KAISER PERMANENTE · CASE STUDY

ADA Documentation Design Library

Accessibility guidance that lived in one-off reviews became a reusable Figma library: component guidance, usage rules, states, content notes, and developer handoff detail, inside the design workflow.

ROLE	SCOPE	DURATION	HEADLINE OUTCOME
Principal Product Designer	Figma-based ADA documentation library	8 months	–30% ADA compliance defects

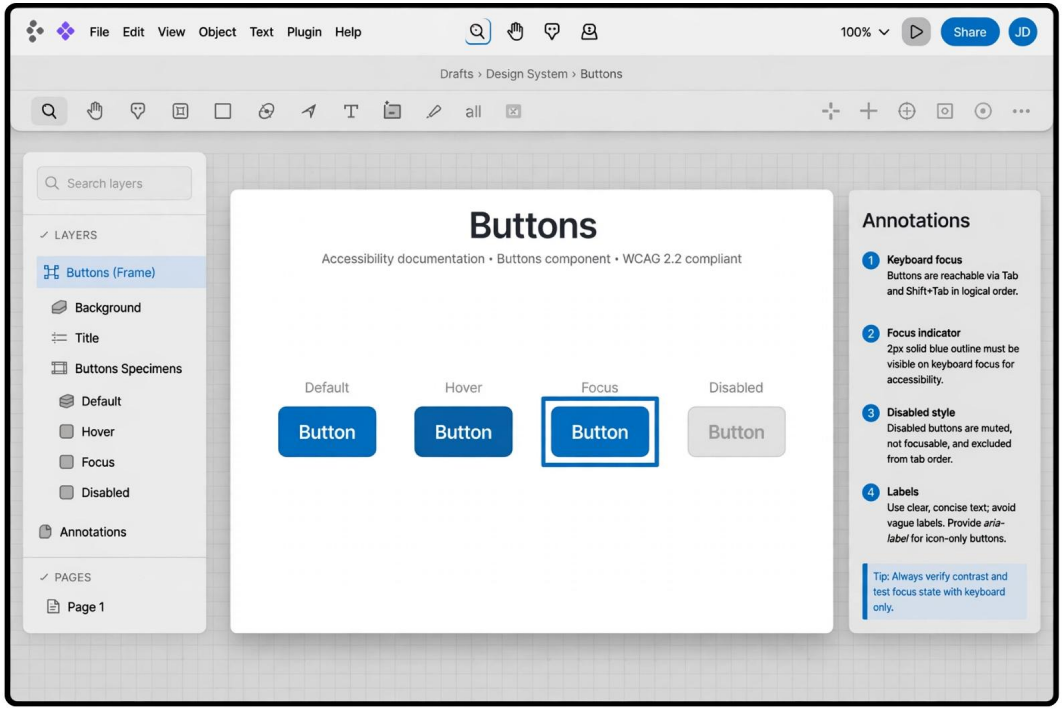
This case study is structured to Nielsen Norman Group standards for UX case studies.

SLIDE 2 · THE RESULT

The shipped library, and what it did

−30%

Reduction in ADA compliance defects across the healthcare platform, once clearer, reusable guidance replaced repeated one-off reviews and defects stopped being created downstream.



A component page from the library: specimens in their documented states, with the annotations that carry the accessibility rationale beside them. The same structure on every page is what made the guidance reusable. Visual recreated from the documented design.

SLIDE 3 · THE PROBLEM

Good guidance existed. Teams still could not apply it consistently.

Accessibility guidance existed, but it was not easy to apply consistently across teams, and significant ADA defects were caused by ineffective communication between UX designers and developers.

- **Inconsistent interpretation:** ADA expectations were applied differently across teams, which increased variability in design and implementation.
- **Late discovery of defects:** accessibility issues were often discovered after design decisions had already moved downstream.
- **Fragmented documentation:** guidance lived in different places and was not always connected to component usage, states, or content rules.
- **Developer handoff gaps:** implementation intent was not always clear enough for developers to preserve accessibility decisions during build.

THE GOVERNING CONSTRAINT

The library had to fit into the workflows teams already used, detailed enough to change implementation and simple enough that teams would actually adopt it.

SLIDE 4 · THE REFRAME

The brief said documentation. The evidence said a system.

IT STARTED AS

A documentation problem: ADA recommendations were handled through repeated one-off reviews, and the guidance itself lived in scattered places, disconnected from the components it described.

THE EVIDENCE THAT BROKE IT

Requirements work with ADA leadership, UX teams, developers, and product partners showed the same component questions recurring with different interpretations, defects surfacing late, and implementation intent lost at handoff. Clearer writing in scattered documents fixes none of that.

THE REFRAMED PROBLEM

Turn accessibility guidance into a reusable design system asset: a Figma library that makes the compliant path the easiest path, with guidance at the moment of use instead of review feedback that arrives too late to help.

SLIDE 5 · MY ROLE AND MANDATE

I owned the structure and the model. The standards stayed shared.

I owned

Structure and documentation design

- The UX structure and documentation model for the ADA component library.
- Practical Figma documentation patterns for usage, states, content rules, ADA notes, and implementation handoff.
- The documentation strategy: what every component page had to answer at the moment of use.

I led with partners

Scope, pilot, and rollout

- Scope, standards, requirements, and review criteria, established with the Director of the ADA team.
- Identifying reusable component guidance needs with UX, development, product, and accessibility partners.
- Communication, training, adoption support, and ongoing library maintenance planning.

Partners owned

Their domains

- Accessibility standards and review: the ADA team.
- Applying the guidance in product work: the design and development teams.
- Product priorities: the product partners.

Recurring questions, answered once, in the library

FINDINGS	DECISIONS
The same questions kept coming back	Requirements work with ADA leadership, UX, development, and product partners surfaced recurring component issues and repeated questions. Each recurring question is answered once, in a reusable component page, instead of in the next one-off review.
Defects surfaced downstream	Accessibility issues were discovered after design decisions had already moved downstream, when remediation is most costly. Guidance moved upstream into Figma, at the component level, where the decisions are made.
Handoff lost the intent	Implementation intent was not always clear enough for developers to preserve accessibility decisions during build. Every component page now carries developer handoff detail beside usage, states, and content rules.

Method note: requirements were defined with the people who felt the pain, ADA leadership, UX teams, developers, and product partners, and the library was piloted with key users before rollout; pilot feedback refined the terminology, structure, and level of detail. The work ran in five stages: understand, define, design, test, roll out.

SLIDE 7 · DECISION 1 OF 2

One reusable library, not another round of one-off reviews

✓ CHOSEN

A centralized Figma-based ADA documentation library: component usage rules, state guidance, content notes, and developer handoff details in one reusable home.

✕ REJECTED

Continuing to handle ADA recommendations through repeated one-off reviews and scattered guidance: the pattern that produced inconsistent interpretation, review friction, and late defects.

? WHY

Teams were solving the same ADA questions repeatedly, often with different interpretations. One reusable source ends the repetition and puts the answer where the work happens.

WHAT EVIDENCE DECIDED IT

Requirements defined with ADA leadership, UX, development, and product partners identified the recurring component issues and the exact points where guidance broke down.

Before: guidance by review

- One-off ADA reviews and repeated questions
- Scattered guidance, disconnected from components
- Defects discovered late, after decisions moved downstream

After: guidance in the library

- Component guidance, states, and content rules in Figma
- ADA notes connected to component behavior
- Developer handoff detail on every component page

The shift in one move: the same standards, carried by a reusable system instead of by repeated reviews.

Guidance at the moment of use, not a static reference

✓ CHOSEN

Component-level documentation designed as decision support: usage guidance, required states and interactions, content rules, ADA notes, and developer handoff, all on the component page.

✕ REJECTED

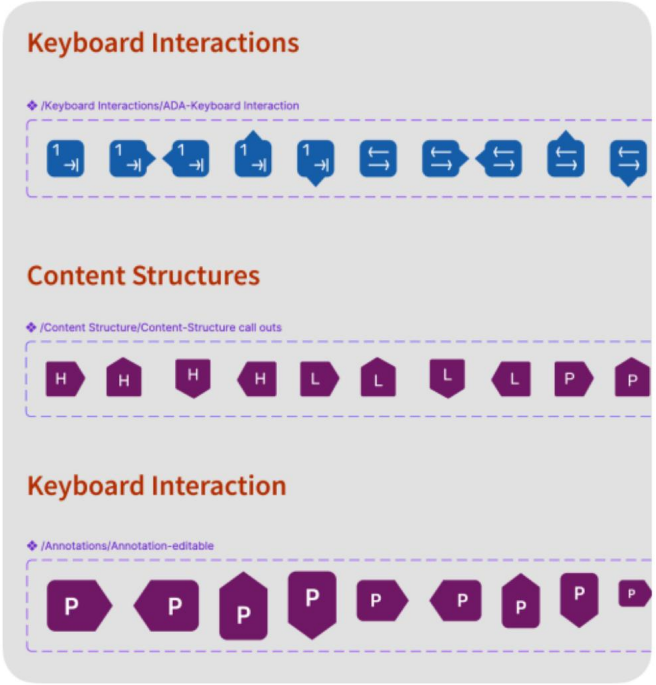
A single static reference document: complete on paper, but separated from component usage, states, and content rules, and easily buried outside the workflow.

? WHY

The library was designed around what teams need to know at the moment of use, as a decision-support tool. Guidance connected to the component is guidance that gets applied.

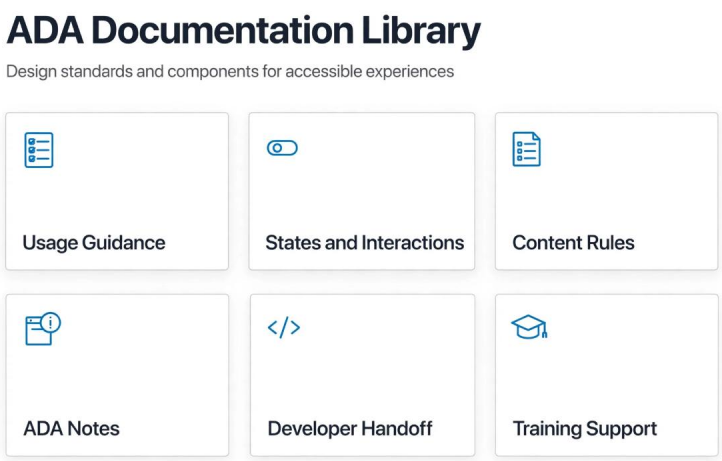
WHAT EVIDENCE DECIDED IT

The pilot with key users tested exactly this structure; their feedback refined the terminology, the structure, and the level of detail before rollout.

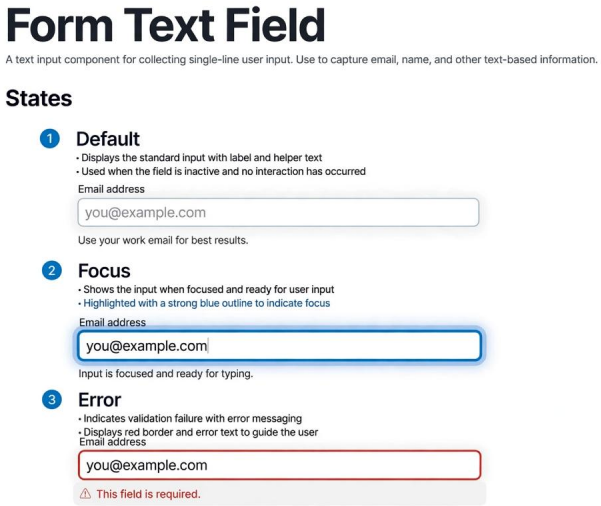


From the shipped library: annotation components for keyboard interactions and content structures, so the accessibility rationale travels with the design itself instead of living in a separate document.

One Figma library, organized around the moment of use



The library's front door: every component page follows the same six-part structure, so guidance is findable the same way, every time. Visual recreated from the documented design.



A component page at the moment of use: a form field in its default, focus, and error states, with the labeling and error messaging rules beside the specimens. Visual recreated from the documented design.

SLIDE 10 · OUTCOMES

Measured in defects, adoption, and alignment

MEASURE	BEFORE	AFTER ROLLOUT
ADA compliance defects	Guidance unclear, defects found late	**–30%**
Accessibility guidance	Fragmented across separate documents	**One library**
Figma adoption	Guidance lived outside the design tool	**Increased**
UX to developer handoff	Implementation intent unclear	**Clearer**

Framing: these results followed the pilot, the refinement, and the rollout of the library as the organizational standard for accessibility documentation. The library was designed and delivered with ADA leadership, UX, development, and product partners; it contributed to these outcomes as part of that combined work, and sole causation is not claimed. The business value: accessibility moved upstream, repeated questions dropped, and teams could prevent avoidable issues before they became delivery risks.

SLIDE 11 · WHAT I LEARNED

Accessibility is a system, not a review step

Lesson 01

Make the compliant path the easiest path

Guidance embedded in the workflow gets used; guidance buried in separate documentation does not. Where the guidance lives decides whether it works.

Lesson 02

Design the adoption, not just the document

A library only works if teams can find it, trust it, and use it repeatedly. The pilot, the training material, and the feedback loop were designed with the same care as the component guidance.

Lesson 03

Build it to be maintained

Standards, components, and guidance all evolve. Ownership and maintenance were planned from the start, so the library stays the standard instead of becoming one more stale document.

The operating lesson I carry into every design systems project since: treat accessibility as a product system, with reusable patterns, clear ownership, and a designed path to adoption.

SLIDE 12 · THANK YOU

Thank you for reviewing this case study.

The summary page holds the outcomes, the deliverables, and the full document.