

MARKETING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Diversity @ Work

Presented by: Evelina Silveira



The Ontarians with Disabilities Legislation

- The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2001) was the original piece of legislation that the AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 was derived.
- The goal is to make Ontario fully accessible by 2025
- It will apply to private and public sectors across the province to remove barriers for people with disabilities
- It will provide timelines for compliance as well and penalize those who do not comply
- The penalties are stiff

What do we mean by “disabled”?

- people who are:
- blind, have a vision loss, people with learning or developmental disabilities
- deaf, deafened, hard of hearing
- have a mobility disability, who may need to use a walker, wheelchair, cane or who have: arthritis, a long-term illnesses, mental health or related disabilities
- people with an acquired brain injury
- if they cannot get into a facility, they can make a complaint of discrimination

Businesses and organizations that provide services to organizations will have to meet certain accessibility standards:

- Customer service
- Transportation
- Information and Communication
- Built Environment
- Employment

The Standards Committee has been formed to address all of these areas. They will meet to develop the standards and then disseminate the information to the public.

ODA and What it means for Business

- there will be increased opportunities for business, as there will be more people fully participating in the workplace

- when you examine the demographics of the disabled population you will find that the vast majority of people with disabilities are 65 and older
- marketing products and services to people with disabilities is often about marketing to an older population

Reasons for Marketing Products and Services to People with Disabilities

- They require the same products and services as the rest of the population
- 75% are financially and physically able to travel
- 40% of the people in Canada over the age of 65 have disabilities
- Seniors and people with disabilities will represent 20-25% of the Canadian recreation, retail, entertainment, and housing marketplaces

Are You Ready?

- Consider whether your business has any barriers that prevent people from purchasing your products or services or from working there?
- What kinds of physical barriers does your place of business have?
- Do you know the various communication strategies you may use for handling different types of disabilities?
- Do you and your staff feel comfortable meeting the customer's service needs of people with disabilities?
- Is your website accessible? What about other technological barriers?
- What about systemic barriers? Do you involve people with disabilities in your public consultation?
- Do your employment practices screen out people with disabilities?

Advertising

- Strive to include people with disabilities in your advertising
- Advertise in disability specific publications, conferences, websites
- Develop relationships with the disabled community where you can learn more about their needs
- Create credibility by placing your ads in a number of formats

Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities

- Studies show that people with disabilities stay longer or just as long as other employees
- People with disabilities now have more education than ever
- Hiring people with disabilities gives you insight into a new market

