Introduction

Card sorting is a simple technique in [**user experience design**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User_experience_design) where a group of subject experts or "users", however inexperienced with design, are guided to generate a category tree or [folksonomy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folksonomy). It is a useful approach for designing [information architecture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_architecture), workflows, menu structure, or web site navigation paths.  
Card sorting has a characteristically low-tech approach. The concepts are first identified and written onto simple [index cards](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Index_card) or [Post-it notes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-it_note). The user group then arranges these to represent the groups or structures they are familiar with.   
Groups may either be organised as collaborative groups ([focus groups](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Focus_groups)) or as repeated individual sorts.

Advantages

* Card sorting is a quick, inexpensive, and reliable method, which serves as input into an information design process.
* Card sorting can serve as a method for finding patterns(often referred to as mental models) in how users would expect to find content or functionality.
* Card sorting generates an overall structure for the information, as well as suggestions for navigation, menus, and possible taxonomies.

Card sorting is applied when:

* The variety in the items to be organized is so great that no existing taxonomy is accepted as organizing the items.
* The similarities among the items make them difficult to divide clearly into categories.
* Members of the audience that uses the environment may differ significantly in how they view the similarities among items and the appropriate groupings of items
* Designer has to explore how people group items, so that he can develop structures that maximize the probability of users being able to find items.[5] Usability Technique Series, Gerry Gaffney Information and design

While designing for web, card sorting is usually used as an input to

* Designing a new site
* Designing a new area of a site
* Redesigning a site
* research into what users need out of the site
* a content (functionality) audit/inventory (for an existing site) or detailed content list (for a new site). For an existing site, it is crucial that the content inventory is examined carefully to include only content that is needed by users.

Its place in the design process is complementary with other activities such as information needs analysis, task analysis, and continual usability evaluation.  
This technique can be used as a technique to derive information architecture in the beginning as well as a testing technique for usability evaluation in the end.

How is it done

* A person representative of the audience is given a set of **index cards** with labels already written on them.
* This person puts the terms into logical groupings, and finds a **category** name for each grouping.
* This process is repeated across a population of test subjects.
* The results are later analyzed to reveal patterns.

Experiment

This is an experiment on card sorting. You will perform an individual card sort with **24 cards** and **6 Categories**. The results of the individual card sorting session will be compared with the a sample categorization for the purpose of analysis.

Objectives

* To introduce and educate the participant to the card sorting technique in usability engineering.
* To get the card sorting performed by the participant successfully.
* To get an insight on the mental model of the participant on the concept that the card sorting is based upon.