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Gathering Celebrates Human Diversity

Designing for the 21st Century Conference

The latest universal design triumphs and challenges were showcased in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from Dec. 7-12 when more than 400 people from around the world gathered for Designing for the 21st Century III: An International Conference on Universal Design, organized by Adaptive Environments Inc., Boston. Designers, architects, academics, disability advocates, students, government officials and corporate representatives shared ideas, research and concerns over common impediments related to designing for people of all abilities.

The theme running throughout the conference, according to co-chair Jim Sandhu, was that “Universal design not only provides a framework for action but is an approach that values and celebrates human diversity. As a product of social policy, inclusive design can restore equity and enhance citizenship.... This means that universal design does not operate in a political vacuum, but at the very forefront of societal change where ‘commitment’ and ‘values’ are the driving forces.” Sandhu, who previewed papers submitted for the event, was unfortunately unable to attend the conference. His remarks

were read by Deborah Lisi-Baker, Executive Director of the Vermont Center for Independent Living.

In remarks at the keynote session, Judy Heuman of the World Bank, discussed the role of universal design in relation to addressing the needs of poor people. “Universal design is critical

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The Key: An Accessible Path of Travel

Resort Looks for a Comprehensive Solution

When the Sheraton Sand Key Hotel and Resort, in Clearwater Beach, FL was hit with a lawsuit in 2003 claiming it was not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the management there was surprised.

Over the last decade, the resort’s management, which takes pride in its commitment to excellence in customer service, had made significant accessibility improvements within the pre-ADA facility. In response to customer suggestions and general knowledge of the law, it had, among other things, installed ramps, improved accessibility in guest rooms and enhanced accessible parking.

“We spent time and money thinking we were doing it right, but we weren’t in compliance,” says Russ Kimball, Sheraton Sand Key General Manager. “We didn’t learn enough about codes for slopes, angles....” It was the lawsuit that brought the continuity

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Professor Hubert Froyen, Diepenbeek, Belgium and representatives from the Center for Universal Design accepting their Ron Mace Awards at the Designing for the 21st Century Conference.

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Should We Be Changing Civil Rights Standards? *An Open Letter to the DOJ posted at www.adaanprm.org*

To the US Department of Justice (DOJ):

I offer these comments on the DOJ Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) published Sept. 30, 2004.

In the ANPRM, DOJ has posed numerous questions as to how to proceed with the adoption of the Access Board's new Americans with Disabilities Act and Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADA/ABA-AG) as a replacement and expansion of the original ADA Standards for Accessible Design. One question which is missing is: "Should we be changing the existing civil rights standards at all?"

In the 12+ years since the passage of the ADA, we have witnessed the very confusing results of the existing marriage of civil rights legislation and building standards. We have seen great inconsistencies in the enforcement process as well as dramatic increases in the accessibility of facilities. And we have noticed a change in the marketplace as the Baby Boom Generation turns 50. During this time we have also experienced the periodic updating of building codes such as the International Building Code and the ANSI A117.1 accessibility standards.

There is no doubt that through the process of "harmonization" those updated building codes are a dramatic step forward in our efforts to reach universal design, but the reality is that the existing ADA Standards for Accessible Design already provide "minimum standards" for *accessible* design as was required by ADA statute. Periodic changes in building codes do not justify changing the minimum standards for assuring civil rights. Have the civil rights of people with disabilities changed? Why should the Standards? Although not perfect, the existing Standards work! What worked 10 years ago, still works today.

Instead of adopting new standards, the US

DOJ should simply identify the new ADA/ABA-AG as a voluntary "safe harbor" or "best practices" for compliance with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design in *newly constructed or altered* buildings as well as in existing facilities. Savvy businesses, that we are working with, are already using the new ADA/ABA-AG criteria in the design of their facilities and products to increase market penetration and improve customer satisfaction.

Adopting the "safe harbor" position opens the door for the development of creative design solutions and frequently improved building code criteria by private sector organizations. For instance, in 2002, experts in accessibility abandoned the criteria for assembly areas found in the new ADA/ABA-AG, adopting superior criteria that are now found in the 2003 version of ANSI A117.1. The Access Board was unable to include those superior criteria in the new ADA/ABA-AG, because of the lengthy (already more than 10 years), elaborate and politically charged federal rule making procedures. The ANPRM recognizes this fact by asking in Question #7 whether those criteria should be adopted.

It seems to be much simpler, more reasonable, and wiser, to offer a voluntary set of criteria rather than new and different absolute requirements. In other words, require compliance with the existing ADA Standards, but offer the new ADA/ABA-AG as alternative criteria for achieving accessibility. Then, let the marketplace do your work.

jsalmen@UniversalDesign.com

Author's Note: I base these opinions on my experience as a member of the US Access Board's Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) Review Advisory Committee, and a testifying expert in legal complaints regarding application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design, as well as being a practitioner of both accessible and universal design.

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Opportunity to Comment on Standards

The Department of Justice (DOJ) has begun the process of revising its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations to make them consistent with the new ADA Accessibility Guidelines published in July by the US Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board).

The DOJ Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM), published in late September, requests public comments on issues related to the application of the guidelines and background information for the economic costs and benefits analysis of this regulatory action.

Members of the public may submit comments until **Jan. 28, 2005**. Comments may be submitted electronically to www.adaanprm.org or www.regulations.gov or by mail to P.O. Box 1032, Merrifield, VA 22116-1032.

Court Upholds Individuals' Right to Sue

A federal court of appeals has agreed that individuals can sue a public entity for violations of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In the case *Ability Center of Greater Toledo v. City of Sandusky, Ohio*, the US Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit affirmed that public entities must make all of their facilities, including streets and sidewalks containing pedestrian walkways, accessible by installing curb ramps. The city argued, unsuccessfully, that the Supreme Court decision in *Sandoval v. Alabama* prohibited individuals from suing public entities because the regulations enforcing Title II went beyond the scope of the statute.

Neither the District Court or the Court of Appeals agreed with the city's argument. According to Tom Zraik, attorney for Accessibility Center of Greater Toledo, the court found that "the plain language of the statute, the intent of Congress in enacting the ADA and the case law before and after the Sandoval case clearly provides for the right of individuals to bring a cause of action against the public entity for such violations."

Designing for Inclusion Report Released

Users with disabilities are often asked to pay high prices for phones with features sets that are not useful to them; are reluctant to invest in tech-

nologies that have an unproven accessibility record; and have difficulty finding devices that match their functional capabilities, according to a report from the National Council on Disability (NCD). The NCD is an independent federal agency working with the President and Congress to increase the inclusion, independence, and empowerment of Americans with disabilities.

The report, "Design for Inclusion: Creating a New Marketplace," was developed to educate designers and manufacturers about the way electronic and information technology (E&IT) intersects with the needs of individuals with disabilities, and how designing with access in mind can significantly increase the size of target markets for E&IT.

The report, which includes 19 recommendations for government and industry, outlines specific strategies for promoting universal design in the E&IT market.

The report also calls for the strengthening of the impact of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. "Despite having been in place for nearly three years, Section 508 has yet to reach its potential," according to the report. "...If industry does not see that federal agencies are serious about implementing Section 508 in a consistent manner, companies will shift the monetary and human resources needed for improving accessibility to product development opportunities that offer a higher return on investment." The report can be found at the NCD's website: www.ncd.gov

Board Seeks Public Feedback on Guidelines for Passenger Vessels

The US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) is accepting comments on its newly released draft guidelines for passenger vessels.

The draft guidelines provide accessibility criteria for large vessels designed to accommodate more than 150 passengers or 49 overnight passengers.

Through an accompanying notice, the Board is also soliciting information on how to address access to smaller vessels, such as water taxis and excursion boats, which, by their size and design, pose unique design challenges.

The deadline for comment is March 28. For more information, visit www.access-board.gov/news/pvag.htm. 

"Despite having been in place for nearly three years, Section 508 has yet to reach its potential...."

National Council on Disability Report



Designing For The 21st Century III
An International Conference on Universal Design

Universal Design in the Workplace

Whether driven by the changing needs of an aging workforce, safety concerns for employees or the desire for a better bottom line, companies across the world need to turn to universal design for assistance, according to panelists on workplace design at the Designing for the 21st Century III: An International Conference on Universal Design.

Aging Europe

Europe is about to experience a demographic time bomb, says Jeremy Myerson, co-director of the Helen Hamlyn Research Center, London. With a rapidly aging workforce, governments in Italy and England are pushing back the re-

tirement age to keep workers on the job. In addition, more older workers are choosing to work because of a lack of pensions.

Managers must adjust to the needs of an older workforce, says Myerson. In addition to increased lighting and improved acoustics for older workers, companies need to consider the “emotional ergonomics” related to an older workforce. Myerson says managers need to ask themselves: How do we show older workers they are valued? How do we make our company inviting to older workers? “Human Resources policies have to match the changes in the

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“...Accessible environments allow people to take their places in society.... Removal of barriers allows people with disabilities to be participants, not special.”

Judy Heuman
World Bank

Conference, from page 1

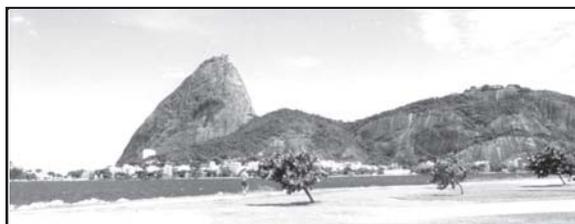
for poverty reduction around the world. In developed and developing countries, poverty and disability are linked.... Accessible environments allow people to take their places in society.... Removal of barriers allows people with disabilities to be participants, not special.”

The evidence of the ever expanding reach of universal design was apparent throughout the conference. Session topics ranged from websites to toilets; from voting to museums; from on-line education to fire safety in buildings.

Immediate Results

Among the most immediate results of the conference was the city of Rio de Janeiro’s approval of and almost instantaneous commencement of changes to improve accessibility to Sugar Loaf Mountain, one of the city’s main tourist attractions.

During pre-conference activities, a group of 45 attendees, including designers and disability advocates, met at Sugar Loaf to explore the venue and offer suggestions on enhancing access for all. The working group developed nine strategies to transform the site into an internationally recognized model of sustainability and



Sugar Loaf Mountain

accessibility.

City officials apparently took the suggestions to heart. In addressing the opening session of the conference, a representative of the mayor’s office announced that the permits to install a ramp and a lift had been signed by the mayor. Construction on some of the improvements began the next day.

We’ve Come a Long Way

There was a noticeable development from the previous Designing for the 21st Century conferences, says John P. S. Salmen, AIA, Universal Designers & Consultants Inc. of Takoma Park, MD and conference participant. “Of the three Designing for the 21st Century conferences, this one drew the most sophisticated audience by far. The sessions reflect the growing maturity within the field, with very little ‘basics of Universal Design’ and a lot of substantive discussion about important issues by insightful participants,” he said. “It was exciting, intellectually stimulating and hope-inspiring for the future of universal design. My hat goes off to Valerie Fletcher and the Adaptive Environments staff for all their hard work.” Conference proceedings can be found at www.designfor21st.org. 

Editor’s Note: There was a wealth of knowledge shared during the Designing for the 21st Century: An International Conference on Universal Design -- too much to include in just one issue of *Universal Design Newsletter*. Additional feature articles and Ron Mace Award recipients will appear in the April issue of this newsletter and on our website: www.UniversalDesign.com Many thanks to Adaptive Environments Inc. for making this conference possible.



Universal Design and the Museum Experience

Museums around the world are embracing the idea of the participatory museum experience. Low tech and high tech innovations are opening up a cultural treasure trove for all people everywhere.

At the international conference on universal design, Designing for the 21st Century III, held last month in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, representatives from museums and art galleries discussed their inclusive programs.

Australia

The Art Gallery of Western Australia hosts a “Sensational Art Day” at which visitors are given gloves and are welcomed to touch a Rodan sculpture, according to Phillipa Daly Smith, access consultant with the Disabilities Services Commission in Australia. The gallery regularly offers this and other activities for visitors with sensory, intellectual and physical disabilities as part of its general schedule of programs.

South Africa

At a “Feel the Rhythm Workshop,” at the South African National Gallery, children are encouraged to put their ears on the drums while they are being played and then asked to paint what they heard or felt, says Sandra Eastwood, a museum consultant from South Africa.

United States

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, regularly offers a variety of touch tours, according to Rebecca McGinnis, Access Coordinator at the Met. One exhibit, “In Touch

with Ancient Egypt,” includes six sculptures in the museum’s Egyptian galleries. Visitors can take a guided or self-guided tour. A similar tour is available for the Met’s American Architecture and Decorative Arts collection. The Met also offers handling sessions using objects from its Touch Collection and has tactile pictures of works of art.

High Tech

At the Museum of Science (MOS) in Boston, MA, the staff continually works to make its computerized interactive exhibits more accessible.

“We know museum visitors include persons of all ages, sizes, abilities and disabilities,” says Christine Reich, Exhibit Planner at the museum. “Visitors learn at their own pace and choose their own activities. Museum learning in exhibitions is facilitated by the design environment, not people.”

Nearly a decade ago, work began on the museum’s first exhibition where computers were designed to be accessible for people with disabilities. The exhibit, which took three years to produce, was a learning experience for the museum staff. According to Andrea Durham, Manager of Exhibit Projects, the MOS staff learned:

- To develop ideas that use buttons, instead of a mouse.
- Have graphic design on the screen reflect the button layout on the panel, (i.e. if the choices on the screen are horizontal, the corresponding buttons on the display should be horizontal).

- Slanting the table surface makes the buttons easier to reach.

- Menu options should be kept to a minimum to reduce button fatigue and make it easier for visitors to remember options. Too many buttons are universally confusing.

- Visitors should be able to turn the audio off and on.

- Stools enhance access for all visitors.

A recent study of the museum’s computer interactive exhibits, showed that a univer-

“Some thought a touch screen would be better for them.... Preference and differences in learning styles play a part.”

Christine Reich,
Exhibit Planner
Museum of Science



Credit: Museum of Science

This exhibit allows visitors to turn the audio off and on.

Accessibility and Reconstruction of the Built Environment

Tornados, earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes or even man-made events such as industrial accidents, armed conflicts and war result in the destruction of the built environment. While these tragic events destroy lives, the infrastructure and the built environment, they also provide an opportunity to incorporate accessibility into the re-building and reconstruction of the community, according to participants at the International Commission on Technology and Accessibility (ICTA-Global) meeting held in December.

Meeting in conjunction with Adaptive Environments' Designing for the 21st Century: An International Conference on Universal Design held in Rio de Janeiro Dec. 7-12, ICTA Global hosted an open meeting for all conference participants on Dec. 8. More than 70 people from around the world attended the session.

In addition to providing information on ICTA-Global and its regional commissions, presentations focused on incorporating accessibility into the re-building/reconstruction of the built environment.

The meeting included discussions led by Betty Dion, Chair of ICTA Global, and a trilingual presentation in English, Spanish and Portuguese, about rebuilding projects across Latin

America by Eduardo Alvarez from ICTA – Latin America. H.M. Chan from Hong Kong, representing ICTA – Asia Pacific region, provided a glimpse of construction constraints in Hong Kong with its limited available land and high density high rises. Ilene Zeitzer from ICTA – North America, provided an update on the US government bill requiring that accessibility be incorporated into the rebuilding and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was noted that the US Agency for International Development (US AID) has adopted the new Americans with Disabilities Act/Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines for reconstruction. Zeitzer also provided details on a Polish government-sponsored meeting on accessibility and reconstruction to take place in April.

The meeting, which was a model of accessi-



The ICTA meeting in Rio de Janeiro.

bility, ended with an announcement that ICTA-Global had just received funding to establish a database of experts in the fields of accessibility of the built and virtual environments. The database is expected to provide an inventory for those looking for accessibility experts in local and national projects as well as international development projects around the world. More about this database and how to become a part of it will be provided in future articles.

For more information about the meeting in Poland, contact: Ilene Zeitzer, Executive Director, USICD or visit the USICD website www.usicd.org and click on Current Initiatives and Activities and look for International Initiatives.

For more information about ICTA and its regional activities, visit: www.ictaglobal.org.

For more information about Adaptive Environments and the Designing for the 21st Century conference, visit the web sites at: www.adaptiveenvironments.org and www.designfor21st.org 

In addition to providing information on ICTA-Global and its regional commissions, presentations focussed on incorporating accessibility into the re-building/reconstruction of the built environment.

About ICTA

The International Commission on Technology and Accessibility (ICTA) is a global organization promoting more equitable and accessible environments and technology. Current ICTA programs include development of an International Accessibility Standard. This program is conducted in conjunction with the International Standards Organization (ISO).

Universal Design Newsletter readers are invited to contact ICTA regional commissions and participate in ICTA activities and programs worldwide. Visit: www.ictaglobal.org.





Website Spotlight:

World Bank Disability & Development Website

Disability and development is a new issue for the World Bank. This website, www.worldbank.org/disability, was created to introduce this new topic of its development agenda and to describe what the World Bank is doing in the area of disability. The idea is

also to serve as a means of knowledge sharing, which is why this site includes non-World Bank links. The site includes information on data and statistics; publications and reports; projects and policies; and disability news and events.

What to Know Before You Go

The National Center for Accessibility (NCA) has published an in-depth article to guide visitors in their search for accessible recreation facilities and programs. The monograph responds to a question: "Where can I find accessible recreation opportunities?" It explores some areas where visitors can conduct initial searches for programs and destinations, contact information and what questions to ask before arriving at a recreation destination. The article is available at www.ncaonline.org/monographs/13questions.shtml

Resources for the Design of Accessible Homes

In addressing the often asked question,

"Where can I get information on accessible homes?, Universal Designers and Consultants Inc. has compiled a list of resources for people in the hunt for ideas and help. The list includes design guides, product guides, resource guides and website references. The list is free. Individuals are welcomed to add resources to the list. To obtain the list or to suggest an addition, visit www.UniversalDesign.com.

Older Drivers Web Seminar

For older adults, driving represents the ability to maintain connections and contribute to the community. The American Society on Aging (ASA) is offering a free online seminar for older drivers. A recording of "Promoting Safety and

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Individuals are invited to contribute to Resources for the Design of Accessible Homes list. To obtain the list or to suggest an addition, visit www.UniversalDesign.com.

Workplaces, *from page 4*

workforce," he says.

UD in Japan

In Japan, the universal design movement in the workplace is being driven by new laws and regulations; concern for worker productivity, safety and health; a sense of corporate responsibility, and the plummeting value of real estate, according to Dai Sogawa, of *Universal Design Magazine*. The results of a universal design related survey indicated that in office design two key ways to improve intellectual productivity were to have a non-territorial workplace and to incorporate natural elements such as sunlight into the space.

Savings

In the US, it makes economic sense for companies to accommodate the special needs of workers, says industrial designer Jim Mueller of J.L. Mueller Inc. "Making job accommodations saves profits," he says. "If you keep valuable employees on the job, it saves money. An em-

ployer who returns an employee with a disability to the job, saves an average of \$154,000."

Mueller contends that adjusting a work space is good public policy as well. "If only 1 percent of people out on disability returned to work — government savings would be \$2.9 billion."

Corporate Canada

Good design with special attention to universal design elements can pay off for companies, according to Susan Szenasy, *Metropolis Magazine*. Many of the buildings we work in, we enter "like moles — through a garage. We see no light changes. We are in Dilbert-like cubicles... rarely do these places make us feel special and they can make you feel sick," she says. In Toronto, Microsoft employees were asked what they wanted in their new workplace, they said: daylight, views and air. The building's design which included large windows with plenty of natural light was worth the investment, says Szenasy. Manager there report reduced absenteeism and workers are more involved and sharing ideas. 

Motel 6 Settlement with DOJ

Motel 6, with more than 600 locations in 50 states, has signed a settlement agreement with the US Department of Justice to resolve allegations of violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

“After a joint review of select Motel 6 properties, the Department of Justice and Motel 6 have identified some accessibility issues,” said Kelley Johnson, company spokesperson. “In cooperation with the Department of Justice, Motel 6 agreed to correct the properties and entered into an agreement to review other properties and make necessary corrections to reach compliance.”

Under the agreement, Motel 6 will remove architectural barriers in existing facilities where it is readily achievable to do so, will ensure that new facilities comply fully with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design and will develop a review process to ensure that altered facilities meet applicable ADA Standards. By June 30, all of the chain’s properties are required to be evaluated and a report written concerning which aspects of each property do not meet the standards. If the chain fails to achieve substantial compliance with the goals stated in the settlement agreement by Dec. 31, 2006, it will pay civil penalties. 

In many Motel 6 facilities constructed for first occupancy before Jan. 26, 1993, the guestrooms are too small to contain two double beds and to meet the Standards of Accessible Design.

Comprehensive Changes Required of Motel 6

The agreement between US Department of Justice and Motel 6 requires the chain to make the following “new construction-like” changes no later than June 30, 2006 in its properties designed for first occupancy prior to Jan. 26, 1993:

- Each facility will have at least one accessible parking space serving the office that meets the Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design (the Standards).
- Each accessible guestroom will have at least one accessible parking space meeting the Standards.
- Each office will have an accessible entrance meeting the Standards.
- There will be at least one accessible route meeting the Standards, including any curb ramps along the route, from the accessible parking space to the office.
- All curb ramps leading from the accessible parking spaces to accessible guestrooms will meet the Standards.
- All exterior doors and door hardware at the accessible guestrooms will meet the Standards.
- All room signs and directional signs on guestrooms and laundry rooms will meet the Standards and be placed in locations that comply with the Standards.
- The following will meet the Standards at each motel: all walkways to accessible guestrooms from the office; all walkways to accessible guestrooms from the accessible parking space designated for that room; and all walkways from the accessible guestrooms to the common use areas.
- The walkway to and entrance into a guest laundry room will meet the standards.
- For each type of available room there will be a minimum of one accessible guestroom meeting the Standards. In many Motel 6 facilities constructed for first occupancy before Jan. 26, 1993, the guestrooms are too small to contain two double beds and to meet the Standards. In these circumstances, if a person with a disability requests an accessible room with two beds, Motel 6 may choose from several options. Motel 6 may rent such individual the designated accessible room and a connecting room together for the price of one room. (See 28 C.F.R. Part 36, Appendix A § 9.1.4). In situations where there are no adjoining rooms that may be linked for this purpose, Motel 6 may offer a guest either two adjacent rooms, or one room that otherwise meets the Standards but has one double (or queen size bed) and one single bed.
- At least 50% of the number of accessible guest rooms required by the Standards at each facility will meet the requirements of the Standards by no later than Dec. 30, 2005; the remaining 50% will be provided by Dec. 30, 2006. Each facility will have at least one accessible room with a roll-in shower meeting the Standards.



Now All New Triton ATMs Talk

Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) manufacturer Triton has announced that all its new ATMs for the US market now include audio-guided transaction support as a standard feature, at no additional cost. The move makes the company's entire line of ATMs accessible to people with low or no vision. The company recently added the audio capability to its Triton 9100 Monochromatic ATM, the lowest cost machine it offers. Triton says it selected text-to-speech synthesis technology for its machines because its flexibility and low cost for distributors.

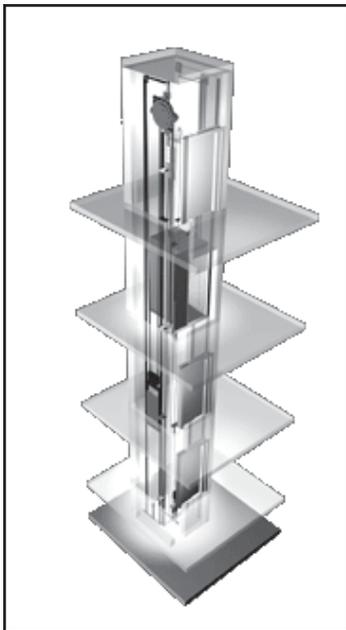


Triton 9100

EcoSpace Elevator

KONE Inc. has developed an elevator system that does not require a machine room.

This space-saving system features the KONE EcoDisc™ hoisting machine that places all control and logic systems inside the hoistway. An alternative to a hydraulic elevator, EcoSpace, uses no oil and has models with lift capacities of 2,000 to 2,500 lbs. Designed for two- to seven-stop applications, the gearless MRL elevator is suited for low- and mid- rise office, public and commercial facilities. Currently the system is available for new construction applications only.



Upscale Grab Bars

Great Grabz, LLC offers a line of decorative accessories that are both attractive and strong. Made of recycled aluminum products, the Great Grabz grab bars are available in 16 different finishes, a variety of lengths and can be used as grab bars, towel bars, robe hooks, toilet paper



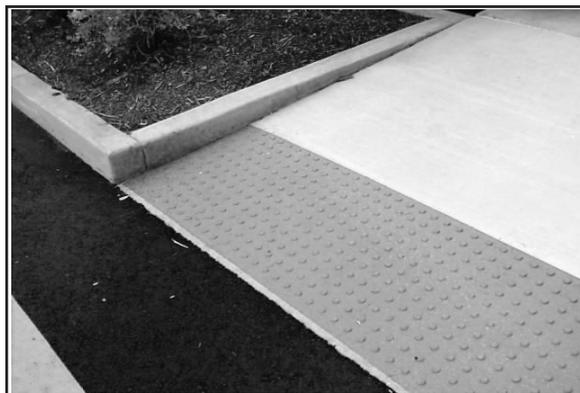
The Wave Grab Bar

roll holder, wash cloth holder and a leash cadie. The bars come in a choice of two wall clearance brackets and two styles, the Wave and the Horizon. All versions offer the same weight bearing support.

Detectable Warning

Vanguard is a "Non Skid," color integral, liquid applied detectable warning that conforms to the nuances of the applied surface, eliminating the need to grind or recess the surface to install.

According to the manufacturer, because Vanguard is liquid applied, it not only conforms to



Detectable Warning

the contours of the surface, it "becomes one" with the surface. With no seams, water can't penetrate between the product and the applied surface, eliminating all "Freeze/Thaw heave." Vanguard comes with a five-year "full replacement" warranty. Vanguard is now available in all 50 states.

Triton
(ATMs)
522 East Railroad St.
Long Beach, MS 39560
228.868.1317 (v)
800.367.7191 (v)
www.tritonatm.com

KONE Inc.
(EcoSpace Elevator)
One KONE Court
Moline, IL 61265
800.956.5663 (v)
309.764.6771 (v)
309.743.5469 (fax)
www.myeospace.com
www.kone.com

Great Grabz
(Grab Bars)
4535 Domestic Ave.
Suite A
Naples, FL 34104
239.403.4722 (v)
866.478.4722 (v)
239.261.8255 (fax)
www.GreatGrabz.com

Vanguard
(Detectable Warnings)
20628 Broadway Ave.
Snohomish, WA 98296
360.668.5700 (v)
360.668.3335 (fax)
www.VanguardOnline.com

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and specifics of the law's requirements to light.

"We had most of the [accessible] paths, but didn't have the signage," he said. "Where we did have signs, they weren't very clear. We had parking, but didn't have the necessary accessible routes to them. The ramps were there, but slopes and landings weren't right."

Hotel Accessibility

The Sheraton Sand Key isn't alone in its attempts to address the overwhelming challenges of hotel accessibility. "The wide range of services offered at hotels and resorts poses one of the most difficult accessibility challenges of any commercial facility," says John P. S. Salmen, AIA, President of Universal Designers & Consultants Inc., Takoma Park, MD. "There are few other facilities where a person dines, sleeps, bathes, toilets, exercises, shops and attends assemblies with other people -- all in the same facility. Making every activity accessible and linked to all others by accessible routes is a problem that can range from being complex for a newly designed property to impossible for some historic properties."

Response

Instead of remedying only the problems identified in the lawsuit, the Sheraton Sand Key management stepped back to look at the bigger picture. "We knew we were going to have to spend the money to get it done, so we wanted to do it right" says Kimball. The hotel took a comprehensive approach to making the changes. "Instead of just getting people to the pool, we wanted them to get to the beach. It would have been less money to just paint the lines on the black top in the parking lot, but instead we installed a walk way," he says.

Rather than tearing out a walkway with too steep a slope, the management chose to install a second landscaped walkway and directional signage, which added an attractive design feature to the property.

The entrance to the hotel's spa included two steps. To overcome that barrier, a second accessible entrance was created.

Path of Travel Enhancements

- The accessible path of travel from the public right-of-way was clarified and improved.
- Directional signage to the accessible main entry was installed at the inaccessible tour bus entry.
- A curb ramp at the front entrance was moved to facilitate the primary paths of travel and to assist in loading and unloading.
- Accessible parking was relocated to facilitate a direct and safe path of travel to the hotel entry.
- The path to the tennis courts was signed and improved.
- Automatic doors were installed in the lobby restrooms. An enclosed lift was installed in the two-level dining area of the restaurant.
- Beach access was improved with a new ramp and handrails added to the existing stairs.

Other Accessibility Enhancements

- A portion of the front desk was lowered to 36".
- A beach wheelchair was purchased and is available for use every day.
- An aquatic lift was installed in the pool.

Lessons Learned

Kimball says one of the reasons he pushed to enhance the resort's accessibility beyond what was required by the ADA Accessibility Guidelines was simply good management. Once the accessible feature is in place, there is no improvising required on the part of staff and guests can go anywhere without having to seek help, he says.

Customer feedback on the changes has been limited, but Kimball is confident guests have a "silent appreciation" for the accessibility features in the hotel. "We don't get a lot of reaction, but guests do appreciate it," he says. "They know you've made the effort. For us, it's worth it when you see the whole family going to the beach together."

According to Kimball, bringing the property into compliance wasn't as complicated as he first imagined. His advice to property managers is to always have the following tools on hand: a digital level, tape measure, code book and an architect or consultant that knows what accessibility means at hotels and resorts.

"Instead of just getting people to the pool, we wanted them to get to the beach."

Russ Kimball,
General Manager
Sheraton Sand Key

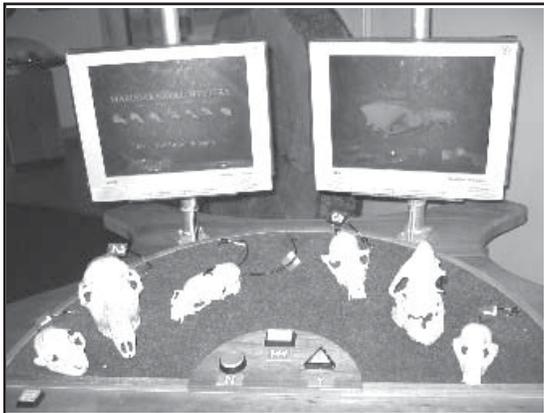


The enhanced path of travel from the parking lot to the resort's entrance.



Museums, *from page 5*

sally accessible exhibit, does not make it universally “better,” according to Reich. The study found that the button interface on the exhibit was accessible and easy to use for all participants. But, Reich says, not all participants



Credit: Museum of Science

Tactile models of skulls at the Museum of Science.

thought it was “better” than other interfaces. “Some thought a touch screen would be better for them,” says Reich, “Preference and differences in learning styles play a part.”

The study found that accessibility features were used by many visitors, but not all. Visitors of varying abilities relied on the audio directions created for visitors with low or no

vision. However, some visitors found the audio distracting. Tactile models of skulls, originally provided for visitors who are blind were widely appreciated by many visitors. However the skulls were difficult for visitors with limited mobility to touch and hold. And most visitors wanted the computers interactions to go slower.

The museum has already made changes in its exhibits based on the study and is pursuing grants with the goal of developing design recommendations for other museums.

New Media *from page 7*

Independence through Older Driver Wellness,” is available on the ASA website.

This hour-long seminar addresses concerns of older drivers and their assistance providers. Among the issues addressed are: What can we do to keep them driving safely as long as possible? How can we improve their functioning and teach strategies to those who have experienced functional loss? How communities can help older adults make smoother transitions from driving full time to cutting back or stopping altogether. For more information, visit: www.asaging.org/webseminars

Tactile models of skulls, originally provided for visitors who are blind were widely appreciated by many visitors.

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March 7-9, 2005: US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, Washington, DC. This is the bi-monthly meeting of the Access Board. Contact: 202.272.5434 (v), 800.872.2253 (v), 202.272.5449 (tty) or www.access-board.gov.

March 10-13, 2005: The Changing Face of Aging: 5th Joint Conference of the American Society and the National Council on Aging, Philadelphia, PA. The conference will examine the themes of independence, choice, evolution, and revolution in light of this diversity. Contact: www.agingconference.org/jc05/theme.cfm

April 5-8, 2005: INCLUDE 2005, London, UK. An opportunity to discuss work on inclusive design at one of the key research and design business conferences of 2005. Contact: www.hhrc.rca.ac.uk/programmes/include/2005/call.html

May 17-19, 2005: National DBTAC ADA Symposium: The Annual Conference on Disability Issues, Kansas City, KS. This symposium brings together nationally recognized experts in their fields

to conduct interactive trainings in an environment that encourages networking and group problem-solving. Contact: www.adaupdate.org/Symposium.html.

May 24-25, 2005: 5th Conference of the International Society for Gerontechnology, Nagoya, Japan. This conference will focus on: health and self-esteem, housing and daily living, mobility and transport, communication and governance, work condition and work ability, geriatrics and dementia cares, leisure, robotics for human support, universal design and standards for the older people and people with disabilities. Contact: www2.convention.co.jp/Sisg/english/

Oct.23-26: 2005: White House Conference on Aging, Washington, DC. This conference occurs once a decade in order to make policy recommendations to the President and Congress to assist the public and private sectors in promoting the dignity, health, independence, and economic security of current and future generations of older persons. Contact: www.aoa.gov/press/conferernce_on_aging/conf_on_aging.asp

Events to be placed in the UDN Calendar must be submitted to the editor two months before the publication date.

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