

CASE STUDY

Accessibility Compliance

Implementing a content management system to help Nabarro conform to W3C AA accessibility guidelines.



for e-business take IT as





Profile

Nabarro is a major UK law firm renowned for their positive, practical approach. With over 125 partners leading more than 350 lawyers, they offer a broad range of legal services to major national and international clients.

As a forward looking and progressive business Nabarro recognised the importance of accessibility as part of their online strategy. They were keen to ensure that as many people as possible could access, understand and interact with their website.

Nabarro chose Red Technology to build and implement their new website with the aim of achieving AA accessibility standards. Crucial to the project was the ability to manage content in-house by non-technical personnel. They needed a content management system that would allow them to maintain consistently high accessibility standards going forwards.

Considerations for the new website were:

- Reduce the cost of maintaining their website by bringing content management in-house instead of outsourcing to an agency.
- Incorporate a Content Management System that could be managed and maintained by non-technical personnel.
- Comply with W3C AA accessibility guidelines to ensure acceptable ease of use for all levels of visitor ability.
- Rapid migration of over 400 pages of content from the old website, reworking it to conform to AA accessibility guidelines.
- A flexible system that would allow Nabarro to implement and manage new functionality including video streaming, email campaigns and micro-site development.
- Automated tools that would ensure consistence and conformity with corporate branding as site content is adapted and changed over time.



What is Website Accessibility?

A website's functionality and ease of use will influence what customers think of an organisation and can directly impact reputation and sales. Even if a business is not actually trading online, potential customers will use the internet to find out about what products and services you offer off-line.

The following types of disability and their particular access needs should be taken into account when producing content for your website:

- **Vision Disabilities.** Blindness, colour blindness, tunnel vision and poor sight mean that people may need to use text to speech software, screen magnifiers or Braille screens to access your content. They may not be able to see or understand your pictures so descriptive text, known as alt tags, and structured content flow is vital.
- **Hearing disabilities.** Those with hearing problems may not be able to hear multimedia presentations and require a text transcript to understand your message.
- **Mobility Disabilities.** A variety of devices are used to navigate your website and click on links. Dexterity and co-ordination problems mean that instead of a mouse some of your site visitors may be using the keyboard or other input devices to navigate your site. It is essential that navigation patterns run in an intuitive and predictable manner to ensure ease of use.
- **Cognitive Disabilities.** These include dyslexia, memory problems and difficulties reading or understanding complex or inconsistent visual displays. Avoiding busy screens while using plain English and lots of white space will help these people understand your site.
- **Technology Disabilities.** Not all users have the latest browsers or monitors with large displays. Content that is dynamically presented in an accessible format will allow your site to be viewed by anyone regardless of whether they are using obsolete technology or the latest mobile phone.



Accessibility Guidelines & Legal Requirements

W3C is an international consortium that develops and publishes guidelines on website accessibility. Implementing their recommended standards is considered best practice and takes into account how those with technological, physical or cognitive issues interact with websites. They classify a websites accessibility into 3 priority levels:

“A” - without implementing their basic guidelines you will be making it impossible for at least one group of users to access your website.



“AA” - implementing their level 2 standards will make it easier for all users to access your content, but some may encounter minor difficulties.



“AAA” - this ideal accessibility standard is what all websites should be aiming for, but in the majority of cases is not yet attainable because of technology and cost limitations.



The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) (DDA) makes excluding those with disabilities from your website unlawful. This is an issue that the public is becoming increasingly aware of and there have been threats of legal action by authorities and pressure groups.

- Moral and legal issues aside – with millions of disabled web users in the UK it makes sense to ensure that as many potential customers as possible can use your website.
- By implementing disability access guidelines, you actually make it easier for those without a disability to navigate and interact with your website.
- Ensuring your site is correctly structured and that meta data and alt tags are used correctly means you can ensure that your messages and products are available to all.

“When building the site, Red Technology implemented high accessibility standards and still managed to give an excellent representation of our original design concepts .”

Chris Rushworth, Online Services Manager, Nabarro





What is Content Management?

Content management systems are software packages that allow businesses to make in-house changes to their websites without the need for outsourced technical expertise.

They should allow you to add and delete pages, change the structure, words, images, tools, documents, downloads and links in your websites quickly and efficiently.

With Red Technologys' **conductIT**[™] content management system, multiple websites, domains and micro-sites can be managed globally, by multiple users, through a web browser based application. Key features of the software include:

- Multiple users can edit and update content via a web browser from anywhere in the world.
- Full template control with the ability to import your own template designs.
- Use templates to dynamically deliver content to PC's, PDA's and mobile phones in multiple languages.
- An easy to use, yet powerful WYSIWYG editor simplifies content editing—no need for HTML programming knowledge.
- Technical users can quickly access and edit content at the HTML code level.
- Based on the latest Microsoft ASP.NET and SQL technology.
- One server based application to manage multiple domains.
- Multimedia, image and document managers allow easy archiving, organisation and retrieval of content.
- Quickly preview pages before posting them live and rapidly roll back to previous content.
- Workflow checks and balances ensure that content is reviewed and authorised before being published live.
- Integrated form builder simplifies data collection and survey form construction.
- Set dates for content to automatically go live and expire to archive and rapidly roll back to archived content.

*“Our **conductIT**[™] cms package helps ensure a quick return on investment by removing the time delays, re-work and cost that is often associated with outsourcing content updates.”*

Calvin Litchfield, Managing Director, Red Technology





Achieving Consistent Accessibility Standards

Building an accessible website is the easy part; maintaining accessibility standards as you change and update content and site structure is much more difficult.

That's why Red Technologys conductIT™ content management system goes one step further. With a host of incorporated content authoring tools, conductIT™ helps ensure you only ever publish accessibility compliant content.

“The integrated accessibility tools and functionality are helping to ensure our website remains compliant no matter how often we update and change our site content and layout.”

Chris Rushworth, Online Services Manager, Nabarro

- Implement accessibility friendly templates to control website design.
- Incorporated XHTML validation tool to check that content will function with disabled users adaptive technologies.
- Take full control of hyperlink content to ensure explanatory and meaningful link descriptions.
- Dynamically deliver content based on user preferences and the browsing devices they use.
- Robust enough to integrate with future technologies.
- Content is delivered via Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), helping assistive technology separate content from structure and presentation styles.
- Implement contrast, text sizing and text only options to enhance user experiences.
- Take full control of content categories and layout to manage and simplify the navigation process.
- Easily editable metadata and alt tags mean that screen readers can describe your non-text content to site users.

“Red Technology have been a huge asset in helping us with our commitment to providing a website that is accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of their technology or ability.”

Chris Rushworth Online Services Manager, Nabarro





Red Technology conductIT Content Management System

1. Online Presence.

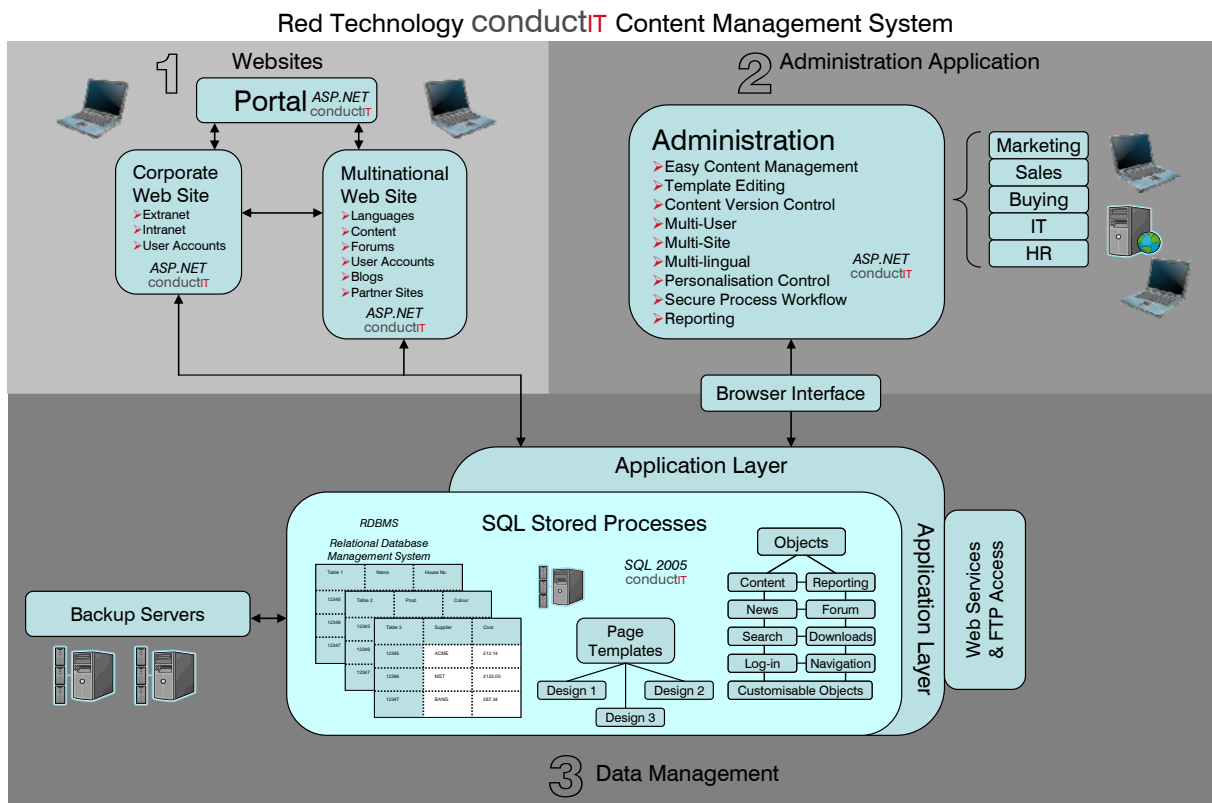
The conductIT™ platform can present multiple web sites, in multiple languages. Highly scalable, the system can manage content for multiple domains, automatically presenting personalised content, branding, navigation and languages.

2. Administration.

Multiple administrators control their own content, wherever they are in the world. Can be hosted separately from web servers to reduce server load. Non-technical operators control and edit content via simple to use browser interfaces.

3. Data Management.

Hosted over single, or multiple servers, with backup redundancy; ensures rapid deployment to multiple web sites. Securing your data while communicating with 3rd party and in-house systems. Scalability to expand with your business and data storage needs.





Red Technology Delivers

Nabarro are very happy with the functionality, look and feel of their new site. They can now control site structure and all content in-house reducing ongoing website maintenance costs through the implementation of a feature rich content management system.

Achieving and maintaining W3C AA accessibility compliance means that information about the business and services they offer can now be reached by many more people.

Their content management system includes emarketing tools that allow them to easily design and implement email campaigns and is flexible enough to grow with the business. Red technology are currently implementing stage 2 of the development which will incorporate the introduction of rich media and video streaming functions.

Red Technology has been a leading UK CMS and ecommerce solution provider since 1996. Their development specialists have built hundreds of content management and ecommerce solutions promoting products and services online, to both businesses and consumers.

Red Technology creates feature rich, functional web destinations that capture the client's brand, simplify natural search engine optimisation and help comply with accessibility requirements. They are the UK's leading mid-market provider of comprehensive web solutions across a number of market sectors including private, public and not-for-profit.

"The conductIT CMS platform simplifies content management and provides a springboard that will allow us to introduce the most up to date technologies and communication methods".

Chris Rushworth, Online Services Manager, Nabarro

- Ecommerce solution software.
- Content management systems.
- Consulting complex web accessibility issues.
- Implementing W3C and DDA compliance.
- Proven website implementation processes.
- Ongoing support and development
- 24x7 secure hosting and redundancy systems.
- Catering for mission critical systems.
- Search engine optimisation.
- Ultimately scalable to grow with your business.

