The VitalSource Accessibility Commitment

For more than a decade, VitalSource has provided accessible solutions to learners of all abilities. VitalSource was the first company to offer a reading system to support the emerging EDUPUB standard, which brings the benefits of accessible classroom materials into the integrated learning environment.

This year, VitalSource is expanding its accessibility agenda with new content, improved applications and increased collaboration with the accessibility community:

* Expanded Content.  As part of last year’s acquisition of CourseSmart, VitalSource has migrated CourseSmart’s accessible PDF content to the VitalSource platform, including content that was enhanced through the Student E-rent Pilot Project (STEPP). Funded by a U.S. Department of Education grant, in partnership with the Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC), this project remediated more than 1,000 leading textbook titles requested by students and instructors with print disabilities. This ever-growing collection, combined with more than 200,000 titles in the highly accessible EPUB format, ensures that VitalSource offers the largest catalogue of accessible educational content available today. VitalSource further strives to lead the market to wider availability of accessible content by continually educating publishers about accessibility best practices.
* Enhanced Applications. VitalSource has made recent updates to its desktop and mobile applications, all of which provide greater support for assistive technologies interacting with EPUB and PDF content. Additionally, VitalSource now supports user-added EPUB content in its downloadable apps, providing access for assistive technologies to a wide range of Open Education Resources (OER) and other content sources.
* Accessibility Advocacy. VitalSource is continuing more than a decade of involvement in accessibility issues by actively participating in:
* The EPUB 3 Support Grid maintained through a partnership between the IDPF, DAISY Consortium and the Book Industry Study Group <http://epubtest.org/>).
* The Center for Accessible Materials Innovation (CAMI), funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (<http://cami.gatech.edu/home>)
* The EDUPUB Initiative.
* VitalSource regularly collaborates with independent consultants and industry experts including the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), Tech For All, JISC, Alternative Media Access Center (AMAC), and others. With the help of these experts, VitalSource strives to ensure its platform conforms to applicable accessibility standards including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, level AA of the Accessibility Guidelines established by the Worldwide Web Consortium known as WCAG 2.0 and the EPUB 3 Accessibility Guidelines. The state of the platform's conformance with Section 508 at any point in time is made available through publication of Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs) posted on the VitalSource website. Documentation of the Bookshelf platform specific compliance with WCAG 2.0 (level AA) and the EPUB 3 Accessibility Guidelines is available upon request.

VitalSource continues to support industry standards for accessibility by conducting conformance testing on all Bookshelf platforms – offline on Windows and Macs; online on Windows and Macs using standard browsers (e.g., Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari); and on mobile devices for iOS and Android. All Bookshelf platforms are evaluated by accessibility experts representing various disabilities (e.g., blind, visually impaired and mobility impaired) and using industry-leading screen reading programs available for the platform including JAWS and NVDA for Windows, VoiceOver for Mac and iOS, and TalkBack for Android. All Bookshelf platforms also are evaluated for keyboard and color/contrast accessibility. To ensure a comprehensive reading experience, all Bookshelf platforms have been evaluated using EPUB and enhanced PDF books.

To support and promote accessibility of content on the Bookshelf platforms, VitalSource has created PDF and EPUB 3 accessibility guidelines, detailing best practices for adapting and/or creating accessible. Download these free from the VitalSource online store here: <http://bulk.vitalsource.com/show/VST-DOCS-EPUB3IMPLEMENTGUIDE>

<http://bulk.vitalsource.com/show/VST-DOCS-PDFSUBMISSIONGUIDE>

VitalSource Accessibility Support

VitalSource strives to provide comprehensive support for all customers. For customers with disabilities, VitalSource offers:

* The ability to adjust the text size of the content in the Bookshelf Windows and Macintosh Desktop platforms.
* Built-in text-to-speech (“Read Out Loud”) feature for Bookshelf Windows and Macintosh Desktop platforms.
* The ability to change the user’s Library view from cover (image-based) to list (text-based).
* Accessible PDF feature on all Bookshelf platforms.
* Accessible PDF conversion services available upon request.
* Accessible web-based Bookshelf platform-specific support and FAQs here: <https://support.vitalsource.com/hc/en-us/categories/200184597>
* Toll-free 24/7 phone support - **1-855-200-4146**
* Customers with accessibility-specific questions or to request Bookshelf support documentation in alternative formats can e-mail VitalSource at support@vitalsource.com.

Ongoing Accessibility Goals for VitalSource

VitalSource is dedicated to continuous improvement in accommodating the needs of all users and has set the following objectives for accessibility:

* Meet or exceed industry accessibility standards.
* Continuously improve accessibility and usability for people with disabilities. VitalSource has integrated accessibility and usability testing as part of the development for all Bookshelf platforms – online, offline and mobile and through rigorous third-party accessibility testing.
* Provide ready access to as many titles as possible: In addition to hundreds of pre–tagged best sellers, VitalSource is committed to providing optimized textbooks as quickly as possible. When an optimized version of a requested title is not available, VitalSource will work to get the title optimized as quickly as possible (often in as little as two weeks).
* Serve the widest possible range of disabilities. VitalSource considers the needs of people with visual, hearing and mobility impairments as well as individuals with cognitive or learning disabilities.
* Go beyond content access and provide more universal design study tools that assist all students.

Long–Term Accessibility Goals for VitalSource

* Provide industry-leading access to all subject areas, including STEM (Scientific, Technical, Engineering, Mathematics).
* Provide ePUB3–based titles with enhanced accessibility. As part of the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF) ePUB3 working group, VitalSource helped define the new digital standards that incorporate accessibility into the standard design. VitalSource is now working with publishers to support the development of commercial materials developed to this highly–accessible standard.