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# Inclusive Design



## **What is inclusive design?**

Inclusive design is a human-centered design process that embraces diversity. It's about making informed design decisions to create a product that serves as many people as possible and accounts for the vast diversity of its users.

## **Why is inclusive design important?**

Inclusive design is about intentionally including the needs of *all* users. When we do not intentionally include, we run the risk of unintentionally excluding.

## **What do we need to be intentional in our design process?**

Inclusive design happens when you have:

- A team who understands that design decisions should be made with solutions for a broader range of user needs, and
- user involvement in the design process.

## **How does inclusive design go beyond accessibility?**

Designing for accessibility ensures that people of diverse abilities (including auditory, cognitive, physical, and visual) can access our software. The UX team often refers to a set of accessibility standards called Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) to check that we are making appropriate accommodations.

Inclusive design, however, goes beyond accessibility. Best practices support users of different abilities, but also, make an honest effort to include the needs of users that are often excluded for reasons beyond accessibility such as age, race, gender identity, economic situation, language, etc.

# 1: Look for Points of Exclusion

*The UX Team explains the first principle of inclusive design. How, when, and why exclusion happens and how DaySmart UX is actively looking for ways to identify and address it.*

## PRINCIPLE 1

# Look for Exclusion

*What are design exclusions, who can be affected by them, and a couple ways to solve for them.*



### THE DEFINITION

As we learn how and why some people are excluded, we can produce tangible measures toward cultivating a more inclusive environment. Therefore, it is important to actively look for and pursue instances of exclusion and use them as sources for new ideas and opportunities to design differently.

It's important to think about disability and exclusion differently. Often, we think of inclusive design as designing for accessibility. While that is partially true, inclusive design attempts to address all instances of disabilities including situational impairments.

Situational impairments can affect anyone. Consider a time you have been distracted while performing a task. You were more likely to miss something or fail to complete the task efficiently. According to the WHO, in the 80's society viewed disability more as a personal attribute, whereas now we must think of it as context dependent.

Microsoft Design describes disability (permanent and situational) as mismatched interactions. Because these mismatches can happen to anyone, we must be able to recognize when they could potentially happen, how our designs may inadvertently cause them, and how our designs might solve for them.



Image from Microsoft's Inclusive Toolkit

Lastly, regularly engaging with and learning about DEI (diversity, equality, and inclusion) efforts also help to expose points of exclusion. Designing for diversity, equity, and inclusion is about learning about people who are different from you in background, experience, and ability. These connections strengthen design muscles and teach us to design more meaningfully.

### IN PRACTICE

This looks like seeking **user feedback**. The UX team regularly seeks feedback from our customers through usability tests, user interviews, and surveys.

A good example of how we seek user feedback are **NPS** (Net Promotor Score) surveys which allow customers to voice their pain points and tell us more about their daily tasks, challenges, and responsibilities. The UX team recently sifted through responses to find common themes of pain points and frustrations. We will use this **research** over and over as we continue to design new features.

# 2: Consider Situational Exclusion

*The UX Team explains the second principle of inclusive design. What temporary and situational exclusion is, how we identify it, and some examples of how we're addressing those challenges head on.*

## PRINCIPLE 2

# Consider Situational Barriers

*How inclusive design can make it easier for customers to complete their tasks despite temporary or situational challenges.*



### THE DEFINITION

Sometimes exclusion is temporary or happens during specific situations. Our customers might be new, work in a busy and noisy environment, or work on the road (we see you mobile groomers!) Those are some examples of how the context in which our customers engage with our

software will impact their experience. The UX team must also consider temporary limitations such as a user with a sprained wrist who will be physically challenged in completing their task.

Microsoft's Persona Spectrum is a great visual to better understand what is meant by permanent, temporary, and situational barriers. Permanent barriers are ones that do not change such as a physical impairment. Temporary constraints occur for a shorter period of time such as a medical condition. Situational constraints happen when the user's environment affects their ability to interact with the product.

Expanding the definition of accessibility to include permanent, temporary, and situational disabilities results in a better designed and more widely accessible product for all.

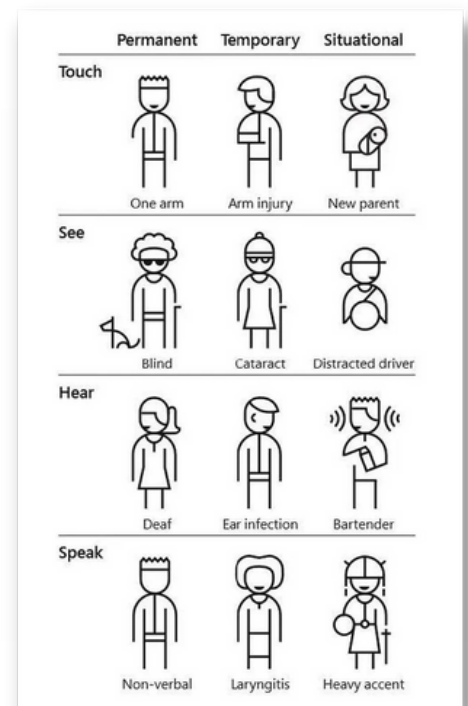


Image from Microsoft's Inclusive Toolkit

### IN PRACTICE

When designing boarding for Pet, we learned, from talking to our customers, what a typical morning looked like for various boarding facilities. Our boarding customers typically have a check-in window of about 2 hours in the morning which means a lot of potentially anxious pets (and their owners) coming in during a brief period of time.



We knew that this was a possibility for situational exclusion. Under pressure, the front desk must interact with their clients and check pets in for their stay. In that short amount of time, our customer will need to document essential information about the pet and their

stay, offer good customer service, and focus on that task despite the noise and distraction of a place that hosts noisy pets.

Understandably, a lot can be missed in these moments. So, when designing, we kept the layout simple

and consistent to avoid sensory overload. Entering belongings, food, medication, and notes are presented in sequential order so nothing is missed, and our customer can move down on the screen as they gather information from their client. We also made these sections collapsable so the page feels less overwhelming. Additionally, we kept the colors simple and ensured the text used was a sharp contrast for high visibility.

What is great about this is that the design addresses accessibility issues for people with permanent disabilities in a way that users experiencing a temporary or situational disability, such as an overwhelming morning, will benefit from also.

Services	Quantity	Unit Price
<p><b>Boarding Stay</b></p> <p><b>Pet</b> Clifford (Labrador R.)</p> <p><b>Time</b> Fri, May 27, 2022 4:00 PM until Sun, May 29 2022 10:00 AM</p> <p><b>Kennel</b> ER (3)</p>	1	<p>*\$22.00</p> <p>*price per night for 2 pets</p>
<p><b>Boarding Stay</b></p> <p><b>Pet</b> Margot (Labrador R.)</p> <p><b>Time</b> Fri, May 27, 2022 4:00 PM until Sun, May 29, 2022 10:00 AM</p> <p><b>Kennel</b> ER (3)</p>	1	<p>*\$22.00</p> <p>*price per night for 2 pets</p>
<p><b>Belongings</b></p>		
<p><b>Food</b></p> <p><b>Pet</b> All</p> <p><b>How much food?</b> Enter food type and amount...</p> <p><b>How many times per day?</b> 2</p> <p><b>Feeding Notes</b> Enter additional feeding instructions...</p> <p><a href="#">+ Food Rule</a></p>		
<p><b>Medication</b></p>		
<p><b>Appointment Notes</b></p>		

# 3: Offer Choice

*The UX Team explains a third principle of inclusive design. Offering choice runs deeper than UI customization. Learn about the power of choice and how it enhances the user experience.*

# Offer Choice

*By offering choice for task completion or displaying information, we empower our customers to engage with our software in a way that best suits their ability or unique circumstance.*



## THE DEFINITION

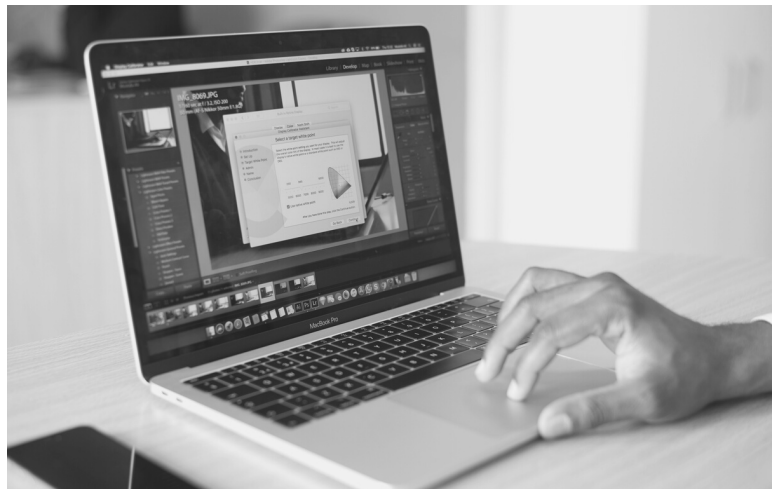
Inclusive design is about meeting people where they are. Offering different ways of completing a task is important because in doing so, we promote equity and participation which communicates to our customers that we are listening when they tell us their preferences and we pay attention to the pages they frequent most and how they like to get there.

Here are some examples of offering choice:

**Text size and font:** Offering the ability to customize text ensures that content is readable for each individual.

**Color contrasts options:** Providing different color schemes, such as light or dark view, can accommodate users with sight impairments and ensures that the content is equally accessible.

**Keyboard shortcuts:** Customers with mobile impairments can benefit from keyboard shortcuts and navigation options.

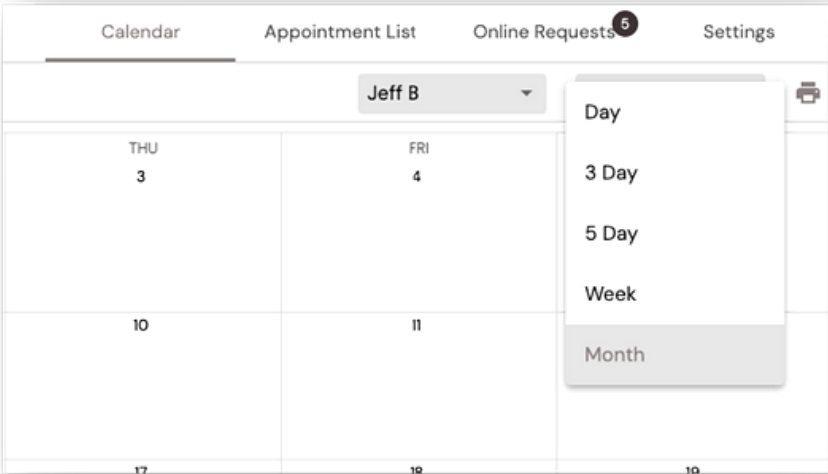


**Captioning and transcripts:** Closed captions and transcripts in training videos make the information accessible to those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

**Alternative text for Images:** Including alternative text allows screen readers to convey visual content to those experiencing visual impairments.

**Language and Localization:** Providing an option to select preferred language and regional settings guarantees content is understandable and culturally relevant.

**Content Layout:** Allowing customers to choose the way they take in information benefits those with various cognitive abilities.



IN PRACTICE

A straightforward way we offer choice is by giving customers the power to customize how menu items are displayed on the navigation bar.

When a client requests an appointment, our customer must quickly find an open time. Depending on the date of the request, the user can choose how they want the calendar to display and filter by employee availability to find the most appropriate appointment slot.

A final example shows that a customer is able to check out their client from the appointment modal but they're also able to get to checkout straight from the navigation bar.

These are a few ways that we can be more inclusive and offer choice to our customers. When we do, we increase accessibility and usability for a wide range of users which creates a more inclusive and user-friendly experience.

