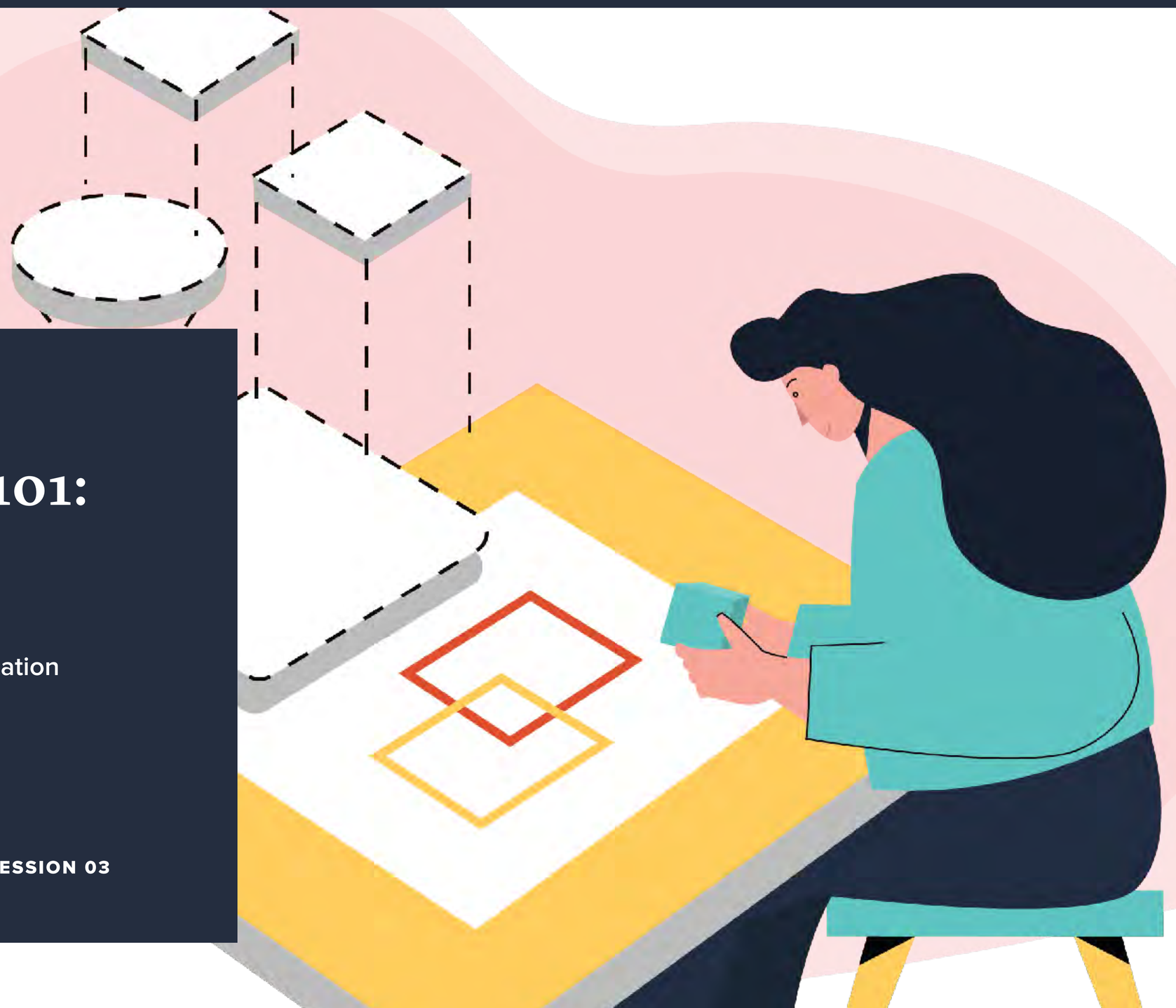
UX Design & Discovery 101: Session 03

Information Architecture:
Organizing Content & Information



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A SPECIAL THANK YOU

This work would not have been possible without my experience working with others and the inspiration of other authors and designers.

A special thank you to the instructional team at General Assembly including Jess Eddy and Mike Morales.

An extended thank you to anyone and everyone who has inspired me, my work, and this project.

*“The **organization**, **search**, and **navigation** systems that help people to complete tasks, **find** what they need, and **understand** what they’ve found.”*

PETER MORVILLE

The "founding father" of information architecture

From: “Information Architecture: For the Web and Beyond”, Peter Morville Louis Rosenfeld, 1998

IA has it's roots in the fields of library and information science

In the practice of Interaction and UX design, Information Architecture encompasses aspects of:

- Information access, management, and retrieval
- Information seeking behavior
- Ontology
- Database design & management

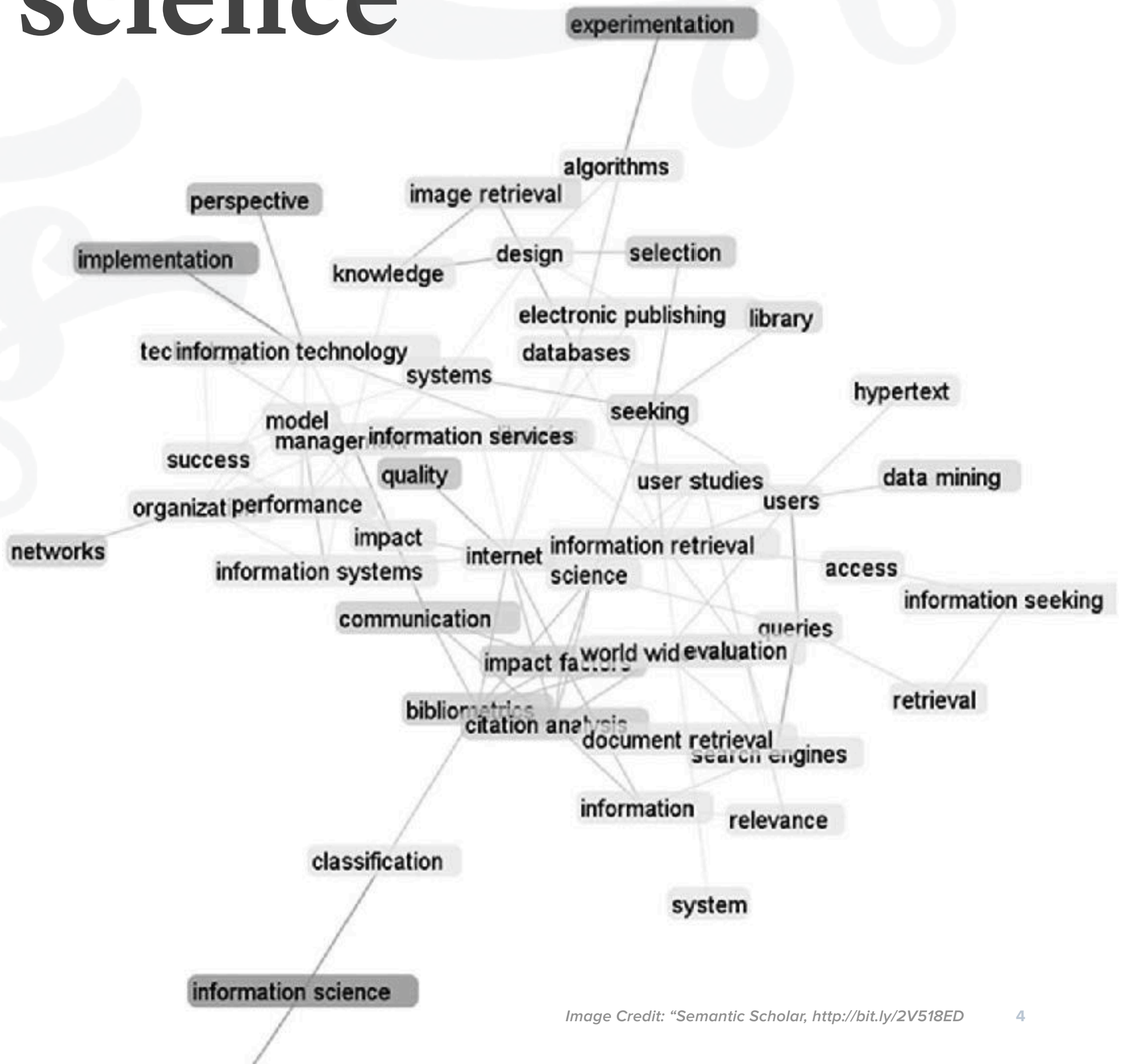


Image Credit: "Semantic Scholar, http://bit.ly/2V518ED

TL;DR

INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE = MAKING SENSE OF COMPLEXITY

Photo Credit: Robby McCullough on Unsplash.com

Complexity = Content + Meaning + Interpretation

"That product must be popular"

"That product must be sold-out"

Example: If we asked two people why there is an empty spot on a grocery store shelf. How would they reply?

One person might interpret the spot to mean that a product is sold-out, and the other might interpret it as being popular.

Example & concepts from: "How to Make Sense of Any Mess", Abby Covert, 2014

Complexity = Content + Meaning + Interpretation

A. Content

Words, documents, images, videos, or whatever you are arranging or sequencing.

- *In example: Jars, jam, shelf, price*

B. Data *(Meaning)*

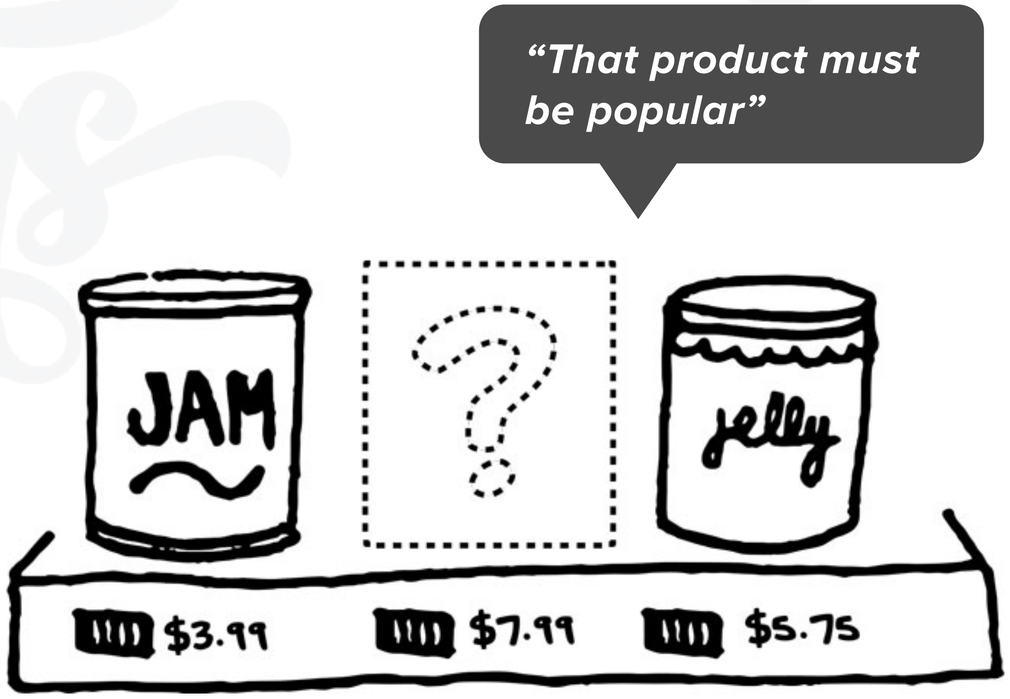
Facts, observations, and questions that a user has about something.

- *In example: One product is missing, similar items remain*

C. Information *(Interpretation)*

What a person interprets and believes to be true about something from.

- *In example: User surmises "This product must be popular"*



Example & concepts from: "How to Make Sense of Any Mess", Abby Covert, 2014

TL;DR

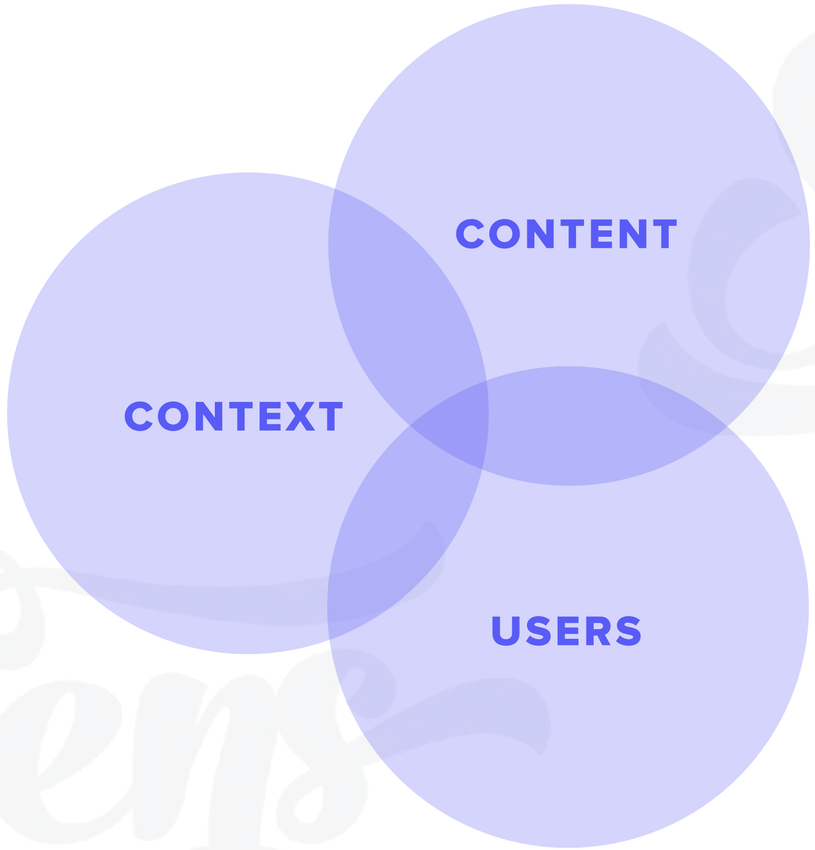
INFORMATION IS NOT A THING...

"It is subjective... It is whatever is **conveyed or represented** by a particular **arrangement or sequence** of things."

ABBY COVERT
"How to Make Sense of Any Mess"

Example & concepts from: "How to Make Sense of Any Mess", Abby Covert, 2014

Effective Information Architecture (IA) sits at the intersection of...



CONTENT

- What type of information are we dealing in?
- What relevance does it have to a user?

CONTEXT

- Where is a user seeking out this content?
- When, why, and how is a user engaging with this content?

USERS

- Who is consuming this content?
- What does it mean to them? What value does it provide?
- What pre-existing expectations do they have?

Diagram credit: "Three Circles of Information Architecture", Peter Morville, 2004
https://semanticstudios.com/user_experience_design/

Key Takeaways:

WHY IS INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE IMPORTANT FOR US TO CONSIDER?

Users

The design of content needs to consider the pre-existing beliefs, and experiences of our users.

+

Context

The design of content needs to consider the environment and situations in which a user will engage with it.

+

Interpretation

The design of content needs to be intentional, conveying meaning to a user through arrangement & sequencing.

Thoughtful IA makes a design good, *not just good looking.*

Effective, user-centered design does NOT prioritize:

- Novelty over discoverability
- Aesthetics over usability

How do I navigate to my reservations?

Example: Marriott Bonvoy App, iOS Version, Summer 2019

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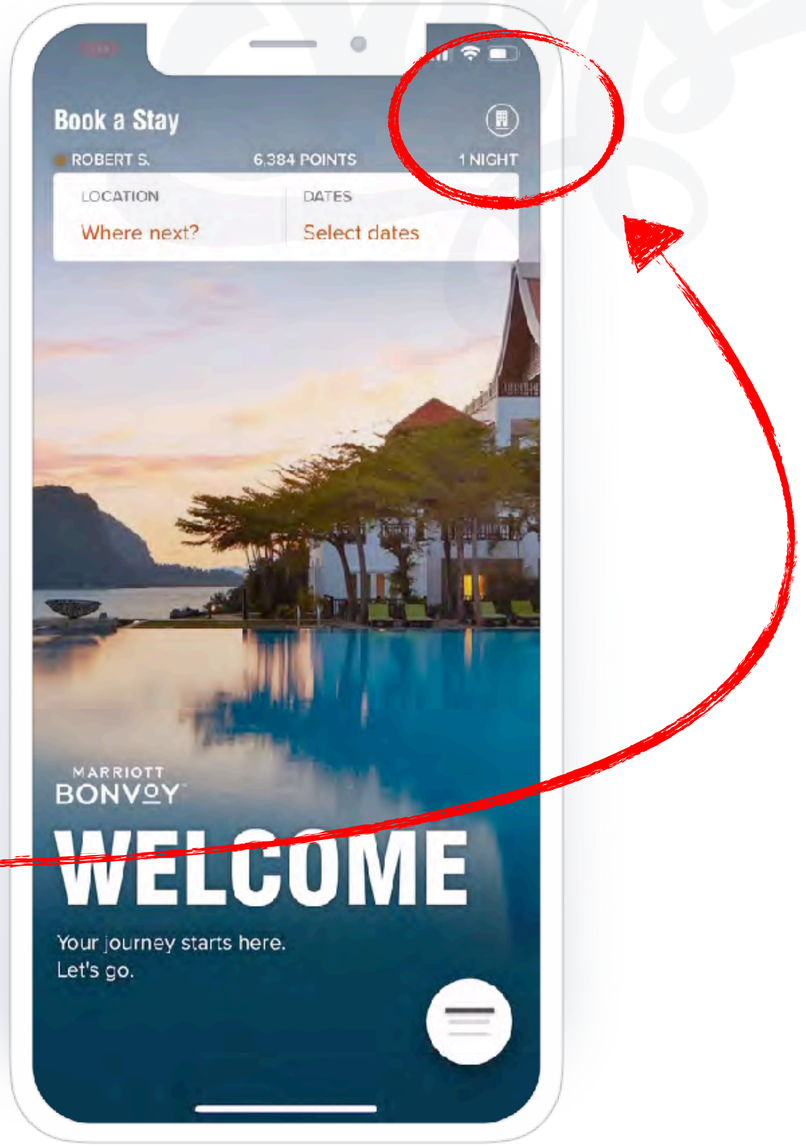

Hmmmmm....Maybe from here?
Wait, what happened?

Example: Marriott Bonvoy App, iOS Version, Summer 2019

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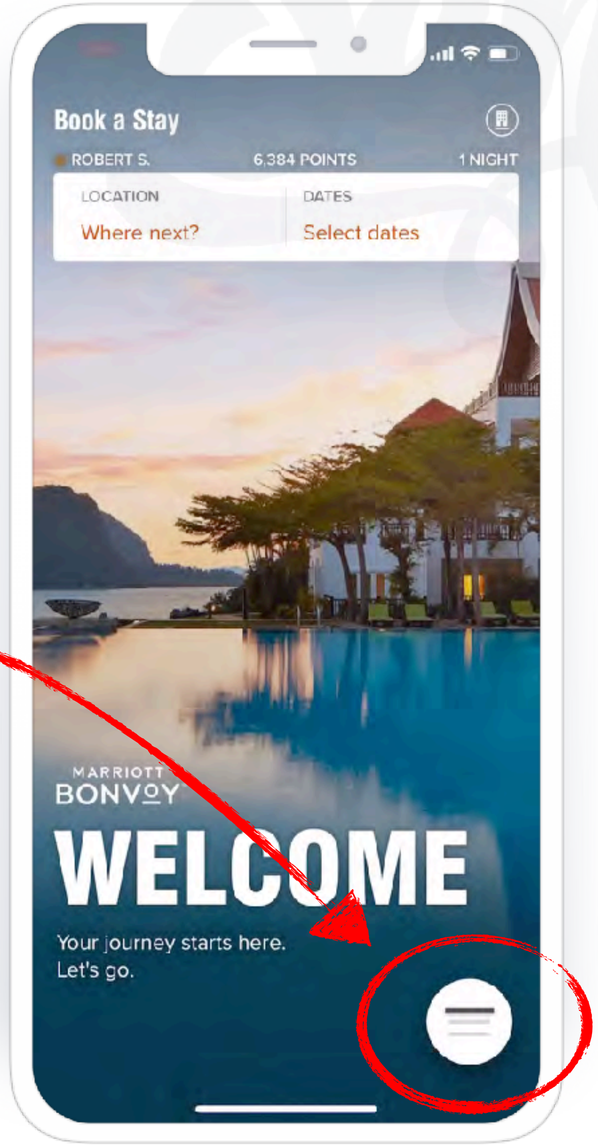

Huh, really? This is how I navigate between sections?

Example: Marriott Bonvoy App, iOS Version, Summer 2019

0.1 | IA & our user *(flow)*

What is Interaction Design?

The simple and easy to remember definition:

Interaction Design is the shaping of behavior through an understanding *(and manipulation)* of:

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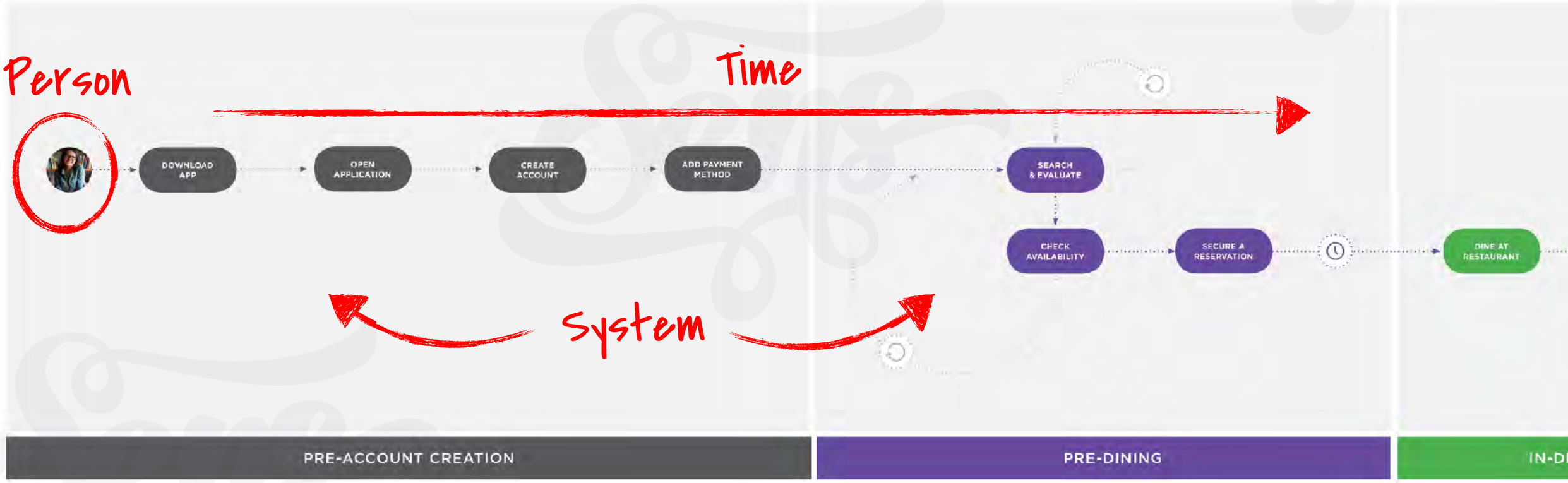
Interaction Design is the shaping of behavior through an understanding *(and manipulation)* of:

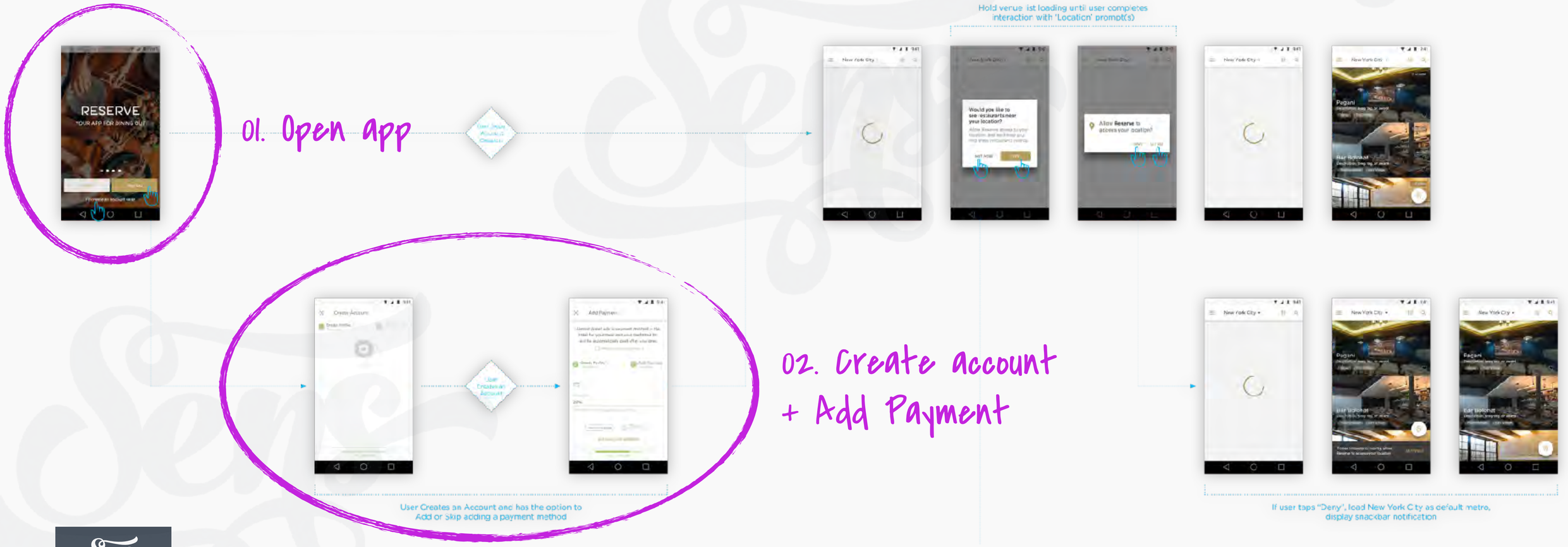
User Flows & IA work in tandem

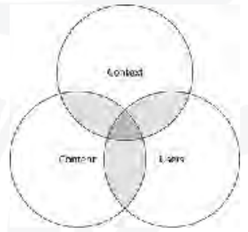
User flows structure (and depict) how a ***user*** experiences a ***system*** over ***time***.



User Flows & IA work in tandem

Information Architecture (IA) **goes a level deeper** and is concerned with **how content is structured** and **delivered to a user** at each **touchpoint** within the **system**, as experienced over **time**.





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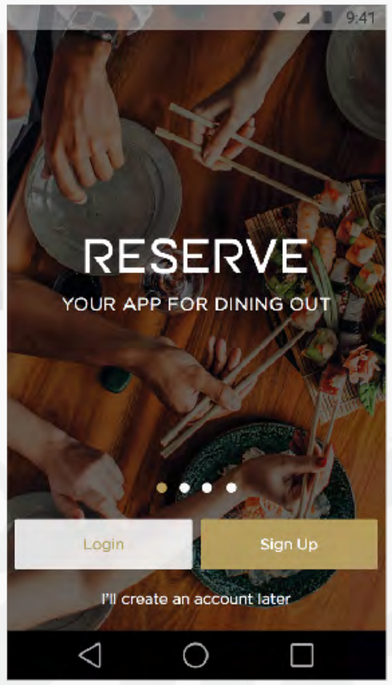


Scenario: (Context)

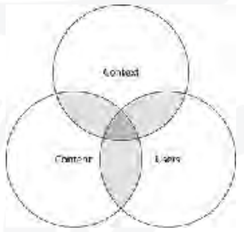
A user who has opened the app and landed on the splash screen.

User's to Consider: (User)

1. Fist time user (primary)
2. Return user who is not logged in (secondary)

The IA challenge: (Content)

How might we structure and present information on our splash screen that encourages account creation (business goal), while simultaneously providing a clear path for them to bypass the process and browse a list of restaurants where they can book a table (user goal).



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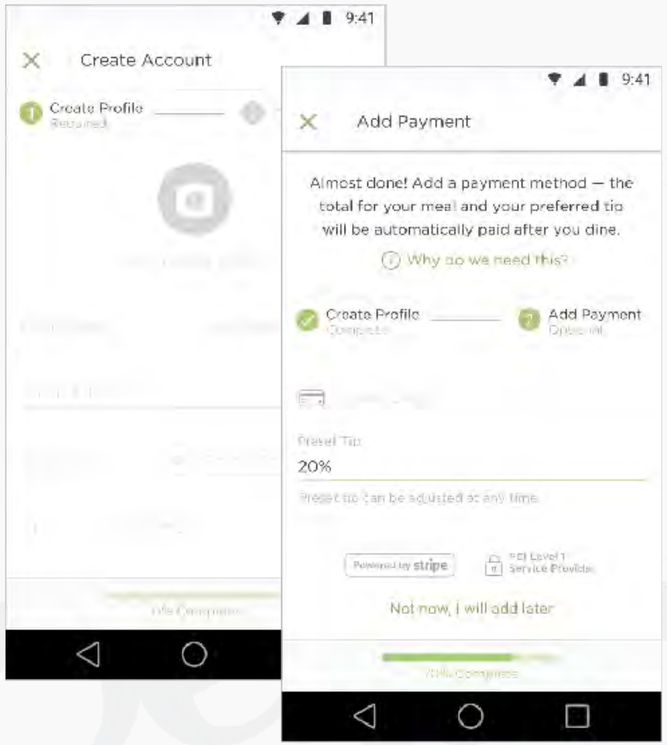


Scenario: (Context)

A user who has opted to create an account after opening the app and landing on the splash screen.

User's to Consider: (user)

1. Fist time user

The IA challenge: (Content)

How might we structure and present information during our account creation process that encourages a user to complete the process (business goal) by helping them understand what we are asking for, why we are asking for it (aka... what's in it for them), and ensures that they feel secure providing it to us (user needs).

As designers, we constantly need to be considering both lenses.

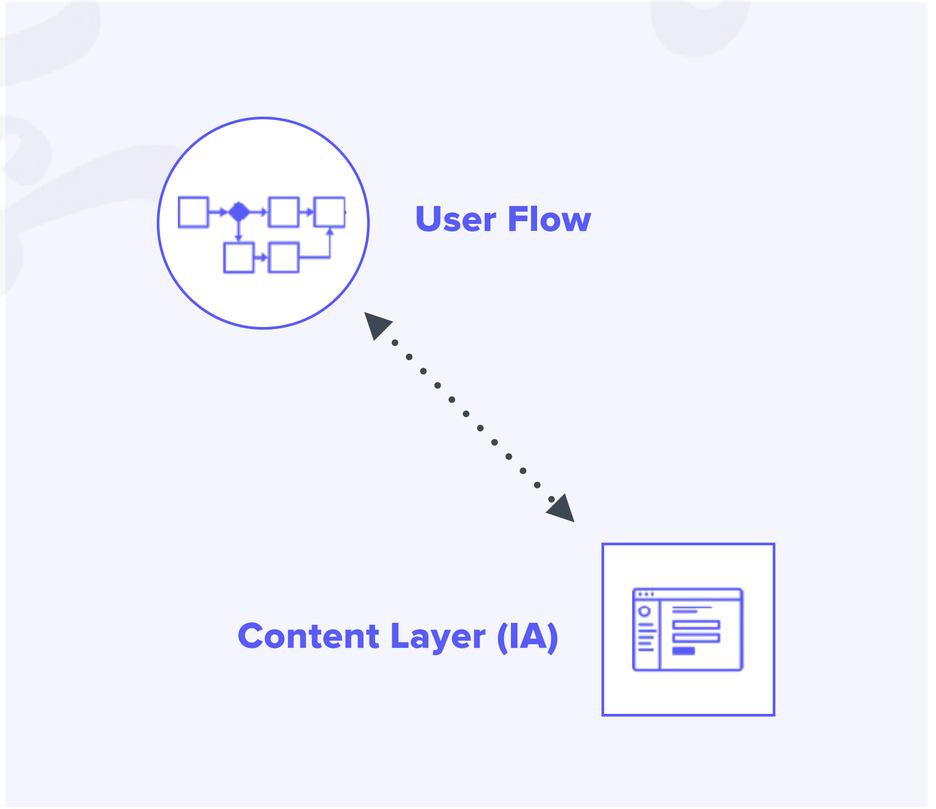
As Interaction Designers, we have to continuously and iteratively evaluate what we are designing through two lenses:

A USER'S FLOW

- The system and paths that we envision will guide and enable a user to achieve a goal within our product.

CONTENT LAYER (IA)

- The structure and presentation of content to our user. *(copy, functionality, affordances, etc...)*



Who read the book?

Web as software interface

Visual Design: graphic treatment of interface elements (the "look" in "look-and-feel")

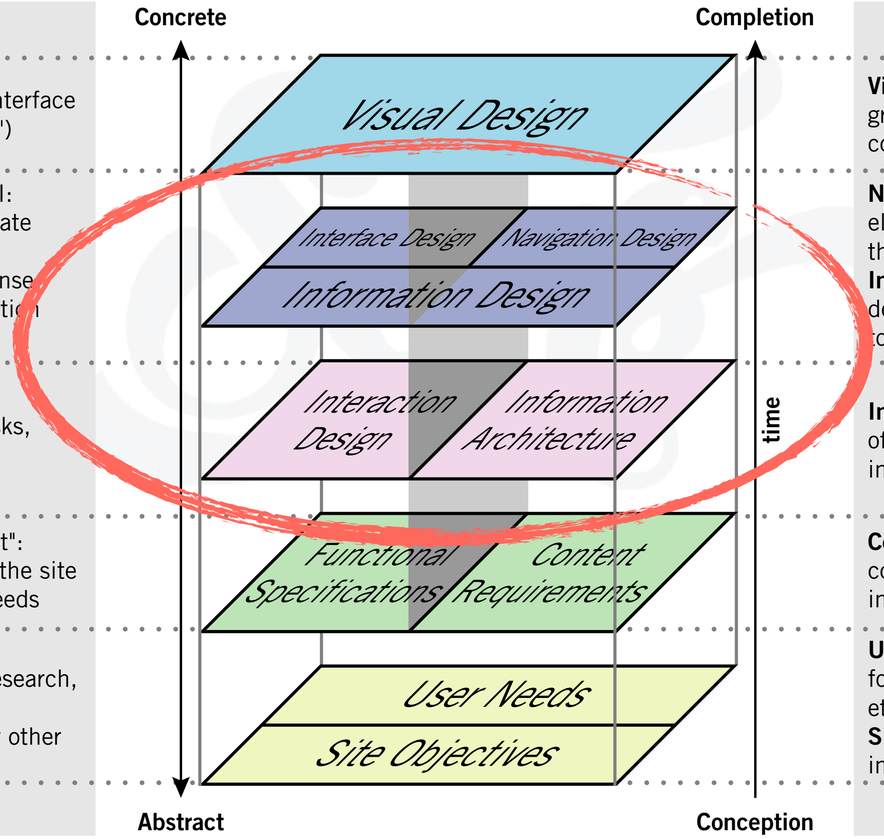
Interface Design: as in traditional HCI: design of interface elements to facilitate user interaction with functionality
Information Design: in the Tuftean sense: designing the presentation of information to facilitate understanding

Interaction Design: development of application flows to facilitate user tasks, defining how the user interacts with site functionality

Functional Specifications: "feature set": detailed descriptions of functionality the site must include in order to meet user needs

User Needs: externally derived goals for the site; identified through user research, ethno/techno/psychographics, etc.
Site Objectives: business, creative, or other internally derived goals for the site

task-oriented



Web as hypertext system

Visual Design: visual treatment of text, graphic page elements and navigational components

Navigation Design: design of interface elements to facilitate the user's movement through the information architecture
Information Design: in the Tuftean sense: designing the presentation of information to facilitate understanding

Information Architecture: structural design of the information space to facilitate intuitive access to content

Content Requirements: definition of content elements required in the site in order to meet user needs

User Needs: externally derived goals for the site; identified through user research, ethno/techno/psychographics, etc.
Site Objectives: business, creative, or other internally derived goals for the site

information-oriented

Diagram & concept credit: "The Elements of User Experience", Jesse James Garrett, 2000/2002
http://www.jjg.net/ia/

Information Architecture (IA):

BEST PRACTICES

Tips for defining IA:

Start with objectives

To design effective information architecture, you need to keep 2 things in mind:

A. Business Objectives:

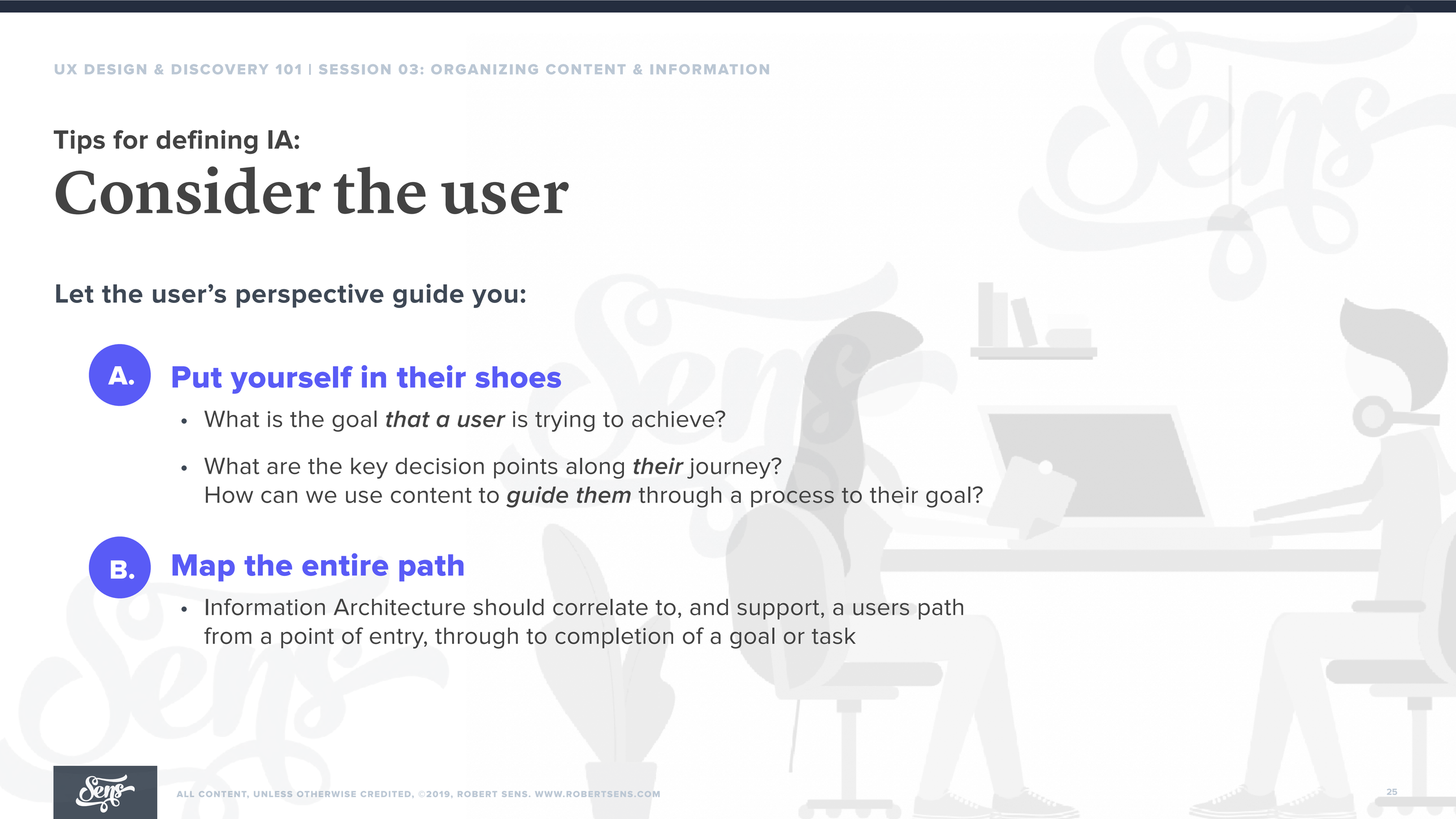
- The action ***we want*** visitors to take
- What success looks like ***for us***
- How ***we*** can make ***their trip*** from A to B as intuitive as possible

B. User Objectives

- The desires or needs ***that they*** want to satisfy
- What success looks like ***for them***

Tips for defining IA:

Consider the user



Let the user's perspective guide you:

A. Put yourself in their shoes

- What is the goal ***that a user*** is trying to achieve?
- What are the key decision points along ***their*** journey?
  How can we use content to ***guide them*** through a process to their goal?

B. Map the entire path

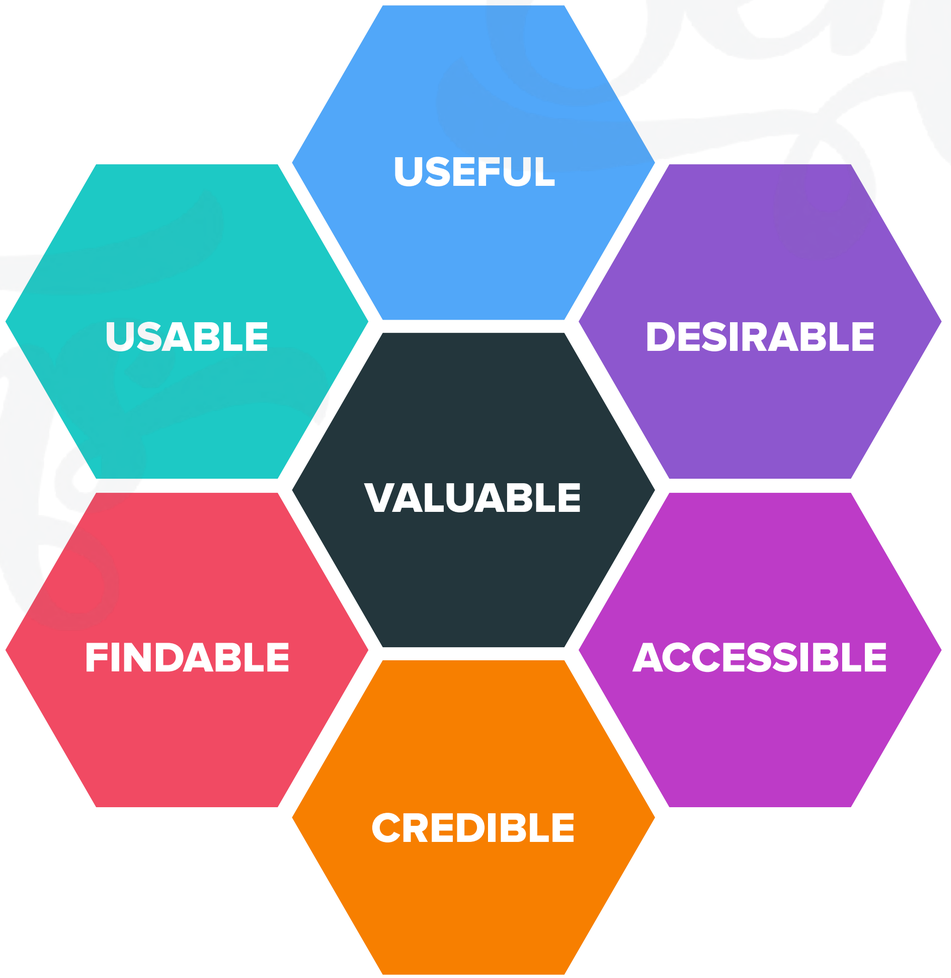
- Information Architecture should correlate to, and support, a users path from a point of entry, through to completion of a goal or task

Tips for defining IA:

Evaluate your design decisions using heuristics.

Heuristic methods can be used to speed up the process of finding satisfactory solutions.

- “Rules of thumb”
- “Best practices or standards”
- Should be used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of an existing or proposed design.



From: “Information Architecture: For the Web and Beyond”, Peter Morville Louis Rosenfeld, 1998

1.0 | The components of IA

The critical components of IA:

Abby Covert's definition *(Abby the IA)*

ONTOLOGY

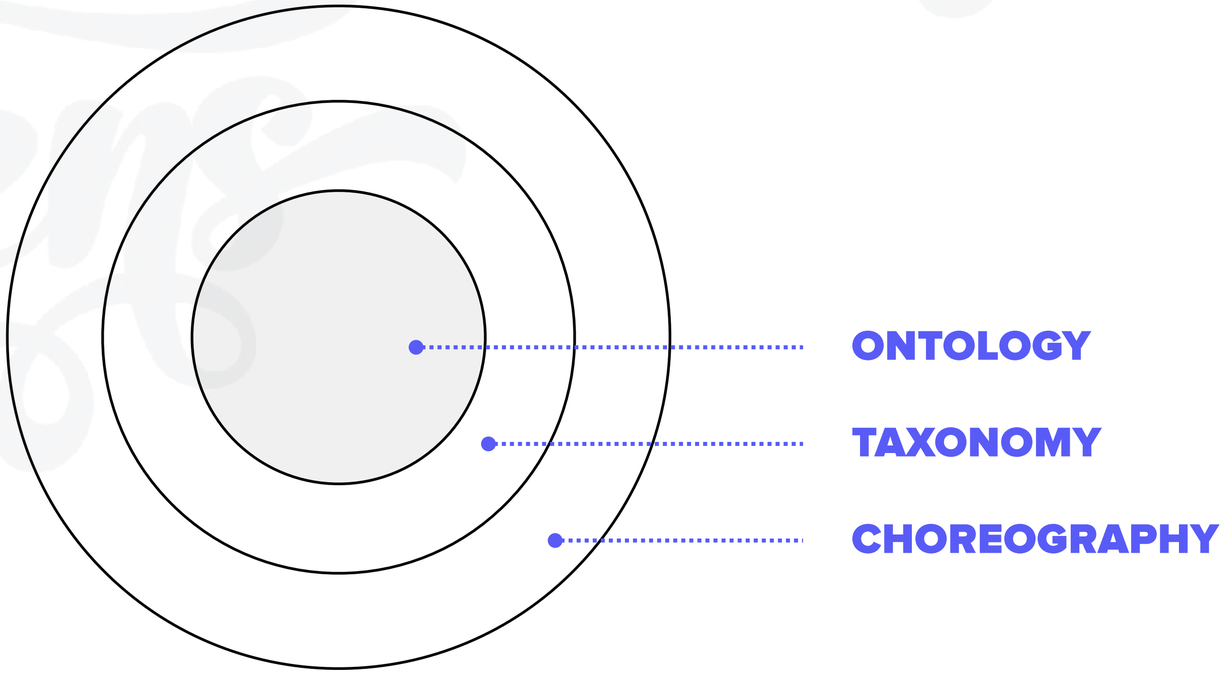
Do you know what you **mean** when you say what you say?

TAXONOMY

Have you provided logical **structure** that **brings meaning** to what you present?

CHOREOGRAPHY

How is **meaning affected** across various channels, over **time** and through **usage**?



From: "Lessons From An Ontology Nerd", Abby Covert, 2013, https://www.slideshare.net/AbbyCovert/lessons-from-an-ontology-nerd

The critical components of IA:

A simplified perspective

ONTOLOGY	TAXONOMY	CHOREOGRAPHY
Ontology = Meaning	Taxonomy = Organization	Choreography = Presentation
UNDERSTAND. As a designer, when considering the *Ontology of content…* We are seeking to understand how our users interpret information: language, words, signs/symbols.	**ORGANIZE.** As a designer, when considering the *Taxonomy of content…* We are consciously organizing content and naming it in ways that makes sense to our users.	**APPLY.** As a designer, when considering the *Choreography of content…* We are intentionally designing ways to apply and deliver content to our users…within a system…over time.

1.1 | Ontology

Ontology is defined as...

A **set of concepts and categories** in a subject area or domain that **shows their properties** and the **relations between them**.

The critical components of IA:

Ontology = Meaning

ONTOLOGY

Ontology = Meaning

UNDERSTAND.

As a designer, when considering the *Ontology of content*...

We are seeking to understand how our users interpret information: language, words, signs/symbols.

TAXONOMY

Taxonomy = Organization

ORGANIZE.

As a designer, when considering the *Taxonomy of content*...

We are consciously organizing content and naming it in ways that makes sense to our users.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Choreography = Presentation

APPLY.

As a designer, when considering the *Choreography of content*...

We are intentionally designing ways to deliver content to our users... within a system...over time.

Ontology

ORANGE

Example Credit: General Assembly, User Experience Design, https://generalassemb.ly/

Ontology

GREEN

ORANGE

PLUM

Example Credit: General Assembly, User Experience Design, https://generalassemb.ly/

Ontology

APPLE
ORANGE
PLUM

Example Credit: General Assembly, User Experience Design, https://generalassemb.ly/

Ontology

Example Credit: General Assembly, User Experience Design, https://generalassemb.ly/

Key Takeaways:

WHY IS ONTOLOGY IMPORTANT FOR US TO CONSIDER WHEN ARCHITECTING INFORMATION?

Context

Things can take on different meaning based on the context in which a users interacts with them.

+

People

People interpret meaning differently based on their own backgrounds and experiences.

+

Culture

Culturural and language differences can have significant impact on the interpretation of content.

Why is Ontology important?

“Nice sweater!”

“Nice Jumper!”

Why is Ontology important?

RED = PRICE DECLINING *(Negative)*

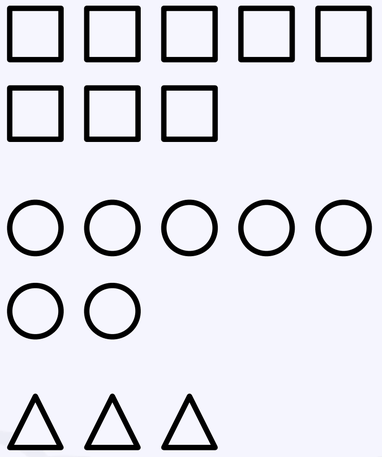
GREEN = PRICE RISING *(Positive)*

RED = PRICE RISING *(Positive)*

GREEN = PRICE DECLINING *(Negative)*

1.2 | Taxonomy

Taxonomy is defined as...



The science (and practice) of **classification of things or concepts** to **create hierarchy** and **organize meaning**.

The critical components of IA:

Taxonomy = Organization

ONTOLOGY
Ontology = Meaning

UNDERSTAND.

As a designer, when considering the *Ontology of content*...

We are seeking to understand how our users interpret information: language, words, signs/symbols.

TAXONOMY
Taxonomy = Organization

ORGANIZE.

As a designer, when considering the *Taxonomy of content*...

We are consciously organizing content and naming it in ways that makes sense to our users.

CHOREOGRAPHY
Choreography = Presentation

APPLY.

As a designer, when considering the *Choreography of content*...

We are intentionally designing ways to deliver content to our users... within a system...over time.

20:00

Activity: Card (Candy) Sort

OBJECTIVE:

Practice different ways of sorting items based on the needs and context of an end user.

AGENDA:

1 Minute	1. Break up into two groups and set-up a workstation
8 Minutes	2. Using the first prompt, determine how to sort the candy based on user needs. Create labels for your sort categories with post-it notes as necessary.
8 Minutes	3. Using the second prompt, repeat the same process but re-evaluate the context and needs of the user.
3 Minutes	4. Discuss as a group

DELIVERABLE:

Sorted, labeled candy piles

RESOURCES:

Candy, Post-its, Sharpie

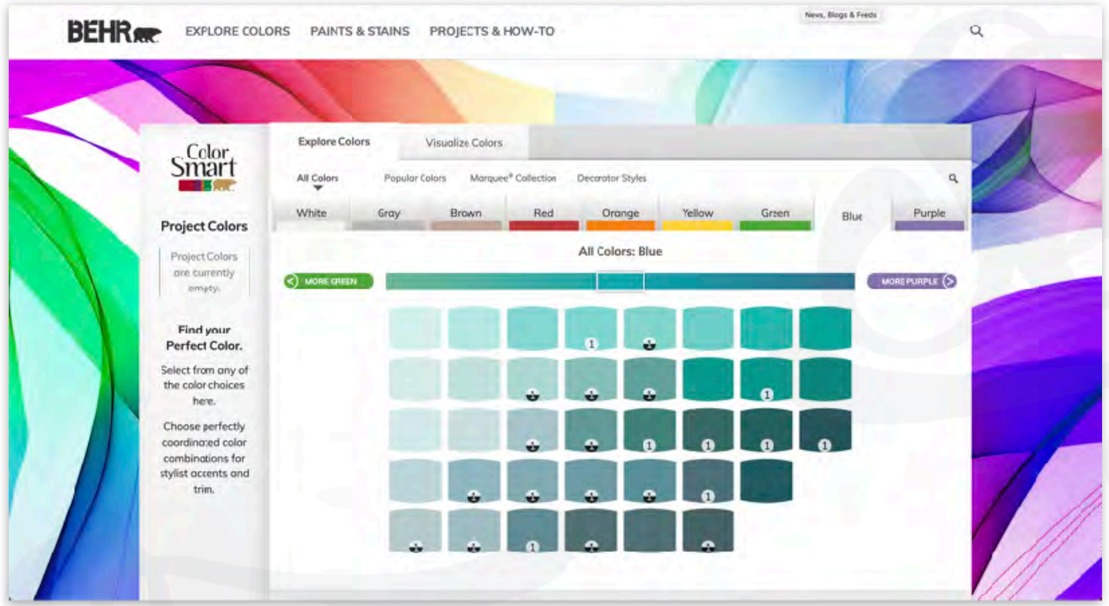
8:00

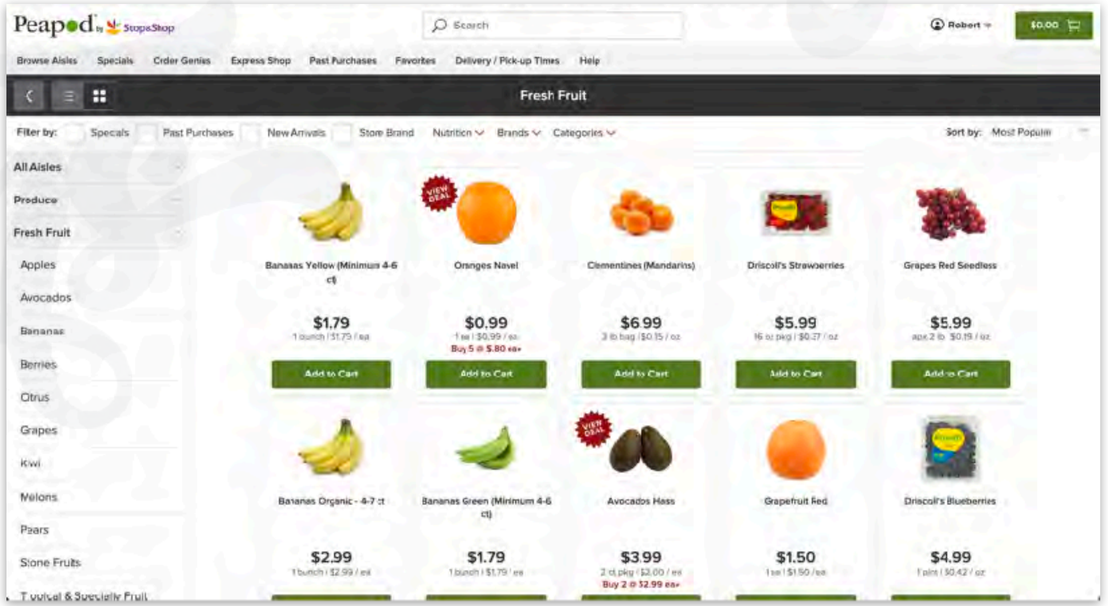
Scenario 01

8:00

Scenario 02

Taxonomy = Organization





Example Credit: General Assembly, User Experience Design, https://generalassemb.ly/

Taxonomy:

ORGANIZATION SCHEMES

Organization schemes

EXACT

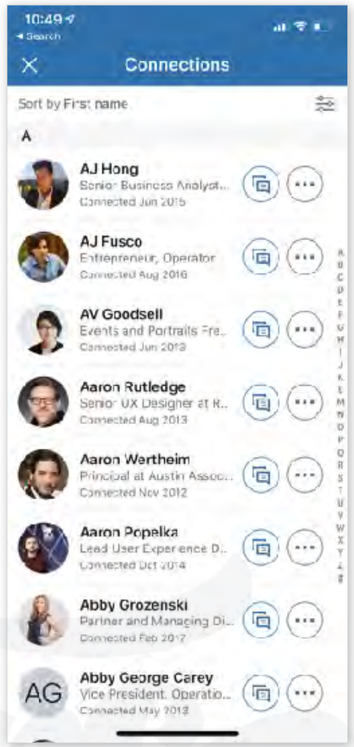
- Alphabetical
- Chronological
- Geographical

SUBJECTIVE

- Topic
- Task
- Audience
- Metaphor

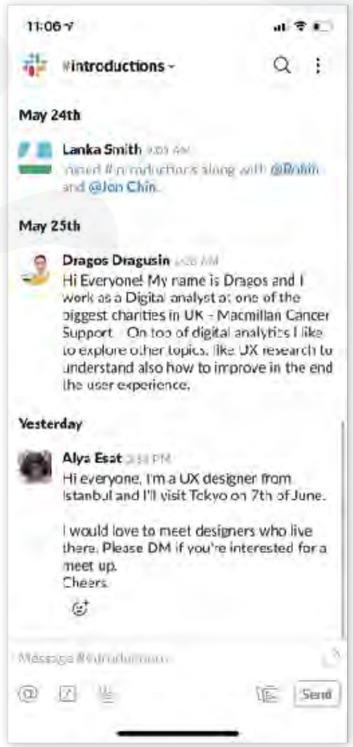
From: "Organization Schemes", usability.gov
https://www.usability.gov/how-to-and-tools/methods/organization-schemes.html

Organization schemes: Exact



ALPHABETICAL

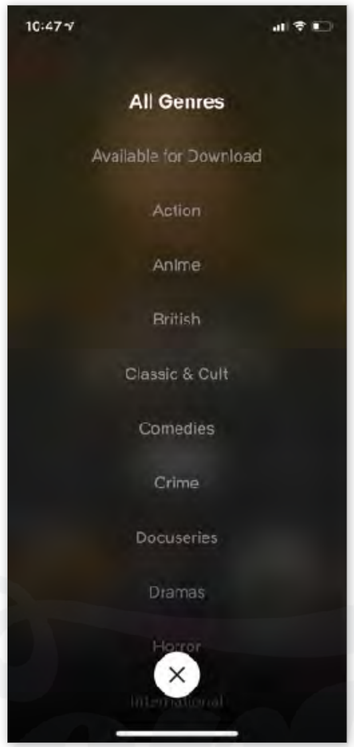
GEOGRAPHICAL



CHRONOLOGICAL

From: "Organization Schemes", usability.gov
https://www.usability.gov/how-to-and-tools/methods/organization-schemes.html

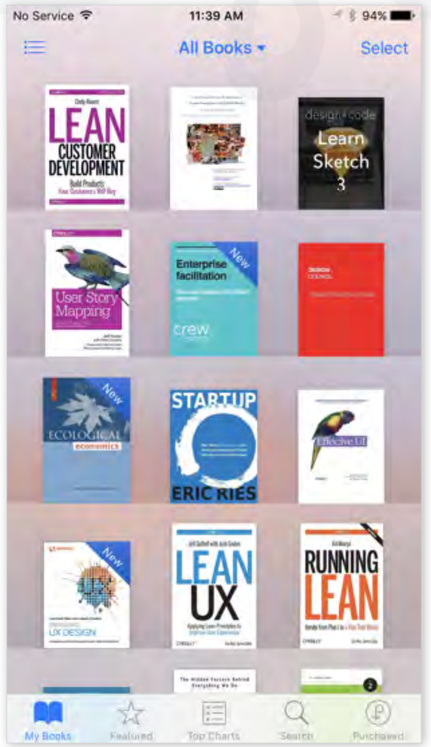
Organization schemes: Subjective



TOPIC

TASK

AUDIENCE



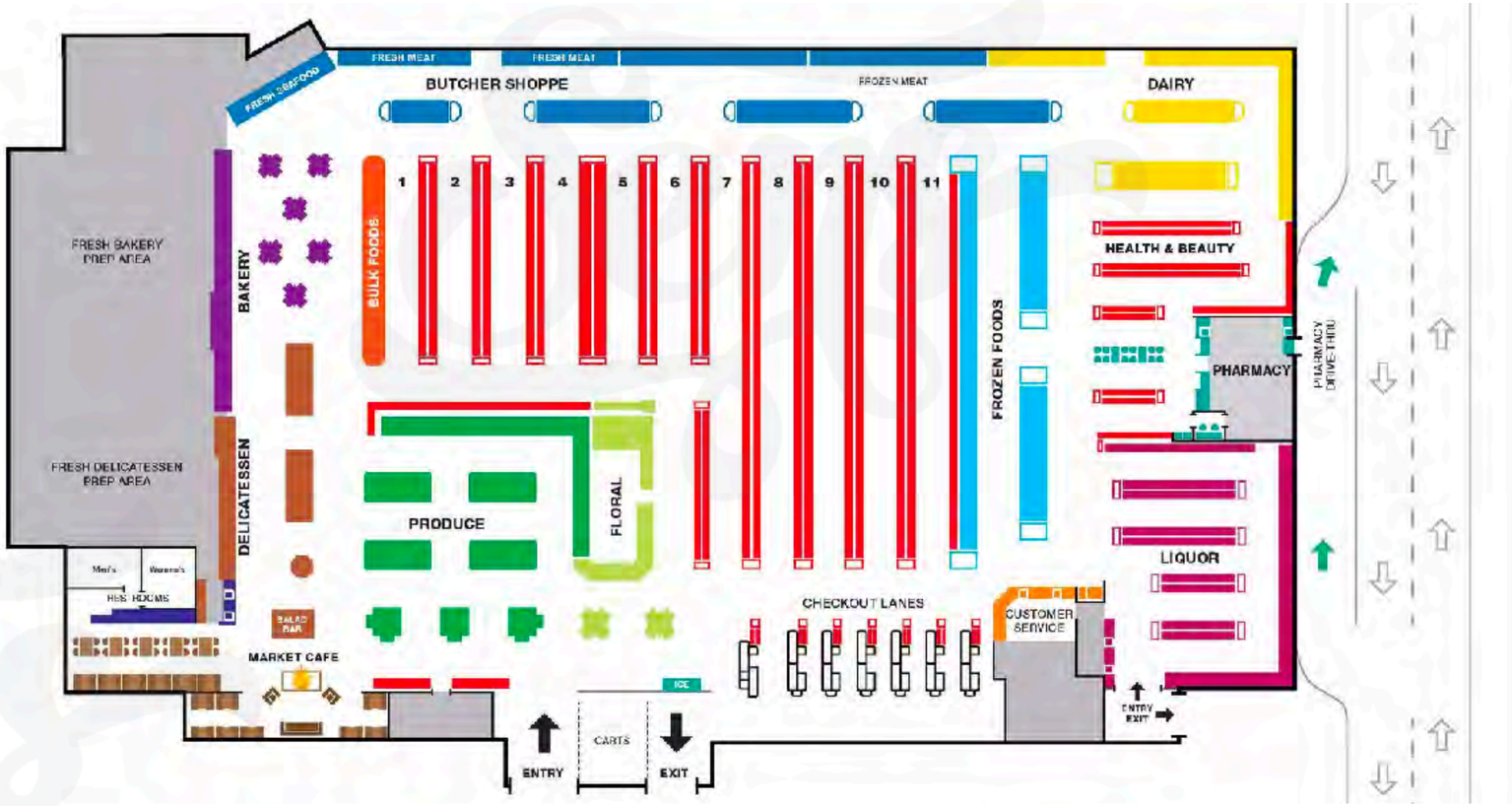
METAPHOR

From: "Organization Schemes", usability.gov
https://www.usability.gov/how-to-and-tools/methods/organization-schemes.html


THINK ABOUT A GROCERY STORE

The Taxonomy of a Grocery Store

Taxonomy is the **naming of the aisles...** and the **organization of the products within them.**



Q: What aisle(s) do these go in?

Q: What aisle(s) do these go in?

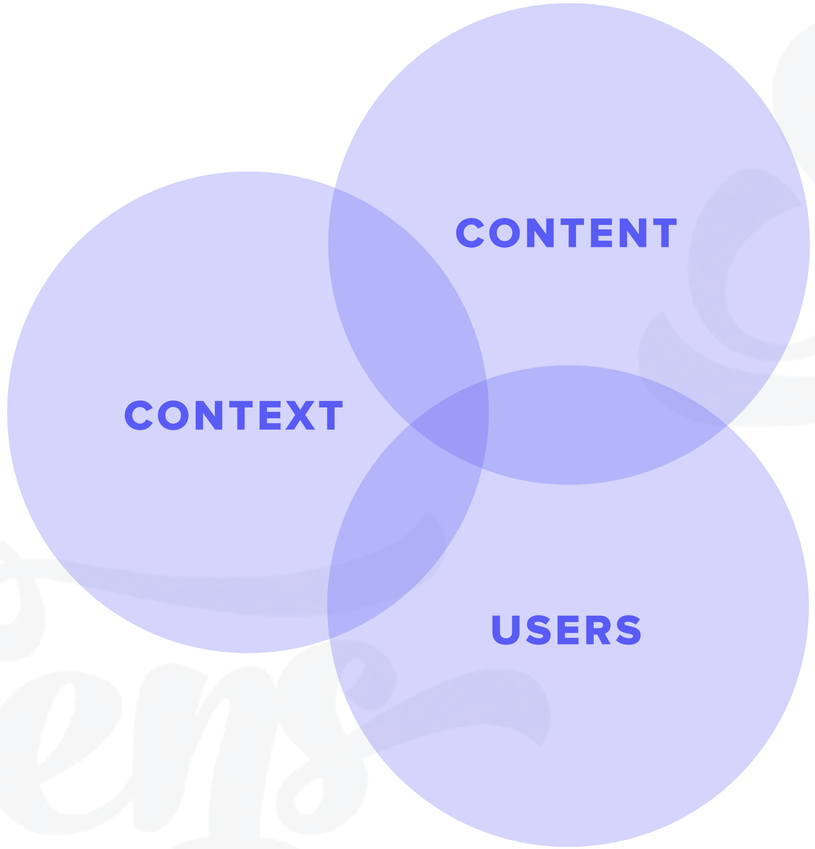
A: It depends...

There are many contextual factors that we need to consider when deciding how to organize and present content to a user:

- **Location** ***(region, country, etc...)***
  Where will a user interact with this content?
- **Medium** ***(device, size of store, etc...)***
  In what environment will they engage with this content?
- **Culture, language & meaning**
  What contextual or cultural significance does this content have, or not have?

Taxonomy = Thoughtful Organization

Effective Information Architecture (IA) sits at the intersection of...



CONTENT

- What type of information are we dealing in?
- What relevance does it have to a user?

CONTEXT

- Where is a user seeking out this content?
- When, why, and how is a user engaging with this content?

USERS

- Who is consuming this content?
- What does it mean to them? What value does it provide?
- What pre-existing expectations do they have?

Diagram credit: "Three Circles of Information Architecture", Peter Morville, 2004
https://semanticstudios.com/user_experience_design/

Key Takeaways:

WHY IS TAXONOMY IMPORTANT FOR US TO CONSIDER WHEN ARCHITECTING INFORMATION?

Context

Organization schemes can succeed or fail based on the context in which a users engages with them.

+

People

People have pre-conceptions of how things should be named & organized based on their backgrounds and experiences.

+

Culture

Regional or cultural differences can have significant impact on an understanding of how things are organized.

Why is Taxonomy important?

What are these?

Sandwiches...

Hoagies...

Subs...

Italian Food...

Lunch

Example Credit: Mike Morales, http://mikemoral.es/

Why is taxonomy Important?

What are these?

“They are all birds”
—Ornithologist

“The Cassowary is not a bird”
—Native Karam, Papua New Guinea

Example Credit: General Assembly, User Experience Design, https://generalassemb.ly/

Why is taxonomy Important?

Would you trust a restaurant to describe what type of food they serve?

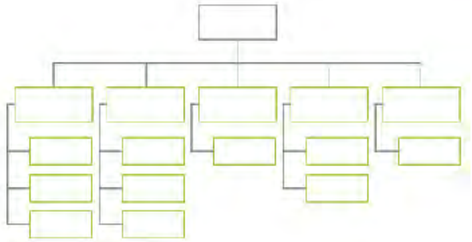
Afghan
African
Afternoon Tea
American
Argentinean
Asian
Australian
Austrian
Bar / Lounge / Bottle Service
Barbecue
Basque
Beer Garden
Belgian
Brazilian
Brazilian Steakhouse
Brewery
British
Burgers
Cajun
Californian
Cambodian
Canadian
Caribbean
Chamorro
Chinese
Cocktail Bar
Comfort Food
Contemporary American
Contemporary Asian
Contemporary European
Contemporary French
Contemporary French / American
Contemporary German
Contemporary Indian
Contemporary Italian
Contemporary Korean
Contemporary Mexican
Continental
Creole / Cajun / Southern
Cuban
Dessert
Dim Sum
Eastern European
Ecuadorian
Egyptian
English
European
Filipino
Fondue
French
French / Indian
French / Japanese
French American
Fusion / Eclectic
Gastro Pub
German
Global, International
Greek
Hawaii Regional Cuisine
Indian International
Irish
Israeli
Italian
Japanese
Korean
Kosher
Latin / Spanish
Latin American
Lebanese
Local & Organic
Low Country Malaysian
Mediterranean
Mexican
Mexican / Southwestern
Middle Eastern
Modern Australian
Modern European
Modern Tuscan
Moroccan
New Zealand
Northwest
Organic
Pan-Asian
Persian
Peruvian
Pizzeria
Portuguese
Prime Rib
Provencal
Puerto Rican
Regional Mexican
Russian
Scandinavian
Scottish
Seafood
Sicilian
Soul Food
South African
South American
South Indian
Southeast Asian
Southern
Southwest
Spanish
Steak
Steakhouse
Sushi
Swiss
Syrian
Tapas / Small Plates
Thai
Thai French
Traditional Mexican
Turkish
Vegan
Vegetarian
Vegetarian / Vegan
Vietnamese
Wild Game
Wine Bar
Yakitori

Example Credit: Mike Morales, http://mikemoral.es/

Taxonomy:

TECHNIQUES YOU CAN USE TO ORGANIZE CONTENT

Popular techniques & frameworks for organizing content



HIERARCHY MAPS

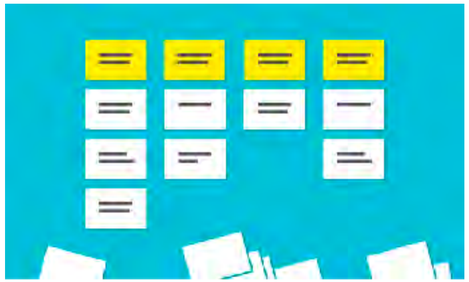
A Hierarchy map is a diagram that shows the way(s) that content within a system is structured and interrelated.

MIND MAPS

A mind map is a diagram used to visually organize information and show the relationships amongst the pieces of a whole.

AFFINITY MAPS

An affinity map is a diagram used to organize data into groups or themes based on their relationships.



CARD SORTING

Card sorting is a technique used to help organize topics into categories (and name them) in ways that make sense to users.

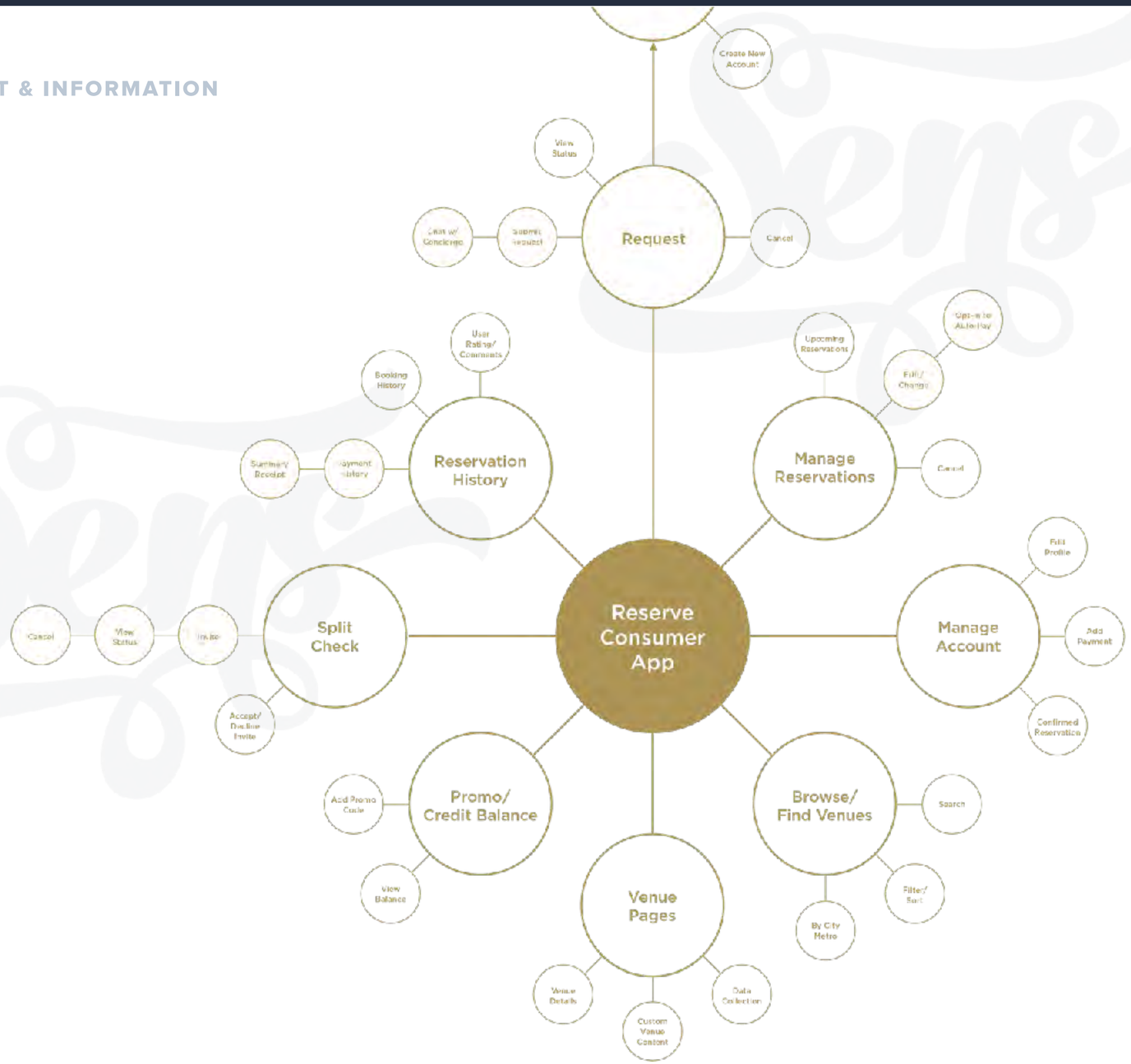
MIND MAPPING

A highly effective tactic for **organizing content**, **making correlations**, and **understanding relationships.**

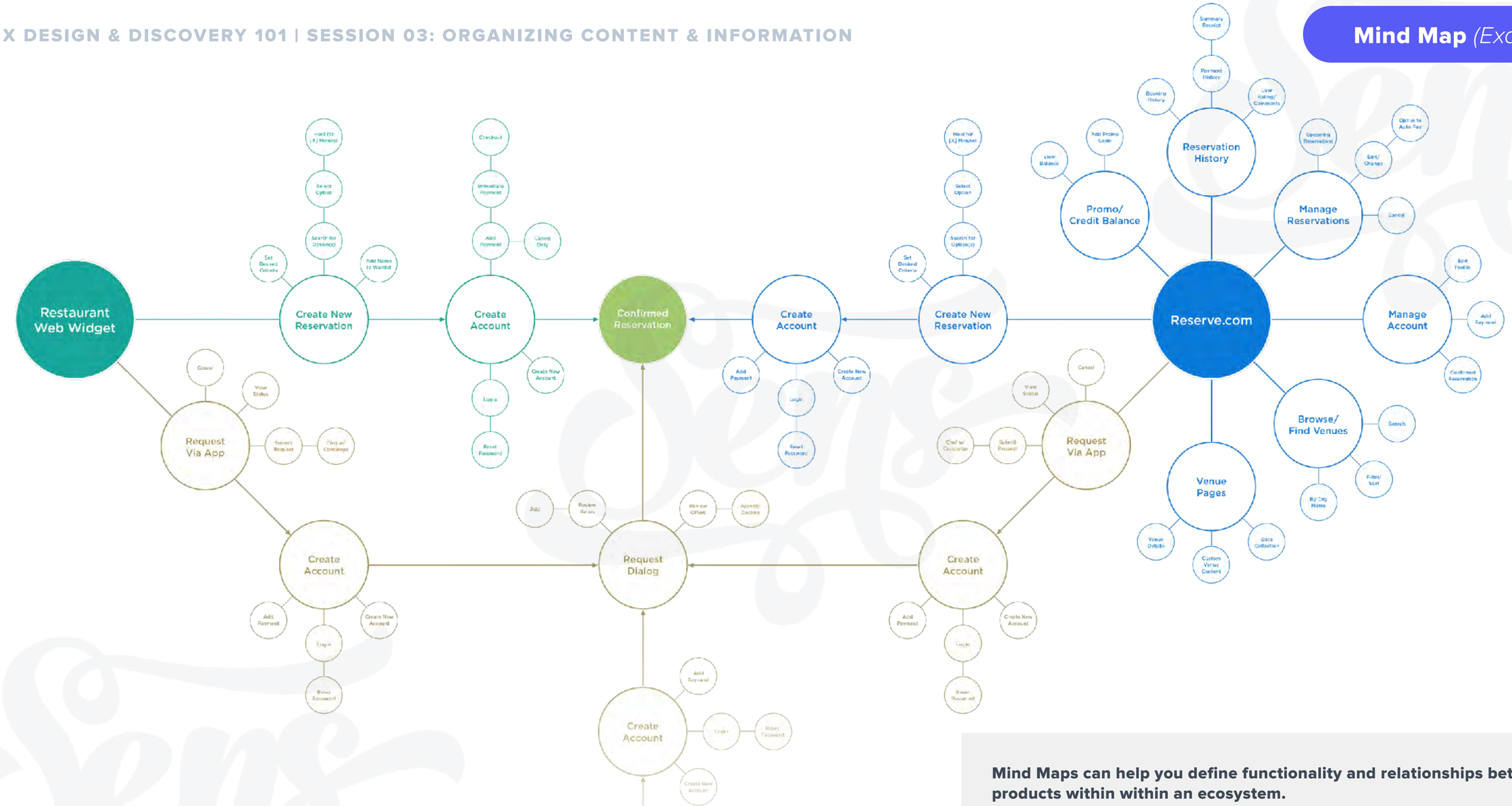
Mind Mapping

To create a mind map diagram:

- Only use very short phrases or single words
- Start with a single, primary concept at the center
- Add related sub-themes adjacent to your primary concept and draw branches to them from the center.
- Continue to add sub-themes to sub themes to show levels of hierarchy and connectivity



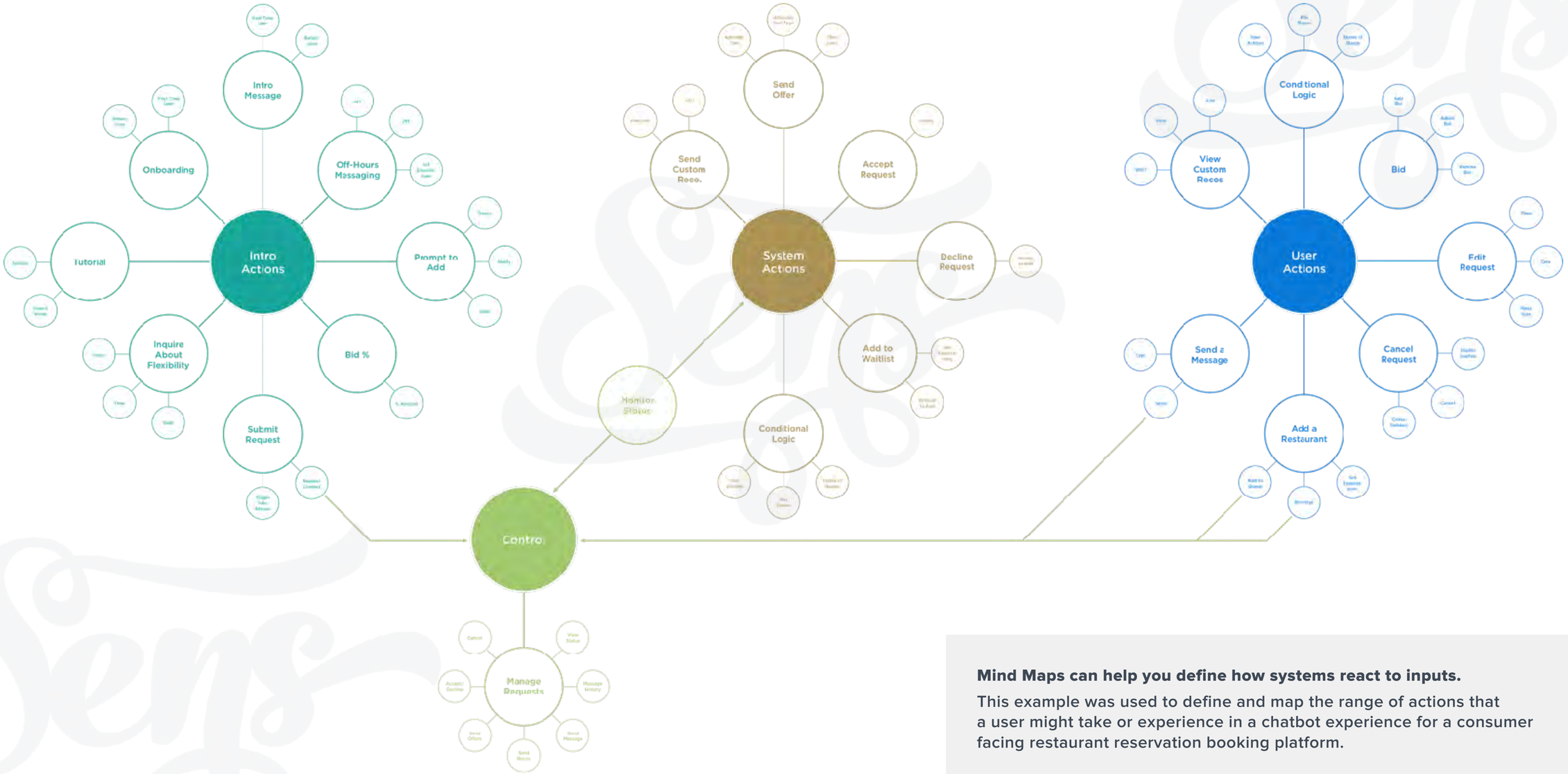
Mind Map *(Example)*



Mind Maps can help you define functionality and relationships between products within within an ecosystem.

This example was used to map the functionality and relationships between platforms within a consumer facing restaurant reservation booking ecosystem.

Mind Map *(Example)*



Mind Maps can help you define how systems react to inputs.

This example was used to define and map the range of actions that a user might take or experience in a chatbot experience for a consumer facing restaurant reservation booking platform.

5:00

Activity: Candy Mind Map

OBJECTIVE:

Practice creating a mind map diagram using the output of your candy sort.

Your mind map sketch should articulate the sorting pattern you created and highlight the connectivity between items and groups.

AGENDA:

5 Minutes

1. Using the worksheet provided, sketch a mind map for one of the sorting patterns you and your team created during the previous candy sorting exercise

DELIVERABLE:

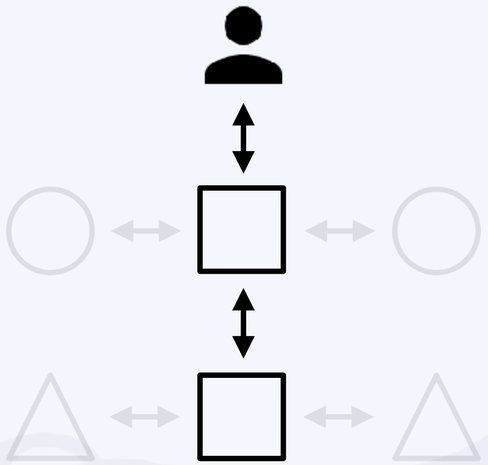
Mind Map Sketch

RESOURCES:

Worksheet, Sharpie

1.3 | Choreography

Choreography is defined as...



The art (and practice) of **designing and arranging choreographic sequences** that **guide the movements** of dancers for a performance.

*"The structures that IA creates **foster** specific types of **movement** and **interaction**, **anticipating** the ways **users and information want to flow**, and making affordance for change over time."*

Information Architecture Institute
https://www.iainstitute.org/

The critical components of IA:

Choreography = Presentation

ONTOLOGY

Ontology = Meaning

UNDERSTAND.

As a designer, when considering the *Ontology of content…*

We are seeking to understand how our users interpret information: language, words, signs/symbols.

TAXONOMY

Taxonomy = Organization

ORGANIZE.

As a designer, when considering the *Taxonomy of content…*

We are consciously organizing content and naming it in ways that makes sense to our users.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Choreography = Presentation

APPLY.

As a designer, when considering the *Choreography of content…*

We are intentionally designing ways to apply and deliver content to our users…within a system…over time.

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

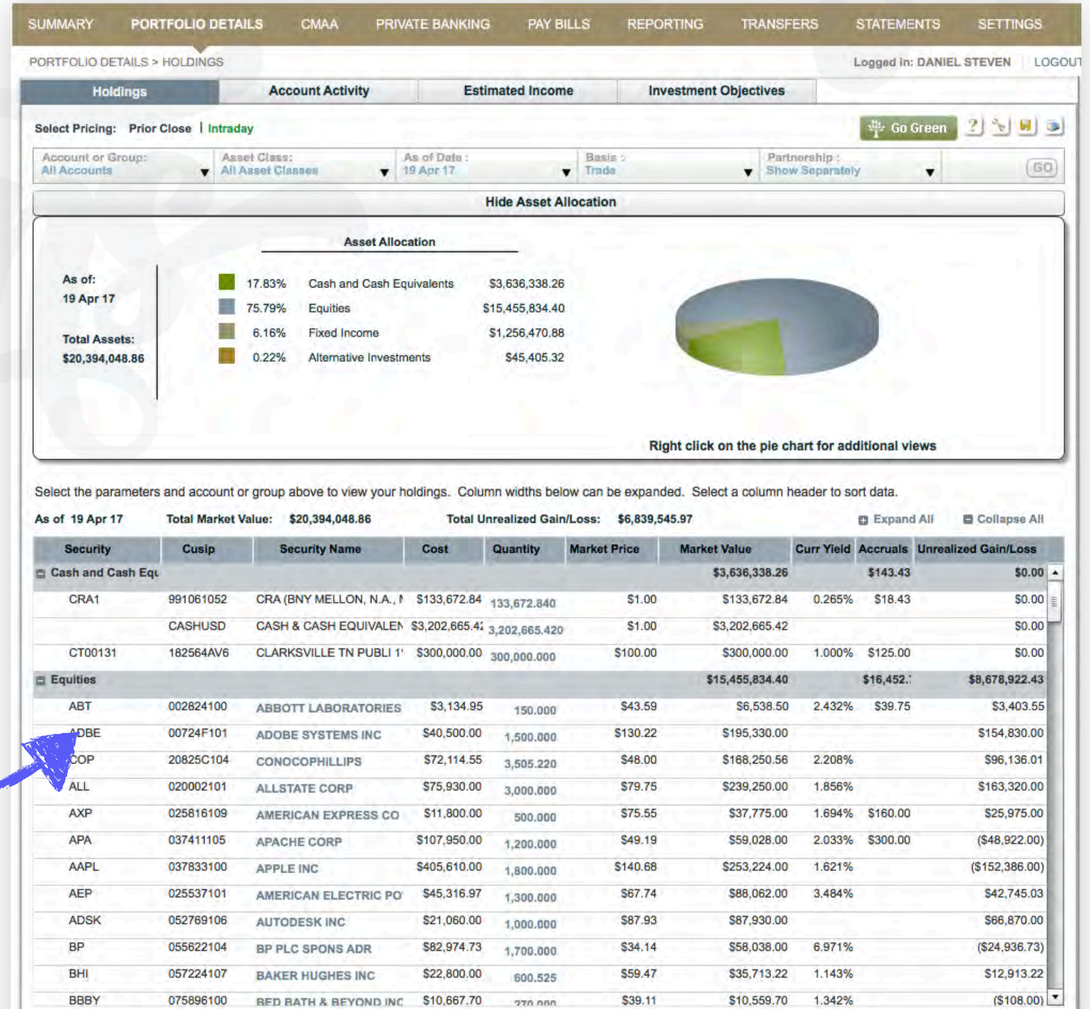
CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Case Study: IA Choreography

Project Context:

One of the oldest players in the financial sector needed to rapidly redefine and launch a client-facing digital web portal for their high-net worth clients after years of neglect in their product offering, user experience, and infrastructure.

The IA challenge:
Make sense of huge amounts of content, then make it delightful for our users to access.



ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Understanding what existed and what it meant to those consuming it.

TL;DR TO GET STARTED, WE DISSECTED THE EXISTING CONTENT AND GROUPED IN INTO TYPES & CATEGORIES.

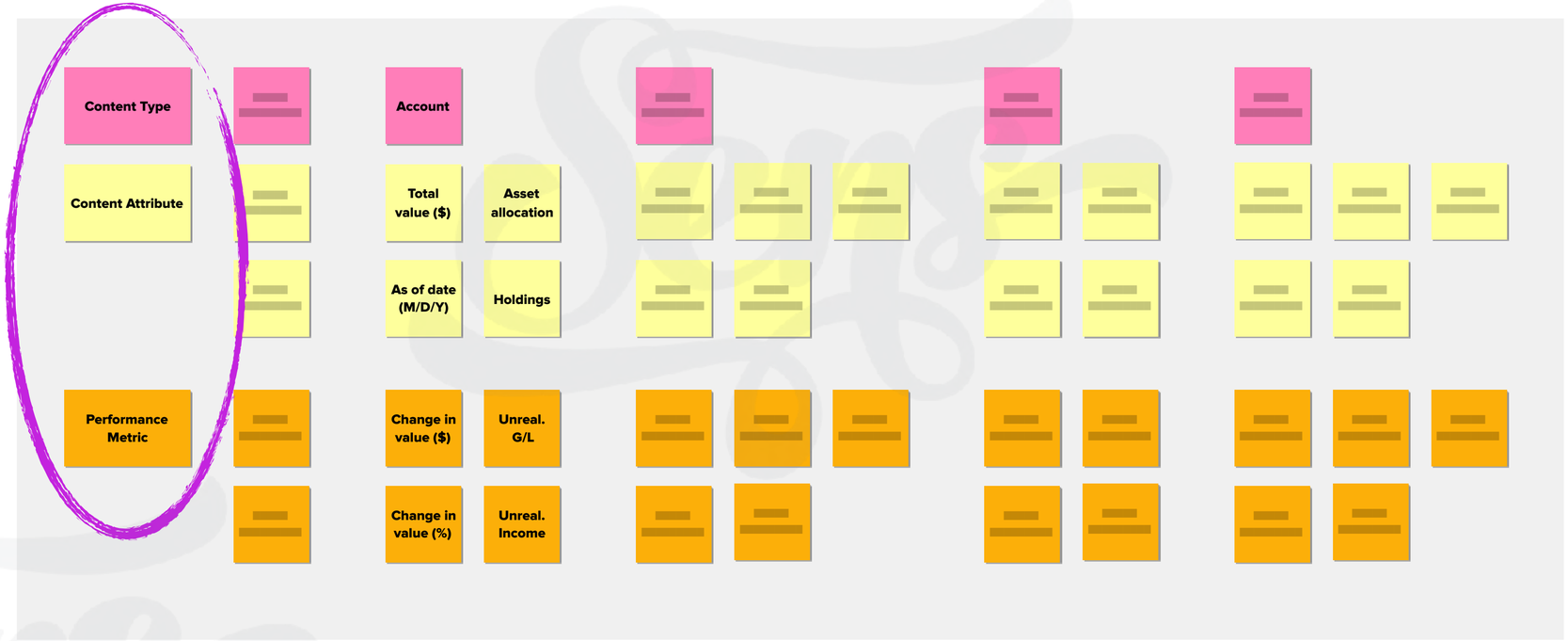
ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Understanding what existed and what it meant to those consuming it.

Through this process, we were able to start to see the nuances of content and meaning.



TL;DR CONTENT TYPES WERE ANALYZED TO UNDERSTAND CORRESPONDING ATTRIBUTES, PATTERNS, AND THEIR MEANING.

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Identifying user types, then understanding their goals and behaviors.

Primary User:

Core Client *(Consumer)*

01.	Quickly understand the state of their wealth.
02.	Clearly see all items that need attention.
03.	Generally understand how their investments are performing.

Secondary User:

Wealth Manager *(Institutional)*

01.	Get into the details of a client's accounts quickly.
02.	Clearly understand the level of complexity within a client's portfolio.
03.	See how a single account or group has performed over time.

TL;DR **USER TYPES + THEIR NEEDS WERE DERIVED FROM IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS & CONTEXTUAL INQUIRY**

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Extracting insights, then defining principles to guide our design.

Guiding Design Principle 01:

By minimizing options and progressively disclosing complex content in layers*, *we can better inform and empower our clients with knowledge and confidence.*

Guiding Design Principle 02:

By structuring content in a thoughtful and intelligent way, *we can tell our clients a meaningful story of their wealth.*

TL;DR **TWO IMPACTFUL CUSTOMER INSIGHTS FROM OUR INTERVIEWS BECAME OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES.**

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Extracting insights, then defining principles to guide our design.

1. At a glance, functionality that is not intuitive to use and content that is not easily digestible is often ignored or abandoned.
2. Less is more, but the 'more' should be available and easy to find when needed or desired.
3. When displaying correlative content, a maximum of three discreet data points should be displayed to maximize user understanding and comprehension at a glance.
4. Our benchmark is the engagement of the core client. Degrading their user experience to accommodate our super users frustrates both parties.
5. Information should be available on drill-down. But our ultimate goal is to surface the most meaningful information with as little friction as possible to the user.
6. When displaying secondary navigation and other affordances on a page, users are overwhelmed when too many options are displayed at once.

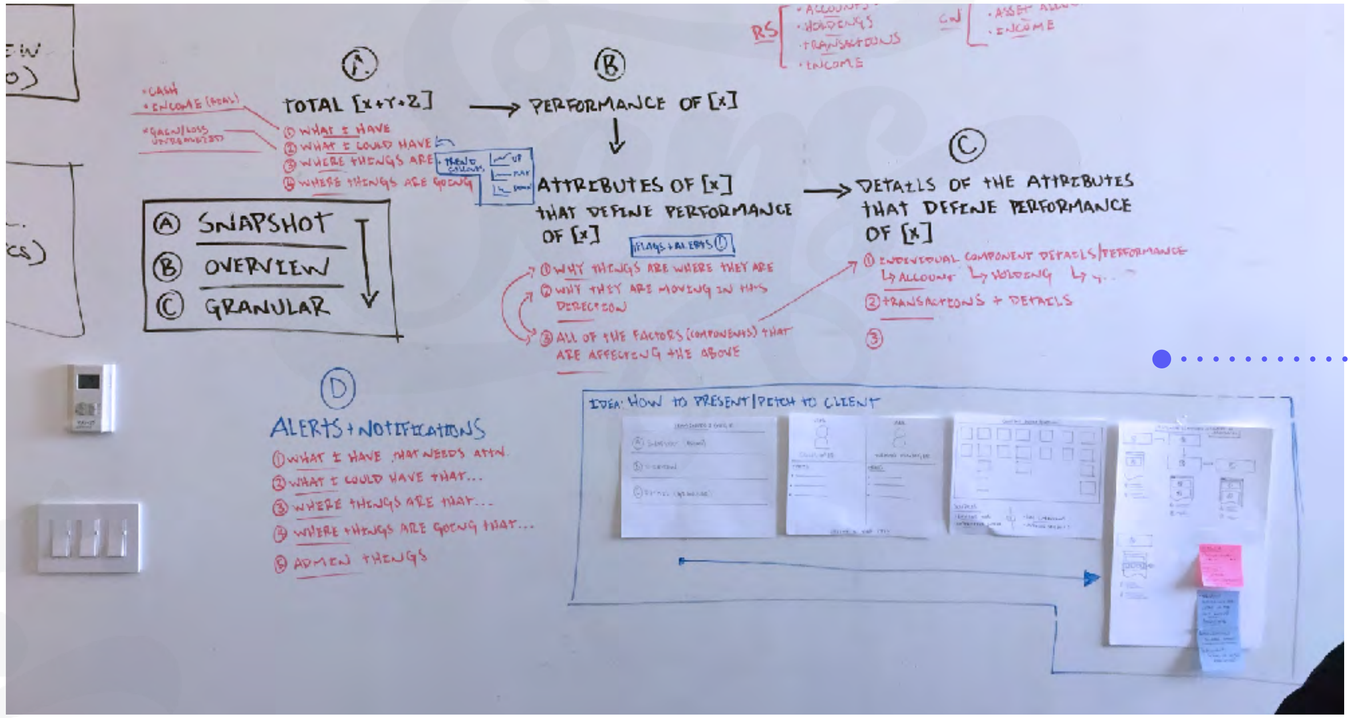
TL;DR **ADDITIONAL, MORE TACTICAL, DESIGN PRINCIPLES WERE ALSO DEFINED TO GUIDE OUR DESIGN.**

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Using our principles to design the organization & presentation of content.



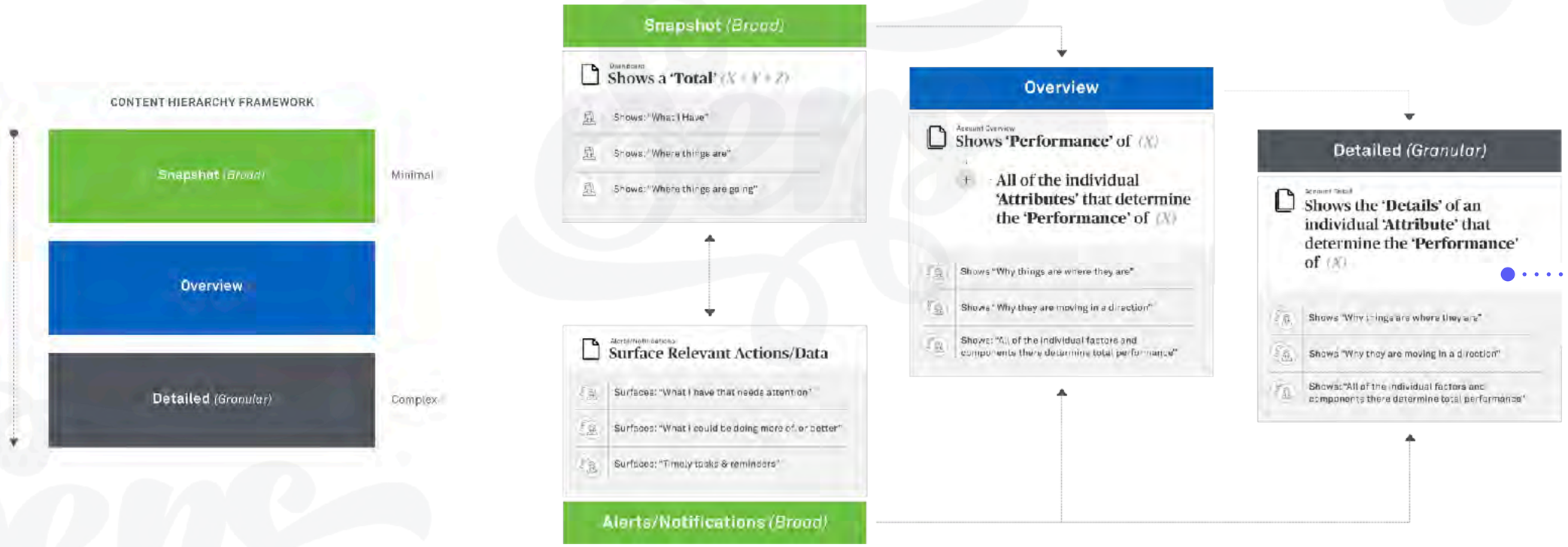
TL;DR WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF OUR USER + OUR CONTENT, WE BEGAN TO DEVELOP IDEAS TO ORGANIZE IT.

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Using our principles to design the organization & presentation of content.



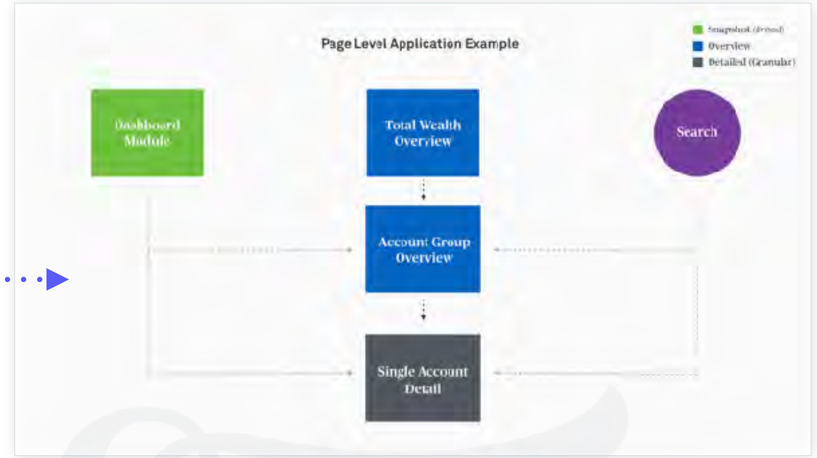
TL;DR A USER-CENTERED ORGANIZATION SCHEME EVOLVED, FOCUSED ON CONVEYING MEANING.

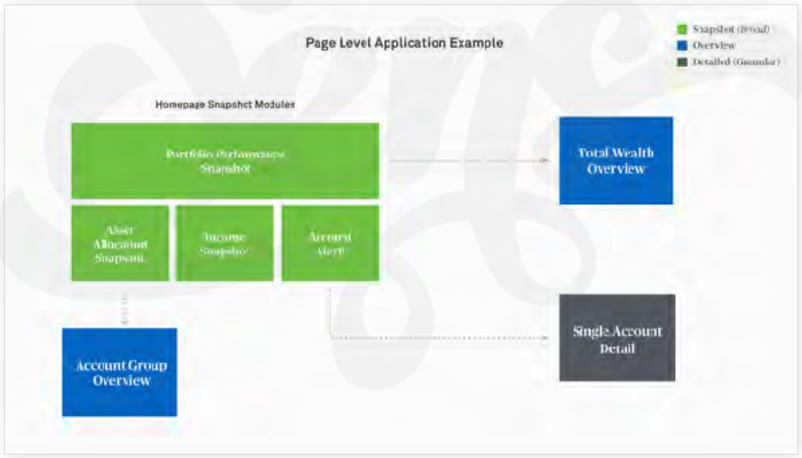
ONTOLOGY = Meaning

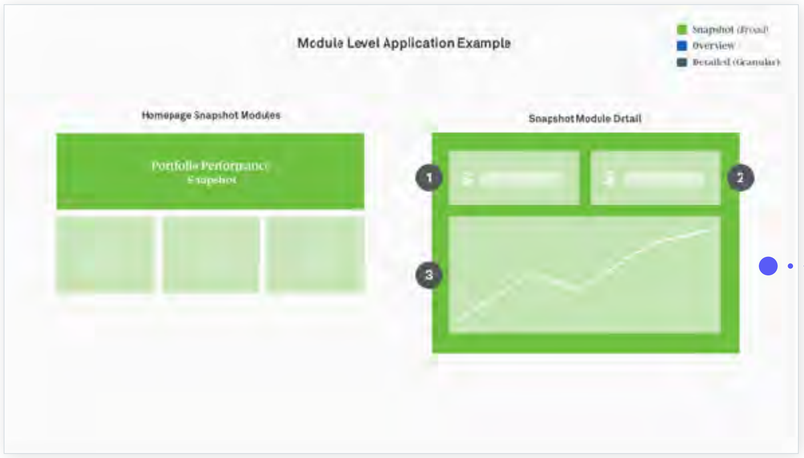
TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Using our principles to design the organization & presentation of content.







TL;DR USING OUR ORGANIZATION SCHEME, WE ITERATIVELY EXPLORED THE FLOW OF CONTENT AND PAGES.

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

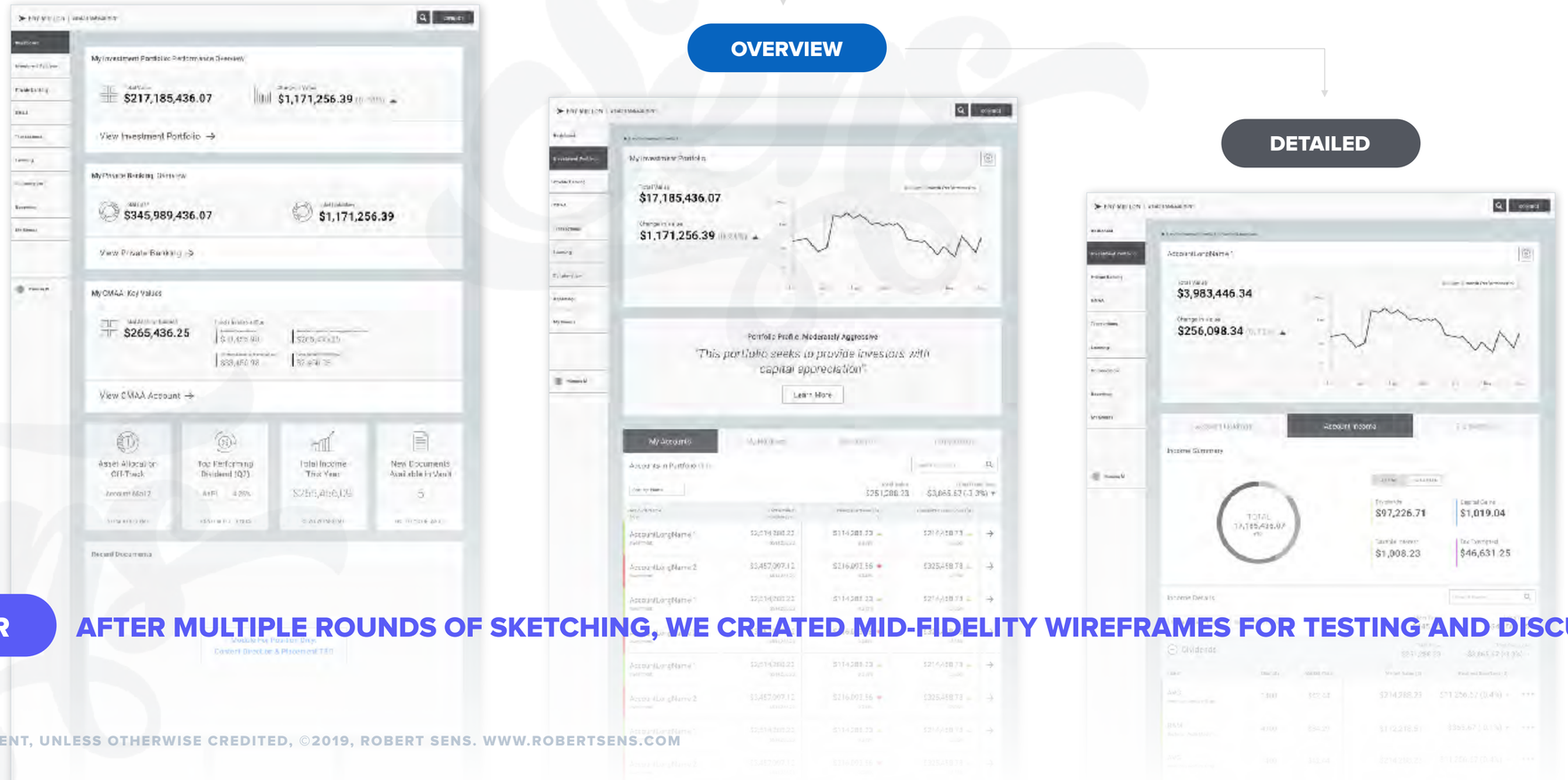
CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Using our principles to design the organization & presentation of content.

SNAPSHOT

OVERVIEW

DETAILED



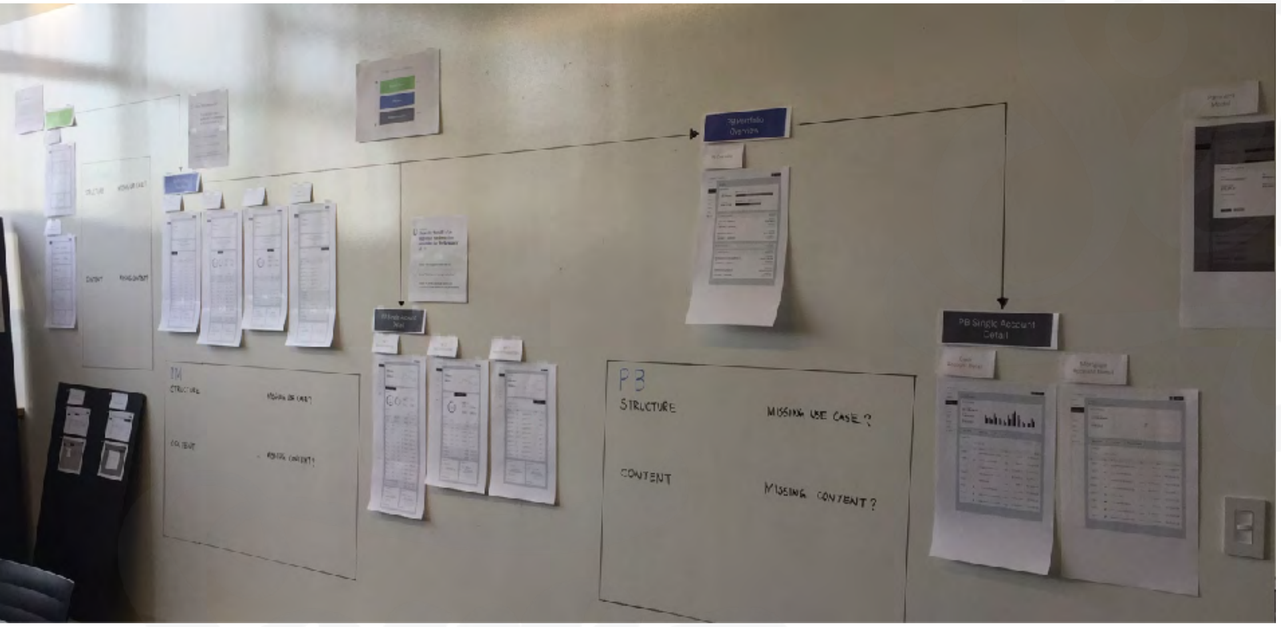
TL;DR AFTER MULTIPLE ROUNDS OF SKETCHING, WE CREATED MID-FIDELITY WIREFRAMES FOR TESTING AND DISCUSSION.

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

Using the IA we designed to communicate with stakeholders.



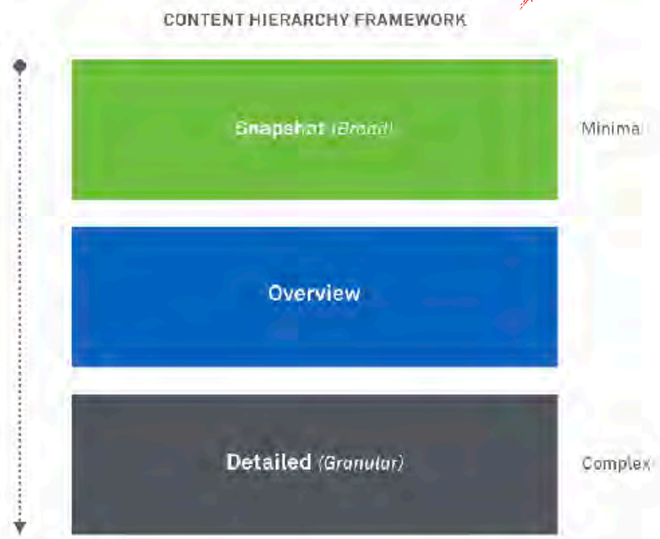
TL;DR WE USED OUR IA TO COMMUNICATE – CREATING A VISUAL, IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE TO EXPLAIN AND DISCUSS THE DESIGN.

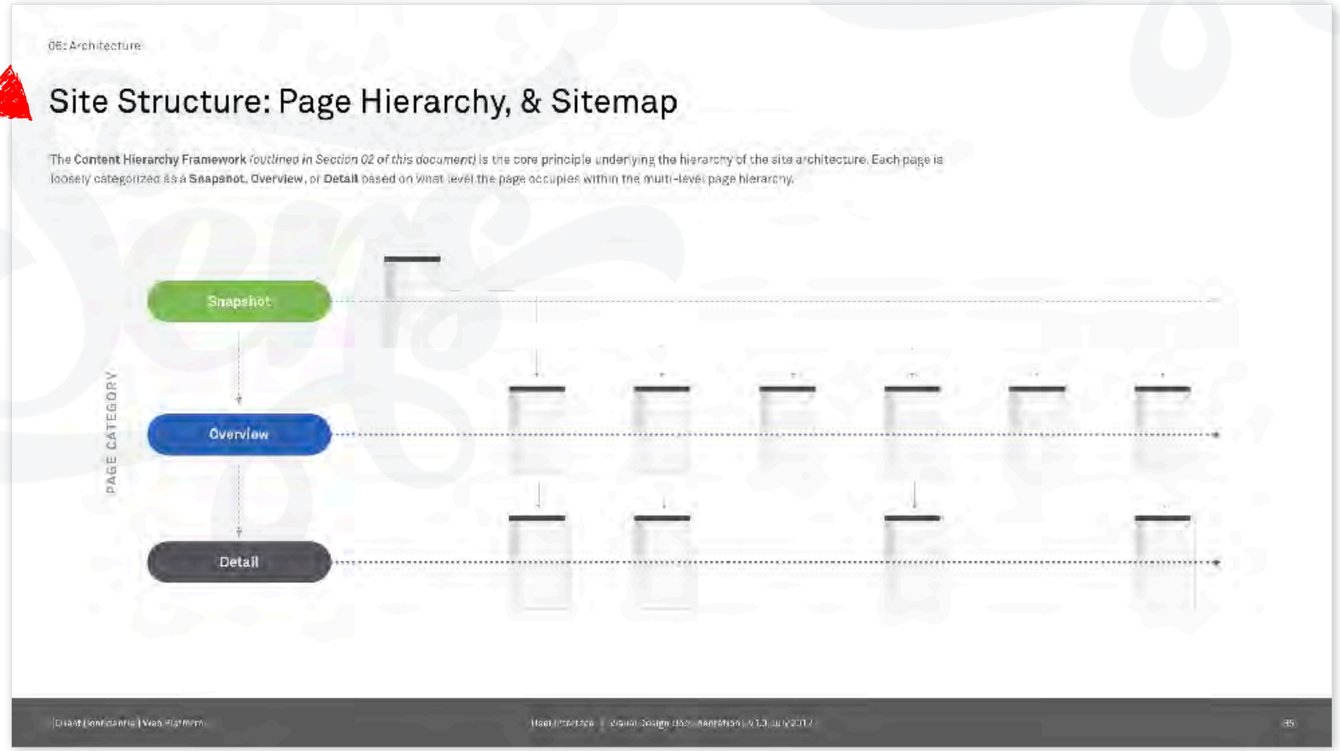
ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

The Outcome: IA with Meaning





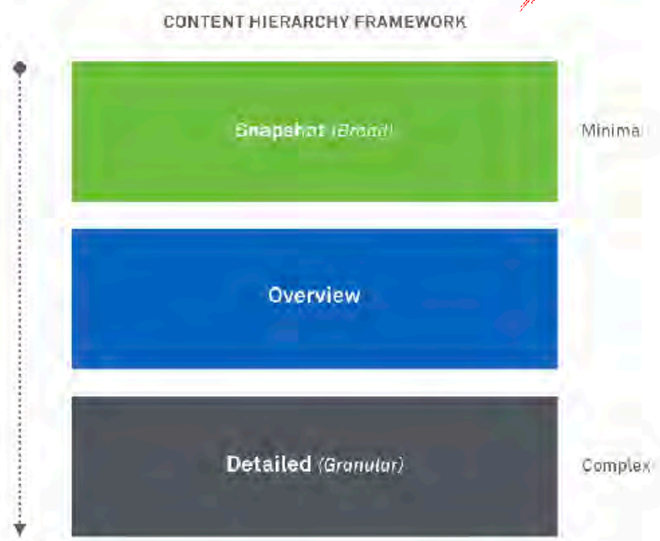
TL;DR **THE OUTCOME WAS CONTENT DESIGN THAT WAS DEEPLY ROOTED IN USER NEEDS & BEHAVIORS.**

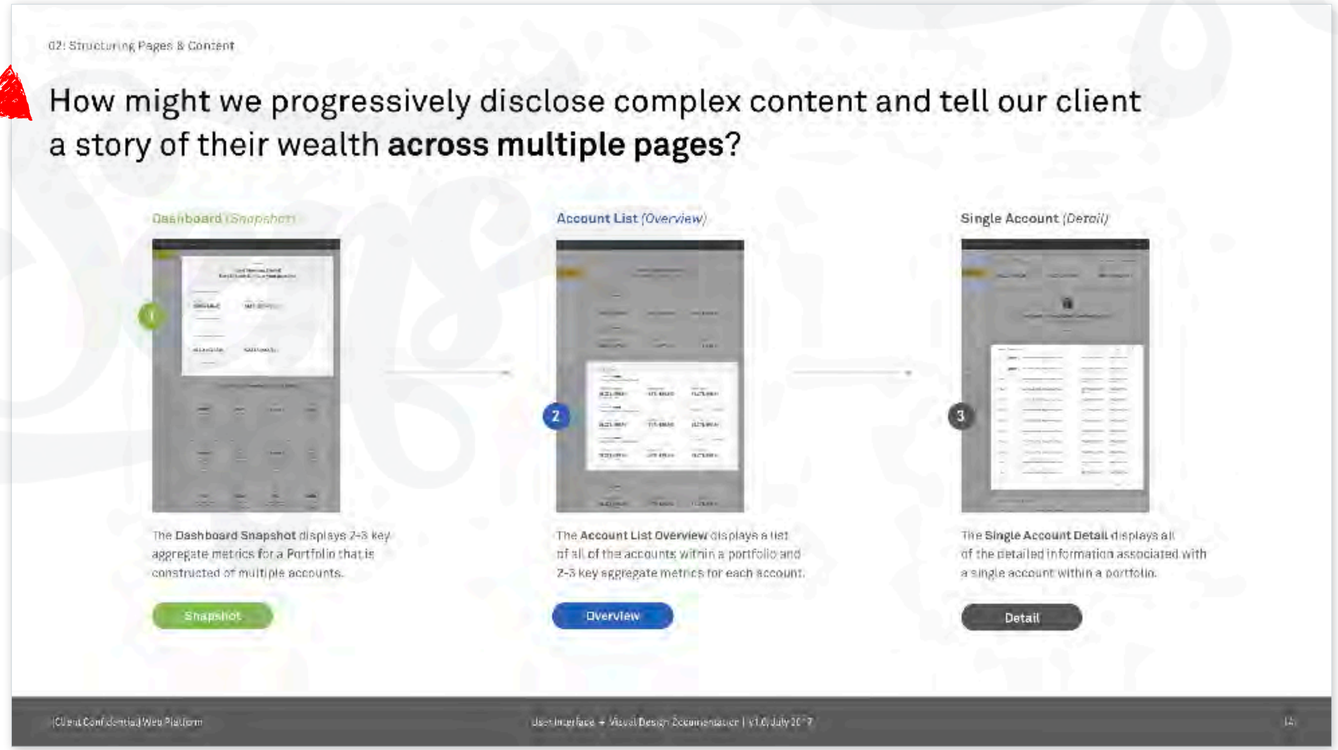
ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

The Outcome: IA with Meaning





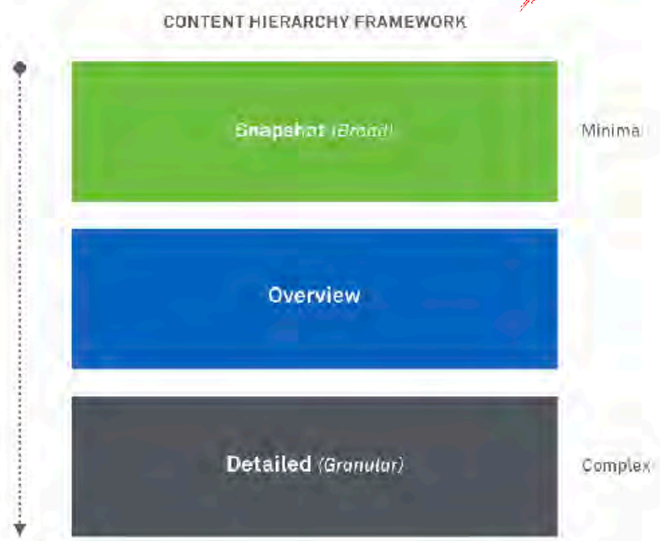
TL;DR **OUR CONTENT HIERARCHY & DESIGN PRINCIPLED INFORMED HOW CONTENT FLOWED ACROSS MULTIPLE PAGES...**

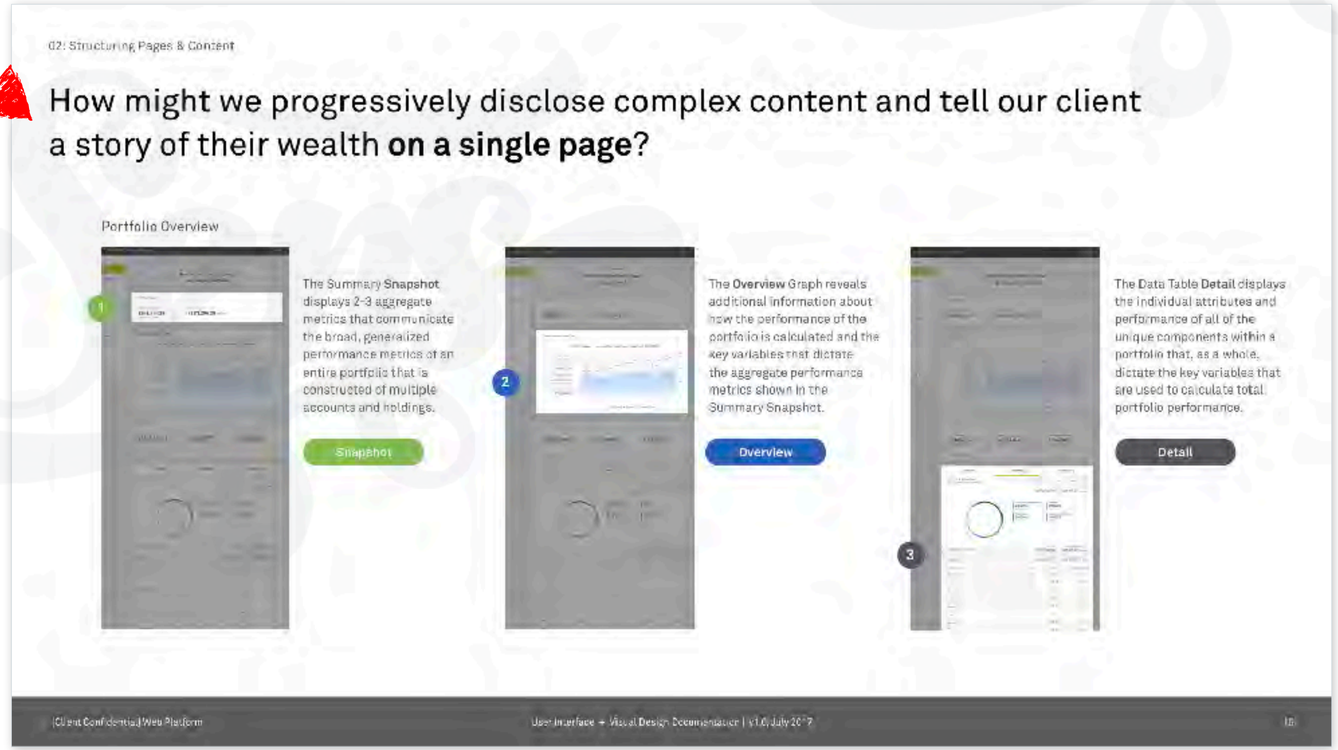
ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

The Outcome: IA with Meaning





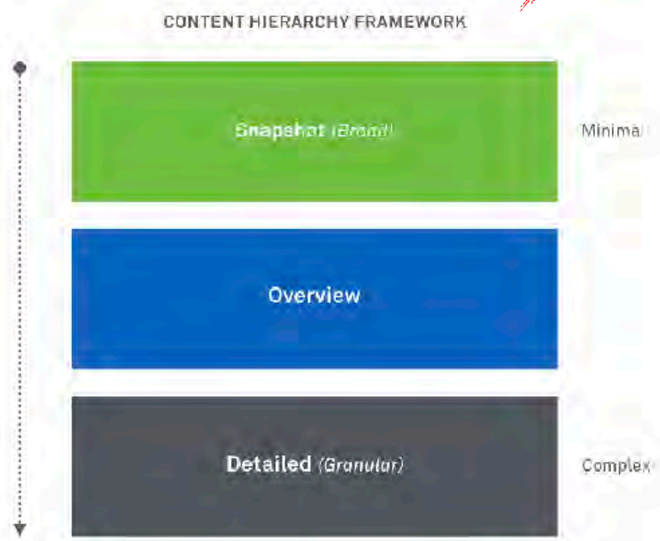
TL;DR **...IT ALSO INFORMED THE DESIGN OF CONTENT ON SINGLE PAGES...**

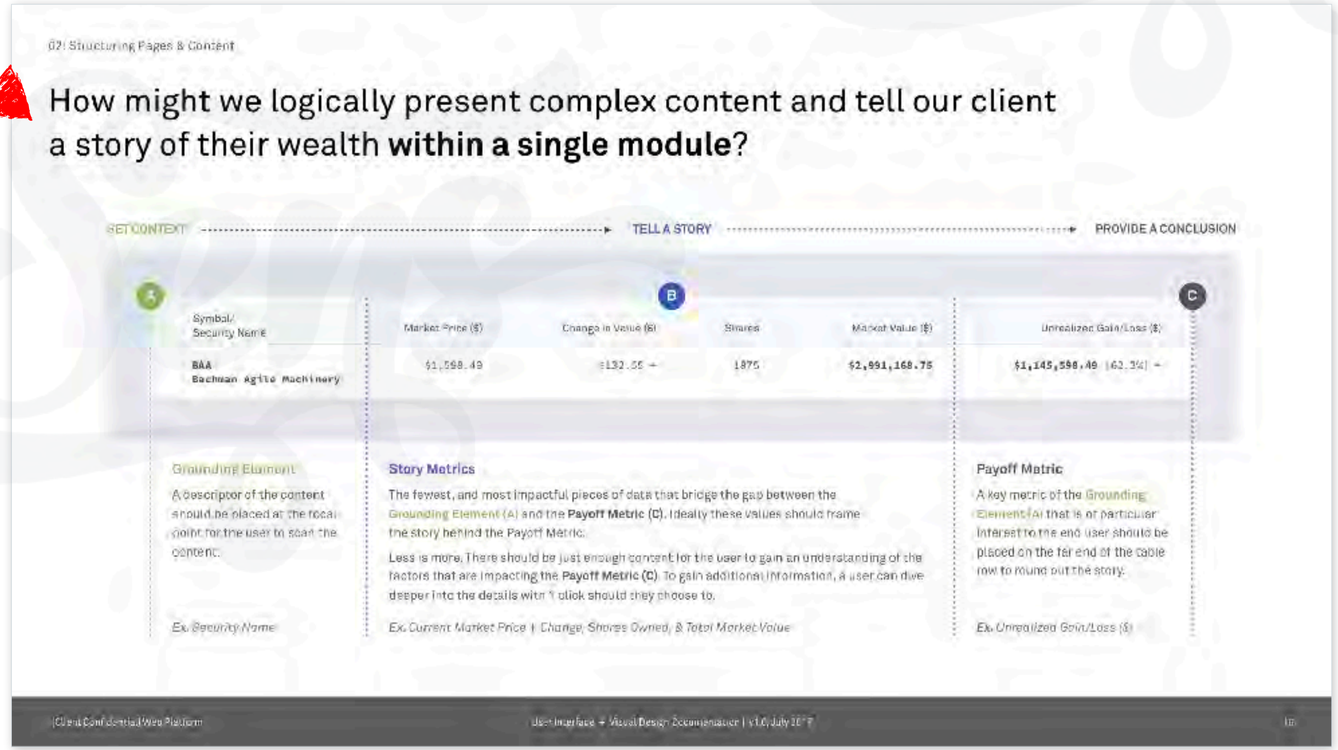
ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

The Outcome: IA with Meaning





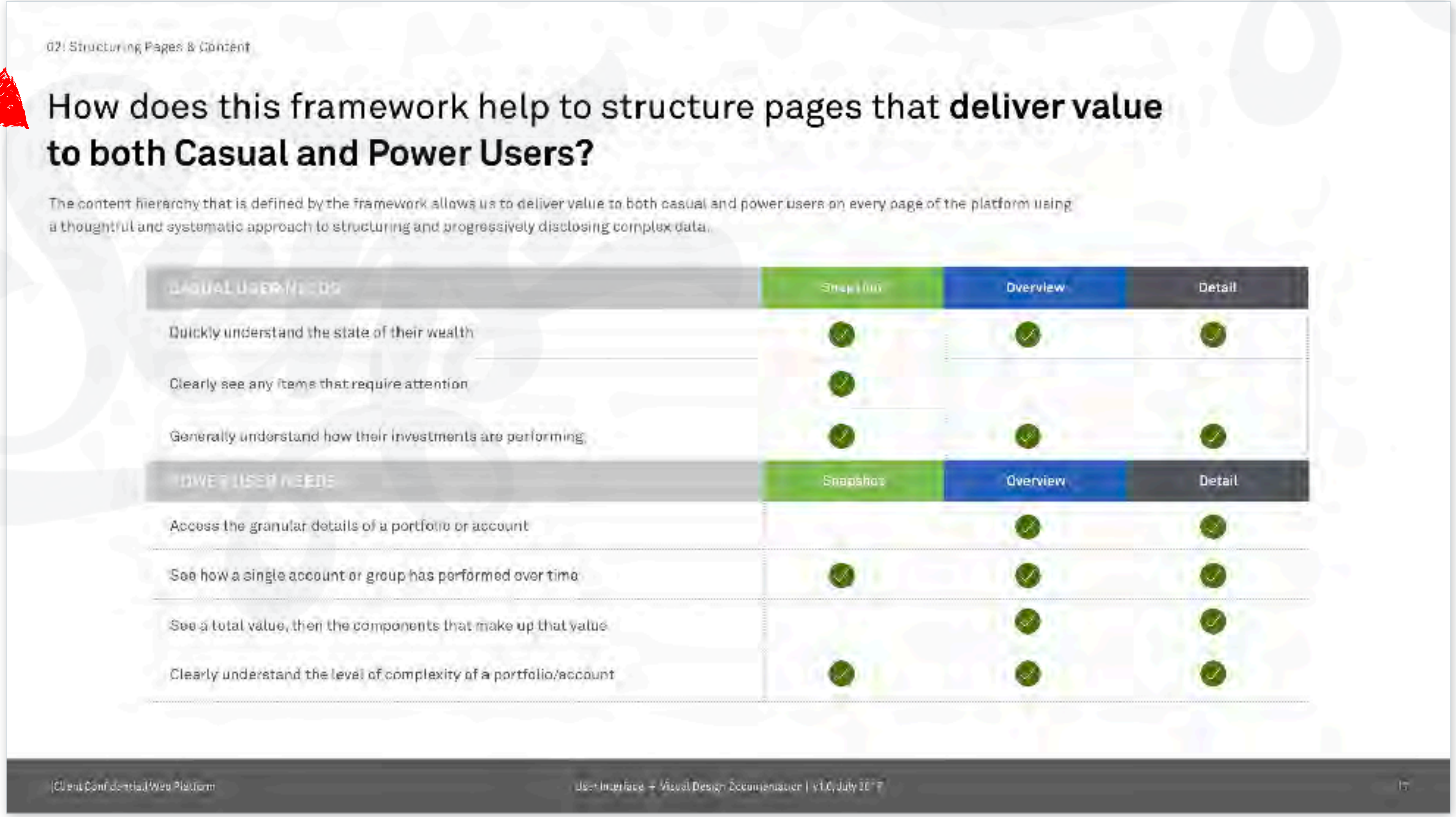
TL;DR **...ALL THE WAY DOWN TO SINGLE MODULES WITHIN A PAGE, INFORMING THE DESIGN OF MORE APPROACHABLE DATA TABLES.**

ONTOLOGY = Meaning

TAXONOMY = Organization

CHOREOGRAPHY = Presentation

The Outcome: IA with Meaning



02: Structuring Pages & Content

How does this framework help to structure pages that **deliver value to both Casual and Power Users?**

The content hierarchy that is defined by the framework allows us to deliver value to both casual and power users on every page of the platform using a thoughtful and systematic approach to structuring and progressively disclosing complex data.

CASUAL USER NEEDS	Snapshot	Overview	Detail
Quickly understand the state of their wealth	✓	✓	✓
Clearly see any items that require attention	✓		
Generally understand how their investments are performing	✓	✓	✓
POWER USER NEEDS	**Snapshot**	**Overview**	**Detail**
Access the granular details of a portfolio or account		✓	✓
See how a single account or group has performed over time	✓	✓	✓
See a total value, then the components that make up that value		✓	✓
Clearly understand the level of complexity of a portfolio/account	✓	✓	✓

TL;DR **ADDITIONALLY, OUR FRAMEWORK SERVED THE NEEDS OF BOTH USERS IN FINDING/CONSUMING CONTENT AND EXTRACTING MEANING.**

Key Takeaways:

CHOREOGRAPHY BRINGS CONTENT TOGETHER IN A WAY THAT IS MEANINGFUL TO OUR USERS!

Designing with intent...

Choreography is the act of designing how content is presented to our users...

+

...for our users.

...In ways that align to their needs, goals, and behaviors while considering their context.

2.0 | Next Steps

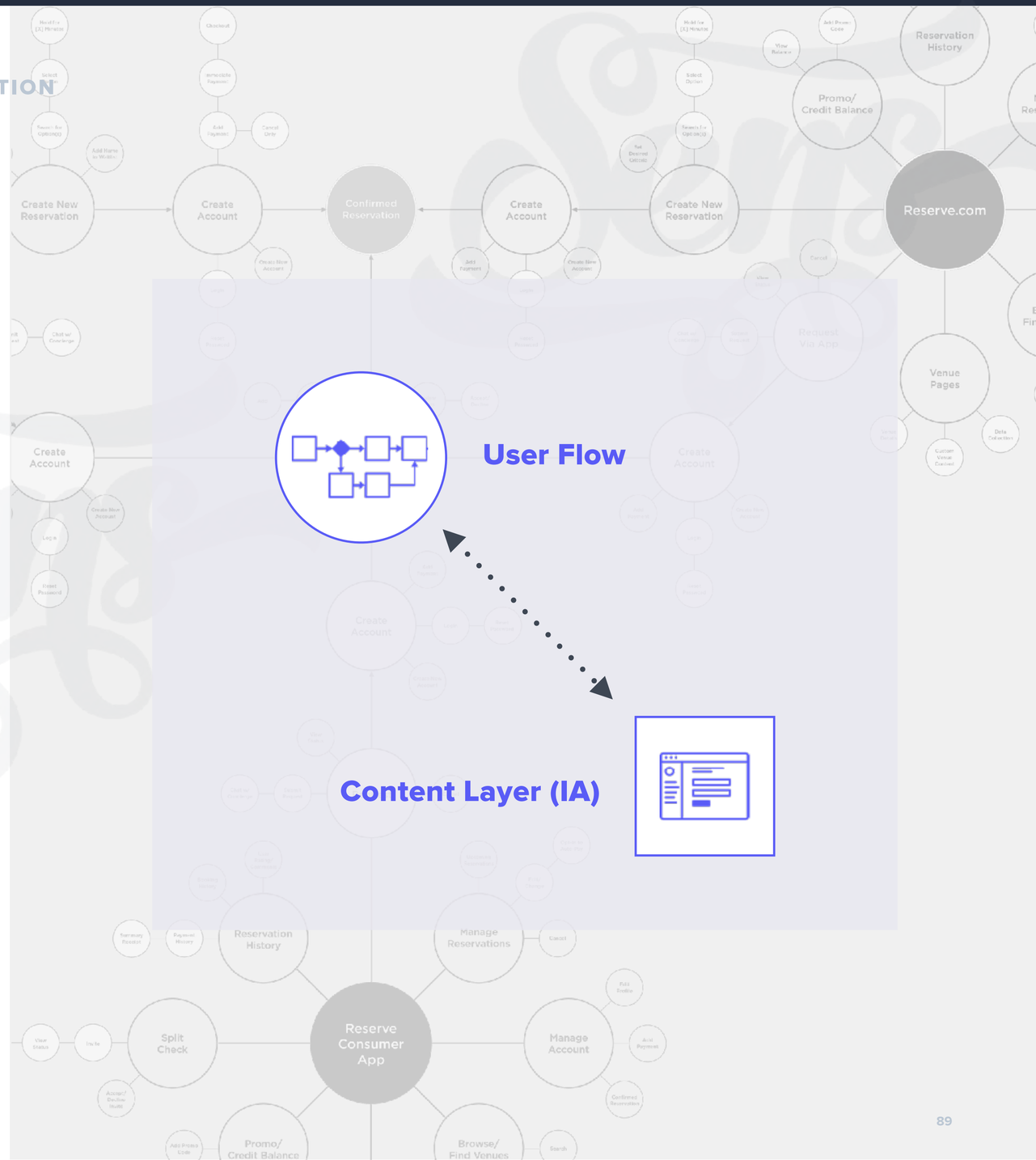
What you should start doing.

1. **Review this deck and ask questions,**
   (discuss with me or as a team over Slack)

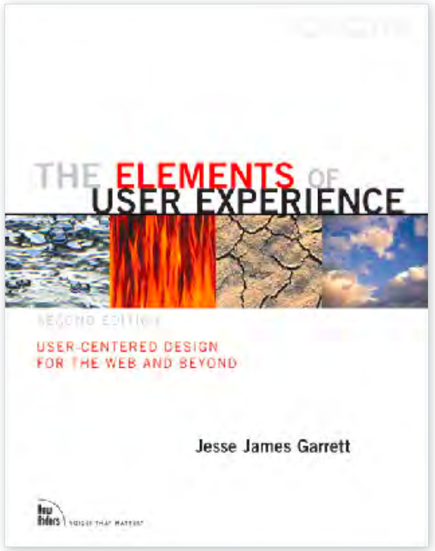
2. **Start considering the meaning of content**
   As you design, ask yourself what does this content mean to our user, what are they trying to accomplish? where are they experiencing it?

3. **Start connecting content design to a user flows**
   As you design, ask yourself does the design of my content align and enable the user flow that I am designing for?

4. **Start small, but think bigger**
   Establish an understanding of the concepts in this deck, but also start thinking about you can use IA heuristics, mind maps, etc... in your workflow.

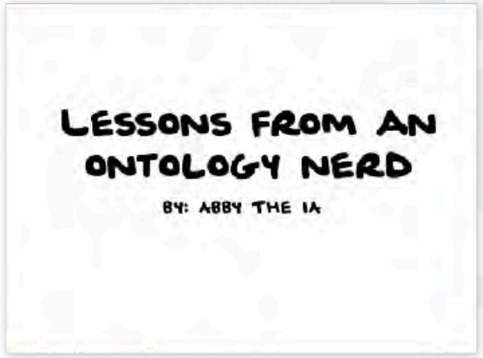


Additional Reading on this topic



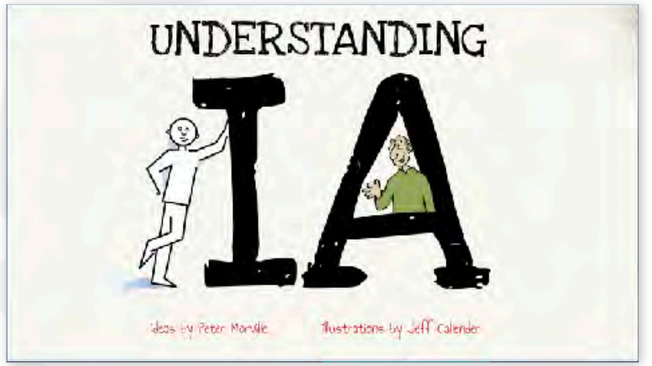
The Elements of User Experience

- Jesse James Garrett



Lessons From an Ontology Nerd

- Abby Covert



Understanding IA

- Peter Morville

How to Make Sense of any Mess

- Abby Covert

Have Questions? Need help?

Robert Sens, Human-centered interaction designer, problem solver, and community builder

- **Website:** www.robertsens.com
- **Behance:** www.behance.net/robertsens