

Expert Review Accessibility Inspection

WolverineBeer.com

<https://www.wolverinebeer.com>

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Executive Summary

An expert accessibility review was conducted of the wolverinebeer.com website, examining all the pages that comprise the site. The inspection focused on identifying any and all accessibility issues, while also pointing out strengths of the website that should be maintained.

The most significant accessibility issues identified in this evaluation include:

- **The tab index value on the subscribe form on the home page (in the source code), prevents users who rely on the keyboard to navigate the site, and to access the rest of the content.** A value of “500” in the tab index HTML element is drawing the focus to the subscribe form on the homepage when the tab key is clicked on, upon users landing on the page.
- **There are several instances where the low contrast ratio between the foreground color and the background color makes the content unreadable.** Low contrast is problematic because users with low visibility are unable to understand the content of the site when there’s not enough contrast between foreground and background colors.
- **Alignment concerns interfere with and break the user flow when it is most needed.** The call to action to view the menu on the home page is aligned to the left, causing a break in the flow of information when users are encouraged to complete one of the most important tasks on the site — which is to look at the menu before ordering online.
- **HTML elements are being misused in the source code, which can confuse users who rely on screen readers to navigate the site.** For example, there are instances where a horizontal rule element (<hr>) should be used to draw a line, instead of using dash characters inside a paragraph element (<p>). Screen readers rely on proper HTML markup to read the information to users with disabilities.

While these issues are among the most pressing accessibility concerns for the wolverinebeer.com website, a number of additional accessibility issues that also deserve attention are detailed in the analysis, with recommended solutions.

Terminology & Conventions Used

Different terms are often used when referring to the same part of the browser window or web page. To facilitate understanding of this analysis, one term was used consistently for each browser/web page element. The terms are:

Accessibility: The design and development of websites, tools, and technologies so people with (and without) disabilities can use them.

Assistive Technology: A product or device used by people with disabilities to perform daily functions that would be impossible for them to do without.

Tabindex value: Is an attribute that can be applied to most elements and specifies the order of an element. A tabindex of 0 would enter the element into the natural tab navigation order. Any tabindex value greater than 0 would jump the element to the front of the natural tab order starting with the lowest value greater than 0 working its way up from there.

Hero section: A large banner image that is placed in the header section of a webpage. It is usually the first thing users see when opening the page.

Screen reader: An assistive technology device that allows users with visual impairments to use a computer. It converts text and images on a webpage into speech or braille.

Call to action: Also known as CTA, call to action is an instruction on a website that tells the user to do something such as 'Buy Now' or 'Sign Up'.

Aria label: ARIA labels define accessible names to be read by screen readers for interface elements. They may be used when HTML associations (label, alternative text, etc.) are not sufficient.

HTML element: An HTML element is an individual component of an HTML document. It represents semantics or meaning. For example, the "title element" represents the title of the document.

Global navigation: A series of high priority links that are located on every page of a website allowing users to switch between categories no matter where they are on the website.

Priority Levels

The issues identified in this evaluation are grouped into three levels of priority:

High priority: These issues are likely to impact a large number of users significantly. They should be resolved as quickly as resources allow.

Medium priority: Issues at this priority level are also likely to affect a large number of users but generally are less disruptive to the user experience, relative to the high priority issues. If resources are available to address these issues, they should be addressed.

Low priority: Low priority issues typically impact a small subset of the overall user base, although they may impact a larger group. Regardless of the number of users affected, these issues carry only a minor negative impact. Low priority issues are generally easy to resolve. There is less time pressure to fix low priority issues, compared to medium priority issues and especially high priority issues.

Usability Guidelines

Simplicity & Clarity

The layout should be easy to understand and follow, without extraneous or distracting elements.

Suggested Changes

High Priority:

- **Center-align the hero section’s call-to-action button “See Menu & Order Online”.** There is a lack of continuity in the alignment of the hero section’s headline and the CTA button below it. Because of this alignment discrepancy, there is a disconnect between the main message and the main action the users are called to take. Aligning this button to the center of the page will make the main message more cohesive.
- **Align all other “See Menu & Order Online” buttons to the center of the page.** On the home page, below the “GROWLER POLICY STARTING JULY 16” section, there’s another button that should be center-aligned with the majority of content above it, in order to preserve a sense of continuity with the rest of elements on the page. The same applies to all other “See Menu & Order Online” buttons on the site.

Medium Priority:

- **Reconsider the use of horizontal lines on the home page, as its purpose seems unclear.** The horizontal lines between sections of content seem to serve the purpose of separating different pieces of information; however, in some cases, there is no line to divide different sections of content; for example, between the “Join the Wolverine State Brewing community” and “What People Are Saying” sections.
- **Enlarge the size of the Wolverine Beer logo on mobile, and use a different menu icon with thicker lines.** The size of the company’s logo appears too small to read on mobile devices, and the menu icon’s lines are too thin — getting lost in the background image. The following touch screen target sizes are recommended:
 - Apple’s iPhone Human Interface Guidelines recommends a minimum target size of 44 pixels wide by 44 pixels tall.

Proper Structural Markup

A lot of what makes content accessible is how things are said as well as what markup is applied to that content.

Suggested Changes

High Priority:

- **Remove empty links.** An evaluation with WAVE (Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool) produced 6 empty link errors (on the home page); which means that there are 6 instances where there are links that contain no text. If a link contains no text, the purpose of that link will not be presented to the user, which can create confusion for keyboard users who rely on a screen reader to navigate and digest information. All empty link instances are located in the footer.
 - **Provide text within the link that describes the functionality and/or target of that link.**
- **Provide descriptive, accurate labels for all ARIA labels.** Even though aria-labels are present in the source code of the site, they appear to be empty. ARIA labels define accessible names to be read by screen readers for interface elements, and may be used when alternative text values are not sufficient.
 - **Ensure aria-label values provide a descriptive and accurate label.**
 - **Add aria-label values to social media icon links in the main navigation, which appear empty in the source code.**

For example, the Facebook link/icon in the main navigation has an aria-label, but it appears empty:

```
<a class="icon icon--fill"
href="https://www.facebook.com/WolverineStateBrewingCo" target="_blank"
aria-label="">
<svg viewBox="23 23 64 64"><use xlink:href="#facebook-unauth-icon"
width="110" height="110"></use>
</svg>
</a>
```

- **Use proper HTML elements for horizontal lines in the source code.** On the home page (for example), below the “New Hours and New Specials!” headline, there is a horizontal line made of dash characters inside a paragraph element (<p>) — instead of a proper horizontal rule HTML element (<hr>).

HTML elements provide important document structure and navigation functionality to assistive technology users. If the paragraph element is used to draw a line, it can be confusing for users with disabilities who rely on screen readers to access the content on the site.

- **Level one heading missing on every page throughout the website.** Headings provide visual meaning and structure to the webpage. They are vital to page navigation for users including those who rely on assistive technology. Each page should have a first level heading present which is usually the document title. It is recommended to provide a title to this page and place it within an `<h1>` element.
- **Change the “tabindex value” in the sign-up form (in the source code) on the home page from “500” to “0” so that the content in the page is accessible with a keyboard.**

The following line of code appears to be the main reason why navigating the WolverineBeer.com website is impossible with a keyboard:

```
<input class="text" id="awf_field-106339962" type="text" name="email" value=""  
tabindex="500" onfocus=" if (this.value == ") { this.value = "; }" onblur="if (this.value ==  
") { this.value=";} ">
```

This is problematic because users who can't use a mouse to navigate and users who rely on screen readers to access the content on the site, can't access the main navigation upon landing on the home page because the tab key focus is directed toward the “tabindex =”500” value in the HTML source code. This “tabindex value” should be changed to “0” to allow the tab key to access the natural flow of the site's HTML structure to improve the navigation of the site via the keyboard (tab key).

Providing Content & Context

Since many disabled users experience content in a non-visual modality, it is important that they have a proper context for interpreting the information as well as access to that content.

Suggested Changes

High Priority:

- **Add an alternative text description to describe the content of the hero images at the top of the page.** Visually impaired users who use screen readers will be read aloud an “alt attribute” to better understand the content subject matter of an image on the page. It is important that all users understand the image content displayed in the hero section. To do that, it is necessary to add an alternative description in the HTML code.

Example:

```

```

- **Keep the alternative text for the main logo in the navigation.** Keep following the recommended practice of adding alternative text to images within a link (logo image) to ensure that the content of the image is available to screen reader users.
 - **Add the link functionality and/or destination to the alternative text so that screen reader users understand the functionality and/or destination of the link.**

For example:

```

```

Graceful Degradation

Concerns how user experience holds up when technologies are disabled as well as when adaptive technologies are used.

Suggested Changes

High Priority:

- **Change the tabindex value in the main navigation from “-1” to “0” to facilitate keyboard interaction for users who depend on the keyboard (tab key) to navigate.** A tabindex value of 0 places an item into the keyboard navigation order so that users can navigate to it using the tab key. A value of less than 0 (-1) removes an element from the keyboard flow leaving users unable to access it using the tab key.

For example:

```
<a class="header-nav-folder-title" href="/our-lagers-1" tabindex="0"
data-animation-role="header-element">
Our Lagers
</a>
```

- **Optimize the keyboard functionality for users who depend on a screen reader to use the site, such as VoiceOver for Mac, and NVDA for Windows.** When users who can't use a mouse, have mobility challenges, or issues with dexterity use the site with a screen reader, they will most likely be using the tab key on their keyboard to navigate. These types of users expect the tab key to take them to the first navigation item/link at the top of the page. However, when first pressing the tab key, the focus goes directly to the email address field in the subscription form. Pressing the tab key should direct the screen reader's focus to the first item in the navigation.
- **Optimize the keyboard tab functionality to complete forms.** On the Gulo Room page's reservation form, using the tabs to navigate from input field to input field is not enough to fully complete the form fields, as the tab key skips the radio buttons focus and goes straight into the next field (using Safari, for example); leaving users who rely on using the keyboard unable to complete the form.

Respecting the User

Many practices convey to users a sense of disrespect (abuse); those users will leave the website and not return.

Suggested Changes

High Priority:

- **Increase the color contrast between link and background colors.** Users with low vision have difficulty detecting the differences between colors that are too similar; because of that, there should be more contrast between the white background and the light grey used for links (e.g. “COVID-19 -- OUR COMMITMENT” and “Submit” buttons on the home and Keg Order pages, respectively).

Right now, the light grey color against the background produces a ratio of 2.43:1. The minimum ratio should be 4.5:1.

The light grey links' HEX value is #a8a6a1; a darker grey that produces the minimum contrast ratio is HEX #76766B. The same is true for all the links under “Even more lagers” in the “Our Lagers” page.

- **Increase the contrast ratio between the foreground color (text) and the background image in the hero section (for all pages with a hero background image).**
 - **Increase size and/or contrast between the main navigation links and the background image, until the contrast ratio is at least 4.5:1 for text smaller than 14 points.** If text is over 18 points, or 14 points bold, the contrast ratio should be at least 3:1.
 - **Increase the contrast ratio between the headline text (foreground) and the background image in the hero sections of the site until the contrast ratio is at least 3:1.** All the following pages have low contrast ratio between text and background in the hero section:
 - Home page
 - Taproom
 - Kitchen
 - Gulo Room
 - Brewery Tours
 - Menu
 - Our Lagers
 - On Draft

- Mug Club
 - Keg Orders
 - Store
 - Get Deals
- **Use the following online tool to check the contrast ratio between foreground and background colors:**

<https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>

Note: other online tools available can be used as well.

- **Increase the color contrast between the email input field label and the background color in the sign-up form on the home page.**

It is unclear whether it was intentional or not to direct the tabindex focus to the sign-up form, targeting users who rely on the keyboard to navigate. In either case, the email input field label is barely readable even by users without vision disabilities because of its low color contrast.

Right now, the light-dark email input label color against the dark grey background produces a ratio of 1.29:1; failing all Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) requirements for AA and AAA levels, for normal and large text.

A white text label, for example, produces a contrast ratio of 20.62:1 against the dark grey background; and passes the AA and AAA Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for normal and large text sizes.

Proper Text Markup & Phrasing

A lot of what makes content accessible is how things are said as well as what markup is applied to that content.

Practices to Continue

- **Present content at an appropriate reading level.** It is vital that users, especially those with cognitive disabilities, are able to read and quickly understand the content presented to them on a website. Continue using casual conversational language and shorter sentences to help streamline the user's navigational experience.

Suggested Changes

Medium Priority:

- **Add descriptive text to the ARIA social media link labels in the global navigation.** Screen readers navigate from link to link on the webpage reading each link aloud in order of sequence giving detailed information to visually impaired users who are scanning the webpage. It is recommended to add the name of each social media destination to each link so the screen reader can call out the destination during navigation.

For example:

```
<a class="icon icon--fill"
href="https://www.yelp.com/biz/wolverine-state-brewing-co-ann-arbor-2" target="_blank"
aria-label="Yelp">
```

- **Remove extraneous link texts throughout the website.** Links are often read out of context and should clearly describe the function of the link. Text such as “here” or “Click here” are considered extraneous, may cause confusion to the user, and should be avoided.

For example, on the ‘Keg Orders’ page, under “Step 1: Decide which beer you want and what size keg”, there is a link for users to find beers that are currently on draft labeled ‘here’. It is recommended that this link be rephrased with:

“You can find the beers currently on draft by visiting our **On Draft** page.”

Low Priority:

- **Rephrase the 'Get Deals' link label in the global navigation.** After clicking on the 'Get Deals' link, users are taken to the 'Join The Wolverine State Brewing Community' page where most of the content is focused on signing up to get regular email updates on products, events, and discounts. The label 'Get Deals' is a possible cause for confusion for some users as they may think this is where they would find digital coupons and vouchers. It is recommended to change the link label phrasing from 'Get Deals' to 'Sign up'.

Device Independence

Requiring users to have a given input device in order to use a website ignores the fact that not all users will be able to use (or possess) all input devices.

Suggested Changes

High Priority

- **Make the online ordering menu keyboard accessible.** After clicking on the 'See Menu and Order Online' link, the menu opens but users are unable to tab or scroll up and down, make selections, or close out of it using the keyboard. The Menu for online ordering requires mousing. Make the online ordering menu keyboard accessible so users who rely on keyboards for navigation can place orders as well.

Visual and Non-Visual Navigation

Navigation should be clear and efficient for users with visual disabilities as well as for users without visual disabilities.

Suggested Changes

High Priority

- **Relocate the 'About Us' link to the main navigation bar at the top of the page.** The 'About Us' link is currently located in the footer at the bottom of the page. This will make it easier for the user to locate more information about the company.

Medium Priority

- **Rearrange labels in the global menu to streamline the website navigation.** Create a dropdown menu under 'About us' and move the 'Get Deals' link below it. The end result should look like this:
 - Our Lagers
 - Lagers
 - On Draft
 - Mugs
 - Kegs
 - Menu
 - Visit Us
 - Taproom
 - Kitchen
 - Gulo Room
 - Brewery Tours
 - Our Store
 - About us
 - Get Deals

Low Priority

- **Rearrange the layout of the unordered list on the 'Lagers' page.** While an unordered list is appropriate for this content, it would be ideal to rearrange the list into two separate shorter columns. This would allow the user to view more of the list at once rather than having the user tab all the way down the page.

Allowing User Control

The ability to control features of the interface is crucial for disabled users; any aspects out of their control may derail the user experience.

Practices to Continue

- **Continue setting text sizes as a percentage of the default browser font size instead of the number of points or pixels.** Users with reduced eyesight typically need large fonts to read. To support these users, continue not setting absolute font sizes but using relative sizes instead. This allows users to shrink or grow the text to fit their needs.

Suggested Changes

High Priority

- **Make the text larger on the 'Lagers' page.** On a webpage, text that is 10 pixels or less is considered very small and can be difficult to read for those with visual disabilities. It is recommended that the font size be adjusted to a larger, more readable size.