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Challenges and Benefits of a Methodology for Scoring Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Conformance

The World Wide Web (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) has developed comprehensive guidance on promoting web accessibility. As part of the WAI, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 specifies success criteria for evaluating the conformance of web content to the guidelines. In this paper, NIST explores a methodology to score adherence of a web page to WCAG 2.0 conformance requirements. The paper summarizes their results (in terms of challenges and benefits) and provides a detailed description of their research on a sample web page. Finally, the paper lists some issues for further research derived from their approach. The hypothesis used for this research was that the methodology is a feasible, practical, and accurate way to score WCAG 2.0 conformance. NIST's conclusion after completing the research is that the methodology, while feasible in theory, in practice is too cumbersome, too subjective, and not sufficiently reliable to be useful for real-world WCAG 2.0 conformance testing, but that the methodology may still inform the thinking of web accessibility evaluators in the future in a general sense.

The attached zip file includes:

- Intro Page.pdf
- Terms and Conditions.pdf
- WCAG20Conformance.pdf