Content Organization
Communication 337

Organizational Systems

- Organizational Schemes
  - defines shared characteristics of content items & influences their logical groupings
- Organizational Structures
  - defines types of relationships between content items & groups
  — Rosenfeld & Morville, p. 26

Organizational Schemes

Exact versus Ambiguous

Exact

- Divide information into mutually exclusive and easily defined categories
- Examples:
  - Alphabetical
  - Chronological
  - Geographical
- User already knows what to look for

Alphabetic Scheme

CREATION ENGINE
Chronological Scheme

Geographic Scheme

Ambiguous

- Divide information into categories that defy exact categorization
- Examples:
  - Topical
  - Task-Oriented
  - Audience-Specific
  - Hybrid
- Best for browsing and associations

Topical Scheme

Task-Oriented Scheme
Organizational Structures

The primary ways users can navigate a site

Major Organizational Structures

- Hierarchy
- Database-oriented
- Hypertext
- Linear

Shallow and Broad
Information Architects

- Clarify the mission and vision
- Determine the content and functionality
- Define the organization, navigation, labeling, and searching systems
- Develop strategies for accommodating change and growth

– Rosenfeld & Morville, p. 11

Mental Models

- How a user thinks about and approaches their tasks and goals
- The goal of IA is to match the user's mental models to the information structure

Information Architecture

![Diagram showing site content and audience goals](image)

Miller's Magical Number Seven

The so-called “Rule of Five” is really based on George Miller’s 1956 paper “The Magical Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two: Some Limits on Our Capacity for Processing Information”