



CASE STUDY

Turning a Website Accessibility ADA Demand Letter into a Competitive Advantage



Summary

When a multi-property independent hotel group received an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) demand letter alleging website accessibility violations, the leadership team initially saw it as a nuisance legal issue. But after investigating the claim and examining their existing accessibility practices, they discovered their approach to accessibility relied solely on automated tools—leaving significant accessibility gaps undetected.

Working with Allyant, the organization implemented a structured accessibility program combining automated scanning with expert manual testing, remediation guidance, and ongoing monitoring. The effort resulted in a Letter of Conformance for each of its hotel and retail websites, stronger internal accessibility knowledge, and the confidence that their digital experiences will continue to meet compliance requirements.

Today, accessibility is an embedded practice—with the Allyant Accessibility Badge on each site signaling a clear commitment to accessible, compliant digital experiences for all.

Key Highlights

- ADA demand letter prompted the organization to reevaluate its website accessibility strategy.
- Automated-only scanning from a prior vendor failed to identify many accessibility issues, heightening legal risk.
- Allyant's combination of expert auditing, remediation guidance, and critically, legal defensibility helped the organization achieve Letters of Conformance across multiple websites.
- The Allyant Accessibility Badge now acts as both a deterrent against nuisance lawsuits and a public declaration of an accessibility commitment.
- Internal teams gained practical accessibility knowledge they now apply to ongoing content updates.

Objective

For a multi-property independent hotel group, website accessibility wasn't initially a primary area of focus—not because it wasn't important, but because the team believed the accessibility vendor they initially engaged was properly managing it.

Like many organizations, the marketing team relied on external support to oversee the accessibility of its websites. They received reports on an ongoing basis suggesting compliance was on track. With limited internal expertise, there was little reason to question progress.

That changed when the organization received a demand letter alleging that one of its websites was not accessible—claiming that's a violation of ADA Title III.

While the letter itself appeared to be part of a broader wave of nuisance claims targeting hospitality organizations, it exposed a more important reality: Their portfolio of websites was not fully compliant—and their existing approach wasn't sufficient to catch the gaps.

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A second demand letter ultimately followed, reinforcing the need to take a more proactive and informed approach. But rather than settling after this second letter, the organization turned to legal counsel to better understand its risk and its options.

That process revealed a critical insight: Without manual testing and expert validation, significant barriers can remain undetected—leaving organizations exposed to costly legal action. At that point, accessibility shifted from a reactive concern to an organizational priority.

The team set out to:

- Understand the accurate state of accessibility of its portfolio of websites.
- Identify an accessibility partner capable of delivering both technical expertise and support for legal counsel.
- Establish a repeatable process for auditing, remediation, and ongoing maintenance.
- Ensure its websites remain accessible for all guests, including those with disabilities using assistive technologies.

What began as a response to a legal trigger quickly evolved into an ongoing commitment—ensuring their digital experiences reflected the same level of inclusivity they strive to provide in their physical locations.

Solution

Following guidance from legal counsel, the organization selected Allyant as its accessibility partner.

The engagement began with comprehensive accessibility audits across the organization's hotel and retail websites. Unlike their previous vendor, Allyant combined automated scanning with expert manual testing to identify issues that scanning technology alone would miss.

"We learned that automated tools only flag a small percentage of accessibility issues. Without manual testing, including testing done by people with disabilities, critical barriers can easily go undetected," said the Area Director of Sales and Marketing.

Working collaboratively with Allyant's team, the organization began a phased remediation process across multiple sites. Their internal marketing team coordinated with external web developers, while the Allyant Platform served as the hub—providing detailed issue tracking, prioritization, code-level guidance, and access to remediation support.

"The platform was intuitive and user-friendly, even when we had several projects running at once," added the group's Marketing Manager.

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Allyant also provided a key capability their previous vendor could not—legal defensibility.

The team's Director adds, "Allyant's team offered support for our legal counsel, standing firmly behind the defensibility of their work, should we receive another demand letter or even a subpoena for required court appearance. The level of confidence we had because of Allyant's commitment made a huge difference in our approach to completing this process."

Results

The refreshed approach to accessibility delivered immediate impact—strengthening compliance, reducing legal risk, and establishing a sustainable path forward. What began as a reactive response to demand letters is now a structured, repeatable process for maintaining accessibility over time. And across each of its hotel and retail websites, the organization received a Letter of Conformance from Allyant.

Internal teams have also built-up practical accessibility knowledge, applying best practices as they update and manage site content. And the Allyant Accessibility Badge has become both a signal and a safeguard.

“For us, the badge is our strongest defensive tool. It’s a public-facing declaration we have an experienced partner, and we’re committed to accessibility. And we have not received another demand letter since,” said the Area Director of Sales and Marketing.

With a comprehensive solution provider bringing decades of accessibility experience, what was once a legal vulnerability has evolved into a competitive strength. The hospitality group’s online experiences now reflect the same standard of inclusive, accessible service they deliver to every in-person guest.

