

BLOGGER BREAKTHROUGH PODCAST



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ABOUT ERIN

Erin Perkins is a deaf entrepreneur, disabled rights activist, and accessibility educator dedicated to making the business world more inclusive. Her fierce advocacy comes from her life experiences as a deaf woman and owner of a small online business, Mabely Q. You can find Erin online at www.mabelyq.com.

Accessibility Myths Busted: What You Need to Know

WITH ERIN PERKINS



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Blogger Breakthrough Summit Podcast Transcript

[00:00:00.00] - Liz Stapleton

All right, welcome back to the Blogger Breakthrough Summit podcast. I'm your host, Liz Stapleton. And today we're going to chat about something super important that doesn't always get the spotlight it deserves: accessibility on your blog. Trust me, making your blog accessible is not only the right thing to do, but it is also a smart move to grow your audience. So with the help of the wonderful Erin Perkins, let's dive in.

[00:00:26.22] - Erin Perkins

Screen readers are very commonly used used by a lot of people more than you realize. And so the one thing I am going to tell people, do not have accessibility overlaid on your website. That's just a hard no. No accessibility overlay. The reason being, these companies are going to sell you on it. I'm going to be like, no, they're going to charge you outrageous amount of money, It's not a good thing because when you think about it, most people with disabilities, we have already created our own system for what works. We have our own setup. For me, for example, my setup was when I use this loop that I have around my neck, the black loop is stream stuff to my hearing aid, my cochlear implant, and it works for me. When I'm asked to wear a different iPhone, it's not going to work for me because it's not compatible. I've already created a system that works for me. The same thing true for a lot of people with disabilities. They may use only their keyboard because they can't use a tracking pad or a mouse. Sometimes when you have an overlay, it interferes with the tech that they bought and set up for themselves because it worked well for them.

[00:02:02.23] - Erin Perkins

Overlays are literally a bandaid fix. If you want to think about it that way, they're a bandaid fix. Those bandaid always fall off, don't they? As you know, they sucks. So let's not do that. Do it from the beginning. Build your website. Create access that way with your website. Don't just slap on bandaid fixers....

[00:02:29.23] - Liz Stapleton

Yeah, and I will say, I think it's easier to build an accessible website from the beginning than it is to go back and fix it. Because I'm definitely in that boat where I didn't know any better when I started some of my websites. And I'm still, years later, being like, oh, wait, that is missing an alt text. Or my very first blog, do as I say, not as I do, I totally use for a while headings based on how they looked and not necessarily...

[00:02:59.24] - Erin Perkins

I did, too. 100%.

[00:03:03.11] - Erin Perkins

I think we all did. So the website, accessibility content, a tech building guideline, WCAG guideline, that is still a relatively new concept in terms of age. I don't even know how long ago it came out, but that concept is still new. Honestly, it is really hard for a lot of people to understand. I like tech, but I'm not a super nerdy, all into coding. I don't do any

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of that. I can't do any of that. My brain doesn't look like that. What I did was I went in and tried to learn so that I can turn around and teach all of you how to make your website accessible without even needing code. You don't need code. You don't need to need no code. You just need to know how to do certain things to ensure that it's accessible. And you're right, it is better to do it from the beginning. But if you have to take a step back, it's okay. Yes.

[00:04:10.22] - Liz Stapleton

You said there are some certain things that people do need to know how to do without coding to make their site accessible? You want to give a couple of examples?

[00:04:21.14] - Erin Perkins

So one of the examples is you said that dropping in heading and maybe you would create a graphic so that it is your look. Don't do that. Just find a good picture, resize it according to how it is, put in the text that you need, and then look at how it looks mobile versus desktop. That way you can see how it looks and make sure it flows on either one. You always want to check both sides. You want to make sure things are mobile-friendly. Most websites do allow you to push things up on either side. I use Squarespace. I don't use any coding whatsoever. It's literally like I can rearrange things on mobile and it doesn't affect my desktop. I really like that. If you're just starting out as a blogger, that's something you might want to consider. How are things laid out so that you can be able to make it how you want it to look without throwing in all the things.

[00:05:33.15] - Liz Stapleton

Remember, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines might sound intimidating, but they're here to help. They're like the rulebook for creating accessible websites. Yes, it is a lot to take in, but you don't have to be a coding genius to make your site more accessible. Start with the basics and build from there. Be sure to join us next time to learn all about tailoring your email automations.