A gang of A11ys

How we learned to stop worrying and love that law

Leonie Theissen
Hamburg, 03.04.25

Who's 'we'?

- Accessibility guild at XING (New Work SE)

- Since (roughly) 2016

- Enthusiastic volunteers across all fields (Marketing, UX, Product, Tech etc.)
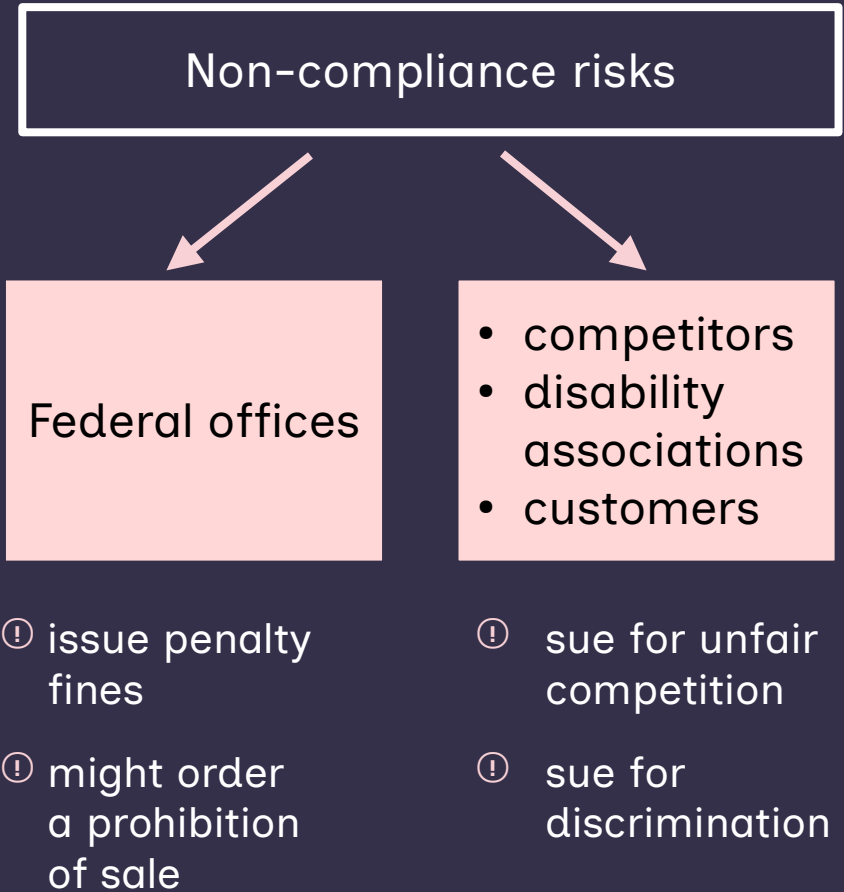
The law is coming

The EAA is coming and nobody is moving — time to panic?

Better baby steps than no steps

- Disclaimer: NO LEGAL ADVICE

- having first efforts in your mandatory accessibility declaration will certainly afford you more goodwill than those that simply ignore it

- you have to keep moving though, as non-compliance makes companies vulnerable to various risks:

Non-compliance risks

Federal offices

- competitors
- disability associations
- customers

- ⚠ issue penalty fines

- ⚠ might order a prohibition of sale

- ⚠ sue for unfair competition

- ⚠ sue for discrimination

Typical reactions

- Does my company have to do anything and what?

- Do we *really* have to? It's expensive...

- Disabled people don't use my product/ service anyway.

- It's just a handful of people for whom this is relevant, it's not worth binding resources over this.

- Ok. How much would the penalties cost us?

But what if there was business potential €€€?

Some examples

Financial potential

Woefully untapped financial potential!

- $8 trillion spending power

- $13 trillion including social periphery

- With an estimated 1.83 billion people worldwide (3.3 bill. social periphery) a greater market potential than China

Who does it concern?

+ curb cut effect

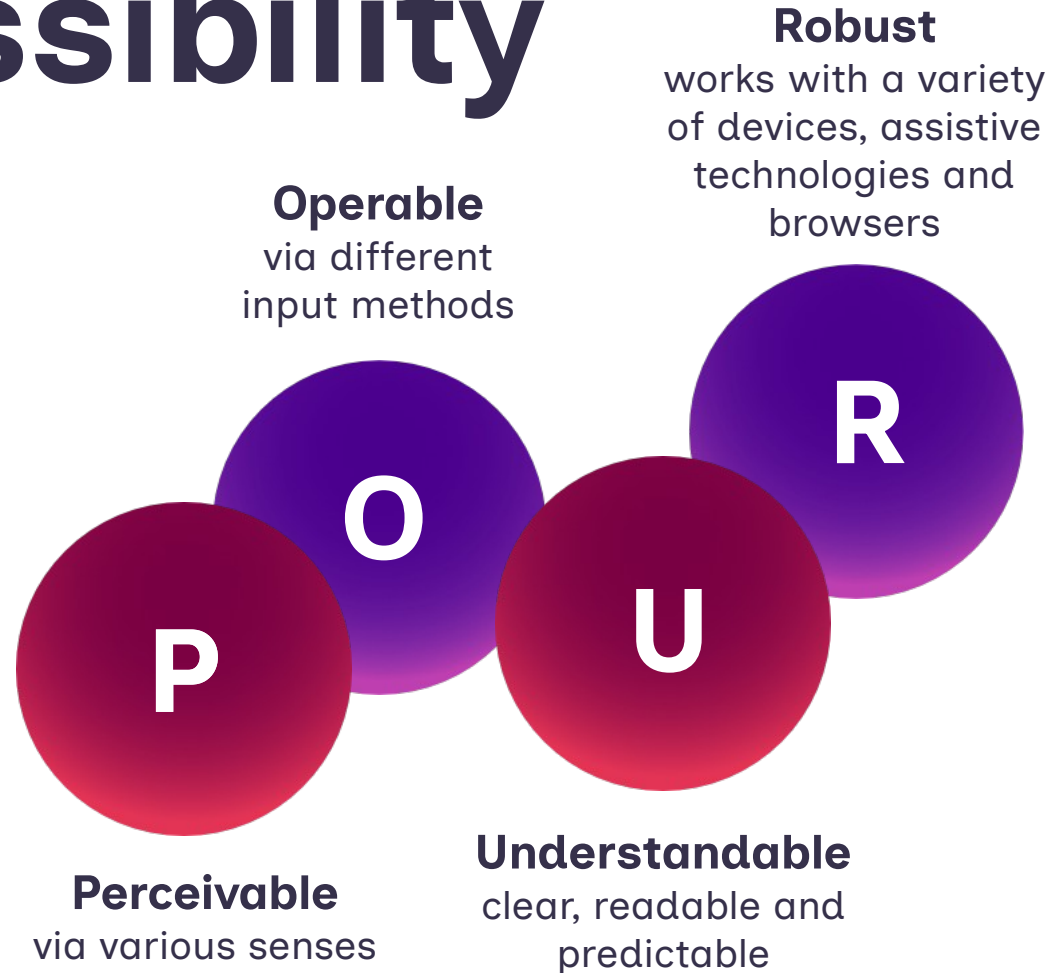|	Touch	See	Hear	Speak	Cognitive
Permanent	One arm	Blind	Deaf	Non-verbal	Cognitive disability
Temporary	Arm injury	Cataract	Ear infection	Laryngitis	Learning, drugs, distress
Situational	New parent	Distracted driver	Bartender	Heavy accent	Interruption, distraction

UX 💜 Accessibility

Aspects such as:

- easy to understand
- clear structures
- legibility
- operability

help every single user in completing a task even faster and more easily.

Good accessibility = better UX

Operable
via different input methods

Robust
works with a variety of devices, assistive technologies and browsers

P **O** **U** **R**

Perceivable
via various senses

Understandable
clear, readable and predictable

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≈5% bounce rate*

Plot twist!

So what did we do?

Ramp up the knowledge

- Share, talk, build a knowledge hub
- Offer workshops to help people get acquainted
- Give talks on what matters to the audience
- Find fun opportunities to promote the topic in creative ways
- Open channels to offer support

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Find allies

- The more the better. Network the hell out of your company/ peers.

- The more high ranking the more impactful
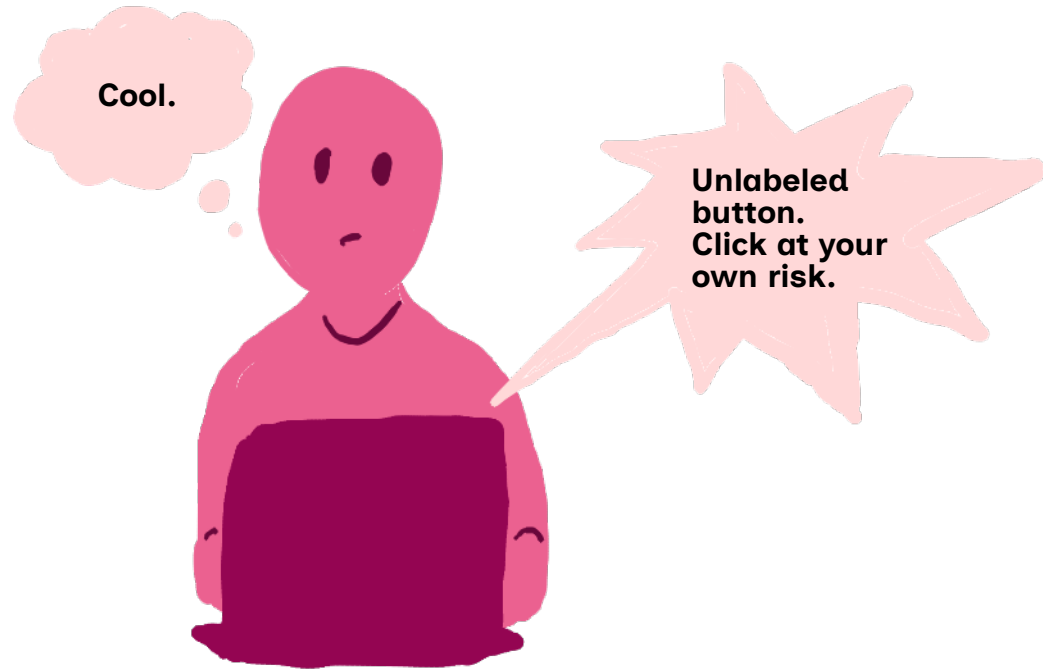
- Offer help to get started

Make it tangible

- Our most powerful tool: empathy with real people

Make it tangible

- Our most powerful tool: empathy with real people

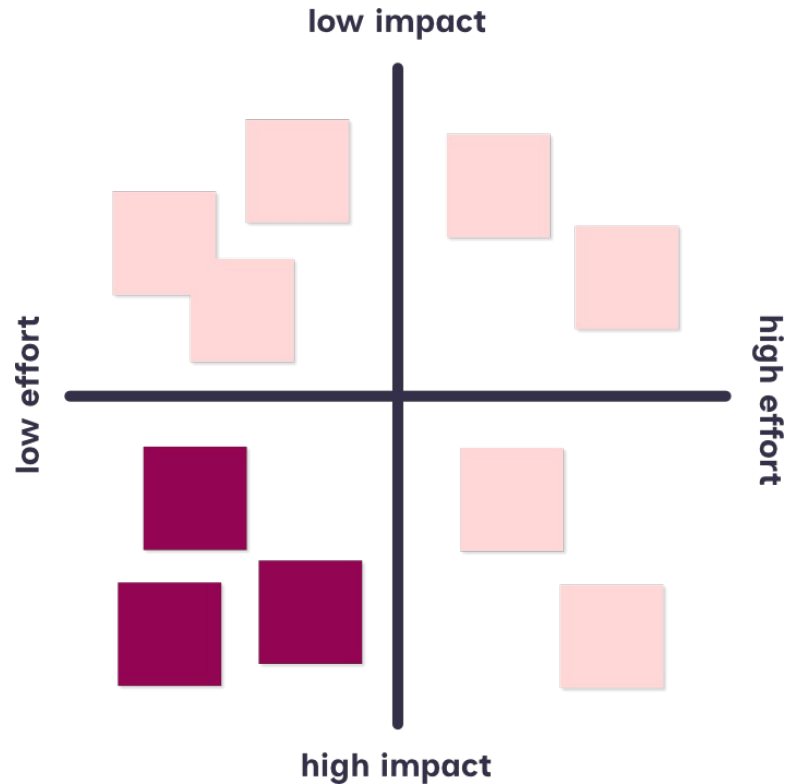- Find powerful images to help with abstract concepts

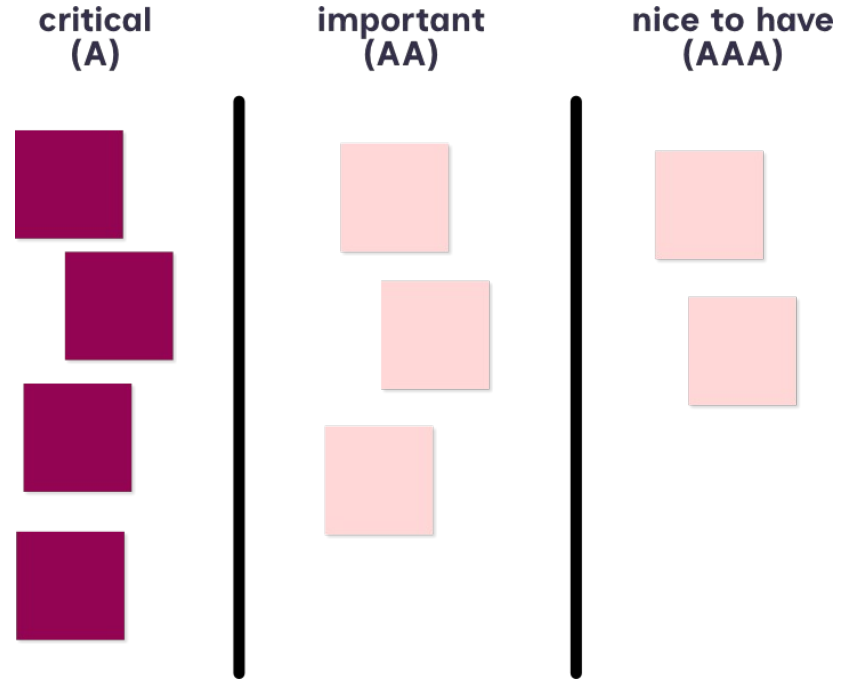**7.9 mill people**

Un-abstract numbers

x99

Make it tangible

- Our most powerful tool: empathy with real people

- Find powerful images to help with abstract concepts

- Have tipps at the ready to support them in starting TODAY

low impact

low effort

high effort

high impact

Make it tangible

- Our most powerful tool: empathy with real people

- Find powerful images to help with abstract concepts

- Have tipps at the ready to support them in starting TODAY

critical (A)   important (AA)   nice to have (AAA)

Don't overwhelm

- WCAG can feel overwhelming (and ironically inaccessible)

- don't flood people with resources, often causes frustration, overload and results in inaction

- offer to walk with them and provide encouragement

In conclusion

Yes, many of us are gonna be late.

Let's get going anyway.

Inclusion vs. Discrimination

1:0

Helpful ressources

Want to connect?

Leonie Theissen

→ Governmental guidance in German language

→ How to set up a Screen Reader for testing

→ Free colour contrast analyser to download

→ Handy checklist sorted by discipline

→ Visually impaired person using her iPhone