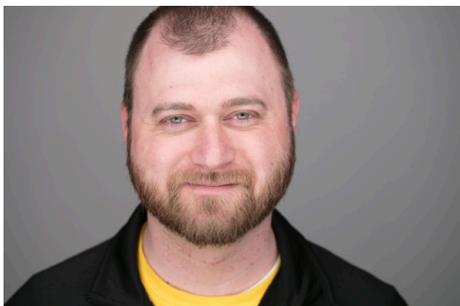


# UATP'S "Accessible Times" podcast launches now!

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*Solomon Romney, project manager for the Inclusive Tech Lab at Microsoft*

## Accessible tech from Microsoft: Don't forget the packaging!

The first episode of Accessible Times: The UATP Podcast is now live! You can listen on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#) and [Stitcher](#)—and it's coming soon to many more services. You can also listen [from the podcast website](#).

In this episode, we sat down with Solomon Romney, project manager for the Inclusive Tech Lab at Microsoft, and Valeria Rodriguez, community development specialist for the City Creek Microsoft Store in Salt Lake City.

Together, they discuss the "why" of accessible technology.

Resources from Solomon:

**Microsoft Accessibility Features:** "The single largest, most comprehensive list of Microsoft's accessibility features in the world. It has a step-by-step how-to guides, instructional videos, and download links organized by need group. It is updated regularly by our Disability Answer Desk Team."

**Disability Answer Desk:** (Microsoft) "This is a dedicated support team to assist people with using accessible

technology. Many of them are people with disabilities who use the products they support, so their help is more knowledgeable and empathetic than what you would find in a general support line."

Show notes:

0:30 - Game controllers used to be designed with certain assumptions. (Strength to hold it, motor skill to use it, ten fingers.)

4:00 - It's about reducing barriers, and they run the gamut. Low or no vision, low or no hearing, it runs across the spectrum.

5:20 - It's not just about work, it's about entertainment.

6:40 - Examples of what you can do now that you couldn't do before.

8:00 - Learning tools for education that allow students to learn at their own pace, while teachers can customize to individual needs.

8:55 - Live captioning in PowerPoint allows everyone to be included, easily. "If it's hard, it's really not accessible," says Valeria.

14:00 - Solomon starts cataloging all the accessible features available at Microsoft.

18:00 - What problems are people trying to solve with assistive technology? "What I tell teachers is, you don't know. You don't know who's going to walk into your classroom on that first day of school," Valeria said. "That's why it's important to keep it broadly accessible."

21:20 - The harder conversation is the culture shift toward a design that includes everybody.

22:40 - Microsoft's Hackathon has produced some game-changing innovation in the accessibility field. "We get to work on whatever we want. ... You get to pull from people from all over the world to work on whatever matters to you," Solomon said.

25:31 - Solomon tells the story of Microsoft's packaging for its accessible Xbox adaptive controller. "I said, 'If I can't open this package with my left hand (which has no fingers)... then we have failed.'"