ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT / SQUARESPACE

Level the Curve

Website Accessibility Audit & Recommendations

Prepared for discussion with Joseph and the Level the Curve team.

Audit date	October 3, 2026
Website	levelthecurve.com
Reference standard	WCAG 2.2, Level A/AA
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Key observation

Level the Curve is built around **Access, Independence, and Dignity**, yet its website still has notable opportunities to improve image alternatives, form accessibility, page structure, and feedback for interactive states. Many priority improvements can be made without a visual redesign by using meaningful text alternatives, semantic structure, labels, and accessible state announcements.

SCOPE & LIMITATIONS

This assessment reviewed publicly accessible Squarespace pages and their readable page structure. Findings distinguish changes the LTC team can make directly in the Squarespace editor from platform-generated behavior that requires hands-on verification. Keyboard navigation, VoiceOver/NVDA, measured color contrast, 400% reflow, touch targets, commerce controls, and dynamic status messages still require testing in real browsers. **This report is not a legal accessibility compliance certification.**

01 / EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prioritized findings

Start with improvements the LTC team can make within Squarespace, then verify platform-controlled interactions before considering custom code.

Priority	Issue	Pages	Recommended action
P1	Generic project image alt text	Project detail pages	Add meaningful alternatives in Image Block settings.
P1	Product image filenames used as alt text	Shop product pages	Edit each product image's alt text in image metadata.
TEST	Product option and quantity controls	Shop product pages	Test native controls using keyboard and VoiceOver.
P1	Contact and consultation embedded forms	Contact / Consultations	Consider native Newsletter/Form Blocks; test retained embeds.
TEST	Add-to-cart state announcements	Shop product pages	Test native status updates before any workaround.
P2	Inconsistent heading hierarchy	Home / Chair / Shop	Apply H1/H2/H3 by meaning; control type size separately.
P2	Repeated generic link labels	Homepage	Replace "Learn more" with clear destination text.
P2	No visible accessibility statement	Site-wide	Add an Accessibility page and footer link.
TEST	Keyboard, focus, contrast, reflow	Site-wide	Run manual browser and assistive-technology tests.

Points to raise in the team meeting

- This is not primarily a redesign problem. Most P1 content fixes can be implemented with existing Squarespace settings.
- The greatest mismatch is that an assistive technology organization still has product and project information that is not sufficiently clear to screen reader users.
- The existing Our Story video transcript and descriptive images on parts of the homepage and Affiliates page provide a good starting point for a site-wide standard.

02 / FINDINGS

Images & product controls

01 Project images lack meaningful alternatives P1

Related criteria: WCAG 1.1.1 - Non-text Content

Observed: On the Universal Eating Tool, Wheelchair Ramp, Spinal Mobility Chair, and Vulcan Grip project pages, several images were represented in the readable structure simply as “Image,” while meaningful descriptions appeared separately nearby.

Impact: A screen reader user may hear only “Image” and miss what the picture shows about product appearance, attachment, or real-world use.

Recommendations: Write alt text for the information each image provides, not merely the project title. If a caption already covers the same information, ensure an appropriate programmatic relationship; use empty alt only for genuinely decorative or redundant images. Adopt consistent writing guidelines for new project imagery.

ORIGINAL AUDIT EXAMPLE
Observed: “Image”
Suggested: “Eli Ramos wearing the Vulcan Grip to secure a drumstick while playing electronic drums.”

02 Product image alternatives use filenames P1

Related criteria: WCAG 1.1.1 - Non-text Content

Observed: Product pages exposed filenames including “IMG_4664.jpg,” “IMG_4687.jpg,” “IMG_0993.jpg,” and “IMG_3796.JPG” as image alternatives.

Impact: Filenames do not explain a product’s appearance, orientation, attachment, or differences between gallery photos, especially important when evaluating assistive products.

Recommendations: Describe the unique information in each product photo, such as front view, side view, or use scenario. Avoid repeating identical alt text on different photos or adding “image of” when the screen reader already identifies an image.

ORIGINAL AUDIT EXAMPLE
Observed: “IMG_4664.jpg”
Suggested: “Gray Vesta Eating Tool attached to a metal spoon, shown from the side.”

03 Product option and quantity controls require testing TEST

Related criteria: WCAG 3.3.2 - Labels or Instructions; 4.1.2 - Name, Role, Value

Observed: A page crawl summarized Vesta controls as “Size: [Select] [Input].” Because Squarespace Commerce generates these components, this crawl alone cannot establish that accessible names are missing.

Recommendations: Use clear product-option names such as “Size” or “Bundle option.” Test size, quantity, Add to Cart, cart updates, and checkout using VoiceOver with Safari and keyboard-only navigation. If native controls fail, document reproducible steps and contact Squarespace Support before overriding markup with custom code.

Squarespace path: Store product editor → Options / Variants. Verify option and quantity behavior in a real browser.

02 / FINDINGS

Forms & commerce status

04 Use accessible forms for contact and consultations P1

Related criteria: WCAG 1.3.1, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 4.1.2

Observed: The Contact page used a Mailchimp-hosted iframe form. The Consultations page said “fill out the form below,” but the form fields were not visible in the readable structure reviewed during this audit.

Impact: An iframe without a useful title, form fields without labels, errors that are not announced, or unexpected keyboard focus behavior can prevent users from completing a core task. These risks require direct testing; the audit does not assert every failure is present.

Recommended approach

- Where practical, replace raw embeds with Squarespace Newsletter Blocks or Form Blocks. Native blocks can integrate with Mailchimp while keeping form fields in the site’s structure.
- If a third-party embed must remain, test its labels, required indicators, instructions, errors, success feedback, and focus order.
- Keep a clear email/contact alternative. Provide visible labels in Squarespace Form Blocks; do not rely on placeholder text alone.

05 Verify native Add to Cart feedback TEST

Related criteria: WCAG 4.1.3 - Status Messages

Observed: Product pages included the text “Add To Cart Added!” Its presence in a page crawl does not prove that a screen reader is notified when the state changes.

Impact: If focus stays in place and no live region or status role communicates the change, a screen reader user may not know whether an item entered the cart.

Recommended approach

- Keep Squarespace Commerce’s native behavior intact until it has been tested with VoiceOver/NVDA and keyboard navigation.
- If a status message is not announced, record a reproducible case and report it to Squarespace Support before considering a maintainable custom-code workaround.
- Test quantity, variant selection, cart updates, checkout errors, and order confirmation messages as part of the same flow.

PLATFORM NOTE
These are **verification items**, not confirmed failures or completed fixes. A crawler cannot substitute for testing a real commerce interaction with assistive technology.

02 / FINDINGS

Structure, links & content

06 Inconsistent heading hierarchy P2

Related criteria: WCAG 1.3.1 - Info and Relationships; 2.4.6 - Headings and Labels

Observed: The homepage used H1 for “Access.,” “Independence.,” “Dignity.,” “Our Story,” “Our Projects,” “Shop our products!,” and “Newsletter.” The Spinal Mobility Chair “Process” heading was also H1, while the Shop landing page had two consecutive “Shop” H2 headings.

Recommendation: Assign headings according to document structure using Text Block → Format → H1/H2/H3, rather than choosing heading levels to enlarge text. Adjust visual size separately in Site Styles / Fonts.

Suggested homepage: H1 “Level the Curve: Access, Independence, Dignity” → H2 “Our Story” → H2 “Our Projects” → H2 “Shop our products” → H2 “Newsletter.”

07 Repeated “Learn more” links are ambiguous P2

Related criteria: WCAG 2.4.4 - Link Purpose (In Context)

Observed: Both Our Story and Our Projects sections used “Learn more.” These labels are difficult to distinguish when screen reader users browse a standalone links list.

Recommendation: Replace them with concise destination-specific wording: “Learn about our story” and “Explore our projects.”

08 No accessibility statement found P2

Related criteria: Accessibility governance / best practice

Observed: No dedicated Accessibility Statement or feedback page was found among the public pages and navigation reviewed.

Recommendation: Add a standard Squarespace “Accessibility” page linked from the footer. Explain the organization’s target standard (for example, WCAG 2.2 AA), known limitations, latest review date, and a clear way to report accessibility barriers. Do not claim 100% conformance before thorough testing and documentation.

09 Improve product information and cognitive accessibility P2

Related criteria: WCAG 3.1 / usability best practice

Observed: Some case studies, especially Spinal Mobility Chair, gave limited information about intended users, operation, current status, safety considerations, and testing. Product pages could better explain sizing, compatibility, and use.

Recommendation: Use consistent page sections such as Problem, Who it is for, How it works, Current status, Testing, Safety/limitations, and How to get it. For products, explain size selection, compatibility, materials, cleaning, left/right-hand use, and accessible instructions or videos where available. Prefer plain language with brief explanations of technical terms.

03 / MANUAL VERIFICATION

What still needs testing

The items below should be validated in real browsers and with assistive technology. A static page crawl is not sufficient to determine pass/fail status.

Test	How to verify	WCAG
Keyboard-only navigation	Use Tab / Shift+Tab / Enter / Space for menus, filters, variants, cart and forms. Check for keyboard traps.	2.1.1, 2.1.2
Focus visibility and order	Ensure each interactive element has a visible focus indicator and a logical sequence.	2.4.3, 2.4.7, 2.4.11
Screen reader	Test headings, links, forms, cart, and dynamic messages with VoiceOver + Safari and NVDA + Chrome/Firefox.	Multiple
Contrast	Measure contrast of text, buttons, focus indicators, and UI boundaries. Standard text at least 4.5:1; large text 3:1.	1.4.3, 1.4.11
Zoom and reflow	Test 200% text resizing and 400% zoom / 320 CSS px viewport width; verify no loss or overlap.	1.4.4, 1.4.10
Touch targets	Check mobile tap targets for menus, filters, cart, quantity, and product options.	2.5.8
Form errors	Submit blank/invalid entries. Confirm clear, associated errors and screen reader announcements.	3.3.1, 3.3.3

Recommended implementation sequence

Phase 1 · No-code fixes in Squarespace

- Add or rewrite project image and product gallery alt text in Image Block and Edit Metadata.
- Correct heading hierarchy; clarify link labels; add an Accessibility page and footer link.
- Where practical, use native Newsletter/Form Blocks with meaningful labels and instructions; use Colors/Fonts to address measured contrast or readability issues.

Phase 2 · Verify platform-generated interactions

- Test native product options, quantity, Add to Cart, cart, and checkout with keyboard and VoiceOver.
- Check Skip to Content on first Tab and confirm the built-in focus outline is visible.
- Test third-party embeds separately. Prefer a native block if an embed cannot meet accessibility needs.

04 / IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

Testing, content & next steps

Phase 3 · Full accessibility QA

- Perform keyboard-only testing of major pages and end-to-end user flows.
- Test with VoiceOver + Safari and, where feasible, NVDA + Chrome/Firefox.
- Measure contrast. Test 200% text resize, 400% reflow / 320 CSS px width, and mobile touch targets.
- Run regression checks after fixes and incorporate an accessibility checklist into publishing workflows.

Phase 4 · Content and product UX

- Strengthen the Spinal Mobility Chair and Vulcan Grip project case studies.
- Add sizing, compatibility, material, cleaning, and usage information to product pages, along with accessible instructions where available.
- Apply the accessibility checklist whenever new content or products are added.

Strengths already identified

- The Our Story page provides a complete video transcript, an important media-accessibility foundation.
- Some homepage images already have descriptive alternatives, including wheelchair users working at a laptop and an electronic-drumming scenario.
- Affiliate logos have useful descriptions rather than only “logo” or filenames.
- Squarespace provides built-in focus outlines, Skip to Content, semantic heading options, alt-text fields, and relatively accessible checkout defaults. These can be used more consistently without rebuilding the website.

SUGGESTED TEAM DISCUSSION OPENING

“I reviewed the accessibility of Level the Curve’s main public pages. The most immediate improvements are image alternative text, form labeling, embedded forms, and shopping-cart state feedback. Many can be addressed without substantially changing the visual design, helping the website better reflect Level the Curve’s assistive technology mission.”

Document status: This English edition translates the original October 3, 2026 audit. Recommendations, observed conditions, and testing tasks reflect that audit date and must not be interpreted as the current state of implementation.

05 / AUDIT SCOPE & SOURCES

Reviewed pages & references

Public pages included in the October 3, 2026 review

Homepage levelthecurve.com/
Our Story levelthecurve.com/our-story
Projects levelthecurve.com/projects
Universal Eating Tool levelthecurve.com/projects/universal-eating-tool
Wheelchair Ramp levelthecurve.com/projects/wheelchair-ramp
Spinal Mobility Chair levelthecurve.com/projects/lawrence-chair
Vulcan Grip levelthecurve.com/projects/vulcan-grip
Shop levelthecurve.com/shop
Vesta Eating Tool levelthecurve.com/shop/p/product-1-ydar7-e8mlb-8hdmk
LTC Drawstring Bag levelthecurve.com/shop/p/product-2-5c6mb-j8mng-ahs36
Vesta Tool Bundle Options levelthecurve.com/shop/p/product-6-yrdld-pcpw6-jtdga
Silverware Bundle + LTC Bag levelthecurve.com/shop/p/product-3-szb2y-gzh2r-2d4ne
Contact levelthecurve.com/contact
Affiliates levelthecurve.com/affiliates
Consultations levelthecurve.com/consultations

WCAG reference material

WCAG 2.2 www.w3.org/TR/WCAG22/
Understanding SC 1.1.1 - Non-text Content www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG22/Understanding/non-text-content.html
Understanding WCAG 2.2 www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG22/Understanding/

Squarespace implementation guidance

Built-in accessibility features
Inclusive design practices
Adding image alt text
Accessible Commerce sites
Form blocks
Code injection

English translation prepared from the original Chinese-language audit dated October 3, 2026. No post-audit changes have been retroactively added to these findings.