

- What do you do with a content inventory?
 - Use it to work with managers, content developers, and all team members.

17. Perform card sorting:

- What is card sorting?
 - Card sorting is a way to involve users in grouping information for a Website (see Figure 11).
- What are the benefits of card sorting?
- It helps Information Architects to learn how end users' think about content and how they would organize a Website. **What are the different types of card sorting?**
 - **Open Card Sort—**
 - An open card sort is typically done when you want to learn how users group content and understand the terms or labels users call each category.
 - **Closed Card Sort—**
 - A closed card sort typically works best when you are working with a pre-defined set of categories and you want to learn how users sort content items into each category.
 - A closed sort works well after an open sort. By conducting an open card sort first, you can begin to identify categories of content. You can

then use a closed card sort to see how well the category labels work.

- How do you conduct a card sorting session?
 - List content topics or types of information on Website.
 - Write each topic on a separate index card.
 - Limit yourself to 50 to 100 index cards; use blank cards; number index cards in bottom corner or on back and process—
 1. Select participants that represent broad range of end users.
 2. Plan for about an hour for each session.
 3. Have enough space for participants to work in with cards.
 4. Plan to have a note taker present to take notes.
 5. Pay participants and treat them well (see Figure 11 on next page for details for doing card sorting with participants).

**The Creative Information Architecture Model (step 4 of The IA Model)—
Part of IA Research**

How does card sorting work?

After you select (or recruit) a group of participants who closely resemble your user population, you should:

1. Give each participant (or two participants working together) a set of index cards. Each card should include one topic from your Website (first photograph).
2. Ask participants to group the cards in a way that makes sense to them. Many participants start by placing the first card on the table and then look at the second card to see whether it belongs in the same group or if it deserves its own category—and so on through the set of cards (second photograph).
3. After participants have grouped the cards, you can ask them to name or label each group (third photograph).



Figure 11: Card Sorting—Step-by-Step Process

Source: <http://www.usability.gov/design/cardsort.html>, c. 2008

- Conducting card sorting session with participants—
 1. Show participants cards; home page and categories; explain you want them to group cards in ways that make sense to them.
 2. Ask participants to talk out loud because you want their thoughts.
 3. Let participants work to organize cards in a way that makes sense to them and for additional hyperlinks or other documents.
 4. At end, if too many home pages, ask if or how they could be combined.
 5. Provide additional colored cards and ask to name each group. What words would they use to name or label items?
 6. At end, pay participants and thank them.
 7. Analyze data at end by recording number down quickly; make a detailed site map or other Information Architecture flow charts or diagrams (see Figures 12-17); less detailed analysis use notes; more complex analysis use computing software for a spreadsheet.