

Americans with Disabilities Act: Starting the Conversation with Business

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It all started with a Research Project

Syracuse University & Southeast ADA Center Participatory Action Research (PAR) Project

- Research teams in 6 states visited 12 communities to survey a total of 60 Title II local government entities.
- Research Question: Are communities more accessible as a result of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the efforts of Project Civic Access?

Participatory Action Research

- People with disabilities were involved in planning and conducting the research.
- Research Teams included people with and without disabilities.
- Each team visited 4 local government entities and documented their first-hand experiences with accessibility.



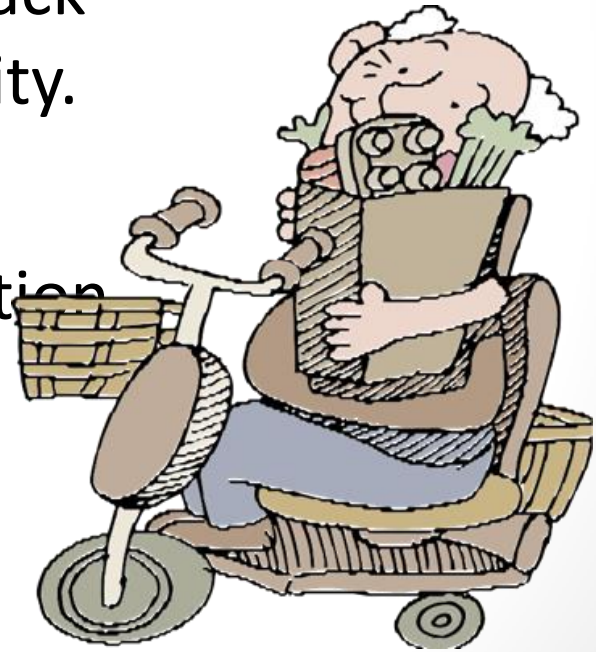


**Why not use a similar approach
to gather information to start a
conversation with business?**

Americans with Disabilities Act: Starting the Conversation with Business

A GUIDE that customers with disabilities can use to give feedback to a business about its accessibility.

<http://adasoutheast.org/publications/ada-conversation-with-business.php>



Americans with Disabilities Act: Starting the Conversation with Business

You do NOT need to be ADA expert to use this GUIDE?

Participants will learn:

- How to find answers to ADA questions, and
- How to share this information with a business.

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Step 1: Form a Team

Who should be on a Team:

- Team members can represent people with different types of disabilities or all the same type of disability.



Step 2:

Make your Team Activity Plan



- Team will select a business they want to visit.
- Team will select 1 or 2 activities that they will do while visiting a business.

Step 3: Complete Your Survey

A Survey Worksheet is provided in the **GUIDE** with 10 questions addressing:

- Accommodations
- Helpful accessible features
- Communication with staff
- Problems or barriers



Step 4: Gather your results

Meet with your Team & record your results:

- Select 1 or 2 barriers that your team wants to share with the business
- Identify helpful accessible features and good things that the business is doing

Step 5: Get ADA Information



Find the most current and accurate ADA information, by:

- Identifying specific ADA information in writing from federally approved ADA publications
- Contact an ADA expert to double-check your findings (Southeast ADA Center)

Step 6: Share your Results

- Use *Sample* “Report to Business Template” to write up the report that you will share with the business.
- Share report & ADA publications with the business you visited



Step 7: Follow up



- Go back to the place you visited to find out what changes they made
- Provide more information and resources, if needed

Alliance of Disability Advocates

Activity: Go to library & check out a book.

Outcomes: Library conducted Staff Training, and purchased / installed Screen reader software



Power of the Dream Self Advocates

Activity: Visit favorite thrift store & buy an item.

Outcomes: Store made improvements to accessible parking & created new policy on service animals



Real Advocates Now Emerging

Activity: Visit a Fast Food Restaurant & order meal

Outcome: Restaurant adjusted tension on heavy restroom doors so they were easier to open.



People First NC

Activity: Measure tension needed to open heavy restroom doors and share results with business.

Outcomes: 11 businesses improved restroom doors and asked for more feedback.



What We Learned



- Advocates learn how to find and share accurate ADA information
- Businesses are asking for more ADA information
- **Businesses are making their programs and services more accessible.**

For More Information

ADA: Starting the Conversation with Business

<http://adasoutheast.org/publications/ada-conversation-with-business.php>



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