



# Virtual Vision Technologies

[www.VirtualVisionTech.com](http://www.VirtualVisionTech.com)

Since 1991 Incorporated as Young Opportunities, Ltd

**Workplace accessibility for people with disabilities  
Access solutions that work.**

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## VAST: VPAT Authoring, Support, and Training

**Overview:** The VPAT is a self-certification of an application or particular content's current accessibility status. Think of taking a *snapshot* of the present level of accessibility for a desktop application, Web site or application (or other content or product)—ideally, measuring that level with automated tools or a VVT Access Analysis... Next, think of pressing that information into the only standardized, generally accepted score card available, ensuring that your product's accessibility statement is universally understandable and readily consumable by potential customers (as well as end users and the general public). Having this document in-hand is *extremely useful* for internal documentation, project management, marketing, and legal purposes, **even if your product is not yet fully accessible!**

The **VPAT**, or Voluntary Product Accessibility Template is that reporting mechanism. It is a template, or check-list, of accessibility and usability characteristic for various products. It is the yardstick for measuring products at the highest level, and so, is very easy to interpret by 508 professionals, acquisitions teams, and even non-technical people who will be the gate-keepers for US government or other similar organizations. It's notable that the Section 508 standard (and the VPAT) are also fast becoming a standard for private corporations who are choosing to buy accessible.

With a VPAT in-hand, you not only *know* where you stand in terms of [accessibility and Section 508 compliance](#) for your project, but you will now also have the industry standard touchstone benchmark for marketing and purposes.

**<!DOCTYPE  
<HTML>  
<HEAD>  
<TITLE>RA  
<LINK REV  
<META NAM**

**Section 1194.22 Web-based Internet information**

Criteria	
(a) A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content).	
(b) Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.	
(c) Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.	
(d) Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.	
(e) Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.	
(f) Client-side image maps shall be provided where the regions of the server-side image map are identified by text alternatives.	

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## The VPAT Authoring Process - *Drafting your Report Card*

Creating and then maintaining a current version of the industry standard **VPAT** for your desktop or Web software titles can present inherent and sometimes difficult challenges, especially the first time you attempt it. Mainly the issues involve sourcing a competent testing resource (internally or third party?), determining how much or how far to test, interpreting the results (adding requirements to development & QA), deciding on what to do with the results (keep it internal, make it public, or a hybrid approach?)... Not-to-mention the big question:

### *“Where do I start?!”*

Ideally, the VPAT for your product should be created and maintained internally/in-house by the subject matter experts on the teams in your organization who know the product best. However this presents a problem in that they probably do not have the skill set to accurately attempt this kind of assessment. Sometimes, even when technical people try to complete a VPAT, they make blanket statements of compliance that may or may not be accurate.

To scope your accessibility challenges and translate them into the VPAT format, you’ve got options:

1. A Virtual Vision Technologies [Access Analysis](#) is the ultimate first step, and is the best way to find out exactly what’s going in your application on in terms of accessibility and usability. The result will be a strenuous documentation of the current issues and solutions, even going beyond 508 concerns. Once the Analysis is completed addressing the necessity of a VPAT becomes much easier. The reporting a high-level abstract of the issues, and even cites specific examples of the 508 violations.

**5. Data table Issues**

Violation of Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act,	Subsection 1194.22, Paragraph (G)
Violation of Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act,	Subsection 1194.22, Paragraph (H)

We found several HTML tables that do expose proper data structuring information that ensures proper exposure of data relativity and context. However, there are several data tables that do **not** use the appropriate markup elements or other attributes that ensure accessibility. Without the proper markup, data tables will not be accessible...

With the Analysis in-hand, you may be able to create your own VPAT based mostly upon those findings. Or, you may find that your team *still* needs that little push to get your VPAT started. Any time you still require that initial jump-start, VVT can assist in the authoring procedure by producing your first draft. With support, you will easily be able to refine it, massage it, work it, and familiarize your team with it but it can then easily become “yours”. VVT support for VPAT authoring includes consulting and training for your staff to ramp up their ability to complete the VPAT independently.

2. Alternately, you can also stab ahead with a VPAT, even before all of the granular accessibility issues and solutions are known—you can give the VPAT a shot and at least have an initial statement of your status:

VVT can draft your initial VPAT, considering the high-level basics of accessibility as they relate to the current Section 508 standards. While this won't describe granular detail of each specific issue that may be a violation—nor will it relate any appropriate solutions, it will be a good starting point and will serve well as initial documentation of your app's current status. Because it will be presented in an industry standard format, the document is then immediately sharable, as appropriate, and satisfies requirements that most 508 evaluation teams will have.

Ideally with, but even without the benefit of a full Access Analysis, VVT can always assist in drafting the initial VPAT for your product. The process requires direct access to the product in the same way that end users would utilize it, and will produce a fully qualified VPAT document with all appropriate sections reviewed and populated. Our Technical Services team is competent and familiar with the processes surrounding VPAT production and maintenance and will guide your team to the finish line quickly and easily.

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### **Maintenance and Confirmation – Ensuring Follow-Through:**

A VPAT is generally only valid for the version of the application that it was tested against. Maintaining a current VPAT will require additional follow-through as new versions of content and application interfaces are developed. Once accessibility is rolled into your development life cycle and you are creating and testing accessible, usable content, it's easy to keep the VPAT up-

to-date and moving closer with each revision to the goal of having all applicable rows filled in with lists of supporting features. Once your teams' efforts have been kick-started, maintenance becomes a simple part of your own internal processes.

No matter what stage your product's VPAT is in, VVT is able to provide support through testing, consulting, and training related to producing quality, accurate statements. Additionally, VVT can provide **third-party validation** and statements that assist by confirming your claims while providing authoritative, professional acknowledgement to back up your self-certification.

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### **After the VPAT - *Implementing Accessibility***

With the results of the Access Analysis *in-hand*, your teams can begin to make solid decisions that move you toward **complete accessibility** and good usability both internally and externally. The reporting will contain high-level review of findings as well as granular technical detail and recommendations. VVT Tech Services Integrators will ensure complete understanding and proper interpretation of the documented findings with an optional (but inclusive/free) post-analysis **Outcomes Conference** call for any / all members of your teams.

**Next steps** after the initial draft of your VPAT will vary according to your company or agency initiatives, projects and corporate culture, but they usually involve dissemination/leveraging of VPAT information, consultation, remediation and solution development and implementation.

- Get the word out! Distribute and review the VPAT internally, using it as you manage accessibility projects going forward, or provide it to your clients, customers, or even the general public as documentation—even as **marketing**—of your status and progress.
- [Access Analysis](#) (if not already completed).
- [ADAPT](#) – Accessible Design Achievement Primer Training to jump-start your development team in efforts to integrate accessibility and usability into the product.
- [Accessible Design Consulting](#) to assist in remediation of existing issues and ensuring future development includes access and compliance considerations.

- Sometimes *custom*, aftermarket solutions like [Screen Reader Scripting](#) will be useful to extend access to AT users when internal remediation is not possible or as an interim solution.
- [AT-UAT](#) – Access Technology User Acceptance Testing provides ad-hoc and full regression testing of accessibility issues at any point in the development life-cycle, or to test and verify that changes have been successful.
- Evaluate your other product offerings for similar considerations. Extend your reach, enhance your user base, and proactively mitigate risk for all of your products, all at the same time.

**In Conclusion**, maintaining a VPAT is the industry’s standard for documenting the accessibility status of a product, and is recommended for all of your offerings. Ideally, the task of compiling and maintaining this documentation is yours as the preeminent subject matter expert on your product—optimally augmented with third-party validation. However, if your organization cannot seem to take that first step without a kick-start, VVT is available to assist in the evaluation process and even draft your first VPAT. Going forward, VVT can also aid in VPAT maintenance with knowledge transfer, consulting, as well as training of appropriate staff to continue self-sufficiently with maintenance tasks. Additionally, VVT can continue provision of subsequent testing/validation sessions so that your VPAT always has up-to-date confirmation from a professional, authoritative third-party.

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(f) Client-side image maps shall be provided of server-side image maps, except where the actions of the image map are defined by a script.	