Accessibility in an Agile World

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Agile Product Development Methodology
How Agile Fails Accessibility
Decentralized Product Ownership
Teams control their own backlog
Separate Accessibility Stories

Sample Release Plan

1. Cool new feature
2. Another cool new features
3. This bug
4. That bug
5. Feature we don’t really need
6. Spike for something we’ll build next release
... 
99. Big mountain of accessibility debt
Unless a proper system is put in place, accessibility, under agile, will always take a back seat to the creation of new features.
Executive Support
This email is not the solution.

From: Your CEO
To: All Employees
Subject: Accessibility

As of tomorrow, all products that we ship must be accessible. It makes good business sense and it’s the right thing to do! Now, go forth and make everything accessible.

Regards,
Your CEO
An email from a CEO can’t…

- Train developers
- Train quality engineers
- Approve designs
- Build test automation
- Manually verify products
Executives remove blockers.

You build an environment in which accessibility can thrive.
Building an Environment

Culture  Tools  Process
Gaining Allies & Raising Awareness
Build a Base

• Virtual team of people who are passionate
• Spread knowledge about accessibility
• Make accessibility part of every conversation
• Build empathy through examples
• Frame accessibility through your company’s core mission
Make it Contagious

• Other people (not you) talking about accessibility
• People asking their leadership about accessibility
Embed on a Scrum Team

• Teach one scrum team how to ship accessible features
• Learn at a micro level how Agile works at your company
Embed on a Scrum Team

- Knowledge of your company’s brand of agile
- Success building an accessible feature
- Proven to the team that accessibility is not a big hurdle
- Allies in UX, scrum leadership, development, and quality
- Path to embed on another, larger, more influential team
Create an Award
Recognize teams that ship accessible products. Reward should draw interest.
Create an Award

- Promotion of accessibility by publicizing the winners
- Proven incentive for scrum teams to build accessible
Reusable Components
A Menu

Radio Items
✓ Pick Me!
   No, Me!

Checkbox Items
✓ You can
✓ Pick all
✓ of us!

Action Items
Clear all
An Autocomplete Typeahead
A Modal

GIMME ALL YOUR FOCUS!
A Non-Modal Dialog
Tabset
What camp are you in?

Reusable Components

1. No reusable components
2. Custom set of reusable components
3. Components from a 3rd party UI library
Building Your Own Components

- Use your contacts to join the appropriate scrum team
- Guide them toward the development of accessible components
3rd Party Components

- Know which components are used
- Gauge their level of accessibility
- Catalogue functionally equivalent alternatives for inaccessible components
- Work with stakeholders to enlist accessible alternatives
Take Advantage of Redesigns

- Product redesigns are common
- Be prepared with a set of accessible, reusable components
- Beware of redesigns
Testing Framework
Quality Engineering

- Reliability
- Efficiency
- Security
- Maintainability
Accessibility verification is not a traditional part of quality testing.
What camp are you in?

Test Automation

1. Accessibility can’t be automated. Too many manual checks are needed.
2. Accessibility tools are great, but it’s hard to get organizations to use them.
3. Accessibility automation is awesome when done properly.
Automation is Key to Accessibility
Build test automation that is specific to your environment

• Opt everyone in
• Automatically issue test failures where possible
• Test for patterns that indicate accessibility bugs
• Perform manual spot checks
• Track everything
Automation is Key to Accessibility
DOM test the simple things

- Images have alt attribute
- Labels associated with form elements
- Buttons and links aren’t empty
- Color contrast between text and background
- Page and frames have title
- Data tables have properly associated headers
- Use of fieldset and legend
- Proper heading usage
This email is better.

From: Your CEO
To: All Employees
Subject: Accessibility

Starting tomorrow, all products will be opted into our new accessibility test automation suite. Furthermore, tests will ensure everyone is using our new UI components.

Regards,
Your CEO
Process Change
How does your company implement a new process?
Develop a Plan

• Problem statement
• Teams or groups who will be impacted
• Proposal detail
• Tracking and success metrics
• Exception policy
• Release sign-off process
• Communication plan
Executive Sponsor

Their main job is to believe in your idea.

Executive sponsorship can come from…
- Product or Scrum management
- Development or Quality
- User Experience
- Your managerial chain
An Example Meta Process

1. Define the problem
2. Identify impacted parties
3. Engage Forums - present proposal, gather feedback
4. Go/No go
5. Re-socialize revised proposal, get alignment, final buy-in
6. Go/No go
7. Visibility to executives
8. Communication and rollout
From: Your CEO
To: All Employees
Subject: Accessibility

Starting this release we will be following the new accessibility process. Thanks to everyone for their input in helping to make this process fit everybody’s workflows.

Details in the Accessibility Process Document.

Regards,
Your CEO
Cultivate support
Provide good components
Leverage your test framework
Institute process change
Keep it going
Thank You