DIFF-ABILITY & TECHNOLOGY:
Creating Straightforward Information Access to Empower People with Disabilities and Older Adults to Improve Inclusive Coordinated Transportation.
“Though I could get a job in one town, I could not actually get to it. Because Connecticut has some large sections that are very rural and some that are much more populated, there were gaps in transportation options and services. Therefore, I helped plan 18 public transportation forums around the state, and I attended and spoke at 17 of them.”

Jamie Lazaroff, Self-advocate and co-project manager for Round 1 of the Inclusive Coordinated Transportation grant.
Steps we used to understand transportation issues in Connecticut:

Round 1:

✦ Hired self-advocates
✦ Held focus groups
✦ Held meetings at accessible, central, and familiar locations
✦ Used collected data to create survey
✦ Wrote summary to present to stakeholders across the state
✦ Analysis of the data helped us decide our main goals
MAIN GOALS

WEBSITE

BOOKLET

CALL CENTER
Steps we used to plan a website, booklet, and call center for diverse groups of individuals:

**Round 2:**

- Held stakeholder, key partner, and participant meetings
- Conducted research on the web and through interviews
- Hired an individual with a disability as our webmaster
- Collected similar booklet to research formats
- Created worksheet for website testing
- Held a website testing
Photos from the 2014 Website Testing:
Options to acquire feedback from populations that have differing levels of abilities, access to technology, and needs:

- Attend meetings held by self-advocacy groups, providers, and at senior centers
- Ask these groups to email their members
- Call specific acquaintances and interview them
- Visit libraries and query patrons at computers
- Go to aging and disability conferences, public hearings, and workshops
- Secure a booth at these conferences and supply a laptop or tablet for demonstration and use
From these options we learned that most participants:

- Were not often reliant on technology for info
- Owned a home or cell phone
- Would rather use phones than the Internet
- Had some access to, and knowledge of, computers

The most helpful info we learned:

- We’d never be able to accommodate everyone’s needs
- Large booklets would become out-of-date quickly
- A brochure would be economical and sustainable
- Our state has THREE mobility managers
Once we realized Connecticut had three mobility managers, we rethought our strategy. We decided to make a brochure rather than a comprehensive booklet, and decided that creating an accessible website was JUST AS important as its content, and the more universal
What to consider when designing a website for those with diff-abilities and only “some access to, and some knowledge of computers”:

- Drop down menus can be difficult to maneuver
- The text on websites is typically too small
- Web pages often are too busy
- Contact info is either non-existent or difficult to find
- Direct phone numbers are often not included
- Too many images can hinder individuals who are visually impaired
- The colors chosen must be readable for those who are colorblind
Main strategies to be accommodating, yet still creative, within the structure of web design:

- Choose a designer who’s artistry does not disrupt accessibility
- Create or use others’ instruction sheets, links, and/or videos
- Be flexible but consistent
- Start with large text rather than offer an enlarger feature:

  CLICK HERE for Amtrak.
  CLICK HERE for Connecticut Limousine.
  CLICK HERE for Greyhound Bus Lines.
  CLICK HERE for Peter Pan Bus Lines.
“Right away, I liked that the TransitNet website used large and readable text and the information I needed was easy to find.”

Bob Rodman, ADS Zone 1 Coordinator and Connecticut State Carfit/WNTT Coordinator
We typically used a “CLICK HERE” approach rather than the more common option of hovering over colored text:
Other Transportation Resources:

CLICK HERE for the Department of Developmental Services transportation options.

CLICK HERE for the Department of Transportation.

CLICK HERE for the Connect-Ability Transportation page. (This service is through the Department of Rehabilitation Services.)

Phone: 866.844.1903 (Toll Free)
E-mail: connect-ability@ct.gov
We created **TWO** menu bars, rather than drop down menus that follow the user to each page:

AND…
...the “contact us” button is in both the top and side menu bars which leads to:

Contact us:

Voicemail: 860.381.0514
E-mail: transitnetct@gmail.com
We created a “back to” option at the tops of most pages...

...and PDF instructions for people to download and/or print:

How to use Google Transit (Trip Planner)
We compiled a “Town List” page with basic contact information for all 169 towns in Connecticut:

**TOWN LIST**

What does the Town List offer? To find out more **CLICK HERE.**

**NOTE:** Some towns listed below have a mobility manager (a person who helps with transportation). If your town does, we recommend that you contact them first.

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Andover  Griswold  Prospect
Prospect

Municipal Agent:
Lucy Smegielski
Phone: 203.758.5300
E-mail: lulubelle4u@hotmail.com

Senior Center:
Prospect Senior Center
Address: 6 Center St.
Phone: 203.758.5300
E-mail: lulubelle4u@hotmail.com
Hours: M-F 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Transportation Info

DDS Region:
West
Phone: 203.805.7400
Toll Free: 866.274.3888
E-mail: ddsct.west@ct.gov

CLICK HERE to go directly to the site.

Mobility Manager:
None yet.

The Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A):
Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging (WCAAA)
CLICK HERE to go directly to the site.
Some methods to market your website:

- Leverage existing resources
- Attend related events, meetings, and conferences
- Create wallet cards with the web address
- Use diverse, manageable mailing lists
- Create a Facebook page and “promote” it
- Offer a free presentation about the website
- Make a “commercial” or be interviewed on public access TV
- Plan a launch event for your “go live” date
Photos from the 2014 Launch Event:
How to include participants to ensure your site remains current, useful, inclusive, dynamic, and suits their needs:

🌟 Attend meetings, conferences, and do presentations
🌟 Continue conducting research
🌟 Join related LinkedIn/Google groups and message boards
🌟 Subscribe to related Listservs, RSS feeds, and newsletters
🌟 “Like” similar pages on Facebook
🌟 Secure an older adult or person with a disability to maintain the page
🌟 Create a Facebook group where participants can post questions, concerns, and info and also get peer feedback
🌟 Keep utilizing surveys to make sure your info is current

**Note:** The more random and larger the email list used actually incurred fewer responses. When small groups that were familiar with The Arc CT were targeted, they were more invested.
Ways to make your website and brochure sustainable:

✦ Put together a board or a steering committee
✦ Create an internship or independent study for a college student to earn credit

Options if you are funded by a grant:

Secure a relevant group to sponsor or fundraise to maintain it like:

- A local AARP chapter
- A senior center
- A local C4A or Arc Chapter
- A relevant state agency
- A self-advocacy group
- A university/high school group
- A local company / business
TransitNet
Transit Network for Connecticut

www.transitnet.info

THANK YOU!