

Liberated Accessibility

Or: Why isn't anybody listening?

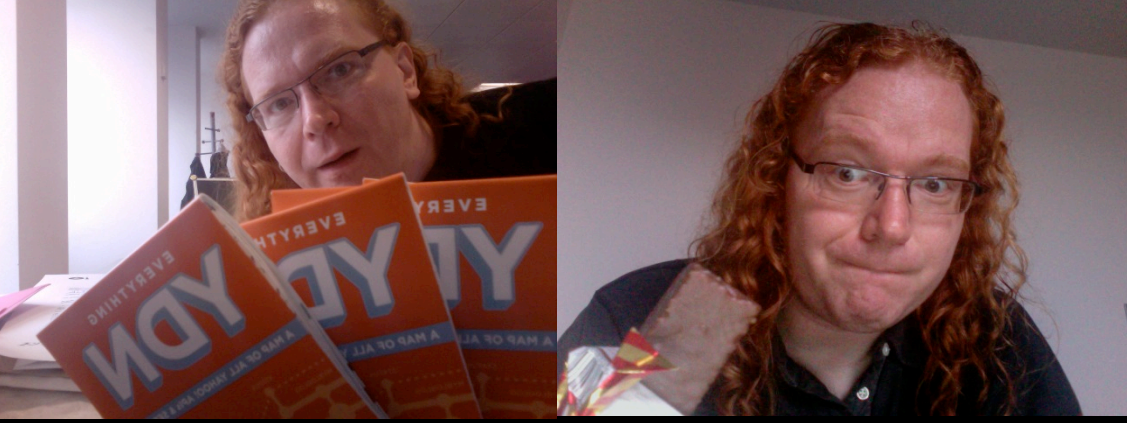


Christian Heilmann | <http://wait-till-i.com> | <http://twitter.com/codepo8>

A-Tag, Wien, November 2008



Hello there...




I'm Chris.



**“International Developer
Evangelist”
at Yahoo.**



**Author of several books,
including the JavaScript
chapter of “Web
Accessibility”.**

The image is a collage of various conference lanyards and badges. The top half shows several lanyards in different colors (white, orange, blue, red) with logos like 'iLuvIt', 'algora', 'eppc.com', and 'dunedin'. The bottom half shows a close-up of a badge that says 'DELEGATE' and a lanyard with 'algora' and 'eppc.com' logos. The text 'I spend a lot of time on conferences.' is overlaid in the center.

**I spend a lot of time on
conferences.**

**And I am sick of seeing
accessibility being treated as
the redhead stepchild at
conferences.**

People talk about “the cloud”, “the semantic web” or what marvels and wonders CSS3 will bring and the room are packed...

**...and attendees are inspired,
blog and write about it and
generally go nuts.**

**However, even if there is an
accessibility talk (which is
seldom enough), things look
different.**



Fail

Why is that?

**Accessibility has a bad
reputation as a topic for
conferences.**

This is mostly our own fault.

**It is very hard to guess how
you really come across and
what people think of you.**



YOUR DIRTY MIND

It's just a lamp. What did you think it was?

**The most common
accessibility talks are:**

**The consultant, explaining
that accessibility is the law
and that you will get sued if
you don't follow the
guidelines.**

**The screenreader user
showing lots and lots of sites
that fail to work and
complaining how expensive
Jaws is.**

**(after spending 20 minutes setting up the reader and the
computer to use for the presentation).**

**The web designer telling
people that when you want
to be accessible, you need to
change your design
drastically.**



We sell accessibility as a gigantic problem.

**Lots of bloggers make the
same mistake.**

And that creates a bad example



**To threaten people with laws
is pointless.**

**Two weeks ago I was in Sao
Paulo, Brazil.**

**They have a law that you
need to check if the lift
arrived before you enter it.**

Aviso aos Passageiros:

Antes de entrar no elevador, verifique se o mesmo encontra-se parado neste andar.

12.722 de 04/09/98

Warning:

Before entering the elevator, please check if it is positioned on this floor.

3

ANTES DE ENTRAR
NO ELEVADOR
VERIFIQUE SE ELE
ENCONTRA-SE
PARADO
NESTE ANDAR

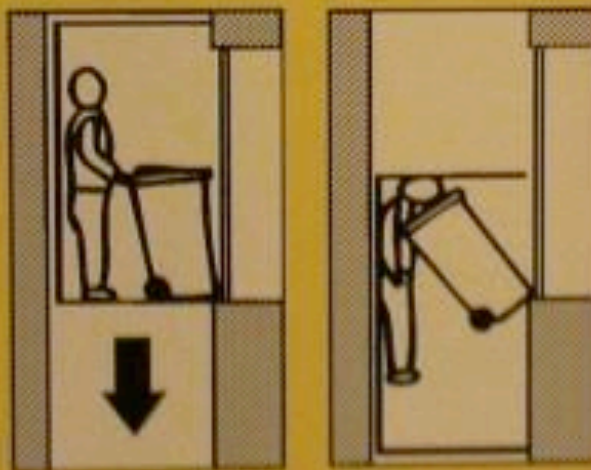
BEFORE ENTERING THE
ELEVATOR MAKE SURE
THAT IT IS ON THIS
FLOOR LEVEL

12.722 de 04/09/98

**Sweden had a similar issue,
but coped with it in a
different manner – by
showing you the
consequences.**



VARNING FÖR KLÄMRISK



**Farligt att transportera
gods i hissar som saknar
innerdörr eller -grind**



**You cannot change the web
by dragging people to court
or threatening with law suits.**

**Someone with the same
family name as me learnt
that the hard way last week.**

**You cannot sell anything by
showing that it doesn't work.**

What we need are positive examples in a language the target audience understands.

**I already started with some of
them.**

YouTube Address:

Load

You can go to the YouTube video you want to watch and copy and paste the address at the top into this box.

Video Size

Small

Medium

Large



Volume



© 2008 by Chris Heilmann, [documentation and help is here.](#)

Use this box to search for videos on YouTube you are interested in, or choose a video from your playlist.

Search

Go

Search Results / Your Playlist

[Officer Stops Rush Hour Traffic for Ducks Crossing](#)

[Duck and 9 ducklings](#)

[It had to be done, and I am sorry](#)

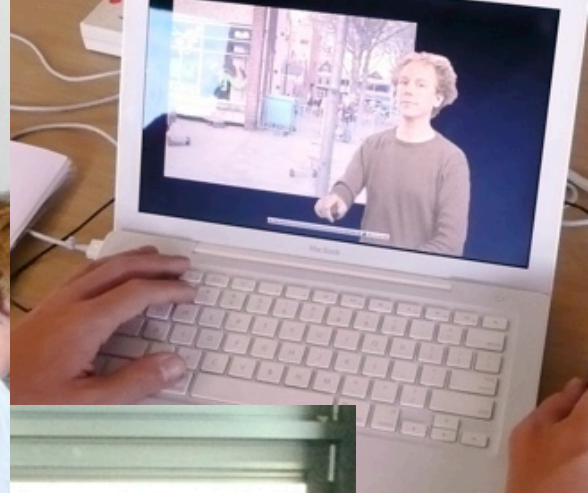
[Panda Cubs On A Slide](#)

[A deaf choir singing a song in sign language](#)



Scripting Enabled

Hacking the web to be more accessible



Scripting Enabled

Hacking the web to be more accessible

Collaborating with designers.



**Others also show the way it
should be done.**

**Last week at Paris Web in
Paris, France:**

- ✓ Déficiences auditives
- ✓ Déficiences intellectuelles
- ✓ Déficiences techniques

Accessibilité : des ... Paris Web 2

3



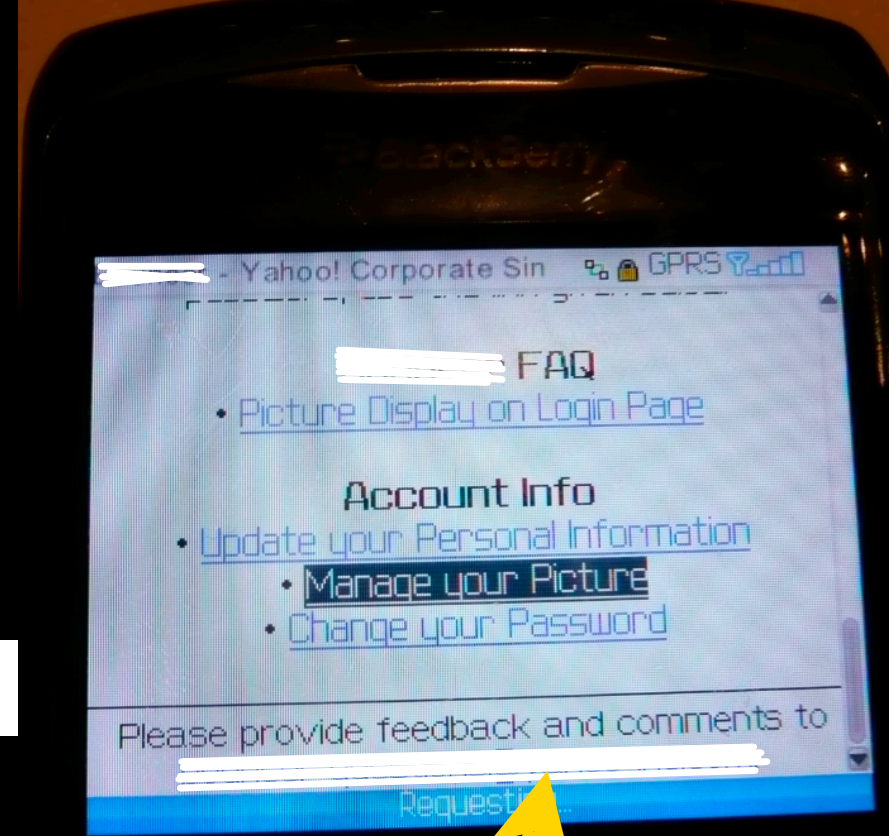
**Other steps
toward
accessibility
world
domination:**



**Instead of
condemning
technologies, show
how they can be
fixed to work.**



Instead of simply demanding that a certain idea should be followed, show why using real life examples.



Blackberries suck with JavaScript and are used by a *lot* of managers.

**Most of all it is time that we
realise that web
development is constantly
changing and evolving.**

Accessibility

Web Development



**"You need
Jaws and
Internet
Explorer 5"**

**"Everybody
has Flash and
JavaScript and
we are almost
ready to ditch
IE6!"**

**Using Firefox, Firebug and
GreaseMonkey I can access
and fix any web site.**


And all of these are free!

**Developers love to play with
technology and create
something cool and new all
the time.**

**The results are always
interesting, but not always
useful.**

Alkulukuja Paskova Karhu *The Prime Number Shitting Bear*

PRIMESTATS
Prime now: 211
Prime count: 46
Prime density: 21.8%
Uptime: 00:00
(c) 2001 AC



211

Stats on


Designed for MS IE 5.0+ and Mozilla
V2.21

"I'm only human, Harry."

- Jim Carrey as "Lloyd Christmas" in *Dumb and Dumber*

Alkulukuja Paskova Karhu *The Prime Number Shitting Bear*

PRIMESTATS
Prime now: 311
Prime count: 63
Prime density: 20.3%
Uptime: 00:00
(c) 2001 AC



311

Stats on

Designed for MS IE 5.0+ and Mozilla
V2.21

The prime number shitting bear.

<http://alpha61.com/primenumbershittingbear/>

**We have a lot of real
problems of real people that
need solving.**

**Developers have the time and
dedication to fix those.**

**...if we talk to them in a
language they understand
and have an open mind to
other ideas...**

**...rather than talking in
parallel.**



So...

**We need much more
information about assistive
technology that is open
source.**

**We need to work with web
developers and not stop them
from evolving.**

Assistive technology has to become cheaper and much easier to use and install.

**And I am 100% sure that this
will not happen in the
commercial market.**

**Developers need to get more
real and *up to date*
information about
accessibility.**

**In the channels that
developers use and read...**

**...and not only the
“accessibility” publications.**

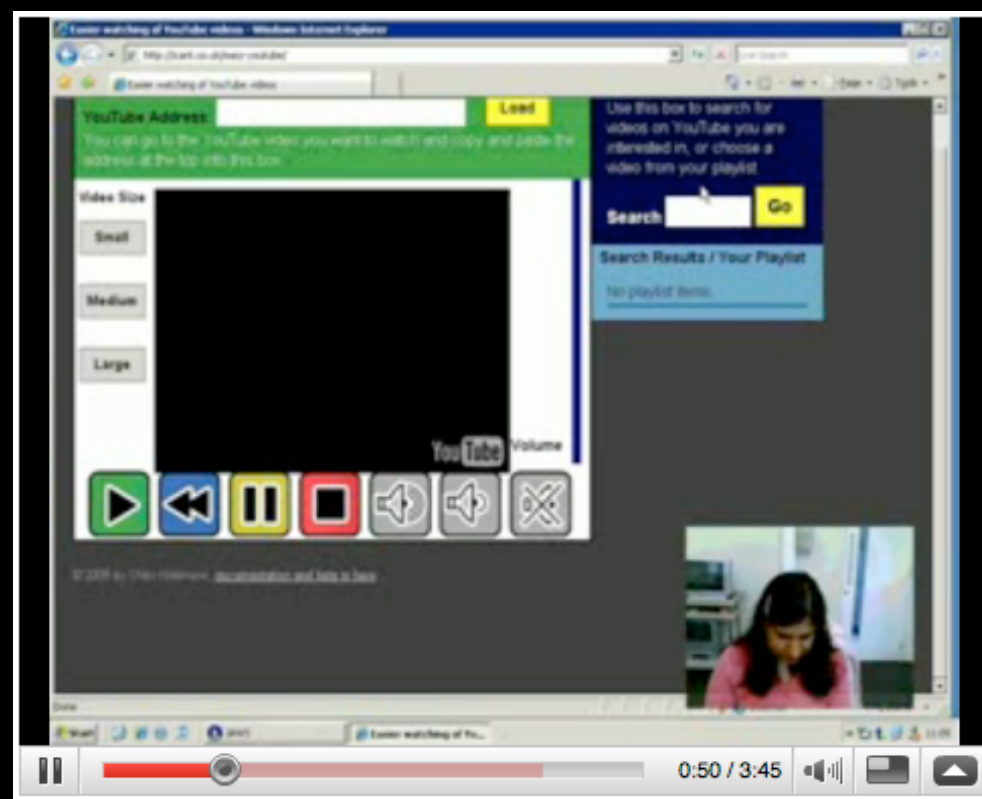
Shared Items in Google Reader.

Bookmarks in Del.icio.us.

Large groups on Facebook.

**What we need are inspiring
presentations, videos and
podcasts.**

Here's an example.

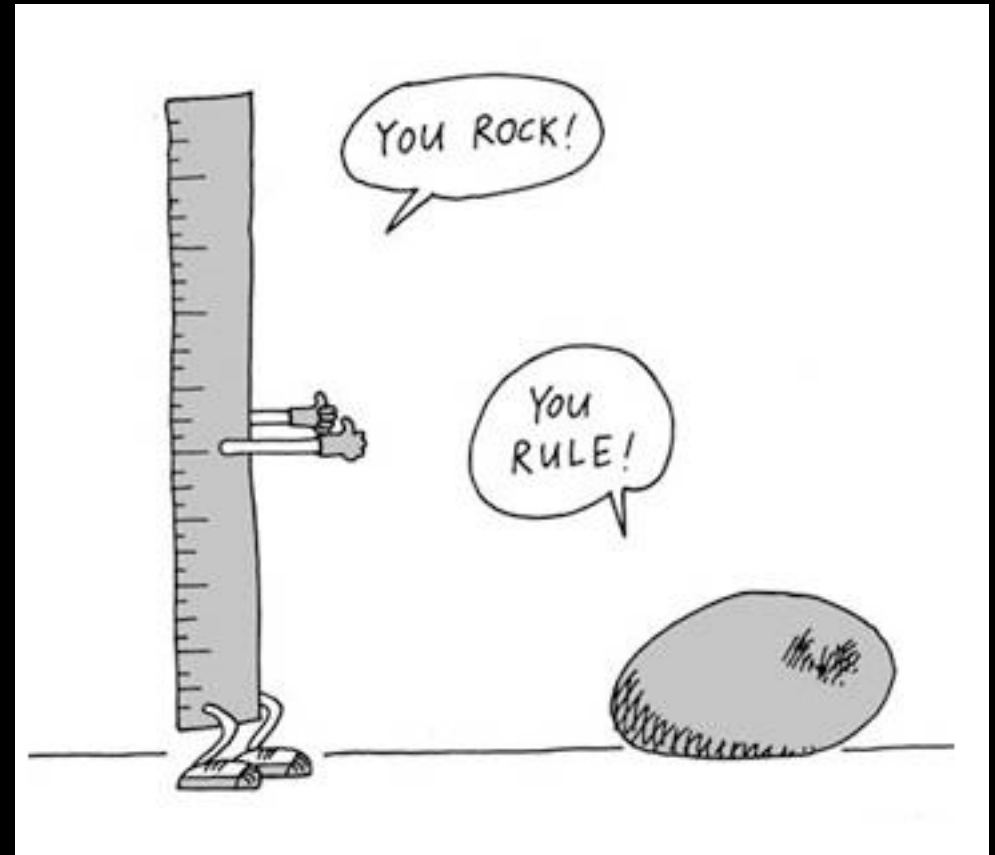


<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwsDKaalgg8&>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QiuT0y0KR6I>

**Well then, ladies and
gentlemen..**

**...get off your butts and go
and tell the web what we
want.**

Thanks!



Christian Heilmann

<http://scriptingenabled.org> | <http://wait-till-i.com>

twitter/flickr: codepo8