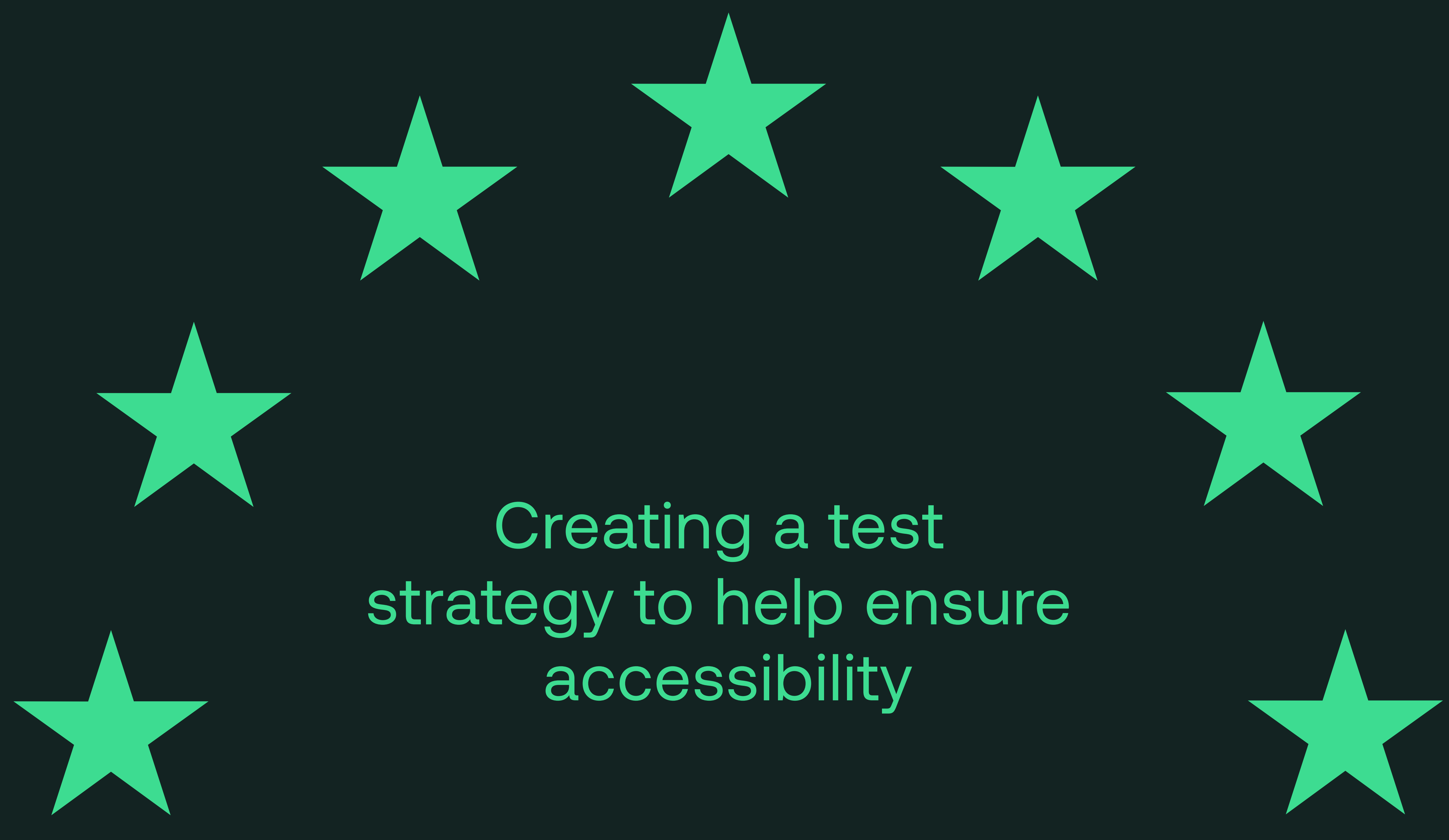


The Guide to European Accessibility Act Compliance



Creating a test
strategy to help ensure
accessibility

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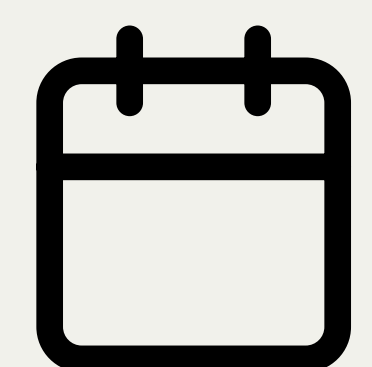


Accessibility Is Equality

Digital experiences now dominate the way people live, work, and interact. But for too many users, these digital experiences are inaccessible, creating barriers to daily living and societal inclusivity alike.

To better meet the needs of all its citizens, the European Union (EU) enacted the European Accessibility Act (EAA) to improve how organizations across the globe create accessible digital products and experiences. And with a looming due date for enforcement, the time to prepare is now.

Whether your organization is based in Europe or does business in the European continent, it's key to understand your compliance requirements so that you can meet the needs of your users, avoid penalties, and grow your market share. Here's everything you need to know to get ready.



**June 28,
2025**

The European Accessibility Act will take effect on June 28, 2025, and applies to most companies that deliver digital products and services for customers in the EU.



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What Is The European Accessibility Act?

The European Accessibility Act (EAA) is a landmark law that defines the accessibility requirements for everyday digital products and services. According to the EU, the European Accessibility Act will make life easier for the roughly 87 million people living with disabilities—almost one in five Europeans.¹

The new rules aim to coordinate accessibility requirements across the EU's member states to create a common standard that will simplify trade between EU members. In addition, the EAA aims to give businesses the guidance required to create accessible products in a way that spurs innovation in how digital products can better serve the needs of users.

20%

Of Your Potential
Market Requires
Accessible Digital
Products



The EAA isn't a technical framework.

Instead, it outlines the accessibility functionality that products and services should include to meet the needs of all users. How organizations make their products more accessible is up to the creative minds of their developers, such as creating more accessible user interfaces, ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies, and offering alternative formats for information and communication.

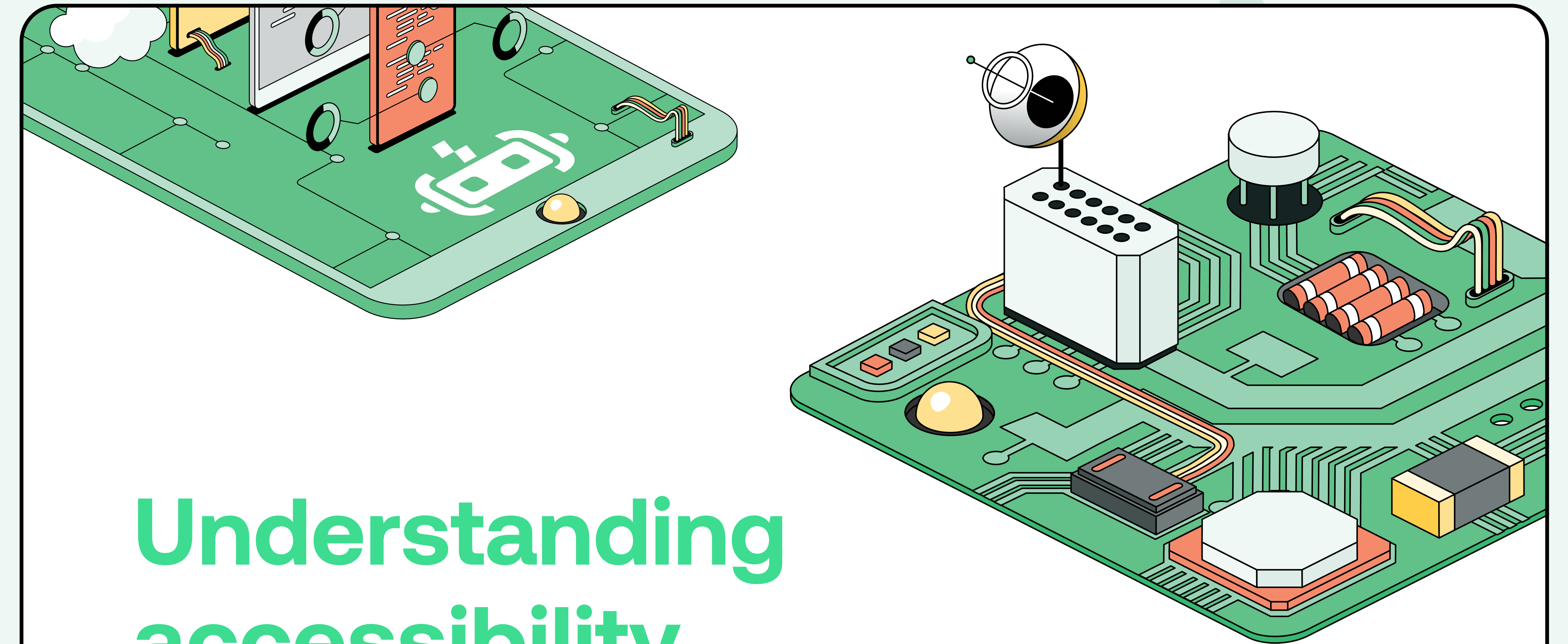
¹ [European Commission, European Accessibility Act: Q&A.](#)



The EAA covers digital products and services touching almost every industry, including:

- ★ Phone services
- ★ Banking services
- ★ E-commerce
- ★ Websites, mobile services, electronic tickets, and all sources of information for air, bus, rail, and waterborne transport services
- ★ E-books
- ★ Access to audio-visual media services (AVMS)
- ★ Computers and operating systems
- ★ Smartphones and other communication devices
- ★ TV equipment related to digital television services
- ★ ATMs and payment terminals (e.g., card payment machines in supermarkets)
- ★ E-readers

Approved in 2019, member states across the EU have been hard at work transposing the EAA into their national laws. But for many businesses, this may be the first they have heard about the EAA or their compliance requirements. But the time to achieve compliance is running out: starting on June 28, 2025, nearly every company doing business in the EU—whether based in Europe, North America, Asia, or anywhere else—must ensure that their digital products and services are accessible.



Understanding accessibility

There are many reasons why people need accessible digital experiences, including:

- Permanent disabilities from birth, illness, disease, or accidents
- Temporary impairment from surgeries, accidents, or medications
- Changing abilities due to aging
- Situational limitations due to loud environments, bright lighting, and other environmental factors

According to W3C, there are five disability categories:

- Auditory: Mild to severe hearing loss
- Sight: Blindness, poor vision, color blindness
- Speech: Difficulty producing or articulating verbal language
- Cognitive: Difficulty with memory, attention, and learning
- Physical: Weakness and limitations of motor control or movement

What Are The Benefits Of Achieving EAA Compliance?

Achieving compliance with the EAA can build goodwill with your customers, significantly increase your addressable market, and protect your business.

Create an equitable user experience

The ability to shop, browse, travel, research, communicate, and engage in everyday activities is critical to enhancing the happiness and well-being of those with disabilities. This means that your business plays a critical role in creating a more equitable society.

By ensuring that all users can access your products, regardless of limitations, you can help create a world where everyone can work, play, and engage meaningfully without restriction. Making your digital products and experiences accessible is the right thing to do, plus is often a critical component in meeting corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Grow your business

The World Health Organization estimates that nearly 1.3 billion people globally have a significant disability.² Additionally, the EU has a growing aging population who may struggle with vision and hearing loss.³ Not only is this a massive market, but one that is underserved by developers who tend to design for non-disabled users. At the same time, 70% of people say that a poor digital experience impacts their decision to purchase.⁴

Making your products accessible increases the likelihood that users will choose them over less accessible options. Designing for accessibility can also be a path to innovation, leading to more intuitive and user-friendly products for everyone.

Reduce business risk

EAA compliance is not an option for most industries. Starting June 28, 2025, applicable businesses must comply with the Act when making digital products or services available in the EU. Non-compliance can expose you to significant fines, penalties, and legal challenges that can cost your business significant money, not to mention creating a distraction for your business leaders and employees.

In addition, the last thing you want is for your business to be in the headlines for non-compliance; the damage to your brand reputation can result in boycotts, bad press, and increased user complaints.

As with any regulation, there are exceptions to the EAA in terms of which industries are required to comply. For example, a microbusiness with fewer than ten employees may be exempt. Work with your legal counsel to understand the full extent of your responsibilities. That said, it's still a good idea to make your products accessible to those with disabilities, even if your business is exempt.

² World Health Organization, Disability Fact Sheet, ³ Eurostat, Population Structure and Ageing, ⁴ Sauce Labs, Every Experience Counts.

What Are The Challenges Of Meeting EAA Compliance?

Achieving EAA compliance will require many organizations to overcome significant obstacles.

The clock is ticking

With a deadline of June 28, 2025, businesses have less than a year to integrate accessibility into their product design roadmap. Products that haven't already been designed with accessibility in mind may require a significant overhaul.

01

EAA compliance isn't your only priority

Organizations are already overburdened with churning out code, with 86% of companies surveyed reporting an increase over the past three years in the applications they've developed, and 47% saying their production has doubled.⁵ Overworked developers may struggle to keep up with their existing workload while also learning about and integrating new accessibility functionalities.

02

Fixing accessibility can mean breaking something else

Every change a developer makes to ensure accessibility may have knock-on effects somewhere else in their code, especially when integrating 3rd-party assistive technology such as screen readers and voice recognition software. These new features can be technically challenging while requiring ongoing adjustments and updates to ensure compatibility. In addition, most accessibility requirements impact the UI, which means a substandard or buggy implementation will be felt by all.

03

Changing products can require changing your culture

Organizations that don't already prioritize accessibility may not have the culture in place required to take accessibility seriously as a business priority. Balancing accessibility considerations with other requirements can be difficult to champion if decision makers don't think accessibility is worth allocating the necessary developer resources and budget.

04

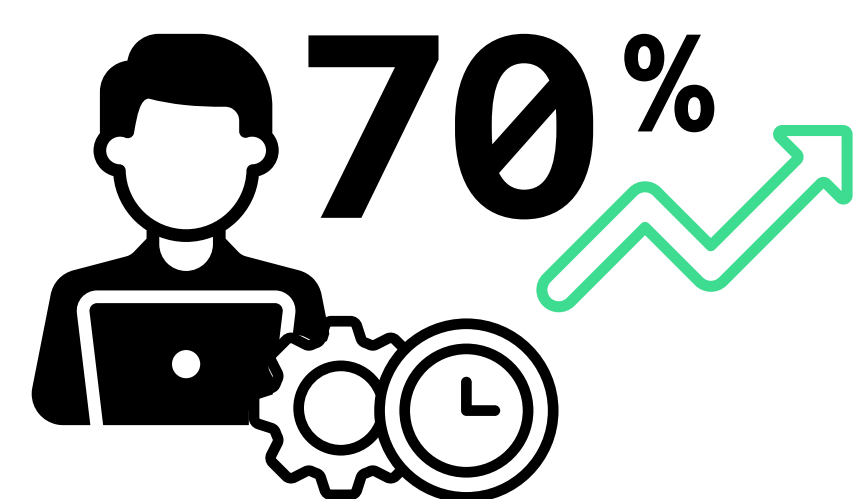
⁵ ESG, Economic Validation: Analyzing the Economic Benefits of Sauce Labs for Mobile Testing and TestOps, April 2023.

How To Achieve EAA Compliance Through A Continuous Quality Approach To Testing

The bottom line: your business has a lot of work to do in very little time to meet your EAA compliance requirements. In turn, you'll need to test everything you create to ensure you meet your accessibility goals without creating new bugs or issues elsewhere in your products and services. That's where a continuous quality approach to testing comes in.

Unlike a traditional testing approach that takes place at distinct stages, a continuous quality approach integrates testing throughout development, integration, and production, allowing organizations to test more, faster, and sooner. In turn, it helps developers catch flaws in the moment when it's easy to fix instead of later on when it's more costly or has already impacted the user experience.

By leveraging continuous quality throughout the software development lifecycle (SDLC), your developers can iterate more quickly to bring accessibility capabilities into your application, as well as reduce the risk of unexpected bugs in mission-critical features like your product search or checkout experience.



Gartner® predicts 70% of engineering teams will adopt a continuous quality approach by 2026, up from 20% just last year.⁶

⁶ Gartner, Innovation Insight: Continuous Quality, By Joachim Herschmann, Thomas Murphy, Jim Scheibmeir, 17 October 2023.



How Sauce Labs + Deque Helps You Achieve EAA Compliance

Sauce Labs makes it simple to leverage a continuous quality approach to testing by providing a powerful end-to-end single-platform for test. Our Platform enables companies to confidently deliver software so they ensure that customer experiences are of the highest quality.

With over 15 years of experience executing more than 7 billion tests to date, our dynamically scalable on-demand test infrastructure is trusted by top enterprises to achieve:

- ★ **ENGINEERING EFFICIENCY:** Our powerful testing infrastructure allows you to effortlessly scale while maximizing engineering productivity and resources.
- ★ **VELOCITY OF INNOVATION:** Accelerate your testing speed with integrated applications and scalable cloud infrastructure so your teams can iterate quickly, experiment with features, and deliver innovative software.
- ★ **RISK MITIGATION:** Boost software confidence by eliminating risks and catching bugs early with secure testing infrastructure, comprehensive in-app data, and compliant data centers.

Sauce Labs has partnered with Deque Systems, the trusted leader in digital accessibility, to help organizations drive greater digital accessibility across their web and mobile applications while reducing compliance risks. This partnership helps customers easily integrate accessibility testing into their quality processes for increased visibility at every level of the software development process.

The enterprise-ready integration between Sauce Labs' Real Device Cloud and Deque Systems' axe DevTools® Mobile for Appium enables customers to easily perform automated testing and get access to an actionable set of accessibility signals as part of a detailed test results dashboard.

[Learn more about the Sauce Labs and Deque partnership](#)

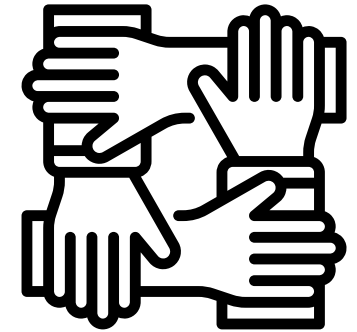
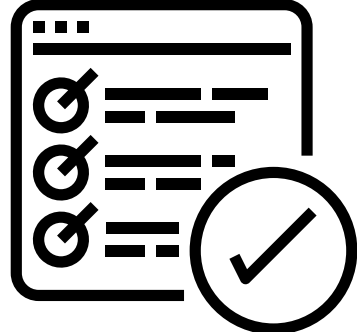
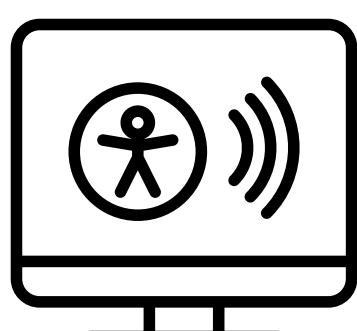
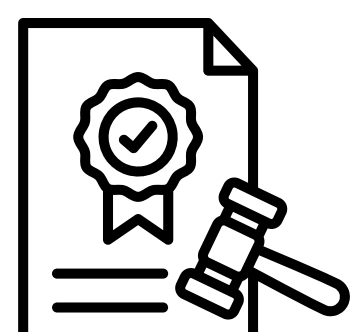
Do more with Deque

Need help meeting your accessibility requirements? With their top experts and proven methodology, Deque can help you implement your testing insights into your websites and mobile applications. Their solutions include:

- **Audits:** Understand your current state of compliance and risk to prioritize work.
- **VPATs:** Document your current state of accessibility to validate resources.
- **Remediation:** Outsource your accessibility fixes to improve speed to market.
- **Strategic consulting:** Optimize your systems and people to prioritize accessibility.

Top Tips For Meeting EAA Compliance

Here are a few things you can do to simplify your path to EAA compliance.

- 01.**  **Start now:** You likely remember the last-minute crunch of meeting GDPR. The earlier you start working to improve your accessibility, the less disruption it will cause your team later on. Keep in mind that EAA will mainly impact your front-end user experience, so you'll need as much time as possible to ensure any changes don't negatively impact the look, feel, and functionality of your applications.
- 02.**  **Create a culture of accessibility:** Promote the value of accessibility to both your technical teams and business leaders so that it's understood and prioritized during development. Remember that making your applications and websites more accessible increases their overall usability, which in turn can help drive customer retention and cart size.
- 03.**  **Test early, test often:** Integrate accessibility considerations from day one so you can begin accessibility testing sooner and catch issues as they arise.
- 04.**  **Focus on high-traffic and high-risk areas:** Prioritize functionalities like your search capabilities, shopping cart, and forms. These are the areas that impact disabled users the most and creates the most risk of user abandonment if inaccessible. Bonus: the more accessible these areas are, the better the experience will be for all of your users.
- 05.**  **Engage users with disabilities:** Applications are often designed by developers who don't have accessibility challenges themselves. In addition, they often rely on UX research that only targets non-disabled users, limiting their insight into an important segment of your market. Expand your UX research to include disabled users to ensure that accessibility is part of your overall design process.
- 06.**  **When in doubt, prioritize accessibility:** Even if it requires more time or resources, build with accessibility in mind. This will help you maintain compliance while paying dividends later on by enhancing usability, broadening your customer base, and avoiding costly revisions later on.

To learn more, request a demo with our testing experts.

The information provided in this guide does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice; instead, all information, content, and materials available in this guide are for general informational purposes only. Please consult with your legal counsel to understand your legal obligations and position in relation to the content described.



About Sauce Labs

Sauce Labs is the leading cloud-hosted platform for automated testing of web and mobile applications, enabling fast delivery of high-quality software across the development lifecycle. Founded by the creators of Selenium, Sauce Labs has been the testing leader for over 15 years and now runs over 1 billion tests annually. Trusted by Fortune 500 companies like Toyota, Walmart, Verizon, Gannett, and Fidelity Investments, its scalable, secure platform supports testing across thousands of operating systems, browsers, and devices while meeting the highest compliance standards.

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