
Objectives	<p>To promote an understanding of the spatial metaphors that govern a user's navigation within and between web sites. To explore methods for visually representing the web in multiple dimensions. To demonstrate the role of information architecture as a core component of the web design process.</p>
The Assignment	<p>The web is a virtual environment on an enormous scale with individual sites spanning thousands of pages. The primary role of an information architect is to establish a sense of stability and logic within the structure of a site. Visual diagrams communicate this structure. In general, three audience/needs relationships exist for web site diagrams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Users of the web site/quick overview of relevant options for navigation• Web site developers/full scope of site, including architecture, flow and functionality• Clients/visualize basic site structure and relationships <p>For this assignment, research the structure of an existing web site. Upon defining the scope and content, develop a representation of the site's information architecture. This overview should be constructed for an imaginary client, showing only basic structure and relationships of content.</p>
Presentation	<p>Using Adobe Illustrator or Macromedia Freehand, produce a printed chart that clearly communicates the architecture of the assigned site. The format for this presentation is open. The design should be appropriate to the information represented.</p> <p>Common design strategies include:</p> <p><i>Isometric box and lines structures:</i> allow maximum content in a minimum area</p> <p><i>Hieratical listings:</i> use type size, color, proximity, indent, line, symbol or icon</p> <p><i>Spoke and wheel relationships:</i> present layers of information around a single hub</p> <p><i>Thematic metaphors:</i> can occasionally enhance understanding—often limiting</p> <p>The final architecture should be mounted on #1024 Crescent matte board for presentation and critique.</p>
References	<p>Paul Kahn and Krzysztof Lenk's <i>Mapping Web Sites</i>, chapters 4 and 5</p> <p>Kelly Goto & Emily Cotler's <i>Web Redesign: Workflow that Works</i>, pages 88–102</p> <p>Jeffery Veen's <i>The Art and Science of Web Design</i>, pages 78–101</p> <p>Jakob Nielsen's <i>Designing Web Usability</i>, pages 198–207</p>
Schedule	<p>1/22 Assignment sheet distributed. Read references.</p> <p>1/27 Research and document site. Sketch presentation strategies.</p> <p>1/29 Refine sketches and begin work on final architecture.</p> <p>2/3 Workday. Prepare site map files for digital output.</p> <p>2/5 Final presentation and class critique.</p>