

# UATP's Pavithran Meets with Google, Apple

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Sachin Pavithran

It's not often one is invited to attend meetings with the likes of Google, Apple or the President of the United States, but in recent months Sachin Pavithran has done them all as part of his responsibilities with the U.S. Access Board. Pavithran is the director of the Utah Assistive Technology Program at Utah State University's Center for Persons with Disabilities, and was appointed to the U.S. Access Board in December 2012.

The focus of the meetings with Google and Apple, and Twitter in the near future, has been accessibility and product design, Pavithran said. Non-disclosure agreements make it impossible to talk about specific details.

"There are ongoing conversations about all these things," Pavithran said. "It's not in-depth, it's more like 'are you guys keeping this in mind?'"

Pavithran said private companies are very careful when they deal with people connected to the federal government.

"I had lawyers following me around to make sure I didn't say or do something wrong," Pavithran said.

In July, Pavithran debriefed President Barack Obama on Access Board issues. The meeting lasted for about

an hour and included six White House staffers and four others.

"Obama kept asking me questions so I told myself 'you better pay attention,'" Pavithran said. "I didn't think he'd be asking so many questions—he was asking for clarification and things like that—I thought it would be more of a formality."