

# Information Architecture Fundamentals



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# What is Information Architecture?

“Information Architecture involves the successful **design, organisation, and navigation of information** so that it is easy for a user to be able to **find and manage information easily.**”

# But what does it mean to you?

When a potential customer makes it to one of your Web application's pages, what will they do? Do you want them to sign up, contribute their knowledge, make a purchase, dive deeper into your content?

# So Information Architecture is ...

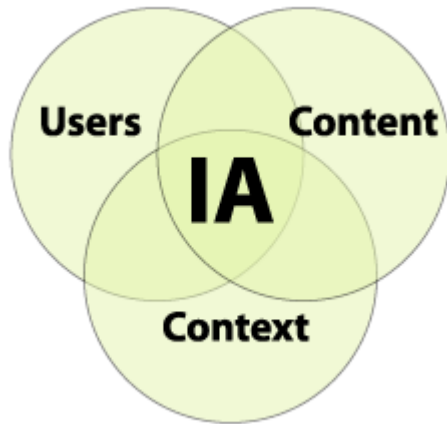
The structural design of shared information environments.

The combination of organization, labelling, search, and navigation systems in web sites, intranets, online communities and software.

The art and science of shaping information products and experiences to support usability and findability.

An emerging discipline and community of practice focused on bringing principles of design and architecture to the digital landscape.

# Information Architecture concepts

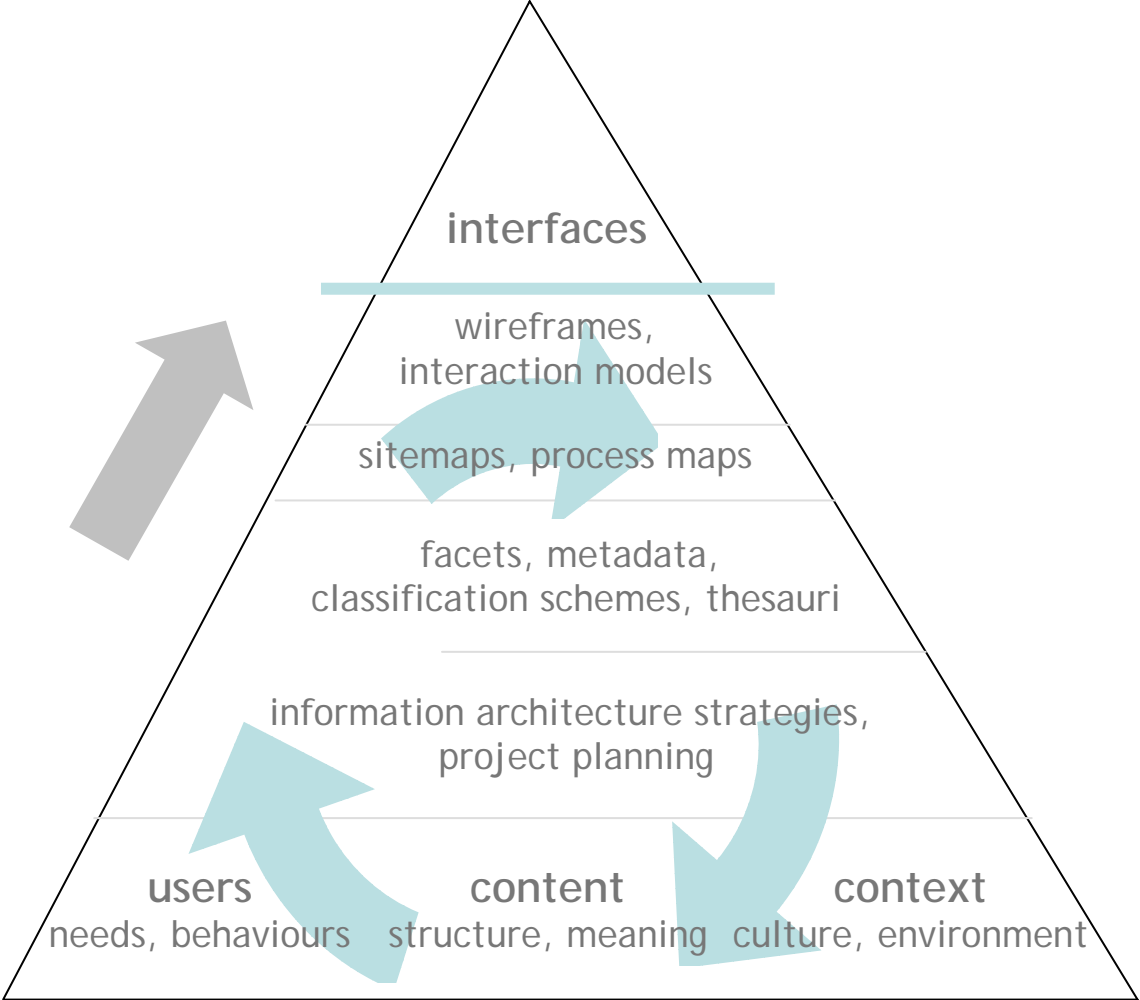


The Three Circles of  
Information Architecture



The User Experience  
Honeycomb

# Information Architecture processes



# Identifies user needs

IA utilises user experience disciplines:

User research

Cognitive science

Experience design

Human Computer Interaction

# Offers multiple approaches to understanding users

Ethnographic

Statistical

Heuristic

Pattern & behaviour recognition

Task analysis

Card sorting

Personas

# Gets to grips with the many ways that information can be organised

Content inventories

Facets & metadata

Classifications & categorisation schemes

Taxonomy & thesauri development

Controlled vocabularies

Information science

Library & information science

thesauri

## **ABSORPTION**

The retention and conversion into another form of energy of rays, waves, or particles by a substance.

UF ABSORPTIVE PROPERTIES

BT SORPTION

NT BIOLOGICAL ABSORPTION

RESONANCE ABSORTION

TWO PHOTON ABSORPTION

X RAY ABSORPTION ANALYSIS

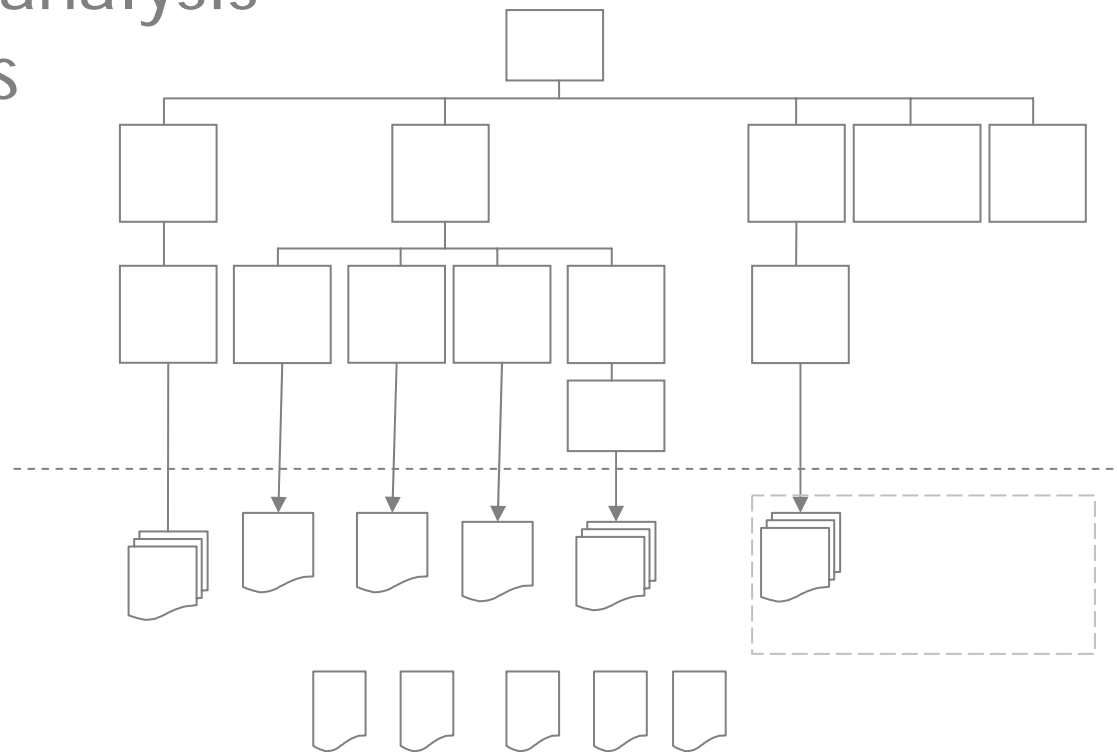
# Creates site structures

Information design through:

Statistical analysis

Hierarchies

Sitemaps



container

Site map

# Creates navigation methods and page layouts

IA Utilises experience, interaction, interface and user centred design.

Produces good labelling, navigation and information 'scent' to help people find what they need and accomplish what they want.

Wireframes

Navigation

Labelling

Global & local navigation

-----wireframe-----

Business Calendar		
June 2008		
Region	1	2
<input type="text"/>	<u>Wellington</u>	
<b>Industry</b>	<u>Chamber of</u>	
<input type="text"/>	<u>Commerce</u>	
<b>Event Type</b>	<u>Breakfast Seminar</u>	
<input type="text"/>		

# Why IA can be ... difficult

Multiple  
stakeholders

Complex goals

Research is  
limited

Language is  
ambiguous

Multidisciplinary  
teams

Organization is  
subjective

# So, why should I care?

Good Information Architecture reduces the costs of:

Finding (time, frustration)

Not finding (bad decisions, alternate channels)

Construction (staff, technology, planning, bugs)

Maintenance (content management, redesigns)

Training (employees, turnover)

And increases the value of:

Brand (identity, reputation, trust)

Education (related products, projects, people)

# Outputs

Personas/User scenarios  
User flows/Task analysis/Process maps  
Content inventory & organisation  
Conceptual models  
Sitemaps/Blueprints  
Controlled vocabularies  
Taxonomies  
Decision tables  
Page Architectures/Wireframes  
Mock-ups  
Usability reports

persona



**Matthew Johnson**  
Program Staff  
Director, USDA

51-years-old. Married, 3 children, 1 grandchild Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics Comfortable using a computer, intermediate internet user, with a T1 connection at work and dial-up at home. Uses email extensively; uses the web about 1.5 hours a day for his work

# Something to think about - Navigation Stress Test

What is this page about?

What site is this?

What are the major sections of this site?

What major section is this page in?

What is "up" 1 level from here?

How do I get to the home page of this site?

How do I get to the top of this section of the site?

What does each group of links represent?

How do I get to this page from the site home page?