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SERIES F: NON-TELEPHONE TELECOMMUNICATION
SERVICES

Multimedia services

Accessibility terms and definitions

Recommendation ITU-T F.791

ITU-T

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Recommendation ITU-T F.791

Accessibility terms and definitions

Summary

Recommendation ITU-T F.791 defines terms describing accessibility, disability and technical vocabulary to be used for improving the drafting of standards, and to facilitate accurately the needs and the mainstreaming of accessibility in standards that will include persons with disabilities (PWDs), older persons with age-related disabilities and persons with specific needs. WTDC Res. 58, WTDC AD and Recommendation ITU-T F.790 provide additional background information

With the passage of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* [b-UNCRPD] in 2006, and its ratification by numerous countries, many new terms and definitions were created, some of which at the behest of PWDs themselves, to eradicate terms that were demeaning, insulting and inaccurate.

Standards writers are able to mainstream accessibility features into standards, as well as to write specific standards for accessibility. To design products and services successfully, there needs to be a common language. Recommendation ITU-T F.791 gives definitions to make it easier for industries to implement these accessibility features and accessibility standards by establishing a common language and vocabulary. It is also important that governments, government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), the UN and its respective agencies be "normalized" in mainstream everyday language.

Article 9 of [b-UNCRPD] makes clear the need to include PWDs, older persons with age-related disabilities and persons with specific needs by mainstreaming them into all aspects of modern life. This can only be done by including PWDs in the design of modern technology and information and communication technologies (ICTs) using universal design as defined in [b-UNCRPD] and using a common language and vocabulary.

This edition updates some of the definitions based on feedback received from the user community.

History

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FOREWORD

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency in the field of telecommunications, information and communication technologies (ICTs). The ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) is a permanent organ of ITU. ITU-T is responsible for studying technical, operating and tariff questions and issuing Recommendations on them with a view to standardizing telecommunications on a worldwide basis.

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), which meets every four years, establishes the topics for study by the ITU-T study groups which, in turn, produce Recommendations on these topics.

The approval of ITU-T Recommendations is covered by the procedure laid down in WTSA Resolution 1.

In some areas of information technology which fall within ITU-T's purview, the necessary standards are prepared on a collaborative basis with ISO and IEC.

NOTE

In this Recommendation, the expression "Administration" is used for conciseness to indicate both a telecommunication administration and a recognized operating agency.

Compliance with this Recommendation is voluntary. However, the Recommendation may contain certain mandatory provisions (to ensure, e.g., interoperability or applicability) and compliance with the Recommendation is achieved when all of these mandatory provisions are met. The words "shall" or some other obligatory language such as "must" and the negative equivalents are used to express requirements. The use of such words does not suggest that compliance with the Recommendation is required of any party.

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As of the date of approval of this Recommendation, ITU had not received notice of intellectual property, protected by patents, which may be required to implement this Recommendation. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information and are therefore strongly urged to consult the TSB patent database at <http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/ipr/>.

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Recommendation ITU-T F.791

Accessibility terms and definitions

1 Scope

This Recommendation defines terms to describe accessibility and terms that are needed by standards writers when drafting international standards. This Recommendation takes account of terms already used in existing ITU Recommendations and Resolutions, as well as those in the UN *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* [b-UNCRPD]. These terms and definitions aim to reduce confusion, on the part of not only standards writers and implementers, but also the general public. This Recommendation also deprecates terminology that is no longer used, offensive or demeaning to persons with disabilities (PWDs) and others.

The terminology in this Recommendation is for use in international work when English is used to refer to telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) accessibility matters. This Recommendation also applies to everyday life and all usages, including website content and other literature, as well as ICT, telecommunications and broadcasting standardization. It should also be mainstreamed into future policy, regulatory and academic documents as to be consistent with global compatibility and understanding. In the future, work that is yet to be created, written or approved may have new terms that can be later added as appropriate by consensus in a revision.

NOTE – This drafting of this document complies with [b-ITU-T F.790].

2 References

None.

3 Definitions

This Recommendation uses the following terms:

3.1 access service; accessibility service: Provision of features intended to make primary audiovisual content accessible to users with specific needs, preferences or in specific environmental contexts.

3.2 accessibility: The degree to which a product, device, service or environment (virtual or real) is available to as many people as possible.

3.3 accessibility content: Content delivered by an audiovisual media solution, e.g., captions, subtitles, audio description, audio subtitles, and differentiated from the solution's interface accessibility, that is accessible to persons with disabilities (PWDs), as well as persons with specific needs.

NOTE – Access services are a primary means of delivering accessibility content.

3.4 accessibility feature: An additional content component that is intended to assist people hindered in their ability to perceive an aspect of the main content.

3.5 assistive listening device (ALD): Devices that enable persons who are hard of hearing to hear sounds and speech on an improved basis.

3.6 assistive listening system (ALS): Assistive technology (AT) systems utilizing electromagnetic radiation, commonly radio or light waves, or a combination of the two, enabling transmission of an acoustic signal from a sound source (e.g., a loudspeaker or a person talking) directly to the hearing aid or cochlear implant processor of a person who is hard of hearing.

3.7 assistive technology (AT): Piece of equipment, product system, hardware, software or service that is used to enable, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

3.8 audio subtitles; spoken subtitles: Subtitle text rendered into speech by a human voice artist or a synthetic voice from text-to-speech software.

3.9 audio captions; audio captioning: Captions that are read aloud and reflected as speech. Audio captioning may also be called "audio subtitles" or "spoken subtitles" in the case of foreign language dialogue. Captions can also be used to designate the audio content of an audiovisual work or sequence in any language along with action. Captions are read aloud by a human or a specific apparatus that converts the text into speech.

3.10 audio description; video description; visual description; described video: An additional audio track to aid persons with visual impairments who cannot follow the visual content.

3.11 captions; captioning: A real-time transcription of spoken words, sound effects, relevant musical cues and other relevant audio information in live or pre-recorded events. Captions can be open, not adjustable by the user, or closed where they can be turned on and off by the users at will. See clause 3.13 for further explanation of open and closed accessible services.

3.12 clean audio: An enhanced audio signal by means of signal processing, with improved intelligibility of the dialogue with respect to ambient noise, background noise, music, etc. This can also apply to the quality of the audio used for audio captioning (see clause 3.9), audio description (see clause 3.10), and subtitles (see clause 3.40).

3.13 closed/open accessibility service: An accessibility service – audio description, audio subtitling, captioning and sign language – that can have the option of be selected by the end user. If this is the case, it is closed. If cannot be selected or turned off, by the user it is an open service, i.e., open caption.

3.14 design for all [deprecated]: The design of mainstream products or services that are accessible to and usable by all persons, especially including persons with disabilities (PWDs), and persons who were born with specific needs. This term is replaced by "universal design" (see clause 3.42 and Appendix I).

3.15 disability: An evolving concept, which refers to the interaction between persons with impairments, and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

3.16 human factors; ergonomics: Factors relating to usability and proper interaction between persons and products and devices; services, systems or environments, both real and virtual.

3.17 impairment: Any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function.

3.18 inclusive design [deprecated].

This term is replaced by "universal design" (see clause 3.42 and Appendix I).

3.19 interface accessibility: Accessibility of the set of provisions that allow a user to operate and control audiovisual media solutions.

3.20 keyboard emulator: Hardware or software input device that emulates the key press outputs of an alphanumeric keyboard.

3.21 lip reading; lip-reading interpretation: A form of communication or interpretation used by persons that are deaf or hard of hearing, regardless of whether they use sign language.

3.22 lip speaker; oral interpreter: A trained interpreter for persons who are deaf and hard of hearing, who speaks silently the dialogue in the audiovisual content or in any other event in real time,