

MALAGA FOR ALL

A Website of an Accessible Tour

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ABSTRACT

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For this paper I produced a web page of an accessible tour of Malaga, explaining the building process of the website and the different aspects related to accessibility in the international, national, and local legal competence, attending to theoretical issues related to disability and accessibility, urban architecture, universal design, and usability. I also assessed the different touristic elements chosen for the project applying criteria's of physical, visual and audio, accessibility using multimedia and virtual tools used as graphic resources for the web page.

The motivational side of this project was based in my personal experience as a personal assistant travelling though different cities such as, Helsinki, Barcelona, Munich, New York. It also stands on the right to participate by all persons in all the aspects of the everyday life including the right to travel, leisure and transit and the legal recognition by different institutions like the United Nations, European Union, Spanish constitution and local authorities to this right by implementing policies and norms related to accessibility.

As a Social Services bachelor's degree student, I believe that accessibility is an essential issue in the social field and a tool to make society more equal. Accessibility empowers all individuals to participate in every aspect of life.

Keywords: accessibility, universal design, accessible tourism, urban architecture, usability, website design

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1 INTRODUCTION

In many trips abroad, working as a personal assistant, for people with physical disabilities, I have observed certain difficulties and particular issues related to mobility and accessibility. In some cities accessibility is well developed but some others are more challenging or not so well adapted yet. I have visited Malaga very often since childhood and I have always wondered about what is the accessibility situation there since it is rare to see tourists in wheelchairs or with disabilities. At the same time and in recent years I have been noticing a change in the architecture and environment of the city with the purpose of making it more accessible for its citizens and visitors.

I would like to find out if the situation is improving: if Malaga is becoming more accessible and equal to other European cities in regards to the tourist attractions, public spaces, services, museums, bars, restaurants, and hotels and if the standards are similar to the Finnish standards.

I believe it is time to assess realistically the accessibility of the city focusing in certain areas that are representative examples for visitors used to the standards of accessibility of Finland. For this purpose I propose to develop a product consisting in a web page of an accessible tour. With information up-to-date about the locations, offering suggestions for independent traveling or in combination with some assistance for making a real tourist experience. With this product I would like to empower and promote tourism for people with disabilities and at the same time create awareness in the areas and the community where this research takes place.

In many occasions we find that the accessibility around the monuments or places of interest are well adapted but as we come out of these areas we find that close by streets are not accessible, dead ends, or more difficult terrain. The tourist guides usually show the different elements isolated without the streets or ways to transit from one to another. I call this phenomenon "Islands of acces-

sibility” and one of the goals of this project is to show these places without the mentioned limitations, in an easy and accessible way linking these islands through accessible routes.

1.1 Premises

The European Commission Enterprise and industry webpage states that According to the UN, an estimated 650 million people in the world live with disabilities. Together with their families, that means approximately 2 billion people are directly affected by disability, representing almost a third of the world’s population.

More people have access needs, whether or not related to a physical condition. For example, older and less mobile people or people with pushchairs have access needs, which can become a huge obstacle when going on holiday. The European population is aging its estimated that by 2050 the number of people over 65 years old will be 3 times what it was in 2003, and the over 80s will be 5 times greater in number.

For those people, travelling can be a real challenge, as finding the information on accessible services, checking luggage on a plane, booking a room with special access needs often prove to be difficult, costly and time consuming. They represent a huge market potential for tourism which today remains vastly underserved. (European Commission, Growth, Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship, and SMEs, Tourism. 2016.)

1.2 Partners

I was able to establish contact with some organizations in Spain, working specifically in the tourist sector and more specifically in accessible tourism. One of this organizations being PREDIF which is the main NGO working at a National level in this area. After explaining them my project they I was referred to ASPAYM Malaga an NGO formed by medullar injured and large disability affected.

PREDIF, as explained in their own webpage, it's an Estate Representative Platform for people with Physical Disabilities, with more than 30 years' experience, and whose mission is to promote equal opportunities and to improve the quality of life for people with physical disabilities (Plataforma Representativa Estatal de Personas con Discapacidad Física)

ASPAYM Malaga was created in 2009 as a local delegation of the National Federation ASPAYM, founded in 1979. ASPAYM is an NGO born around the Toledo's National Hospital for Paraplegics. It has 18 associations in 13 Autonomous communities, and two foundations. The main goals of ASPAYM is to work towards Social Inclusion to promote and defend the rights of people with limited mobility and to work for integration making Malaga an accessible place for everyone (Asociación de Lesionados Medulares y grandes discapacitados).

1.3 Goals

The main objective of this project is to design a self-guided tour of Malaga for an independent traveler in a short visit to the city. For this porpoise I have used an assessing tool for each of the chosen locations and then transfer this information to webpage where is possible to read this information in a more clear an

uncomplicated manner, including tips about places that are suggested for the tour.

The information provided will explain the exact location, brief history of the attraction and touristic details, focusing in accessibility aspects based in the field assessment. The web page is an interactive model of a tour for independent travelers open to anyone and with the possibility of adding information thanks to the comment section and experiences of other travelers. It will be using multimedia tools, like sound clips, maps, and videos, to provide with the best possible information in each case and the local knowledge to have a more unique and real experience.

One of the goals of this project is to connect the different touristic elements between them without inaccessible routes or dead ends avoiding the creation of "island of accessibility" mentioned earlier in this paper.

A secondary objective is to promote the city as an accessible destination with the many options that Malaga can offer to their visitors and at the same time creating awareness about accessible tourism while researching and contacting the different information and reception centers of each of the chosen locations.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

An environment or a building can be considered accessible when it is functional, safe and pleasant for all users. This is the objective of physical accessibility. Although an accessible environment serves everyone, it is an absolute necessity for many people, such those who use relators or wheelchairs or are pushing prams. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, COME 2012: 15.)

Over the last 20 years a great emphasis has been put on design and building sensitive to the needs of individuals with disabilities or those who may acquire disabilities at some point in the future. Public policies have required that public and private environments be accessible and promote inclusion of people with disabilities. (Pynoos Jon et all 2013:154-155.)

2.1 Legal background

The articles 24 and 27 of the Universal Declaration Human Rights recognize the rights to leisure and rest as well as the participation in the cultural and recreational activities. (Universal Declaration of the Human Rights, 1948.) More specifically the article 9 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations; Recognizes the importance of accessibility to physical, social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education and to information and communication, enabling persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The above mentioned Article 9 of the UN convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities describes a more detailed protocol for accessibility in many aspects related to architectural, and transport and urban aspects. It empowers persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life.

States had the responsibility to undertake measures and to ensure that persons with disabilities can access, on an equal condition than others, to physical environment, transportation and communications, including information and communications technologies, systems, and other facilities or services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures that shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility and should apply to:

-Buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces.

-Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.

States shall also take appropriate measures in developing, promoting and monitoring the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public and the must ensure that private entities that offer facilities and services provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities. (UN Enable, 2006).

They also shall provide training for stakeholders on accessibility issues facing persons with disabilities providing with communications tools like Braille signs and easy to read and understand forms of assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers and professional sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to ensure their access to information, communications technologies and systems, including the Internet to promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so

that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost. (UN Enable, 2006).

The European Commission developed the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, renewing the European policy and commitment towards a Barrier-Free Europe. This document states different areas of action and more specifically about the accessibility to ensure accessibility to goods, services including public services and assistive devices for people with disabilities. (The European Commission 2010: 4-5.) Despite of this efforts there is not and specific act on Accessibility to this day without a clear date of when the European Commission will discuss this issue. (Carine Marzin, 2015.)

The article 49 of the Spanish Constitution of 1978 establish that the public powers will have a policy of prevention, therapy, treatment, rehabilitation and integration for people with physical, sensorial and learning disabilities providing specialized attention required for the use of the right that this article gives to all citizens. (Spanish Constitution 1978, Title 3 article 49.)

Every Spanish Autonomic Community has the competences and the obligation to implement the accessibility policies and provide Social Services for all the citizens of each community.

2.2 Methodology

According to the official Spanish model of evaluation for accessibility from the ministry of industry, there are three main aspects to consider (Patrimonio accessible, PREDIF: 88-92):

Physical accessibility expresses the ability to go anywhere and to reach every open and closed built-up area. It is mentioned as a guiding principle of design in the United Nations (UN) conventions. These conventions require equal opportunities for everybody because; an accessible physical environment benefits

everyone, not just persons with disabilities. Therefore, accessibility is a significant achievement in urban design, not just for disabled people but also for society at large.

Inclusive design, a recent approach to urban design, means designing environments to be usable by the entire society, regardless of ability. It aims to remove the physical barriers that prevent people from participating equally in everyday activities. (Nilay Evcil 2006.)

The visual accessibility of a space refers to the effectiveness with which vision can be used to travel safely through the space. For people with low vision, the detection of steps and ramps is an important component of visual accessibility. (Leege et al 2010, 1)

In this project I have added some audio files following the example of some map services that enables visually impaired users to exploit, for example, sonic landmarks. For visually impaired pedestrians, road signs are generally not accessible, which limits their orientation; clearly visible or sonic landmarks, however, could be used to help these pedestrians orient themselves. For example, water fountains, basins, and natural creeks, ditches, and rivers with running water providing constant sound can all serve as sonic landmarks for visually impaired hikers in a park. The locations of notable visible and sonic landmarks should be included in the geospatial database and accessible through a route planner so that users can utilize the information when planning routes and while navigating those routes. (Mari Laakso et al 2011, 6.)

Audio accessibility to ensure the communication and information on anyone who has hearing difficulties through the use of informative panels, signs, electronic and visual devices and by eliminating any kind of structural barrier existing in the public and private spaces.

These three aspects are main focus in the evaluation of the five touristic elements chosen for this project and analyzing subareas like, entrances, visual

signs, acoustic signals or assistive devices, guided tours adapted to persons with special needs, lighting, informative panels, braille signs, assistive personnel, and more specifically the connection between the elements.

2.3 The Independent Living Movement

One of the basis and inspirations for this project is the personal assistance role based in the independent living movement. According to the Independent Living Institute, people with disabilities are the best experts on their needs. The Independent Living movement is policy development oriented, specializing in consumer-driven policies for disabled, peoples' freedom of choice, self-determination, self-respect and dignity. The ultimate goal is to promote disabled people's personal and political power. (Independent Living Institute.)

Many people with disabilities travel independently, with family that also assists them or just their assistants. A personal assistant can be somebody who provides support to the person who has some disability and in a travel, employed by the social service provider, service user directly or very commonly a friend or family member or the service user. Usually assistants have to multitask, helping with personal hygiene, eating, dressing and undressing, but also with housework, transportation, health care, leisure activities, meeting relatives and friends, shopping or eating out, communication with others. Both assistant and service user needs accessibility in order to carry out every day activities and to be able to participate in the normal development of the holiday activities. It is essential then to consider the figure of the assistance by the tourist authorities and institutions allowing free entrance and discounts and facilitating access the presence of the personal assistant role.

2.4 Theology

From a theological point of view, there are numerous examples in the bible where disability is referred to, like for example: 1 Corinthians 12 (See appendices 1). Today some theologians approach disability from four main models based in embodiment concepts and each one of them focusing in different aspects of the disability, physical, social and spiritual:

- The medical model
- Minority models
- The liberation theology model
- The limits model

The medical model and the minority model pay specific attention to the diversity of human embodiment and to justice with concerns arising from of exclusion and oppression. The liberation theology model will respond with a discussion of ways they have learned to respond to individual impairments, usually through changes in architecture or assistive technology as ramps, elevators, sound systems and any other material ways. The limits model, attending to the fluidity of human embodiment and most particularly the claim that limits are a normal aspect of being human. Rather than acting as a deficit, they lead us toward creativity, and even toward God. (Creamer Deborah Beth 2008, page 93.)

2.5 Accessibility and Diakonia

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland accessibility program is based on the Christian concept of humanity and the church and is founded on the gos-

pel. This is not only promoting the interests of a certain special group or the work of some specialist Church employees. This involves the primary mission of the Church and the fidelity in realizing that mission. Only a church that is open to all people is a genuine church of Christ. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, COME 2012, Page 7.)

If we look closely at the strategy of the COME program, we can see that strategic policies influence the inclusion of accessibility in everyday work including the basic operational description of the parish. The accessibility of parish functions is improved by an accessibility action plan or program, which is drafted based on an accessibility analysis as well as a usability and operational assessment. The operational and financial plans should show how accessibility perspectives have been taken into consideration. For this purpose the elected board members play a key role in this work. The accessibility philosophy must take into account the following issues: operational planning and execution, recruiting, facilities, personnel development, elected board member training and procurement.

Accessibility can be made the focal point of a parish's strategic philosophy. Parishes can choose the area or areas, from which to begin advancing matters related to accessibility. People with experience should be included in planning and execution during different phases. Local disability councils and organizations are natural partners. Supervisors should be appointed for the implementation of accessibility measures of the parish. Furthermore, training for both elected board members and employees should be provided as a basis for strategy work. (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, COME 2012, Page 23.)

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT AND DIFFICULTIES

In the following chapter I will explain the production process of the website, the challenges, and describe the different sections of the web page with screen captures. These can be found in the appendices section of this paper with the link to the web site. (See appendix n°1)

3.1 Planning and gathering information

Prior to the field research, a selection of the locations to be visited was made selecting only representative sample of the city touristic sites. An online study was also necessary for each of the tourist elements to assess, gathering information about opening hours, accessibility, prices, exact location, and distances between the places.

The NGOs, PREDIF and ASPAYM, were contacted to ask for advice and partnership in this project. In fact PREDIF was the NGO who put me in contact with ASPAYM. This last organization provided me with information and advised me in witch locations could be assessed and many others that were already evaluated and that could be part of the itinerary. They also provided me with new publications and newsletter about accessibility in Malaga, Andalucía and in Spain and said that once the webpage was ready they may include my project in their official site.

The on field research was carried out during on the second half of October 2014 during approximately ten days, the different locations, assessing and taking notes and photos of the different elements. I used a GPS to mark the exact locations and streets and walk alternative streets to find the optimum itinerary for wheelchairs or people with mobility problems.

Some of the locations where visited with a baby's pram, which gave a better idea of the difficult steps and obstacles on the tourist sites. We must not forget that pregnancy and babies are ways of limited mobility and accessible design can be beneficial for these visitors.

3.2 Doing the website

The website is divided into five parts according to the elements chosen for the tour and a map connecting all these touristic points. Each of the attractions chosen for this project represents different aspects of the tourist experience while at the same time trying to keep the flavor of the local knowledge. Each of the locations will be assessed according to the accessibility criteria, underlining aspects of design and adaptation relevant to the project.

The website tries to be an example of a suggested tour that should complete the many other electronic and printed publications informing about the tourist options of the city. It does not try in any way to substitute the above mentioned sources of information or tour operators working in the field.

The website can serve also as a platform for public and private services with the potential for advertising and publicity from the tourist industry.

- Puerto de Málaga (Muelle uno y el Palmeral de las Sorpresas)

With the renovation of the port of Malaga, by the architect Jerónimo Junqueras, an opportunity opened to make this public space accessible to everyone, connecting different parts of the city creating business and leisure spaces. The port of Malaga represents the best example of new urban architecture and Universal Design at the same time that facilitates the economic activity (Cole S. Morgan N. 2010, pages 7-9). It also includes many cultural attractions, shops, muse-

ums, restaurants and bars, maintaining the historical heritage at the same time that it increases the access not within itself but between different locations of the city. (See appendix n°2)

On the other hand, the economic importance of the port has made possible, and prioritized, the renovation of this space in detriment of others with a minor business potential of this area. In any case, before the renovation this area represented a marginalized part of the city center without interest for the visitor. (El palmeral de las sorpresas, Jeronimo Junqueras)

- Physical accessibility:

The renovation of the port was conceived as a connecting element, eliminating old obstacles and creating free mobility for visitors on foot, wheelchair's, bicycles, at the same time that the space must be still used by supplying vehicles, while maintaining the maritime activities of the harbor with tourist boats and cruises.

It is equipped not just with numerous lifts and mechanic stairs but also reduced number of steps in favor of mild ramps and open spaces without dead ends, offering transition and continuity.

The port stretches from the center of the city to the lighthouse connecting the nearby streets to the beach of the Malagueta and the cruise terminal where buses, taxis and other private transport operate in a regular basis.

- Visual accessibility:

The port promenade has not specific sensorial tracks or acoustic signs for blind people except in the access to it. There are some areas with fences to avoid

people falling in to the sea but assistance would be required when visiting the port by people with visual impairments.

- Audio accessibility:

The port is nowadays is a pedestrian area with no traffic and good visual signs not presenting any special difficulties for people with hearing impairments.

- Restaurants

One of the most emblematic wine bars in Malaga is “El Pimpi”. It has been for many years a meeting point for locals and one of the most visited bars by tourists and famous people. It offers a great variety of local wines and food and in recent years has developed a gastronomic offer based in the local specialties.

The historical location of the bar and building makes accessibility challenging and perhaps an example of how many relevant businesses are not up to date in these important issues. Accessibility is not only a legal requirement in the Spanish law but also is an opportunity for business (Patrimonio Accesible, PREDIF, page 10-14).

Looking at the aspects of development sustainability, tourism promotes interaction between people, places and the past (in an individual and collective level), and in policy terms tourism cuts across the fields of planning, education, health, environment, transport, development and culture (Robinson M & Picard D 2006, page 15).

As examples of the development mentioned above we find how traditional buildings are renovated, while respecting the local character and identity at the same time that they are opening to other travelers and visitors with special needs. The variety of languages in menus and information panels and the offer of some culinary products has evolved to a more international taste. These examples show us how accessible tourism is possible and can be a good investment for the local business offering services to a wide range of people and potential clientele. (See appendix n°3)

- Physical accessibility:

The access to the bar is limited to exterior areas and the accessibility of wheelchairs to the most interesting parts of the building is not possible. Through the main entrance there are accessible areas to the typical Andalusian patios and some eating salons (not always) open but that will give the visitor a good example of the character of the place. There are accessible toilets in this part of the bar.

- Visual accessibility:

The staff of this place would be the best assistance for the visitor with any visual difficulty. Well detailed menus and in many languages are available for the visitor who can enjoy the traditional architecture and decoration of this restaurant.

- Audio accessibility.

Perhaps the noise level of the place at the busiest times can be overwhelming for some visitors.

-Arts and History

One of the most crucial aspects of accessibility is the possibility to enter information and cultural life and the truly bonding experience of travel. Bonding is related with the building of community. It is materialized in at least three ways. Firstly, through the rallying potential of icons; secondly, by breaking down the barriers to participation and offering visitors multiple fields of the culture to engage with and finally, by aligning visitors around a new sensibility through shared attitudes to experience. (Stenglin Maree, 2007)

The Picasso museum was chosen among the many other art museums of Malaga as this museum is perhaps one of the most emblematic. Malaga is the birth city of the painter and today the museum owns one of the most important collections of Picasso.

- Physical accessibility:

The location of the building offers accessibility and is well connected with the rest of the touristic elements chosen for the tour. The museum represents an example of accessible old emblematic building renovated and fully adapted for all kind of visitors, there are lifts and ramps to access all rooms, the doors are wide and there are no physical barriers. There is a wheelchair access to the archeological site underground and there are toilets for the disabled in this same level. (See appendix nº4)

- Visual accessibility:

There are free audio guides available at the entrance, explaining the most of the pieces on display and also the museum's history as a Phoenician archeological site. Also there is a possibility of guided tours and other workshops organized by the museum for people with visual disabilities.

- Audio accessibility:

The museum organics adapted visits and also many other special activities according to the needs of the different groups. Unfortunately there is not an individual program yet but the museum keeps renewing its accessibility offer.

Besides the museum I also decided to include a historical and an archeological site "The Alcazaba" (a fortified palace), as a more complex and ambitious attempt to adapt a historical tourist site where the preservation is a priority and perhaps the planning and investment in accessibility not always manage to achieve desired results.

- Physical accessibility:

There is a lift from one of the side streets close to the main entrance that gives access to one of the patios of this fortified palace. Although the accessible area is a good example of the place is very restricted and small and can be somehow disappointing for some visitors in wheelchair or with mobility problems. The palace is full of narrow corridors and steps making the transit difficult and in some cases impossible. (See appendix n°5)

- Visual accessibility:

The visitor with visual conditions will need of some assistance, as the palace is full of steps and dark rooms and many other obstacles that could result in accidents.

- Audio accessibility:

There are many informative panels and maps at the entrance and through the

palace.

- The Cathedral

Many important cities in Europe have a cathedral and Malaga is no exception. All cathedrals have similarities but each has the uniqueness and special qualities. Malaga cathedral was built between 1528 y 1782; it has Arab and Renaissance influences and today is a true icon of the religious art and spiritual life of the city.

A considerable effort has been made when it comes to the accessibility of Malaga's Cathedral resulting in a very attractive monument for tourist with disabilities. The cathedral is full with sensorial experiences inside and around the cathedral premises with the added spiritual and religious value for many of the visitors.

Despite of the relative good access of the cathedral there is very little or specific accessible plan of the religious monuments by the Catholic Church and it seems that every church tries to manage on its own this issue according to their local authorities and economic possibilities. For this reason I will use the "The COME" program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland as a model of accessibility plan and the process that can be carried out.

- Physical accessibility:

The Cathedral has a good access through a ramp at the main entrance and the transit at the interior is easy and with very little steps. Only the area of the chorus and the small chapels, which are close to the general public, had steps. The outside gardens do have steps, making this area inaccessible for wheel-

chairs although the nearby streets is situated just few meters from the gardens letting enjoy the gardens without obstacles.

- Visual accessibility:

The interior of the cathedral is dark and there are no braille informative panels inside. Assistance is recommended for the visually impaired visitor.

- Audio accessibility:

There are informative panels at the entrance and inside the Cathedral explaining prices, historic, artistic and religious aspects of the place.

- The Malagueta beach

The coast and specifically the beach is a natural resource well exploited by the tourist industry but not always accessible enough for the entire tourist. To make it accessible is sometimes expensive and environmentally damaging. I decided to choose these elements because of this reason, especially because the beach is possibly the number one attraction not only of Malaga but perhaps all over Spain.

It is important to consider the environmental impact of such of adaptations but also to remark that is not necessarily bigger than the impact produce by public showers or some small kiosks on the beach which are nowadays much regulated and control by the environmental laws.

- Physical accessibility;

The Malagueta beach has been well adapted, to become more accessible thanks to paved paths, disable toilets, adapted showers with shaded areas and disable parking. There is not a paved area for sun umbrellas and wheelchairs to park apart of the pave paths. These can be an unconvinced if the visitor wants to stay away of the sand and not on the way of other users.

- Visual accessibility:

There are informative panels in braille close to the accessible area but the blind visitor may need assistance on the beach. There is a lifeguard in this same area. (See appendix nº6)

- Audio accessibility:

Informative panels and flags indicate the timetables of the lifeguards, opening times of the toilets, infirmary and other services on this accessible area.

3.3 Challenges and difficulties

One the issues that soon I came to realize, when I started the research for this project, was the great quantity of information related to accessibility tourism and the already existing publications with accessibility assessments and similar web sites to the one I was planning to do. I decided to stick to the idea but focusing in a short distance tour and the connection between the tourist attractions, as I could not find this type of format in the information available.

The limitations in resources and time were other unavoidable issues that very soon came to be problematic. Flight tickets were expensive and I had limited time in Malaga thus I had to optimize my time I was not going to have enough time to repeat visits or gather more information. For this purpose I made a timetable of visits and mapping. It was frustrating at times when I realized that I for-

got some important aspect to be checked or when the audiovisual material was not usable because of poor quality.

Sometimes the tools that I wanted to use, as in GPS devices and cameras or just the webpage were expensive or had technical problems. I ended up having to find cheaper tools or alternative ways to document usually with less quality or simply not in way originally planned.

In some occasions photos and recording of the places was not allowed and permission was not granted and only observation and notes could be taken. In rare cases I found no help or bad information from the places and organizations that I visited, being this one a marginal issue of the project.

A factor that had to be taken in to consideration is the rapid evolution of multi-media and internet tools, making the way we consume information constantly changing and possibly making this project soon, obsolete. For this reason and the time limitations I decided to offer a smaller and a more personal approach for visitors who would like to enjoy a more concrete experience without the complications of multiple choices and disconnected destinations that may not provide a comprehensive experience.

3.4 The future of the project

The project aims to be long lasting and interactive. There are several ways of helping the project up to date. Below are some of the ways:

The platform used for this project allows constant updates, correction and modifications, user comments and dialogue between users and the web editor. In this way constant improvement and up-to-date information can be ensure.

My visits to Malaga are frequent, at least once a year. In this way, it is possible

to follow the state and accessibility of the places of this tour and even add new places to visit.

It is also possible to include a small questioner in the webpage as a method of feedback, so that any user can give their opinion about any aspect of the webpage and the information that it contains.

The NGOs contact for this project can make suggestions once this web is delivered to them and the users can be eventually asked for new ideas to be put on the webpage, leaving room for debate and reflection about the webpage itself, or any other aspect related to the topic.

My actual job as a personal assistant, allows me to be in contact with people who use wheelchairs on a daily basis and have considerable experience in traveling with wheelchairs and they could also be enquired about their thoughts and opinions on the webpage and also making the webpage more visible and public.

3.5 Issues of reliability and ethics

The majorities of the places visited and evaluated are public and did not require permission for the production of this project. As currently I am not making any profit, there is no need to ask permission for the mentioning of names places like restaurants etc.

I did not use other people's personal photos or private information in any part of the project so I did not have to ask for permissions on those. Moreover, the information is of public access and can be found in the Internet or from tourist publications. All the Internet sources and publications used have been referenced and only material that can be used for noncommercial purposes were used for the website.

4 CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

The original idea at the beginning of this project was to develop an assessing tool and a database for tourist with accessible problems. It was overwhelming the amount information and technical data necessary to include in a project as such so I came to realize that it would be not possible for me to add any relevant information, to the already existing material, with a project of similar characteristics. There way I decided then to develop a web page of a self-guided tour of Malaga for independent travelers with accessibility impairments. In this way I have developed a platform that focus in accessibility aspects using multimedia and interactive tools, allowing any user to complete and upload data through a contact email address created exclusively for this purpose. This simpler and more specific format allows interaction with the users and offers direct information about the places to visit and their accessibility. It is also a less common product found around the already existing material and I believe makes this project a more relevant product.

The economical aspect when choosing the format for the project was very decisive and I was soon limited by the costs of websites and applications for the websites at the same times that finding free alternatives or tests samples became a very rewarding challenge at times and frustrating at others. Very similar to the technical issues that I came across when producing the websites and I tried to gather all the material for the web, there is a constant learning process in the production process that is often limited by the technical knowledge of web design and use of multimedia gadgets.

One of the goals of this project was to connect the different touristic elements between them without inaccessible routs or dead ends avoiding the isolated areas of accessibility and for this porpoise I was limited in the space that the tour should cover to an area that could be walked and if possible not to be necessary the use of private or public transport. This limitation makes the project to be a small example having to be very selective of the elements for the tour

and sometimes living out many other important places of interest for the visitor. Despite these practical considerations I believe that the product represents well the city and its tourist offer.

A secondary objective is to promote the city as an accessible destination with the many options that Malaga can offer to their visitors and at the same time creating awareness about accessible tourism while researching and contacting the different information and information centers. Despite the big effort, made by the city, in accessibility and universal design in the last years there are still many areas with very limited accessibility or not at all and during the making of this project I have observed a lack of investment from the private and public sector contradicting laws and regulations, that in rare occasions are enforced by the local authorities, taking away the citizens right to participate in the everyday life of the city.

Another interesting issue that I came across during the making of this project, is the critical aspect of efficiency when renovating buildings with the purpose of increase the level of the accessibility, and the investment required, bringing up the subject of how much of these modifications cost and how much more accessible the places become after the re-construction works. In some cases is difficult I to see a mayor improvement on the conditions but instead seems to be a good excuse to use a considerable amount of public money in order to obtain some certification or perhaps for the individuals involved getting some illegal commissions. Although this opinion is personal and not based in any specific case it has been part of the recent history in many cities of Spain related to public money and city construction and improvement works.

It has been interesting to observe during the making of this project, the constant improvement and new creations of virtual tools and interactive formats that can be used for this kind of projects, to the extent that would make me rethink about the chosen method and alternatives to this product if I had to do this project again. More specifically, I am referring to other social media available like Facebook, Tweeter, Google, etc. This new platforms offer user friendly applica-

tions capable to reach more users, establishing a more dynamic ways of communications according to today's standards and covering more accessibility aspects for people with visual and audio disabilities.

Despite all the above limitations and the obvious room for improvement I believe that with this project I have created a more personal and perhaps much useful product with the possibility of improving through the collaboration of the user themselves and anyone willing to provide with new data, being this perhaps the strongest point of this project, constant learning, adapting and open to new ideas.

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APPENDICES

Link to the web page:

Appendix nº1:

http://malagaccesible.webnode.es/?_ga=1.157199035.1660185288.145237614

4

Appendix n°2:



The screenshot shows a website page with a light blue background featuring a subtle, intricate pattern. At the top left is the 'Accesibility' logo, and at the top right is a navigation menu with links: HOME | MUELLE UNO | LA MALAGUETA | LA ALCAZABA | WINES AND MORE | PICASSO MUSEUM | THE CATHEDRAL | THE MAP.

Muelle uno

El palmeral de las sorpresas

The harbour of Malaga is wheelchair accesible although some assistance may be needed for the blind . Its the perfect location to start or end our tour. We cand access the shops and restaurant and even the touristic boats at the street level. At night time is full of bars and some nightclubs and is close to many Hotels. It is also a very close to the Malageta beach where we will continue our visit.



Appendix nº 3:

Bars and more



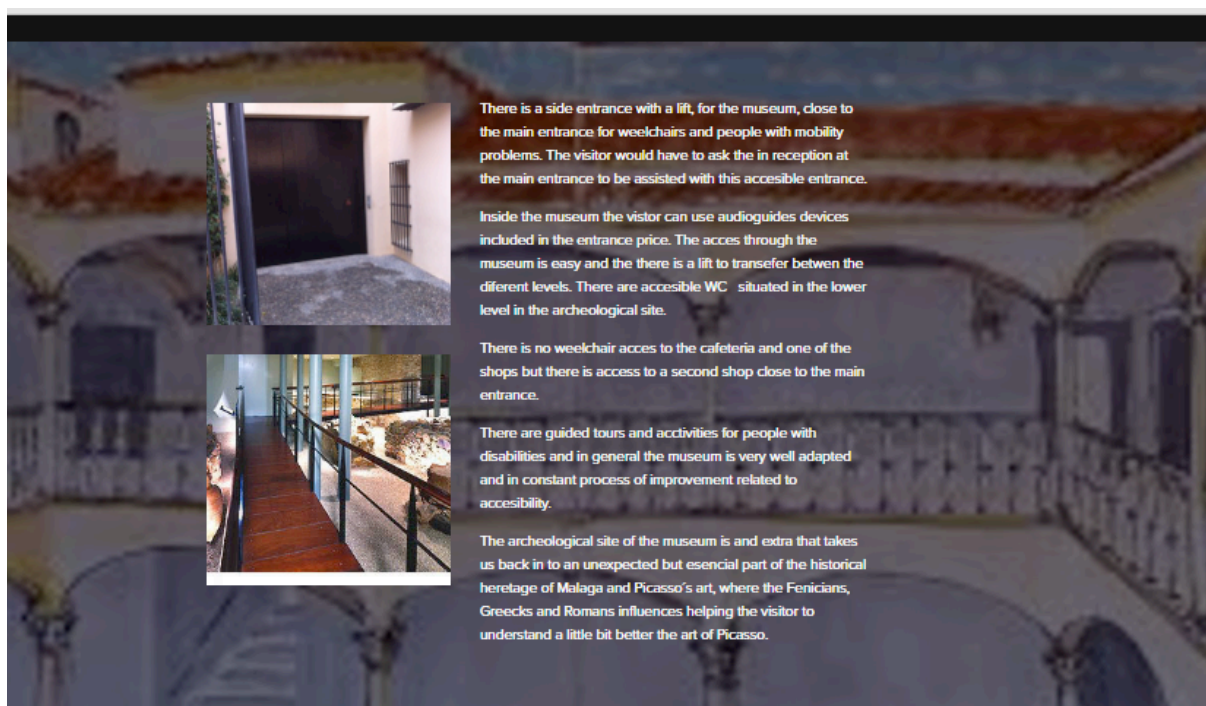
This is one of the most emblematic taverns of the city with traditional and lively atmosphere of Andalusia. The bar has a limited access but has an exterior terrace for wheelchair visitors. It is still possible to enter through the Calle Granada to see the inside and to access the disabled WC or the Plaza de la Juderia where the outside terrace is situated with the amazing views of the Roman theater and the Alcazaba.




It is worth checking out the 360° tour on their webpage through the link below.

www.elpimpi.com

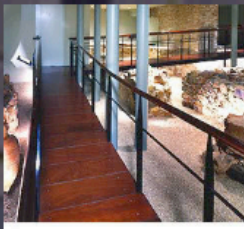
Appendix nº4:





There is a side entrance with a lift, for the museum, close to the main entrance for wheelchairs and people with mobility problems. The visitor would have to ask the in reception at the main entrance to be assisted with this accessible entrance.

Inside the museum the visitor can use audioguides devices included in the entrance price. The acces through the museum is easy and the there is a lift to transefer between the different levels. There are accessible WC situated in the lower level in the archeological site.



There is no wheelchair acces to the cafeteria and one of the shops but there is access to a second shop close to the main entrance.

There are guided tours and activities for people with disabilities and in general the museum is very well adapted and in constant process of improvement related to accessibility.

The archeological site of the museum is and extra that takes us back in to an unexpected but esencial part of the historical heretage of Malaga and Picasso's art, where the Fenicians, Greecks and Romans influences helping the visitor to understand a little bit better the art of Picasso.

Appendix nº5:



Appendix nº 6:

