

GOT IA?

Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer



www.stevenheitman-ia.com

January 2010



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Section 1.0 What is an Information Architect?.....	3
Section 2.0 IA Profile.....	4
Section 3.0 What are my IA skills?	5
Section 4.0 What is The NS Model?.....	6
Section 5.0 What is The IA Model?.....	8
Section 6.0 Doing Information Architecture.....	11
Section 7.0 Matrix for Usability Testing.....	14
Section 8.0 Reviews—The IA Model	15



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Section 1.0

What is an Information Architect?

Definition: Information Architect

The Information Architect is responsible for the design, organization of the Website's information and content within a Website, including writing design reports, writing statements of work reports, researching and writing personas including user scenarios, drawing wire frame mockups, producing flow charts and schematics (Visio), designing navigational systems and search functions, prototyping, card sorting sessions, questionnaires, focus groups, usability testing (to include user-centered design practices and "best practices" prior to final implementation and using The IA Model), and project management. The Information Architect works with graphic designers, interface designers, HTML programmers or computer programmers, content developers, subject matter experts, et al., and stakeholders on projects to build Websites or other digital design products.



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Section 2.0

IA Profile

Are you looking for an Information Architect, User Experience Designer with a wide range of relevant skills?

I can assist you. My focus has been on architecting corporate Websites, digital design products: Design research; to concept generation; user scenarios; wire frame mockups—mapping and diagramming; deliverables; prototyping; usability testing; implementation; and system testing.

Working on projects from the ground up—to final implementation—I understand the full cycle for completing high-quality design products. My Credentials are in Information Architecture and Design.

Doing Information Architecture for Websites ultimately helps end users in the long run. Because of my expertise in Information Architecture and Design, I work with clients on developing products compliant with user-centered design principles or “best practices.”

While digital design products may have technical limitations, producing high-quality Websites that work right for end users involves—prior to implementation—doing Information Architecture, User Experience Design specific to what works for end users.



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Section 3.0

What are my IA skills?

Information Architect & Interaction Design Skills

- Observing psychological aspects of end users
- Structuring information on Websites, findability, taxonomy
- Incorporating wayfinding tools and affordances into IxD
- Designing fully integrated navigational systems
- Using stickums for conceptual brainstorming
- Creating end user flow charts, site maps, schematic diagrams in VISIO
- Writing annotated wire frame mockups
- Developing high-quality questionnaires and surveys
- Interviewing subject matter experts and end users
- Writing usability testing reports and IA documentation
- Making IA recommendations and implementing my findings
- Implementing IA best practices for digital structures
- Incorporating user-centered design practices into projects
- Complying with Section 508 ADA as necessary
- Creating documents via desktop publishing and PowerPoint presentations
- Prototyping using Dreamweaver, Photoshop or ImageReady (for optimization of digital images)
- Coding HTML using BBEdit and developing Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)
- Using project management skills to deliver projects on time, MS Project and MS Office
- Negotiating, outsourcing, managing projects
- Determining goals for successful outcome on team or projects



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Section 4.0

What is The NS¹ Model?

1. Hierarchical navigational systems
2. Global navigational Systems
3. Local navigational systems
4. Integrated navigational systems
5. Remote navigational systems
6. Ad hoc navigational systems
7. Search engines in Websites

¹ Navigational Systems



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Conclusion—The NS Model

The effective types of Navigational Systems used for navigation within Websites, Web pages, and subsites are namely Navigational Systems that serve the end user. The main goal is to enable the end user to navigate effectively in order to obtain the information while being online. In order to explore this matter, the discussion of ineffective types of different Navigational Systems used as integrated Navigational Systems was researched and reviewed. It is important to use integrated Navigational Systems that coherently mesh because it promotes user-centered design for end users.



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Section 5.0

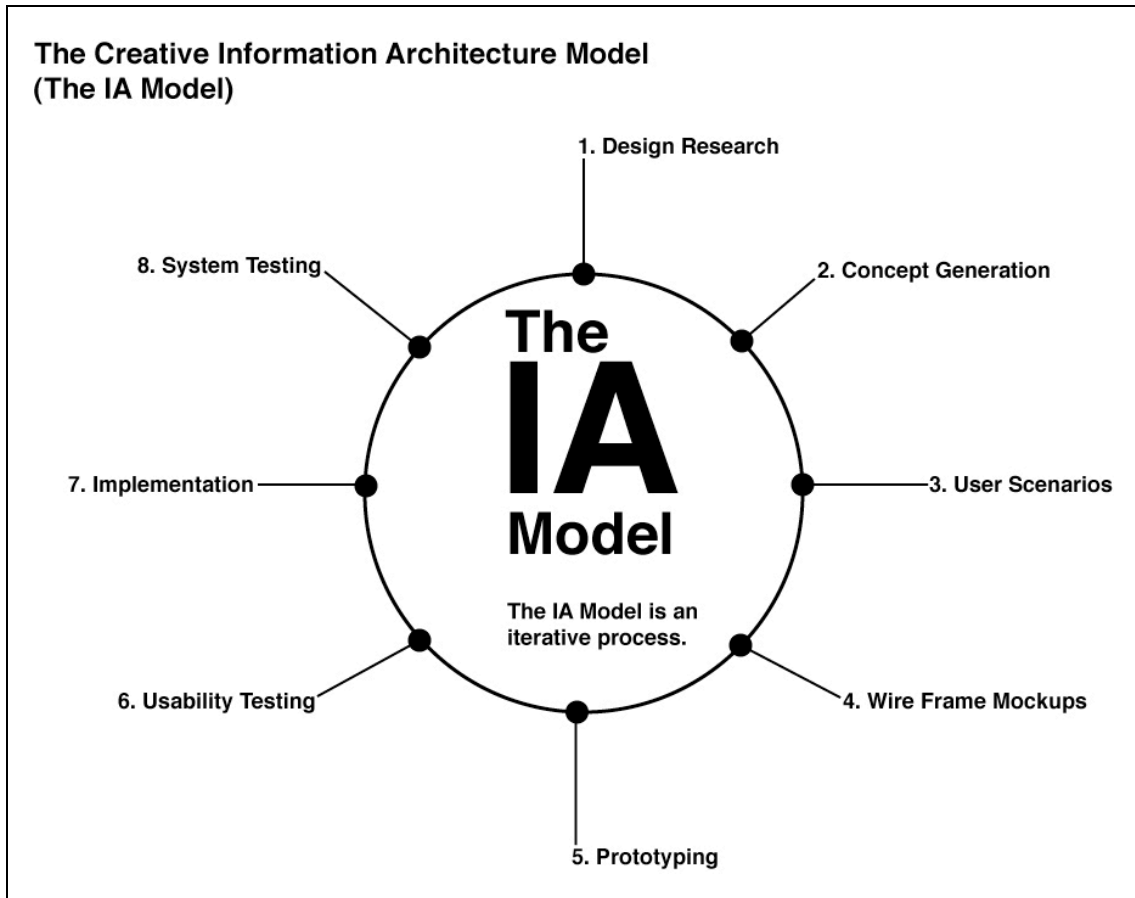
What is The IA Model?

1. Design research
2. Concept generation
3. User scenarios
4. Wire frame mockups
5. Prototyping
6. Usability testing
7. Implementation
8. Systems testing



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?





Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Conclusion—The IA Model

The IA Model is comprised of eight steps:

1. Design Research,
2. Concept Generation,
3. User Scenarios,
4. Wire Frame Mockups,
5. Prototyping,
6. Usability Testing,
7. Implementation, and
8. System Testing.

This Thesis Report explains the step-by-step process for successfully using The IA Model. Since Instructional Designers use The ADDIE Model, it helps them by providing a systematic approach to instructional design on projects. Since Information Architecture is not a regulated industry, Information Architects or others do not really have a model to use for projects. Therefore, The IA Model provides a systematic approach for everyone to use on projects. While it is true complicated processes and procedures have to be followed, The IA Model provides a solid framework and excellent model that anyone can use on projects. The IA Model provides a systematic approach for building Websites and/or other digital design products. Using The IA Model, it promotes user-centered design for end users.



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Section 6.0

Doing Information Architecture

The Information Architect starts out by defining your Website's goals.

Design research begins by asking questions:

1. What is the mission, goal, or purpose of your organization?
 2. What are the short-term and long-term goals for your Website?
 3. Do you know who the intended audiences will be?
 4. Why will people (end users) use your Website?
- The Information Architect develops a list of questions together and interview people on a one-to-one basis or at a company meeting. After one receives feedback from everyone involved, do begin to write a design plan.
 - The Information Architect defines user experience. Now it is time to interview people in the marketing department or other departments. Then write a few personas and eventually user scenarios.



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

- What is a persona?
- A persona is a fictional person who represents a major user group for your site. Usually, an Information Architect creates 8 to 20-plus personas with photos, depending on the complexity of the Website.
- The next step might be to do a competitive analysis or a case study about your competitor's Websites, including documentation about functionality, style, design, color, information architecture, and navigational systems. This information can be included in the design plan. At this point in the process, it is important to think about the content and structure of the Website. Then create a list of content and functional requirements.
- From the design plan, identify the content and functional requirements necessary for your Website. Now start to organize your content and define the Website's architecture (Technical Writing). This is the basis for defining the major sections of the Website as well as the headers for each section.
- Do document this information in a design plan. Think about exploring the use of metaphors as a way of organizing information and navigational systems in terms of using icons.



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

- Can an end user understand what your icons mean?
- At this point in the process, do create a site map, blueprint, and/or flow chart to document Website's structure (Visio). Then navigational systems are designed and developed into the overall structure of your Website.
- In the design plan, do document your Website's structure and global and local navigational systems. It helps to have graphic designers, art directors, as well as creative directors involved in the design process.
- Start by drawing wire frame mockups that show the structure for a Web page. Wire frame mockups visually represent the structure of a Web page—sketched out by the Information Architect using (Adobe Create Suite), and assists graphic designers to create a graphically designed Web page. Wire frame mockups can be sketched out, or develop working prototypes (Rapid Prototyping).
- Document details in your design plan. Now the team is ready to build a Website. Do not forget to do usability testing to make sure design product works for end users. Always include end users at the beginning of any project to incorporate usability into your design product (user-centered design).



Section 7.0

Matrix for Usability Testing

Section __. Website: Matrix for Information Architecture Research Questions:	3 Excellent	2 Good	1 Poor
Ease of Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity of Web page design • Predictable and clear navigation • 1-3 clicks to get to information • Aesthetically pleasing design 			
Remarks:			
User Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legibility and reading speed • Good use of the screen in all resolutions • Printer-friendliness • Browser compatibility • Respect interface standards • Icons work or do not work • Use of colors 			
Remarks:			
Practical Value <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative homepage • Contact information • Search and search results • Up to date and correct information • Language and copywriting appropriate/not appropriate 			
Remarks:			



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Section 8.0

Excellent Reviews—The IA Model

It does a good job of introducing Information Architecture concepts to a student, and offers numerous modes of communication, including illustrations, links, diagrams, and citations from authoritative sources....

...an excellent courseware module and a solid introduction to the topic of Information Architecture.

Mr. Christian Crumlish
Senior Consultant
Senior Information Architect

Great stuff!

Ms. Natalie Buda
Navigation Arts
Director of User Experience
Senior Information Architect



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Excellent Reviews—The IA Model

His work in his Thesis Report and detailed analysis, instructional design goals and objectives, and online IA tutorial are on target. The tutorial works well for delivery of instructional materials....

Ms. Megan Descalso
Writer, Editor

I'm really impressed with the site. It's got a very professional look and feel to it. I'm impressed by the strong visual/graphic contrast. It helps to differentiate areas of the tutorial. I also liked that you employed an engaging and reassuring writing style. It fits with the intended audience. It's a smart move, because the subject matter and the scope of the tutorial could be perceived as a little intimidating to a beginner. For someone like me, who has little to no experience with this subject matter, the writing style was comforting. I felt at ease embarking on the tutorial. Nice work. Really well done!

Mr. Raymond Angelo
Sun Microsystems
Technical Writer



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Excellent Reviews—The IA Model

Through analysis of the researcher's work, it is congruent with my experiences in regard to using Websites. The researcher's knowledge base of Information Architecture, usability testing, and navigational systems speaks to the importance, significance, of user-centered design. Steven's research is extremely coherent, valid, and valuable regarding Information Architecture concepts and inventions on navigational systems.

Ms. Deborah A. Jacobs
Widgetry
Chief Executive Officer
Product Designer



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Excellent Reviews—The IA Model

<p>Dr. Brian Beatty, Ph.D. Professor San Francisco State University Department of Instructional Technologies</p> <p>The IA Model</p> <p>APPROVED</p>	<p>Dr. Gene Michaels, Ph.D. Professor San Francisco State University Department of Instructional Technologies</p> <p>The IA Model</p> <p>APPROVED</p>
--	---



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Excellent Reviews—The IA Model

<p>Graduate Committee San Francisco State University College of Education</p> <p>The IA Model</p> <p>APPROVED</p>	<p>IA CERTIFICATION</p> <p>for Steven Heitman Senior Information Architect Specialist</p> <p>The IA Model</p> <p>IA MAEd</p> <p>San Francisco State University Department of Instructional Technologies College of Education</p> <p>Dr. Gene Michaels, Ph.D. Dr. Peggy Benton, Ed.D. Dr. Kim Foreman, Ph.D. Dr. Brian Beatty, Ph.D.</p> <p>May 24, 2008</p> <p>APPROVED</p>
---	---



Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer

GOT IA?

Steven Heitman
Information Architect Specialist
User Experience Designer
www.stevenheitman-ia.com