# Creating an Accessible Law Firm Website: Achieving User Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

The Practical Lawyer CLE Series: Session # 15

Session 15 of The Practical Lawyer CLE series will address the importance of providing complete accessibility to any potential user of a law firm website, taking into consideration the diverse range of potential hurdles to accessing and using a website. This course will explain how law firms can provide user equity and inclusion by integrating the technical means of providing access to those persons whose disabilities can prevent them from utilizing a law firm website and accessing website features intended for use by current and prospective clients and other website visitors.

Attorney Barb Heikoff will provide a brief, introductory overview of the concepts of the American with Disabilities Act, which have expanded from requiring reasonable accommodations in strictly physical environments to include guidelines on providing access to internet and website platforms and how law firms incorporating website accessibility fulfills ADA principles.

Dr. Amanda Diver will provide an overview of the physical disabilities that can create barriers to access to websites developed for and offered for use by law firms. Dr. Diver will explain the means law firm owners can employ to provide accessibility features, thereby eliminating barriers not only to full access to and use of a particular website, but also to allow those persons seeking legal representation to achieve success in finding an attorney by performing an internet search to locate the law firm and the type of legal counsel or practice area being sought.

Dr. Diver will also open the presentation up to Q&A with attendees and address the typical questions raised by website owners prior to incorporating accessibility features necessary to ensure equity and inclusion for and by the diverse population who may wish to locate, access, and use a law firm’s website. Materials provided will include a comprehensive audit checklist used by Dr. Diver’s company when assessing whether any particular website provides complete accessibility.

Our Presenters:

**Dr. Amanda Diver,** PT, DPT, CPACC (accessibility certified), is a Physical Therapist, Website Developer, and Accessibility and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) expert. Dr. Driver provides consulting services to diverse businesses and organizations to help clients reach larger audiences, by increasing website accessibility and improving online presence. Over the past several years, during the process of building websites for clients, Dr. Diver realized that 96.8% of the web was not accessible to everyone. This led to the realization that accessibility plays a huge role in SEO, which allows websites to show up in Google and other search engines. This ignited her passion in this emerging field. With Dr. Diver’s knowledge and experience as a Physical Therapist and her history working with over 100 business owners across diverse industries on their websites, Dr. Diver set out to become a Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competency (CPACC). This foundational credential strengthened her skills in digital technologies, architectural considerations, and thoughtful design as well as her understanding of compliance responsibilities requiring disability access. Dr. Diver’s insights and practical solutions captivate audiences by explaining complex material to those less comfortable with technology. In addition to her professional achievements, Dr. Driver has authored A Beginner’s Guide to Indoor Rowing and owns and curates sites such as The Rowing Doc and Healthy Digital. Amanda Diver lives in Colorado with her husband and two fur-kids.

Attorney **Barb Heikoff** began applying the concepts of reasonable accommodation in the summer of 1990, during the first week the American with Disabilities Act became law. Barb was a legal intern at the Legal Aid of Hartford County [Connecticut] in a new unit of their Civil Disabilities Division created to champion the rights of persons with AIDS facing discrimination. Barb was tasked with developing a litigation guide in anticipation of the first case of denial by a nursing home to treat an AIDS patient. As AIDs discrimination litigation experienced little published case law, Barb reached out to grass roots organizations and learned how difficult AIDS support communities were finding success at being able to prove and address the consequences of AIDS discrimination. With the passage of the ADA, the need to prove biases that actually resulted damaging discriminatory practices was no longer the sole recourse. Instead, the objective and observable facts of the situation took forefront: did an employee or customer have a disability that prevented or impaired access to employment or public accommodations? Was a reasonable accommodation available to the employer or owner that would provide the same access that someone without that disability would have? As a corporate attorney, Barb guided business and real estate owners through considerations of and compliance with ADA standards. Barb is currently a solo practitioner at Heikoff Law, LLC, where she focuses on transactional real estate matters and business interests.

Barb is also the Chairwoman of Colorado W.O.L.F. (Women Owned Law Firms), which supports women attorneys who own their own Colorado law firms and provides outreach to the greater Colorado solo small law firm community by offering practical education to business owners of SSF firms, as well as monthly networking opportunities to connect and commune with other solo and small law firm attorneys and owners. To assist in supporting all solo and small law firm attorneys and owners throughout Colorado, Colorado Women Owned Law Firms is a patron organization of the Solo Small Firm Practice Section of the To assist in supporting all solo and small law firm attorneys and owners throughout Colorado, Colorado Women Owned Law Firms is a patron organization of CBA's Solo Small Firm Practice Section.

**Cost:** Free to members of Solo Small Firm Section and Colorado W.O.L.F. (Women Owned Law Firm Owners); Non-members: $25.00

**CLE Accreditation:** 2 EDI, 2 General CLE Credits.