

Chapter 5


E–Business and Web Accessibility

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ABSTRACT

This chapter emphasizes that the rapid growth of e-business has intensified digital exclusion for people with disabilities, making web accessibility a strategic and ethical necessity. Using WCAG 2.2 as a framework, it analyzes key barriers across disability types and how inclusive UI/UX, assistive technologies, and global regulations (ADA, AODA, EN 301 549) shape accessible e-commerce. The chapter argues that accessibility improves customer experience, SEO, conversion rates, and brand trust, especially within the “purple economy.” It concludes that accessibility must be embedded into digital transformation to ensure inclusive, resilient, and future-ready e-business ecosystems.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of global digital markets has fundamentally rewritten the rules of commerce. It is a story not just of technological change, but of a seismic shift in how

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the world connects, trades, and creates value. At the heart of this transformation lies e-business the central engine powering contemporary economic exchange.

This digital revolution has dismantled the old barriers of geography and time, giving birth to a dynamic, 24/7 global marketplace. In this new arena, a craftsman in Jakarta can instantly connect with a customer in Oslo. Information, capital, and goods now flow across borders in seconds, creating an interconnected ecosystem where opportunity is truly global.

E-business has emerged as the central nervous system of this new world, defined by key developments: it has democratized access, empowering small entrepreneurs to compete on the world stage; it is driven by data, enabling hyper-personalized customer experiences; it has redefined supply chains, making them more transparent and responsive; and it has spawned entirely new business models, from the sharing economy to digital subscriptions.

Yet, this rapid integration also brings profound challenges from cybersecurity threats and complex regulations to the ethical imperative of digital inclusion. It is within this complex, fast-paced, and borderless context that businesses must now operate. To build lasting success, they must move beyond simply having an online presence. They must embrace strategic, responsible, and forward-looking principles. And as commerce becomes inseparable from the digital experience, one such principle rises to critical importance: building an e-business that is accessible to all. This is no longer a niche concern, but a fundamental pillar of ethical, resilient, and competitive commerce in the 21st century.

The internet and digitalization are fundamentally changing the way people, businesses, and governments interact. This has led to a new phase of globalization driven by the movement of data across national borders, changing the nature, patterns, and actors in international trade in goods and services (Fayyaz, 2019). While democratizing access to goods and services, this transformation has simultaneously exposed a significant digital divide: the systemic exclusion of individuals with disabilities from full participation in the digital economy. Therefore, the intersection of e-business and web accessibility represents a critical boundary in the evolution of commerce, where technological innovation, ethical imperatives, and commercial strategies converge. The relationship between IT and disability is revealed as a normative phenomenon, providing IT developers with powerful tools to manage those with non-standard bodies consumers with disabilities (Viluckienė, 2015). This chapter explores the crucial integration of web accessibility principles within the e-business ecosystem, arguing that inclusive design is not simply a matter of regulatory compliance but a fundamental component of sustainable, ethical, and profitable digital enterprises.

The need for accessible e-commerce goes beyond legal mandates and is rooted in profound shifts in societal and market expectations. Therefore, building platform

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