



GYMNASIUM

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UX  
**FUNDAMENTALS**

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*Lesson 4 Handout*

*Make Your Content Make Sense*

# ABOUT THIS HANDOUT

This handout includes the following:

- A list of the core concepts covered in this lesson.
- The assignment(s) for this lesson.
- A list of readings and resources for this lesson including books, articles and websites mentioned in the videos by the instructor, plus bonus readings and resources hand-picked by the instructor.
- A transcript of the lecture videos for this lesson

## CORE CONCEPTS

1. There are lots of different ways to organize a client's website. UX designers help decide how your client's website is organized and which structure is most appropriate for the users. This practice of organizing the content on your website is called information architecture.
2. The way to best organize your client's website, is to let your users tell you how. Any or all combinations of personas, in-person interviews and card sorting can be used to accomplish this.
3. You have about 10 seconds or less to make an impression with a new customer. Users on the web are typically "on the hunt" for relevant information, they typically don't read text, they scan it. Avoid unnecessary text and make wise use of headlines, bullets and hyperlinks to avoid making a visitor have to think!
4. Writing clearly instills trust in your customers and trust is good for business. Making content a priority rather than leaving it until the end is a mistake. Many organizations are beginning to use content strategists to help them prioritize content, a user experience designer and a content strategist working together equals a very strong team!

## ASSIGNMENTS

In this assignment, you'll create a navigation menu for your project (airline or restaurant reservation). This navigation bar should reveal the structure of your website or app, and should be easy to understand.

The first step is to choose a menu style that's relevant to your project. Feel free to base it on a "design pattern" navigation example from one of these lists:

- If you're designing a website: [handy list of website navigation examples](#)
- If you're designing a smartphone app: [handy list of mobile navigation examples](#)

(By the way, the next class session is all about "design patterns" like these!)

Then, decide what items will go in the navigation. Choosing menu items that are appropriate for your project and audience. You can name and order them as you like. You do not need to have a wireframe for each item.

However, we're giving you extra menu items that must also be included in your navigation. This is to better simulate a client experience. These menu items can be renamed, reordered, and can be nested into sub-menus, but they must all appear:

- Our Picks
- About Us
- Career Opportunities
- Human Resources
- Advertise With Us
- Contact Us
- E-Mail Newsletters
- Privacy Policy
- Terms of Service
- Information for Developers
- FAQ
- Press Releases
- Our Blog
- Like us on Facebook
- Follow us on Twitter

Note: you won't need to add these menu bars to your wireframes yet. We'll do that in the next assignment.

## UX FUNDAMENTALS NAVIGATION ASSIGNMENT

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Project chosen \_\_\_\_\_

(Booking a flight or finding a restaurant and making a reservation)

Medium chosen \_\_\_\_\_

(Website or smartphone app)

My user is a \_\_\_\_\_ who needs to \_\_\_\_\_.

Menu Navigation style:

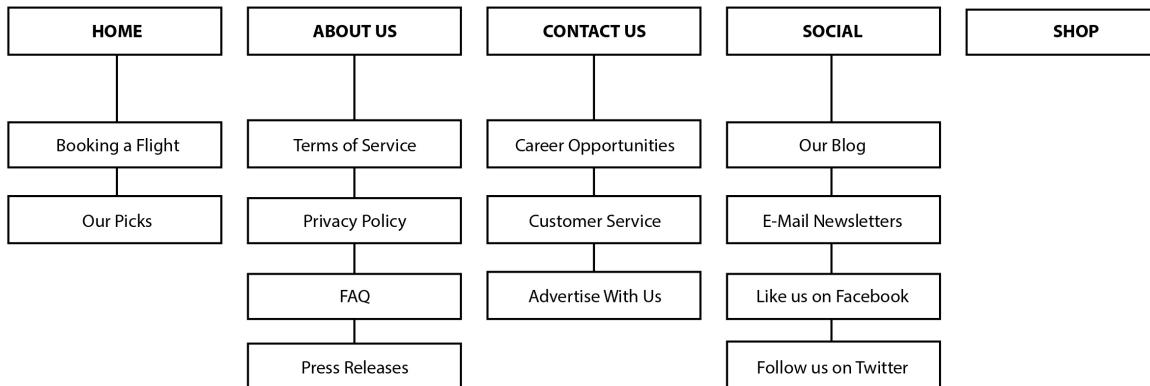
(Include a web address, example, sketch, screenshot, or image describing how the navigation menu would look and behave)

Menu Items: (a bulleted list or site-map diagram of the elements in the navigation and how they would be grouped and named)

## ASSIGNMENT PARTIAL EXAMPLE

Here's an example of this assignment's menu items, from a student who completed the course:

### CLIENT WEBSITE NAVIGATION REQUIREMENTS:



## RESOURCES

- (Book) Information Architecture for the World Wide Web: <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0596527349/michanicknich-20>
- (Article) Card sorting how-to: <http://www.usability.gov/how-to-and-tools/methods/card-sorting.html>
- (Article) Card sorting: a definitive guide: <http://boxesandarrows.com/card-sorting-a-definitive-guide/>
- (Article) Card sorting: how many users to test: <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/card-sorting-how-many-users-to-test/>
- (Article) How to recruit participants for usability studies: <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/recruiting-test-participants-for-usability-studies/>
- (Article) The \$300 million button: [http://www.uie.com/articles/three\\_hund\\_million\\_button](http://www.uie.com/articles/three_hund_million_button)
- (Article) A funny example of marketing-speak: the Pepsi “Breathtaking” strategy PDF: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/pepsi-nonsensical-logo-redesign-document-1-million-for-this/>
- (Site) Stanford’s Web Credibility Research: <http://credibility.stanford.edu/>
- (Person) Special thanks to content strategist Stephanie Hay for this lesson’s “mom test” and inspiration for this lesson: <http://www.stephaniehay.com/>

# INTRODUCTION

(Note: This is an edited transcript of the UX Fundamentals lecture videos. Some students work better with written material than by watching videos alone, so we're offering this to you as an optional, helpful resource. Some elements of the instruction, like live coding, can't be recreated in a document like this one.)

It's time again for UX Fundamentals, an online course developed by Aquent. This is lesson four. Today, we're talking about content, and how to make your content make sense. When I say content, I mean words and pictures. And you as a designer might be going, what? What are you talking about? I'm a designer. I don't do words and pictures.

Well, for certain kinds of content, like navigation and the home page of a client's website, you might actually be the most qualified to write it, believe it or not. Today we'll talk about how to do it, when to do it, and why do it.

Today's lesson is broken up into four big ideas.

1. There are lots of different ways to organize a client's website. We'll talk about what some of those are and how to decide between them.
2. If you really want to know how to best organize your client's website, let your users tell you how. We'll give you specific strategies for doing so.
3. In the world of the web, you've got about 10 seconds to make an impression with a new customer. We'll talk about how to make the most of that very limited amount of time.
4. Writing clearly instills trust in your customers. And that's good for business. We'll talk about how.

## BIG IDEA #1

### THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS TO ORGANIZE A SITE.

Let's start with big idea number one, that there are lots of ways to organize a website. And when I'm talking about organizing, I'm talking about content. The content on a website needs to be organized in a way that makes sense for your users. That's true whether your website is small like this one-- where you enter your zip code and it tells you if you need an umbrella today-- or very huge websites like Wikipedia, which has more than 4 million pages in English alone.



We need a way to turn chaos into order. And the best way to show that order is through navigation. Navigation can reveal the structure of a website and how it's organized. Let's take the BBC's website's. Let's say you don't know who the BBC are.

Well, how would you get a sense of who they are? Well, you'd look at the content, obviously, and the pictures. But you could also look at the nav bar. You see this nav bar up here at the top? Let's look a little bit more closely at it.

Here it is, and the words here in the nav bar show how this website is organized and the things that you're likely to find here. You're likely to find news and information on sports and weather. This tells you, among other things, what kind of website this is. And that it's not a travel site, for instance, or a place that you might buy clothing.

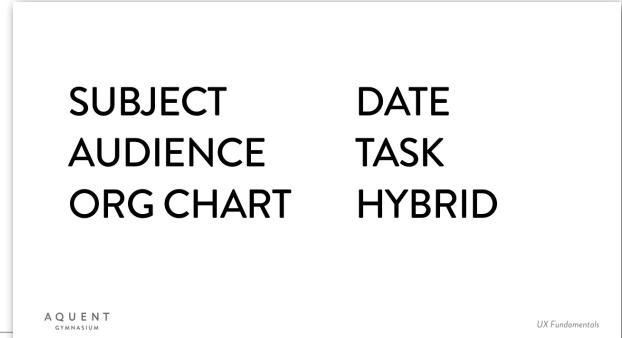
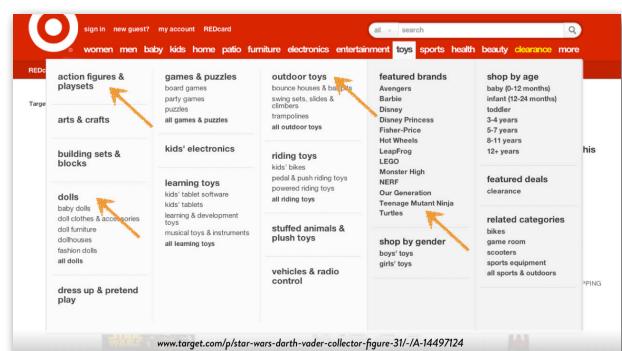
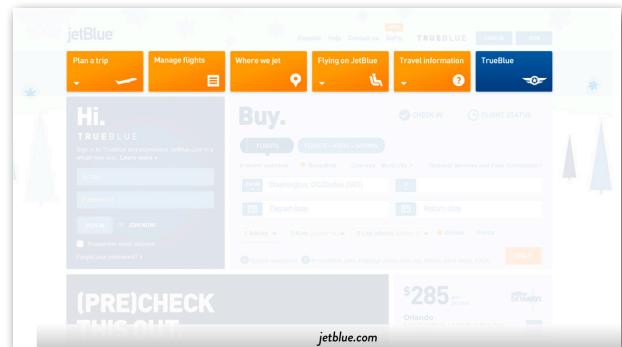
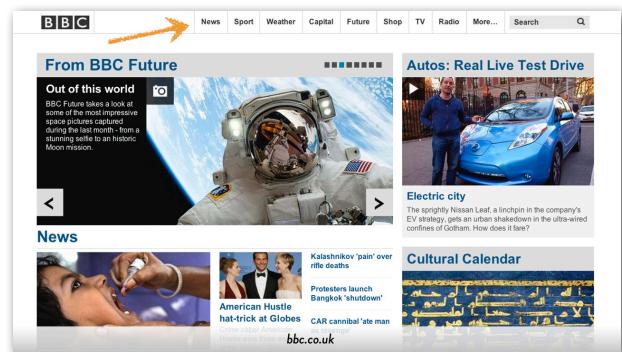
The same is true of an actual travel site like JetBlue. The nav bar here at the top reveals what you can do on this website and how the content on this website is organized. The same is true of retailers like Target. Here's Target, where's the nav bar here? Yup, it's this up at the top.

And more specifically, the kinds of products they have are in this little strip right here. That's all the stuff that Target has and the way that they decided to organize it. You may have already noticed that many nav bars like this one tend to stay the same on all the different pages of a website. For instance, here Target's nav bar stays the same whether you're looking at clothing or whether you're looking at toys.

That bar stays in the same place. You can put your mouse over one of the elements or click it, and you can get more navigation. Here it's a roll-over nav. I've rolled over the word "toys" and this is a big drop down block. And this menu not only reveals the different kinds of toys they have but how they organize those toys. For instance, that there are action figures, and that there are dolls, and those two things are different.

There are outdoor toys. And over here there are the different kinds of brands of toys. All of these menus, these navigation bars, show how the content is organized. They're like signposts. So if a user comes to an airline site and they want to know if their flight's on time. Or somebody else goes to Target and wants to buy a toy, they know how to find it through that navigation bar.

You as a designer get to decide what goes in that nav bar. You get to decide what items your users need, and what to call them, and how you group them. And especially if you've got a large website, you'll have to decide how to group and organize your content.



There are a million different ways to group content. Here are some of the most popular. You can group content by subject, by the kind of thing the content is. You can group by audience, meaning the kind of person who's looking at the website. You can organize by the org chart of the company, by how the company itself is structured.

You could organize by date. You can organize by task that the user is trying to accomplish. Or a mix, a hybrid of all of these. Let's take a look at each one of these in turn with a quick example.

First let's start with subject. Subject is a very, very common way to organize a website's content. Here's the Home Depot, it's a chain hardware store. And this left navigation, this block right here, it's organized by subject. By the kind of thing that you might be shopping for, whether it's appliances, or bathroom, or faucet fixtures, et cetera and so forth.

Another way to organize is by audience. Audience means the kind of person who's looking at the website. Clothing stores frequently do this. Here's The Gap, and the top navigation strip here is largely organized by audience. The first section is for women, for women's clothing and ostensibly for the women who will be looking at this website.

Maternity for pregnant women. Men, girls, boys, toddlers, all of these are by audience. The only two that aren't are Body and Gapfit. Body is their code word for underwear and Gapfit is for athletic clothing. But all the rest are for a particular gender and age of the person who's looking at the website. Now, of course, babies aren't likely to be looking at this website. But their parents are and that's an audience too.

Another way to organize a website, and a somewhat controversial way, is by the organizational chart of the parent company, of the company that's running the website. And actually, The Gap is a good example of that as well. But not in the nav strip we just looked at. Instead, this one up here at the very top.

You see these icons here? Well, they represent other companies, other clothing stores that are in Gap family, that are owned by the same parent company as The Gap. Now this is a very common way of organizing a website because it makes sense to the company itself. The risk is it may not make a lot of sense to regular users.



Here's Unisys, for instance. I'm showing you a drop down menu here under Offerings. And you see the first thing under Offerings? It says Unisys Stealth. What's that? If you don't already know what Unisys Stealth is, this menu item is not going to help you in any way understand what this offering is.

The second one is the same way, Forward by Unisys. No idea what that means. This navigation bar, and especially these first two entries, are organized the way the company is organized. They're not organized in a way that regular users are likely to understand.

Organizing a site like this is dangerous. It can be bad for users because if they don't understand the navigation they're not likely to click on it. Another way to organize websites that's also common but less controversial is by date. Very easy to understand.

A lot of blogs do this, like Bldg Blog, this architecture blog. You see here on the left and on the right the archives are organized by date. Very, very, very common organizational scheme for blogs. It's also how Facebook organizes the wall, for instance. The posts on your Facebook wall are, generally speaking, organized by newest to oldest.

Alphabetizing a website's content is also a way to organize. One place it happens is here in the federal government. There's so many US government departments and agencies that one of the websites is an a to z list. But it's not a very common way that websites organize their content.

A much more common way is to organize by task, by the questions that customers have and answering those questions. For instance, can I book a flight? Or where's the cheapest hotel? Or what time does the store open? And organizing the navigation around the answers to these questions.

Many travel websites like JetBlue do that. Here's JetBlue's navigation. And you can see that, generally speaking, it's organized around the kind of tasks that a traveler might have.

Most websites don't do just one of these organizational schemes. Instead, they do a mix or a hybrid of a bunch of these different schemes. Let's go back to this example here of the toys at Target, this pull down menu underneath toys. And this is all the different ways that toys are organized at Target.



And you can see that it's a mix of different schemes. It's by subject here. Action figures and play sets, that's a subject. So is arts and crafts. But over here it's featured brands. That's really like an organizational chart. It's the companies that make those particular toys.

Down here it's by gender and by age. That's by audience, that's looking at different audiences. This very large menu combines a bunch of the different organizational schemes that we've looked at and creates its own hybrid. And this is common.

And you as a UX Designer get to decide how your client's website is organized and which of these teams, or mixture of the schemes, are most appropriate for your users. This practice of organizing the content on your website is kind of like what a librarian does to books. And in fact, the professional title for this kind of work is called information architecture. It's born out of library science. And it is the practice of structuring, organizing, architecting the thing that your site's content falls into.

If you're a person who designs websites, you probably do this already. You probably do information architecture. And if you don't have a structure that you're following, you're most likely just using your gut. Or you're going with what the client decides.

None of the schemes that we've talked about so far are perfect. For instance, organizing things alphabetically works well for the federal government. But where can I find the branches of the military? Can't find it in the scheme.

Finding things here on The Gap seems like it makes sense if you're looking for a particular kind of clothing. Or I guess if you want to know what other stores The Gap owns. But where do you see what's new this season? You can't in this organizational scheme. So none of these are perfect.

When faced with a bunch of schemes that are not perfect, a common thought by designers and information architects is, well, if one single scheme isn't perfect, well shoot, we've got plenty of space. Let's do them all. Well, you want to see what happens if you do them all? You end up with a website like the Mountain Valley View Farm Inc blog.

A whole bunch of items up here at the top of this page organized in different ways. You've got by subject, you've got by task, you've got by animal here. But that's not all. Scroll down the page and you've got categories of different blog posts. But we scroll on down the page past all of these categories and we've got date based organization. We've got the archives by month and by year.

But the page doesn't stop there, it keeps going down. This is what this page looks like. Check out that navigation on the left. Oh my goodness, folks this is too many choices. The designers of this website in trying to provide all the different possible choices have completely overwhelmed us. And this is not just my opinion, this is borne out in research. That humans like to think in chunks, in small bite size pieces of information.

Let me prove it to you. I'm going to ask you, the student, to remember the number that I'm going to show up on the screen here for a few seconds. Here's this number, please remember it. Great, what was that number? Do you remember what the number was?

Let me show the same number to you in a slightly different way. Mm-hmm, this number is much easier to remember because it's based two chunks. Instead of one long number it's two shorter numbers. And this is in fact why telephone numbers in the United States are made this way.

This chunking happens on websites too. Here on The Gap's websites they've got a chunk of information here. Another chunk here up top that's separated by space and by graphic design. And still another chunk here and here.

So four different sections that have navigation clustered together. This is an easier way for the human brain to interpret what these different things do. Chunks are very useful to us as designers. And you know what, we like them too.

OK, last thing. Another thought that designers and information architects frequently have when trying to solve sticky problems is, well, we can't figure out what the right navigation is. So let's solve it by using search, by having a search field that folks can type in the thing that they're looking for. It makes sense right? It seems like a plausible, reasonable solution.

The problem is that search doesn't always work very well. Search can fail. And often this comes from a computer's lack of context. If I did a search, for instance, for Apple, a search engine is not likely to know whether I mean Apple Computer or the fruit. Or maybe I mean the Big Apple. Or maybe I mean Fiona Apple.

Search engines don't know and so that can lead to a low success rate. Here's some numbers. In one test, an e-commerce site got a 74% success rate, which means that about 3/4 of the users who used the search engine found what they were looking for. Not bad, but it meant a full 1/4 of the users couldn't.

But when the same test was done to a group of intranets, that success rate dropped to 19%. 80% of the people using





Many of you probably know National Geographic, the famous magazine and cable television channel. Well, National Geographic is a huge company that has many different properties. They have the magazine, which most folks know. But they also have a slightly lesser well-known travel magazine.

They have a couple of magazines geared towards kids. They sell books. They have more than one cable TV channel. They sell products. And they have apps and websites for tablets, phones, and for the desktop. A whole lot of different things come out of this media company.

And this is what the National Geographic website looked like during the 2000s. This was the navigation scheme that they came up with. You can see that the left side here, under Site Index, that's organized by subject-- Adventure and Exploration, Animals, History, Kids, and so forth.

But these other three sections here-- Magazines, TV and Film, and Store-- these were organized the way the company is organized. So this organization scheme here on the right-hand side is by the org chart of the company.

But here's what the website looks like today-- a completely different navigation bar and organizational scheme. And if we look at it, almost none of these are organized by the org chart anymore. And that's in response to what users wanted.

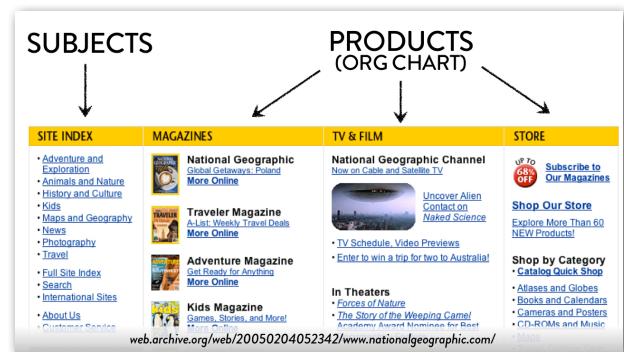
So for you and your client, what do users want? And how do you find that out? It's a tough question.

One way is to use your personas. Remember personas from our first lesson? So you as the user experience designer have to think about what does Frank want? Or what does Jess want?

What kind of navigation scheme would work best for them? Would they prefer a button that says Travel Info or a button that says Book a Flight? Use your personas to try to answer those questions.

Another way is to ask a real person, not the persona but go out and find a flesh-and-blood person and ask them. This can work surprisingly well, as long as that flesh-and-blood person is not your client. You've got to ask a stranger.

Here's an example of how that worked for Amazon.com. PJ McCormick, a user experience lead there, had this problem with his internal clients where they could not agree on how something was going to be presented. They were arguing back and forth about the right way to do it. And nobody could come to consensus.



So they decided to take two days. They made paper mockups. They printed out their Photoshop documents on a printer, and they show them to the first people they could find who were not designers and who were not invested in the project.

You know who they showed them to? The security guards working at Amazon. They did. They showed them to security guards with a specific script.

They asked, look at these mockups, and what would you expect if you clicked this guy right here? Or where would you find such and such? In other words, they gave the security guards a task to do with these paper mockups. And then they just sat and listened to what the security guards had to say.

For those of you keeping score, this process is an extremely informal version of what we call a usability test. You show a website to a person and ask them to do things on it and then listen to what they have to say. It's unscientific, but incredibly useful.

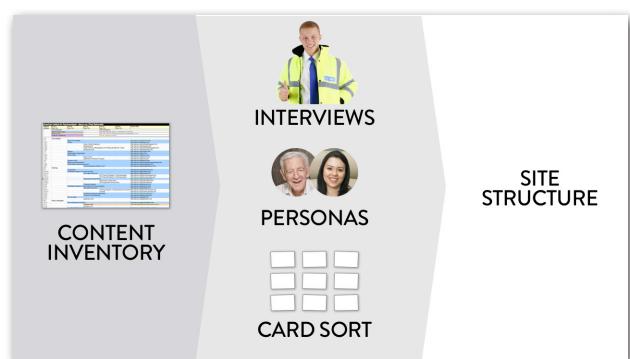
For this example with Amazon, both the designers and the clients-- they were arguing back and forth, remember-- well, both of them did it. They went separately and showed them to security guards, came back together in the conference room, and discussed what they saw. They were able to come to consensus very, very quickly, based on what they saw real people do.

We'll learn more about this process of usability testing. And I'll give you a complete guide as to how to do it in a later lesson. So personas and asking people-- two ways to find out how your users would like to structure your website.

Here's a third way for your tool belt. And it's a process-- and actually a pretty fun one-- called card sorting. This is also a process where you talk to real people. And what you do is you take all the different things in your content inventory, and you write each one down on a 3x5 index card. You take that group of cards to a stranger and show them and ask them to organize the cards in the way that makes the most sense. They literally put the cards into piles.

It works best when you've got a bunch of content, like 30 to 100 cards. And it works best if you can test it on a bunch of different people. Just talking to one person often won't get you what you want. So if you've got a bunch of content and you've got some time, card sorting can be a very effective tool.

The process that we've talked about, about how to structure your site, starts with the content inventory, with researching and figuring out what you've got. And then, once you've got that, you find the patterns. You find the patterns of the groupings using your personas, or you talk to real people, or you could use card sorting or maybe a combination of the three. And with that information, you come up with the way that your site is structured.



Now, once you've figure out your site structure, you need to communicate that or document that in some way. And one of the standard ways to document your site structure is through something called a site map. A site map can take on a bunch of different forms. But its purpose is to show how your site is organized.

One of the forms is a very simple one. It can be a Word document that is a list, a bulleted or a numbered list with the different pages or sections of your website or app. Or some folks like to take this kind of list and organize it like this, present it visually. It's the exact same list, the exact same information, just presented in a slightly more visual way.

When sites are more complicated, designers sometimes add color to their site maps or icons, describing what the different kinds of pages are. Or they might present a site map that's more like a mind cloud, that has less structure visually, but has the same kind of information. Or very complex sites sometimes have extensive site maps with a mixture of colors and iconography and text, explaining how a site might be structured.

So no matter how you present your site map, it's still just a planning document. It's meant to reveal the structure of your website. In this instance, the top sections are who we are, what we do, and contact us. And we can take that information and apply it immediately and directly to our wire frames.

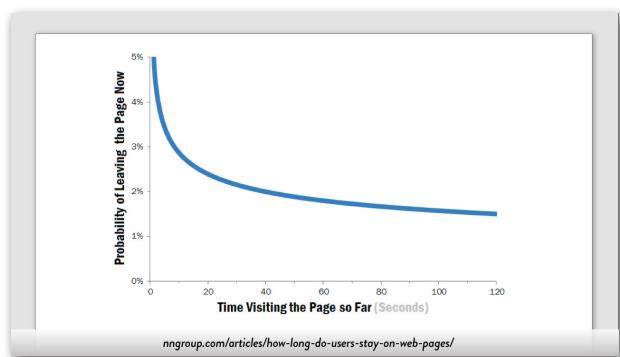
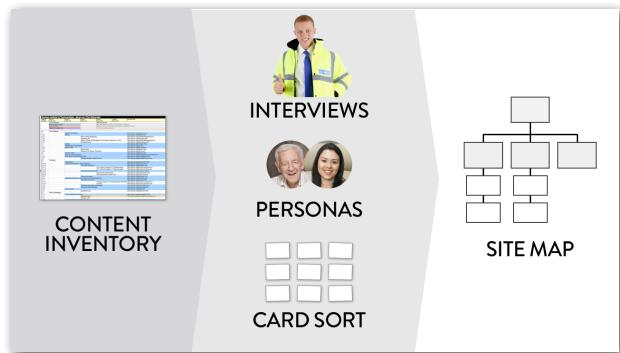
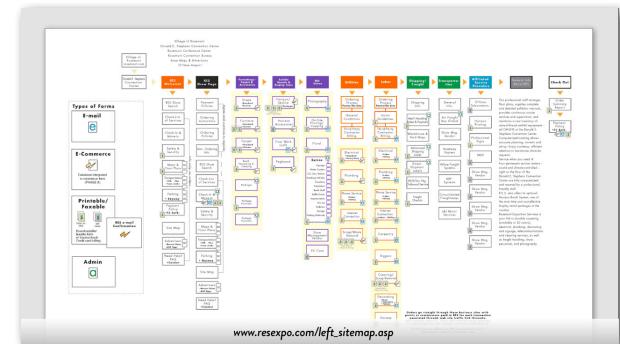
So we do our research with the content inventory. We figure out our patterns using interviews, personas, and card sorting. And then we articulate those through the site map. The site map is the representation of how our site is structured. And we got there by letting our users tell us how.

## BIG IDEA #3

### YOU HAVE TEN SECONDS.

It's important to spend all this time talking about navigation, because with new users you only have about 10 seconds to get their attention. Users of websites and mobile apps are on the hunt. They are moving fast, trying to find the thing that they're looking for. And studies show that the amount of time that users are willing to spend on a page looking for something is pretty low. It's about 10 seconds. Not to mention the amount of time it takes for a page to load.

1. Home
2. Who We Are
  - CEO
  - Staff
3. What We Do
  - Products
  - Services
4. Contact Us



So you've got 10 seconds or less to tell a user who you are, why they should care about you as a company or a product, and what you want them to do next. Let's try it together. I'm going to show you a website for 10 seconds, and I want you to figure out who they are, why you should care about them, and what they want you to do next. Ready? Let's try it. Here's a website. You've got 10 seconds.

OK, who were they? Why should you care about them?

What do they offer that's of benefit or helpful to you? And what do they want you to do next? Let's look at it again. Here's the website. Was it easy to figure out what this company offers and what they want you to do next?

Let's look at a different website. It's got a similar graphic design, but the text is different. Here you go. You've got about 10 seconds.

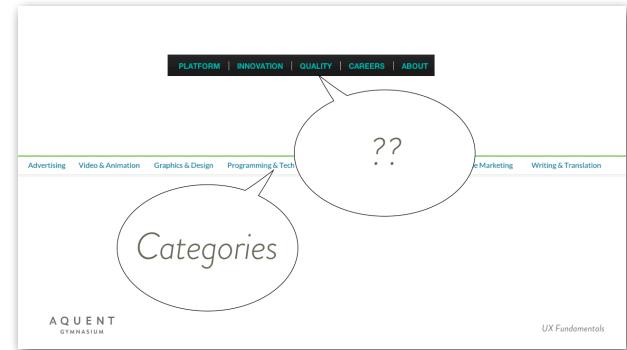
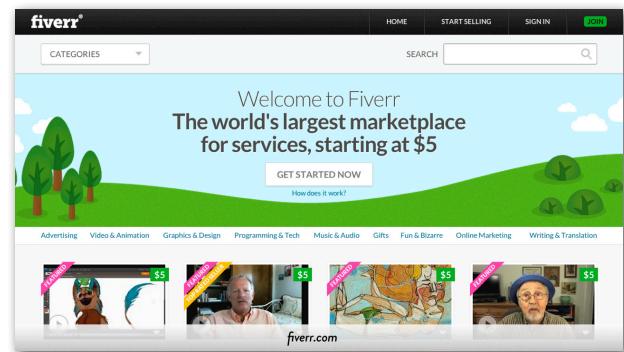
OK, with that website, who were they? Why should you care about them? And what did they want you to do next? What did you look at on this website? What were the things that stuck out to you? For many folks, this website is easier to understand. And that's partly graphic design. Here are the two websites side by side. The website on the right uses graphic design to focus attention towards the text here in the middle, the world's largest marketplace for services starting at \$5. The site on the left splits attention somewhat between the app Nexus, creating a better internet as a world economic forum text, that headline right there, and the text down below, the app nexus technology powers the most innovative training solutions text.

But another big difference here is in the words that they chose, especially the words here in the middle. The site on the left isn't doing a great job of explaining in clear, plain language what it is they do. The site on the right is probably doing a much better job of that.

But that's not the only place that there's text. Look at the nav bars. The nav bar here on the left and also this one on the right. These nav bars help us understand what these websites are about. Let's look at the nav bar on the bottom here.

How is it organized? It's organized almost entirely by category, advertising, video and animation, graphics and design, programming and tech. They're categories, and they give us a sense of what this website is all about. It's about something having to do with these categories.

What about the one on the top? The nav bar on the top is not organized in a clear way. It's not clear what platform, innovation, or quality really are. You get a sense of it, but it's not nearly as clear as the navigation on the bottom.



Hey, if you like this 10 second test, try some more. In fact there's a website, [fivesecondtest.com](http://fivesecondtest.com). It's kind of fun. We're not affiliated in any way. It's just kind of a fun thing to do. Or you can look at somebody else's website, and you have five seconds to answer a question. Or you can upload your own website and get questions answered for you.

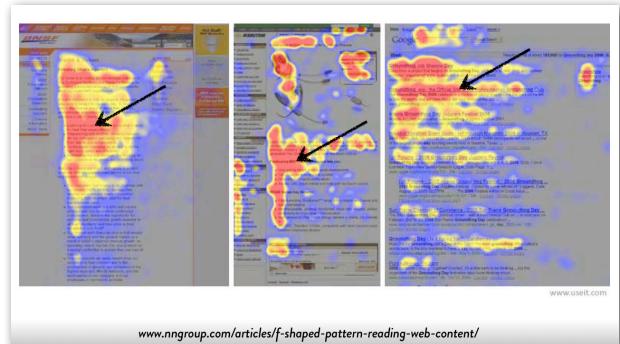
But if your user will only take 5 or 10 seconds to look at your website, there's no time to read long pieces of text. In fact, when customers are looking for something, we know that all they do is scan. They scan words until they find the thing that they're looking for. We know it because we've done eye tracking studies.

And eye tracking studies are when we take users and we give them goggles kind of like these. And what these cool looking goggles do is they measure where the person's eye is actually looking. That in turn is mapped against the website design and gives us these kind of diagrams, these heat mapped diagrams. And what these are showing are where users are actually looking, where their eyes are resting.

The areas in red indicate where users are looking the most and the longest. And we know from the studies that many of the words on a page do not get read. In fact, only 28% or fewer of the words on a page get read. And what does get red? And what's that 28% percent that does get read? Well usually it's headlines, bullet points, and hyperlinks, and also images.

In other words, the things that are the fastest and the easiest to scan. If a user was looking at this web page, what might we assume they would read because it's easiest scan? Well, the headline like this or bullet points like this and this. What about this page? What's the easiest to scan? Well, this headline probably, links like this, this image here, and maybe navigation boxes like this up here. Headlines, bullets, and hyperlinks, and of these arguably the most important to us are hyperlinks.

Hyperlinks are important to users because they're easy to scan and they're meant to be used. And they're important to us because we want to get our users someplace. We want to move them to action, and that's true whether it's a hyperlink that looks like this, or a hyperlink that looks like a button or a hyperlink that looks like a navigation bar. And that's why these hyperlinks here, these navigation bars, are so important.



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So a user is on a hunt and scanning hyperlinks. What are they going to read from this sentence? Well they're probably going to read these two words. It's the easiest to scan. It's the thing that's bold and in this case blue and underlined. That's what they're going to read. And the problem with this sentence is if the user just reads the words, click here, they're not going to know what to do. They're not going to know what this hyperlink gives them.

A much better way to word this sentence would be like this. That way if they only read the blue underlined text, they know what they're going to get. They're going to get an about us page. And if you're going to write the sentence in this way, learn more about us, why not just write it this way? Make it short and sweet. Don't make the user have to think about it.

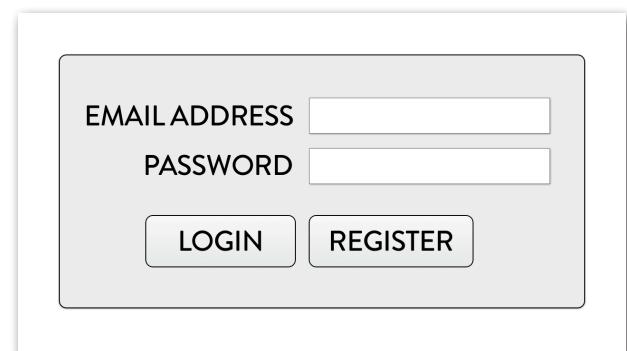
In fact, that's the title of one of the seminal books in this field, *Don't Make Me Think*, the whole point of which is to create designs and in this case hyperlinks that are short and sweet and make the most sense with the least amount of thought required. Steve Krug wrote this book. It's a fantastic book. I highly recommend, and there's a link for it in the classroom.

One of the examples that he gives is a button that goes to a place where you can apply for jobs. If that button says employment opportunities, that make sense. You get that that's where you would find the place that you would apply for jobs. But it takes a little bit of time to understand, maybe less than a second, but it's still a little bit of time.

What about this button, human resources? It's shorter, might take a little bit less time to understand. But you got to think, OK, human resources, HR, that's where I would find the jobs. But the simplest of all is this button right here, the jobs button. Simple, quick, painless, requires no thought at all. And this is what you want. It is what you want especially in navigation. And making navigation clear is important not just because we say so, but because it helps the bottom line.

Here's an example. This one comes from a \$25 billion retailer. After you fill up the shopping cart, the website asked you to create an account. They give you a form that looks like this to enter in just your email address, your password, and then to either login to your existing account or to register for a new account.

The retailer did some research on this form and found that it was somewhat confusing to users, that they had to think about what this form meant. So they decided to experiment by changing this one button. They changed it from register to continue, and added the words no account needed. They found that making that very simple change made sales go through the roof, to the tune of \$300 million in extra sales every year. That is a lot of scratch based on changing a navigation button, a very good reason to keep your navigation clear and simple, to not have your website look like this, because you've only got 10 seconds.



## BIG IDEA #4

### INSTILL TRUST BY WRITING CLEARLY.

And finally, big idea number four, that we can instill trust in our customers by writing clearly. Everybody wants to show and tell you how great they are. Every product out there wants to let you know how fantastic and easy and awesome and fast and simple they are to use. Like the saying goes, everyone is above average.

But the reality of many products is different than how they're advertised. It's kind of like going to a food website and seeing an amazing recipe for eggs cooked inside green peppers, but when you do it, it ends up looking like this. And this, of course, is true of websites and apps in general-- that websites tout themselves as having endless possibilities or being highly secure and always on. Or this one, which is so awesome, they don't even have to describe what it is. It's just a guy in a field, flying a kite.

Clear, informal writing is the key to gaining credibility with your users and to gain trust, and that trust is very good for business. This makes sense intuitively, but we also know it from research. Stanford spent three years and worked with 4,500 people to figure out what websites need to do to make themselves more credible. You can read the full report in the Resources and Links section of the classroom, but what it boils down to is if you're writing a website, you need to show that the product and the company is real-- that it's backed by real people. The website needs to look professional. It needs to be useful in some way, and you probably need to use restraint when promoting yourself.

Basically, it's like being on a date. You've got to look nice. You've got to act nice, and you can't be too slimy. And that's what makes for credible content. And you want to know a good rule of thumb? We can use Mom again-- another Mom test. Take a look at the content your client's website has or that they'd like to put on their website, and if you would feel dumb saying that content to your mom, than you probably shouldn't say it to your customers.

Let's take an example. I'm going to pick on these guys. They probably don't deserve it. I bet they've got a great product, but they're called Soonr Enterprise. And look at this first paragraph. Soonr Enterprise is the cloud-based collaboration and file sharing solution designed for businesses. The agility and use desired by end-users with the security, control-- IT departments. Mom is not going to understand what that is. Take their competitor, Google Drive. Look at this language. One safe place for all your stuff. Upload photos, videos, and documents. Mom can understand this.



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 **Stanford Web Credibility Research**  
Part of the Stanford Persuasive Technology Lab  
[www.webcredibility.org](http://www.webcredibility.org)

**Stanford Guidelines for Web Credibility**

How can you boost your web site's credibility?  
We have compiled 10 guidelines for building the credibility of a web site. These guidelines are based on three years of research that included over 4,500 people.

Guideline	Additional Comments	Supporting Research From Our Lab
1. Make it easy to verify the accuracy of the information on your site.	You can build web site credibility by providing third-party support citations. Other sites, relevant for information you present, especially if you link to this evidence. Even if people don't follow these links, you've shown confidence in your information.	<a href="#">ch000_ch009_ch010_ch012_wrc</a>
2. Show that there's a real organization behind your site.	Show that your web site is for a legitimate organization will boost the site's credibility. The easiest way to do this is by listing a physical address. Other ways include listing the names and titles of your offices or listing a membership with the chamber of commerce.	<a href="#">ch000_ch009_ch010_ch012_wrc</a>
3. Highlight the expertise in your organization and in the content and services you provide.	Do you have experts on your team? Are your contributors or service providers well-known? If so, list them. This adds credibility to your organization and organization. Make that clear. Conversely, don't link to outside sites that are not credible. Your site becomes less credible by association.	<a href="#">acm09_ch009_ch010_ch011_ch012_wrc</a>
4. Show that honest and trustworthy.	The easiest way to do this is by listing your contacts behind the site. This adds credibility to your organization and organization.	<a href="#">ch000_ch009_ch010_wrc</a>

[credibility.stanford.edu/guidelines/](http://credibility.stanford.edu/guidelines/)

**Welcome to Soonr Enterprise**

Soonr Enterprise is a cloud-based collaboration and file sharing solution designed for businesses. Soonr Enterprise offers the agility and ease of use desired by end-users with the security, control, and management capabilities required by IT departments.

The Soonr Enterprise solution is the result of over 20 years of experience in the enterprise space.



 Security Plus	 Proven Availability
 soonr.com/enterprise	 Active Directory

Of course, when writing, you've got to remember your customer's goals. Your customer's goals depend on the product and the personas you might have come up with, but the customer's goals almost always boil down to saving money, saving time, and being better at what they do. So the writing should be geared that way.

This is an app called Tout. It's used by companies to track their customers and to be able to email and correspond with them, and this was their homepage. It listed all the things that the app did and had a big button down here on the bottom for viewing plans and pricing. They did some research and talked to customers, and what they found out is one of the most useful things of this app for their customers was to be able to write emails and sales emails.

So what they did was they changed up this text drastically. They got rid of all the text about features and changed it to this one sentence. Write your sales emails faster and know what happens after you hit Send. And they saw traffic jump, because the text was clear, simple, and aimed at what the customer wanted.

You are a designer, not a writer by trade, and there are writers by trade that do this kind of work for websites, often, they're called content strategists. A content strategist is like a writer who's thinking about the business and who's thinking ahead to how to make the content work best for the business. And if you can hire a content strategist for your team or your product, you absolutely should. They are worth their weight in gold. But if you don't have a content strategist, you may be the one that has to write it. You may be the most qualified.

If that's the case, here's a pro tip. Usually, in the design and construction of a website, content comes last. If you've built a website, you know the experience of waiting at the very end for the client to supply the content for their website. Well, if you want to make the content better, you've got to make it happen earlier. It'll help influence the design. It'll make the user's experience better. Hey, look at that. User experience. It'll make the design better, and it'll make the product better. All that from writing clearly, and writing clearly instills trust.

## ASSIGNMENT

Today's assignment, like many of the others before, is in two parts. And as always, complete instructions are in the classroom files. I'll go over them briefly here.

Part one of the assignment is to take your project and your wire frames and to create a navigation menu for your website. More specifically, I'm asking you to pick a style for that navigation menu. I've provided a list of examples in the classroom materials.

If you're working on a website, I've sent you this page, which has lots and lots of different ways that websites do navigation. If you're working on a smartphone app, you could look at this page, which has plenty of examples of smartphone navigation. If you want to do something different that's not on either of these pages, that's great too.

By the way, the page I'm sending you are design patterns. And they're basically style guides of navigation examples. We're going to talk a lot more about design patterns in the next session. For now, choose a way you'd like the navigation to work in your project.



Then, part two of the assignment is to decide what goes in that navigation. That's right, the actual groupings of navigation items, the titles of those items, the tasks that you think your users need to accomplish. Since we don't have a working site yet, you'll do this by creating a site map. Remember, a site map reveals the structure of a website.

And a site map can look a couple of different ways. A site map can be simple bulleted list, like this. It can be a drawing like this, or a complex drawing like this. Doesn't matter to me. All you need to do is to document how your navigation is structured, and do it in the clearest way you can.

However, I've got a twist to this assignment, the twist is that your client has some things that you need to add to that navigation. Your fictional client-- which, I guess, is me-- has a bunch of stuff that already exists on the website that's got to go somewhere in the nav. I'm providing a list of about a dozen things that you need to include in the navigation somewhere. How you organize and title them is up to you.

Complete instructions and that list are in the classroom files. When you're done, package all this stuff up as a PDF, and post a link to it in the forum. I look forward to seeing you there. This is UX Fundamentals.