

Information Architecture

What is Information Architecture?

Information Architecture (IA) is the process of organizing, structuring, and creating a usable flow of content.

IA is the research and planning stage of an interactive project, and is the foundation for creating a good user experience.

Good IA will allow people to find what they want without really giving it much thought.

Great IA is seamless and invisible to the user.

Process

1. Gather data
2. Organize content
3. Structure + Flow

Gather data: *design brief*

1. business goals

What are the objectives?

What are the business requirements provided by the client?

What will this allow your customers to do?

What is unique about this product?

2. user goals

Who is using this product?

What do they want (content, features, functionality)?

How will they want to move through the site?

3. competitor benchmarking

Who are your main competitors?

What do/don't those competitors offer?

How is the competitor's content structured? Do you plan to deviate?

How can this product be better than the competitors?

4. contextual research

How do users behave in the real product environment?

5. usability testing

How do users use competitor products?

What do users think about the competitors visually?

What more do they want from the product?

Organize content

1. content inventory: *outline*

What type of content will be used?

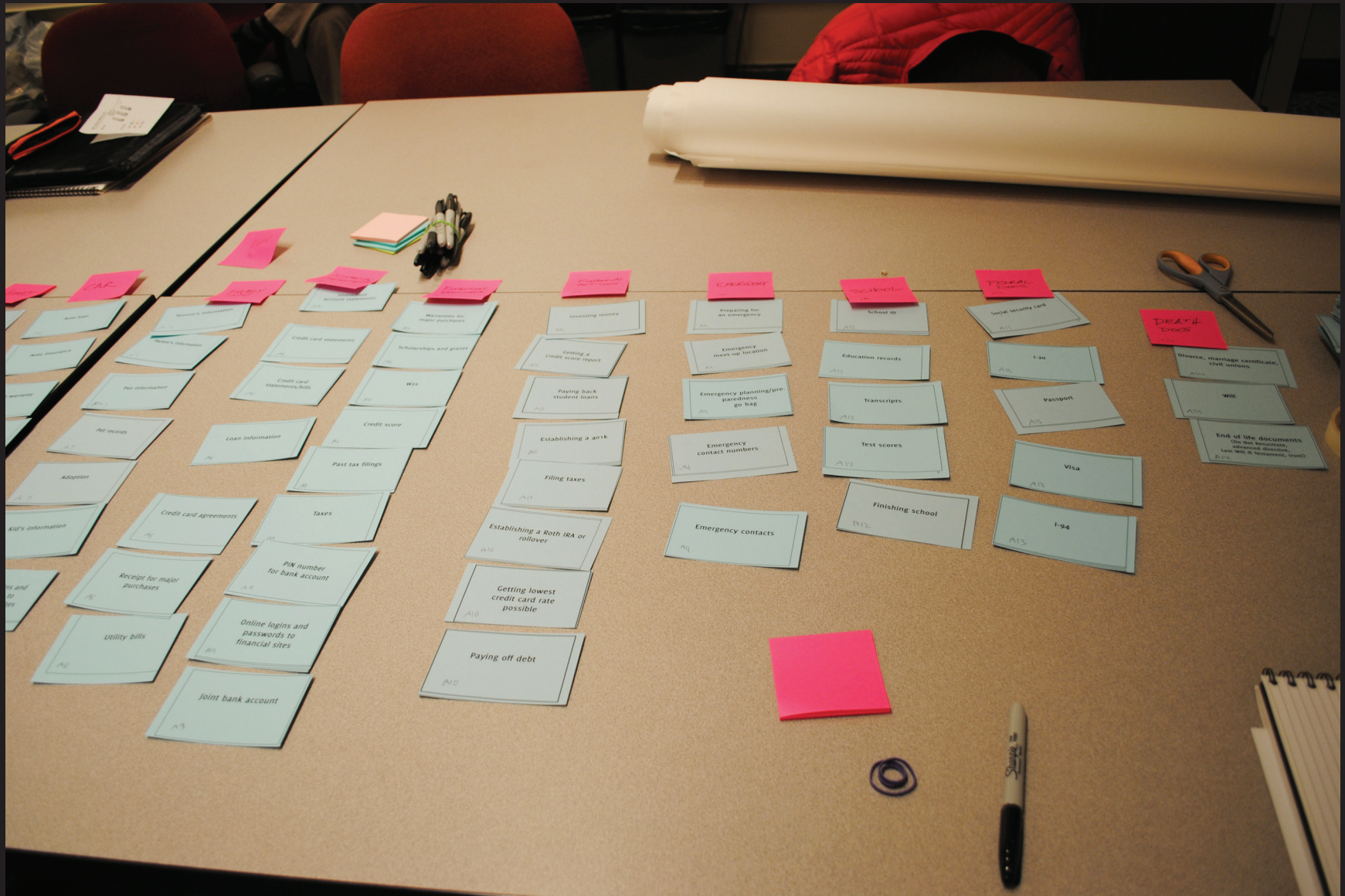
What is the existing content?

What is the new content?

2. grouping content: *card sorting exercise*

How can the content be grouped into modular chunks?

How do you group the content vs. your users?



ADP information
ADP records
Adoption
Kid's information
Receipts and so on
Utility bills
Joint bank account

Credit card agreements
Receipt for major purchases
Online logins and passwords to financial sites
Credit card statements
Loan information
Past tax filings
Taxes
PIN number for bank account

Scholarships and grants
W-2s
Credit score
Past tax filings
Taxes
PIN number for bank account
Establishing a 401k
Filing taxes
Establishing a Roth IRA or rollover
Getting lowest credit card rate possible
Paying off debt

Increasing money
Getting a credit score report
Paying back student loans
Establishing a 401k
Filing taxes
Establishing a Roth IRA or rollover
Getting lowest credit card rate possible
Paying off debt

Preparing for an emergency
Emergency meet-up location
Emergency planning/preparedness go bag
Emergency contact numbers
Emergency contacts
School ID
Education records
Transcripts
Test scores
Finishing school
Social Security Card
I-20
Passport
Visa
I-94

DEATH
Divorce, marriage certificate, civil unions
Will
End of life documents
(Do not be greedy, appoint someone, get will & beneficiary, trust)

5 ways to organize information (a.k.a. LATCH or Five Hat Racks)

Location

Alphabetically

Time

Category

Hierarchy

Structure + flow: *site map*

How do you label groups of information that makes sense to users?

What are the top-levels and secondary-levels of navigation?

How will the navigation be labeled?

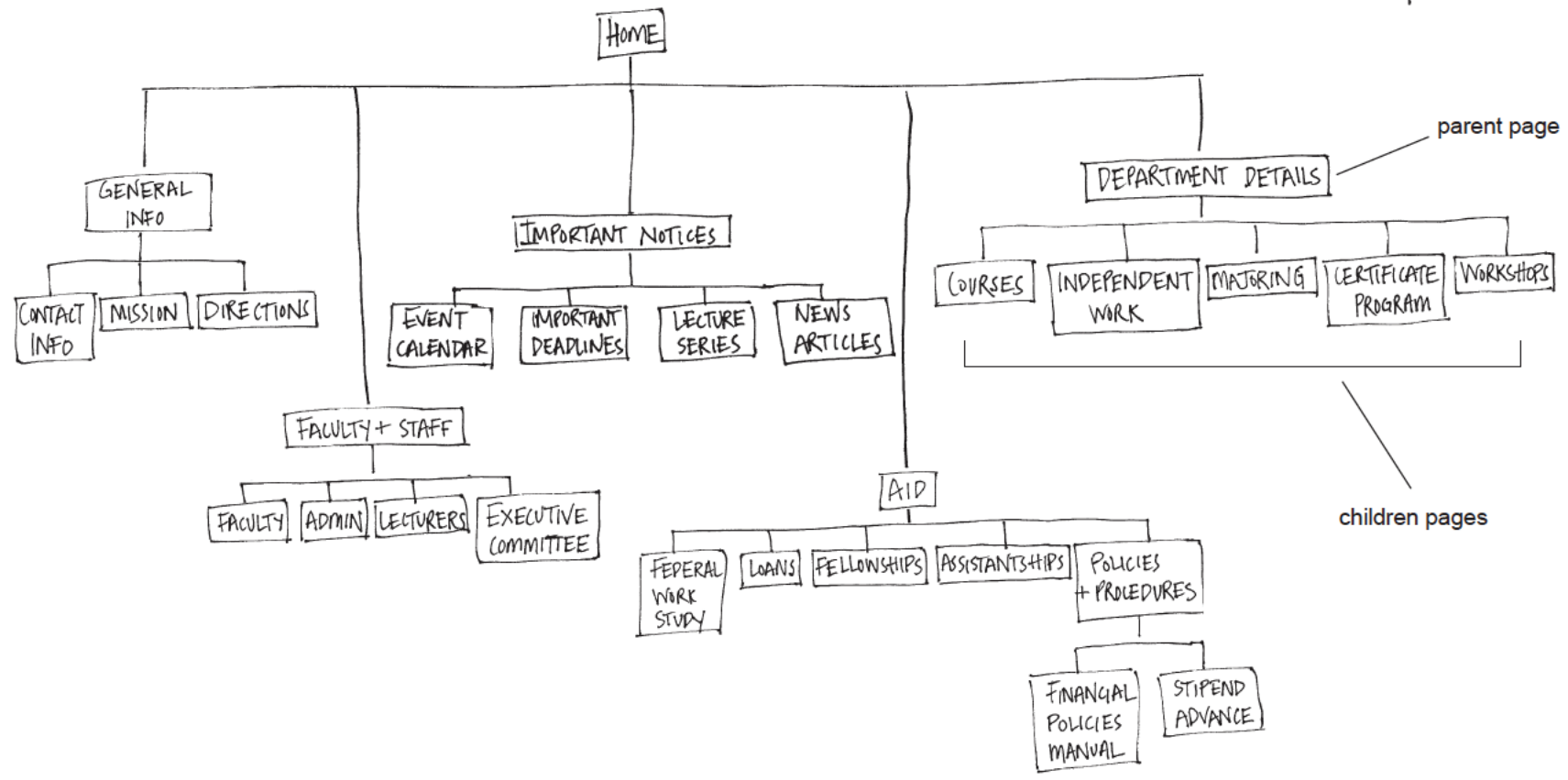
How will users move through the site?

What information will be located on each page?

What is the hierarchy of information on each page?

Example of a site map

TOOLBAR: SEARCH | WEBMAIL



parent page

children pages

FOOTER: LINK TO SITE FEEDBACK, CONTACT NUMBER + E-MAIL, UNIVERSITY COPYRIGHT