneurs to Produce Accessible and Usable Web Content.*

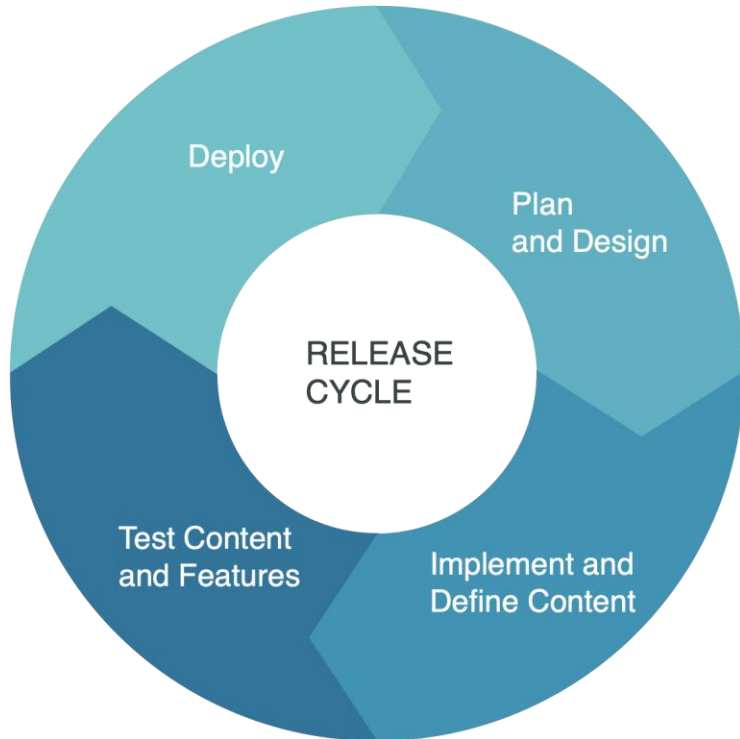**UsableNet**

Agenda

1) What Does it Mean to Inject Accessibility into the SDLC

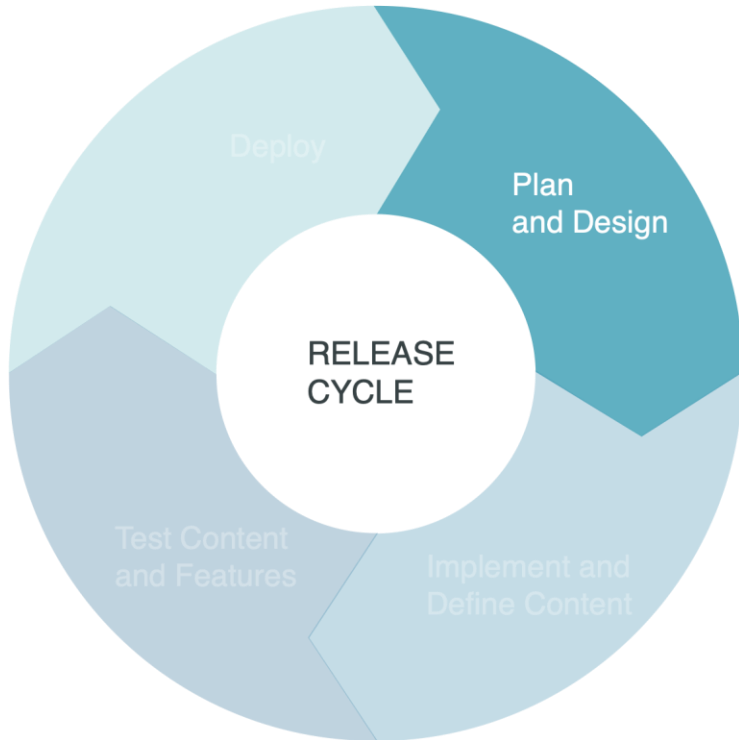2) Challenges and Recommendations

3) Q&A

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What Does It Mean to Inject Accessibility Into the SDLC

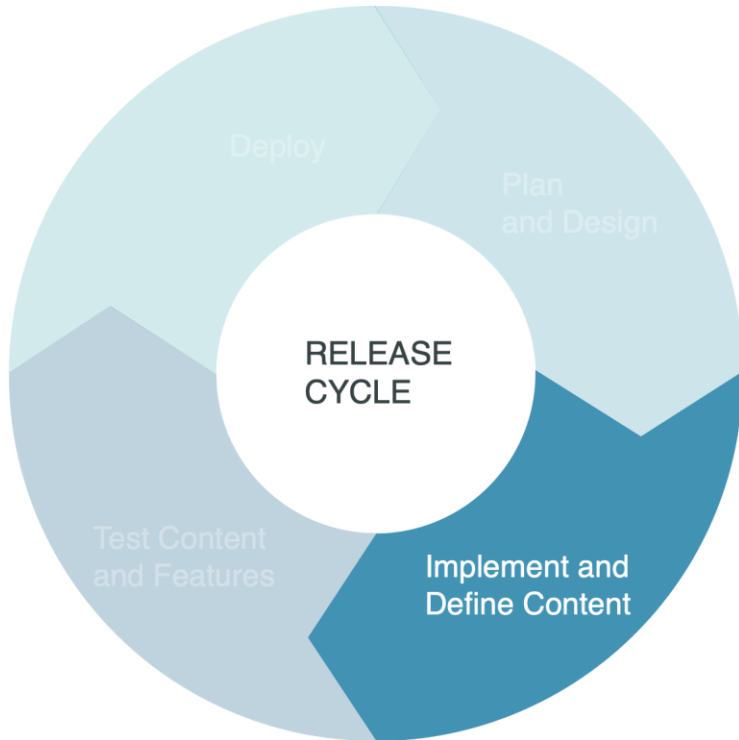# Injecting Accessibility Into Your SDLC Release Cycle
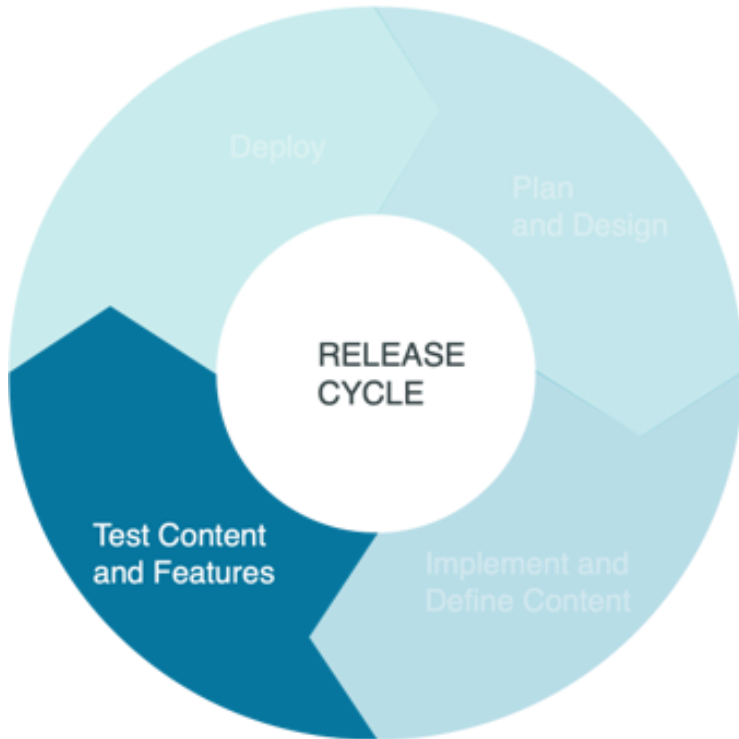
SDLC Stage 1 – Plan and Design

Task	Roles
Define project requirements	• Project manager • Marketing / Business Product Owners & Technical Product Owners • Internal & external strategy teams • Accessibility lead/team
Design the user experience	• Project manager • Content team • UI/UX Team • QA Lead • Accessibility lead/team

Deploy

Plan and Design

RELEASE CYCLE

Test Content and Features

Implement and Define Content

SDLC Stage 2 – Implement and Define Content

RELEASE CYCLE

Deploy

Plan and Design

Implement and Define Content

Test Content and Features

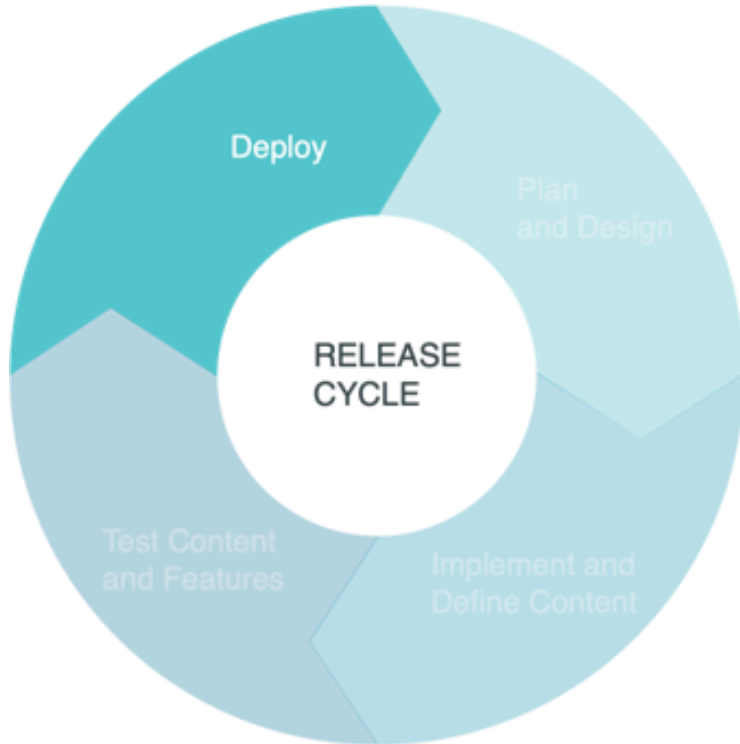| Task	Roles
Front End and Back End Implementation	• Project manager • Development team • UI/UX team • QA team • Accessibility lead/team
Content Creation	• Project manager • Content team • UI/UX Team • QA Lead • Accessibility lead/team
Multimedia and PDFs	• Project manager • Content team • Video editor • Transcriber • Captioning specialist • Audio description specialist • Accessibility lead/team

SDLC Stage 3 – Test Content and Features

RELEASE CYCLE

Deploy

Plan and Design

Test Content and Features

Implement and Define Content

Task	Roles
Quality Assurance Pre-launch testing.	• Project manager • QA team (skilled in basic accessibility testing techniques) • User testing with users from the disabled community) • Accessibility lead/team

SDLC Stage 4 – Deploy

Deploy

Plan and Design

RELEASE CYCLE

Test Content and Features

Implement and Define Content

Task	Roles
Quality Assurance Post-launch testing	• Project manager • QA team (skilled in basic accessibility testing techniques) • User testing with users from the disabled community) • Accessibility lead/team

Transformation

In order to make accessibility into a requirement at all levels, an organization needs to engage in multiple areas:

- Company Culture

- Budget

- Teams

- Planning

- Processes

Challenge: Limited Accessibility Understanding

Recommendations

- Leadership needs to set forth clear policies and expectations.

- Training is needed across the organization to ensure a level setting of what Accessibility is.

Challenge: Accessibility Ownership

Recommendations

- Accessibility should not be considered at story level but be a consistent part of the mindset and practices in place throughout the organization.

- It's the "Accessibility First" mindset

Challenge: Oversimplification of Methodologies and Process

Recommendation

- Ensure that Accessibility is approached in the correct way to ensure that all sites and apps are remediated and maintained in line with best practices to ensure accessibility standards are conformed to and all customers are included in the digital experience.

Challenge: Accessibility Built into Project Requirements

Recommendations

- Put a organization-wide Accessibility Policy in place.

- Short term: Include "Accessibility" on all project requirement templates as part of the definition of done.

- Long term: Over time, and with experience, working with Accessibility top of mind might allow it to be removed from documentation for internal teams if it's considered a default.

Challenge: QA Needs the Power to Say "No"

Recommendations

- The QA team needs to be empowered with the time needed to do their testing to ensure accessibility quality.

- Remember: Automation doesn't cover the majority of testing requirements. It's critical for QA to test using keyboard navigation, screen readers, and other methods to ensure accessibility is maintained.

Challenge: Time

Recommendations

- Prioritize remediation so the time spent has true impact.

- It's a myth that accessibility takes additional time. Once teams understand how to design, develop, and test for accessibility it can take the same amount of time to build accessible as it does to not.

Challenge: Costs of Not Having An Accessibility First Mindset

Recommendations

- For new projects accessibility must be considered from the beginning and be mandated, to avoid getting further behind.

- From an existing app/site perspective, it's important to get remediations underway, and beyond that to consider accessibility first when doing maintenance to ensure that accessibility is maintained or even increased.

Challenge: Reliance on Vendors

Recommendation

- Make sure you're working with vendors who conform to WCAG standards, and that your accessibility standards and acceptance criteria are part of your contracts and requirements.

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Challenge: Using Same Toolsets

Recommendation

- A unified baseline for the toolsets and processes are crucial to ensure there are no misunderstandings around the accessibility goals and how they will be reached.

Challenge: Metrics

Recommendation

- You wouldn't put KPI's around PCI compliance or information security, and accessibility should be held in the same regard. The only metric you should consider is what your current conformance level is against your baseline, and how you'll strive to reach or exceed it for the benefit of your customers.

More to Come at CSUN

Please join us Thursday at 4:20pm in Grand GH

Project Manager/Product Owner: Crucial Roles in Accessibility
This session covers what Project Managers and Product Owners need to know about digital accessibility so that they can work with teams to prioritize work as part of accessibility projects (such as remediations). The session also focuses on the impact of accessibility as a requirement on their day-to-day activities, as well as in the long-term success of an accessibility program.

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Q&A

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Thank You