

A Braille-iant Idea for a More Accessible SAP Vancouver



When SAP Labs Vancouver became the [first Accessibility Certified Gold](#) business by the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) in 2018, an unlikely trio was called into action. SAP's d-shop team, a global in-house makerspace that aims to impassion and enable people's interest in technology through exploration and experimentation, partnered with SAP Labs Vancouver Facilities to come together for a special project.

BRAILLE TO SAP—POWERED BY D-SHOP AND FACILITIES

With encouragement from RHF's assessment, SAP Labs Vancouver set out with a mission to improve navigation around the office for those who are visually impaired.

"They identified a lack of braille signage in our space and suggested that we expand on that," says Murray Weyenberg, Head of Facilities. "When wayfinding didn't work, we looked at another option—verification of arrival directly on our meeting rooms." But by the fourth failed attempt of partnering with a professional braille print supplier, this project seemed to be slipping further out of reach.

THE PENNY DROP MOMENT

Meanwhile at d-shop, a new tech gadget had entered the building. "I was just walking through the office and saw Eric setting up this 3D printer," Murray recalls. That's when it came to him, "Well, can we just do this ourselves?"

After consulting with Eric Laroche of Intelligent Data Analytics and Senior Design Consultant/d-shop Lead, Christine Kuo, their mission became possible. “That’s the beauty of 3D printing. You can prototype anything,” Christine states.

“As soon as we moved it in house, things moved quickly. Within two weeks I had the product—a cup-o-braille to be specific—on my desk and we were putting it in place,” Murray explains. This is one SAP success story that shows the value of pooling your own resources together. “I’m really glad I got to do something valuable for the site,” Christine smiles.

You can now find these subtle green braille strips next to various meeting room door handles throughout the office. Each strip translates to the meeting room number.



GREATER INCLUSION THROUGH INNOVATION

At SAP, we believe that closing the accessibility gap starts from the ground up. Powered by creative problem solving and collaboration, we continue to stay curious about innovative ways we can integrate accessibility into our space. It’s small and subtle modifications like these that go a long way in allowing individuals with disabilities to be self-sufficient in their daily tasks. By proactively eliminating barriers to inclusion, we ensure more equitable opportunities for our people.



Special things happen when great minds across different teams come together.

So, what’s the next collaboration project to cross off the list for d-shop and Facilities? They laugh, “Oh there’s always something...we talk a lot!”

SAP Labs Vancouver is committed to keeping the promise; to support and celebrate diversity and inclusion in environments where individuals with diverse abilities can truly flourish. That’s just how we run.