

Building Accessible Online Forms & Surveys

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Today's Geek Content Level



98%

Accessible forms.

It's not that hard, right?

- Add some `<labels>` tags
- Some `<fieldset>` & `<legend>`
- Maybe some Access keys?

Accessible forms

**A trip down
the rabbit hole...**

- `<labels>` tags are great, but compete with question titles in JAWS
- `<fieldset>` & `<legend>` help, but legend text won't wrap
- Validation? Inline vs. refresh
- Access keys? ...maybe not

Let's backup...

Different types of accessibility

- Screen readability
- Keyboard navigability
- Understandability
- Oh, don't forget about usability

Good Practices Tips 1-5

- Use Web Standards: XHTML, CSS
- Avoid JavaScript
- Use label tags
- Good tabbing and focus
- Choose good font size & contrast

Order of elements & labels

First Name

Last Name

First Name

Last Name

Server-side language

- PHP
- JSP
- ASP

First Name

Last Name

Would you like to receive our newsletter,
with the latest news about Web Development ?

Yes No

Labels help... mostly

Simplest... (but not in IE 6!)

```
<label>First Name: <input  
  name="name"/></label>
```

Preferred:

```
<label for="first">First Name: <input id="first">
```

JAWS Screen Reader

Screen reading mode: reads the page

Forms mode: reads form input to input including labels (can skip titles and instructions.)

Newsletter Format

Plain Text

HTML

Fieldsets & Legends

```
<fieldset>
```

```
  <legend>Newsletter Format</legend>
```

```
  <label><input type="text"> Text </label>
```

```
  <label><input type="text"> HTML</label>
```

```
</fieldset>
```

But...

Legends read, but not wrap

Given the current state of the US economy, what do you think abo



Agree

Disagree

HACK! – Add a `<div>` tag around content in the legend. Will not validate.

Useful technique: CSS Hide

- DON'T USE: `display:none`
- DO USE: `left:-9999px;`

```
<label><span>Newsletter Format</span>  
<input> Plain Text</label>
```

Plus this CSS

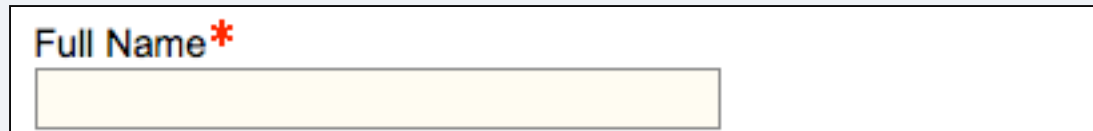
```
label span {position: absolute; left:-9999px;}
```

Good Practices Tips 6-10

- Set language in the `<html>` tag and character set `<meta>` tag
- Images sparingly with alt tags
- Access keys are problematic
- Mark Required Q's accessibly
- Use well thought out validation

Requiring questions

- Don't use just an asterisk

A screenshot of a form field. The label "Full Name*" is positioned above a text input box. The asterisk is red. The input box is empty and has a light yellow background.

- Method 1
 - use an image with alt text
- Method 2
 - hide the "Required" with CSS

Validation

Some conflict between sighted and non-sighted

- JavaScript added text not read
- Alerts are read

First Name **! Blank field**

Last Name



Better validation model



There are errors are your page. [Go to first error.](#)

First error: The following required field is blank.

1. Enter your name

[next error](#)

Surveys

Like forms, but harder...

- More questions, more pages, more goals
- Best design practices for sighted and unsighted users are different

Table/Matrix Questions

Please rate the following

	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied
Course selection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instructors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Tables are dead, Long live tables...

- Tables make surveys shorter, easier
- Watch out for linearization
- Labels don't work in header or rows
- Add labels to each cell, then hide

Live examples in SurveyGizmo

<http://Demo.Accessibility.Sgizmo.com>

Resource links

http://wac.osu.edu/workshops/survey_of_surveys/

<http://www.sitepoint.com/print/accessible-online-forms/>

<http://www.devaricles.com/c/a/HTML/Building-Accessible-Web-Forms/>

http://www.utexas.edu/disability/ai/resource/how_to/form/radio_buttons/radio_buttons.html

<http://www.w3.org/TR/wai-aria/>

<http://www.usability.com.au/resources/forms.cfm>

<http://www.alistapart.com/articles/prettyaccessibleforms>

<http://www.webaim.org/techniques/forms/>

<http://webaim.org/techniques/aria/>

<http://webaim.org/techniques/javascript/>

<http://www.alistapart.com/articles/waiaria>

<http://www.alistapart.com/articles/accessibledatavisualization>

Contact info

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