

Albertson's Online Stores Navigation Segmentation

Site usability will be correlated with the intelligibility of navigation elements. A problem with the previous site design was an apparent lack of organization and consistency with these elements. Shopping links were scattered around the page, intermixed with administrative links.

The new design sought to improve usability by grouping functionality and giving permanent visibility to links that a customer might use repeatedly, while moving less-used links to other areas, to reduce clutter. Following is a diagram of our new site's home page.

Logo link to home page	Primary product navigation	
Administrative, non-shopping links	Featured links to static product pages	Links to static product pages
Cart and List links		

The highlighted areas are those that remain permanently during a customer's shopping session. To qualify as a permanent link, the link should be one designed for repeated, non-contiguous use during a single shopping session. Links not so-designed should be relegated to other areas.

To maintain intelligibility, links should remain segmented by high-level functionality. A link to items on special would not belong, for example, in the administrative or cart/list areas.

For the same reason, link types should remain consistent. For example, a link with the visible appearance of a tab that pops a menu should not be mixed with a link that looks the same but does something other than pop a menu.

The two non-permanent areas in the above diagram contain links to static pages. What is meant by this are links to pages that the customer cannot modify and that will not change during a customer's shopping session. The pages may be dynamic in the sense that they are database driven, but they are still static from the shopper's perspective.

Since the content of such pages is static, customer's have no reason to visit them more than once during a shopping session, thus they do not qualify for placement in a permanent section.