

COMPANY

Breaking down barriers on Fidelity.com

By Sam Ali, Fidelity Central Senior Associate Editor 4/20/2017

Most of us probably take browsing web pages on the Internet for granted.

But people with disabilities don't have that luxury. If you have a visual, hearing, motor or cognitive impairment, navigating the web can be difficult, if not outright impossible.

Think about it: How would you use your own computer or mobile device if you couldn't see? Or hear? Or use a mouse or keyboard? Or touch the screen?

But here at Fidelity, doing business on Fidelity.com just got a lot easier for customers and associates living with sensory, motor, or cognitive disabilities, thanks to the launch of a new [Accessibility information page](#).

For Margy Bergel, who leads the Accessibility Team in the User Experience Design (UXD) group, building lifelong relationships with customers means being prepared to support them as their physical and perceptual needs change —and Fidelity.com's new Accessibility Home Page does just that.

"This page is one step in that direction," she said. "Before this, we didn't state anywhere that you could request Braille or large print statements, or raised line checks. There was no information on how to contact us for help with technical accessibility issues on our sites or apps. We didn't mention or acknowledge customers with disabilities at all."

The link for the [Accessibility page](#) is located in the footer section on Fidelity.com's home page, and if that sounds a little counter-intuitive, it's actually not.

"When clients need assistive technology, it's ingrained in us to look in the footer area to see what the company provides,"

explained Jeff Wissel, co-chairman of the Fidelity Enable, a newly-formed employee resource group for people with disabilities. "From a loyalty standpoint, it's huge for folks like me and there are a lot of 'me's' out there. Seeing this information on Fidelity.com, you feel like, 'I found my people.' You connect."

The main purpose of the UXD accessibility team is to deliver a seamless experience for people with disabilities on all of Fidelity's Web and mobile apps, regardless of age, technology, or ability. Margy said her group worked closely with associates like Wissel as well as the Central Publishing and Digitization of Service (DoS) teams to create the page, adding that over the next few months, it will be updated to include even more information.

"The tips there now address the most common issues we see. But over time, we hope to add to what's there," she said.

Already though, the page is getting good reviews.

UXD conducted usability testing back in December to solicit qualitative feedback from actual customers who use assistive technology to access Fidelity.com and the response was "very positive," Margy said.

"I think it's good from a marketing standpoint in addition to an informational standpoint," said Amy, one of the customers who is blind and participated in the study.



Customer with low vision uses screen magnification software to view chart.

"If somebody has gone out of their way to work on accessibility and people know that, they are much more likely to select that company over another one."

John, another blind customer who participated in the study and also uses assistive technology said that before the page existed it was difficult for him to contact Fidelity when he ran into any kind of roadblock.

"But having that (the page) there ... to me as a person with a disability, is a very valuable asset to have on a web site," he said.