

Information Architecture: Case Study for Youth Law Center



IA Design & Usability: Case Study

Topic: Information Architecture: Case Study for Youth Law Center

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INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE: Case Study for Youth Law Center

My Role and Client Deliverables

- Project management
- Information architecture
- Research and development
- Writing case study and user scenarios
- Producing wire frame mockups
- Producing flow chart
- Website design and production
- HTML coding
- Coordinating events and client presentations
- Brainstorming with group
- Developing templates and forms
- IA is not responsible for maintaining Youth Law Center's Website

Information Architecture (IA)—What I Did

The main navigational system consists of ten main categories that are included on every Web page. The other sub categories are ad hoc links for easy access. Providing consistent information architecture is important to this Website's structure, end users can easily acquire the information online. Wire frame mockups show the Web page designs after it was developed by our team (see Figures 1, 2).

Main Navigational System

- Home
- What's new
- Who we are
- What we do
- How you can help
- Current publications
- Annual report
- YLC cases
- Contact YLC
- Index (site map)

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Wire Frame Mockup (Shows Main Navigational System on Left Side)

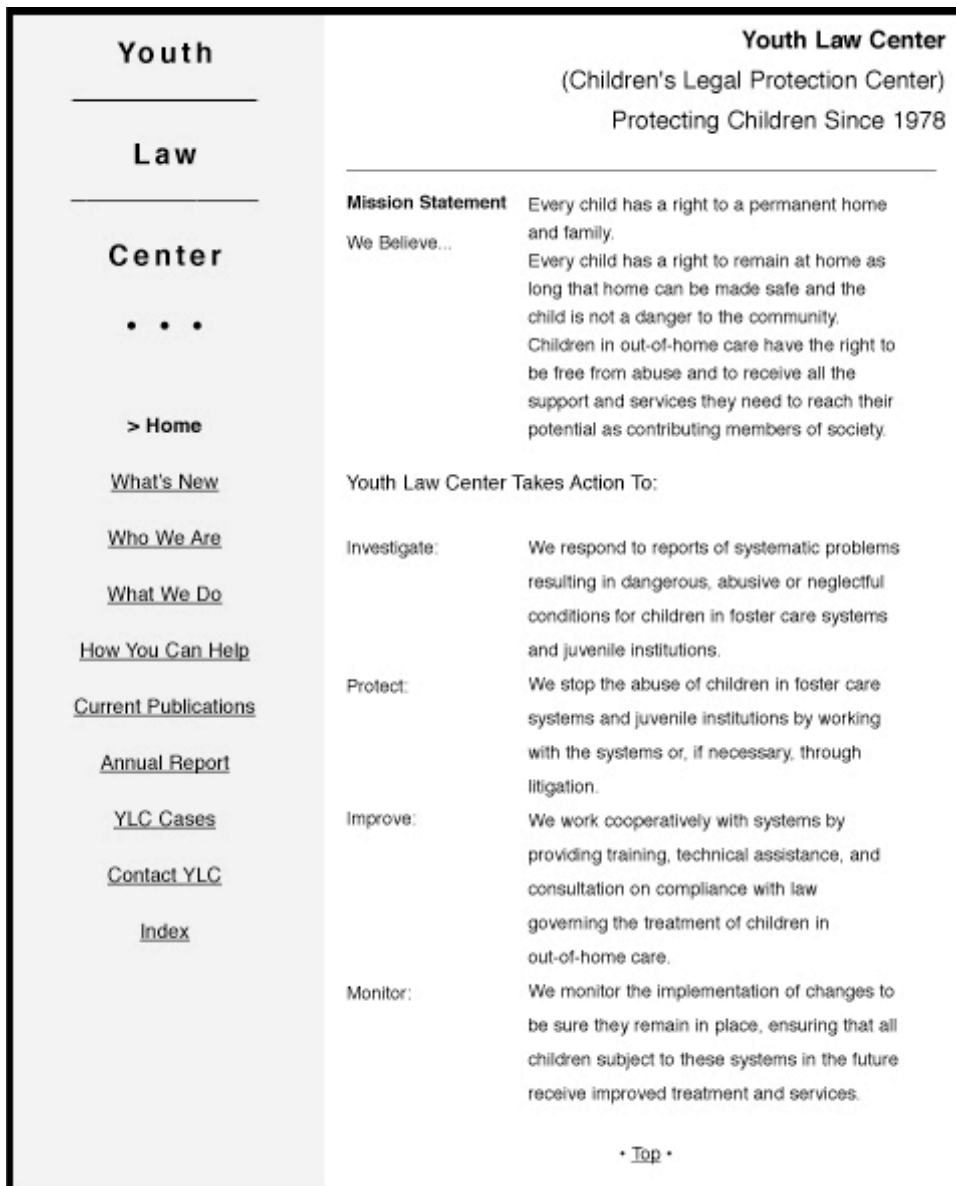


Figure 1: Wire Frame Mockup of YLC's Homepage

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Wire Frame Mockup (Shows Sub Web Page, Ad Hoc Links)

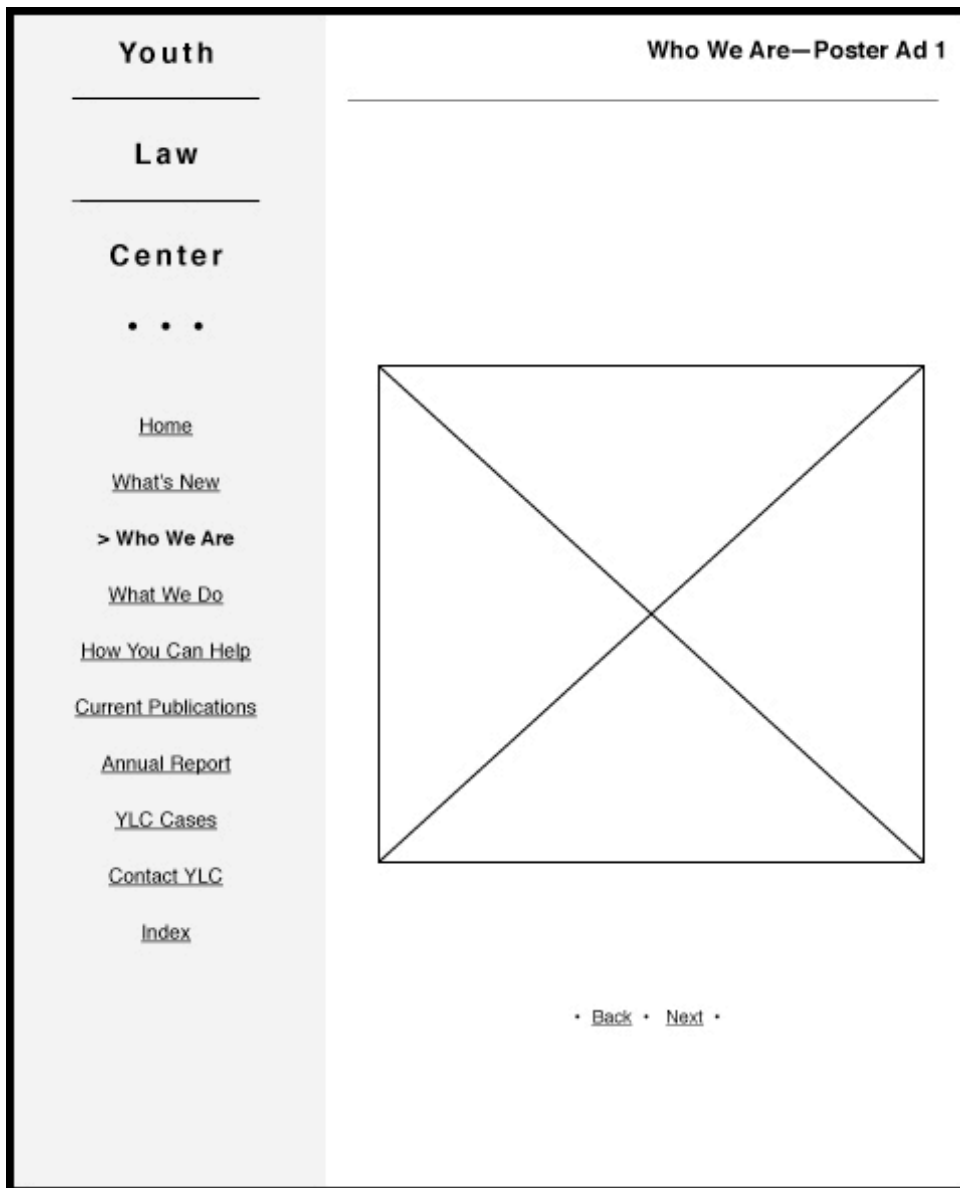


Figure 2: Wire Frame Mockup of YLC's Sub Web Page

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INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE:

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Project Description

The Youth Law Center is a non-profit agency in San Francisco, California. They provide legal services and protection to children, investigating to monitoring implementation of changes in the legal code for children—to protect them. The team did the complete job on designing their Website from scratch. Steven Heitman developed information architecture and did project management, content development, technical writing, and HTML coding.

Target Audiences

The target audiences are:

- Judges
- Attorneys
- General public
- Children

Statement of Purpose

To provide the necessary information about the Youth Law Center's services, so end users may be informed quickly because user centered design was incorporated into the overall structure of this Website. The purpose of Youth Law Center is to respond to reports of systematic problems resulting in dangerous, abusive, or neglectful conditions for children in foster care systems and juvenile institutions.

Main Objectives

Information architecture is to be consistent and easy for end users to use while surfing online—information architecture provides a stable framework for this Website—consolidate and organize new content more efficiently, while incorporating client's deliverables into Website.

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Color(s) Scheme

We will use this color scheme for Website, per client's direction (see Figure 3):



Figure 3: Colors

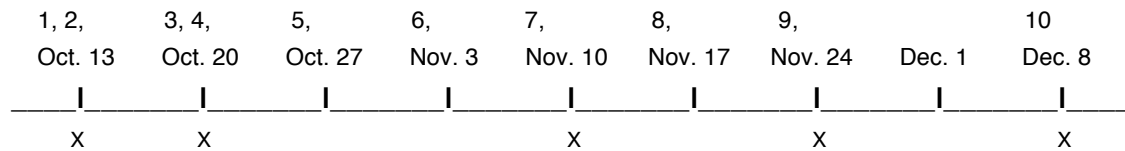
Colors

- **Text** (dark red) #660000
- **Link** (red) #FF0000
- **VLink** (dark rose) #CC6666
- **ALink** (dark pink) #996666
- **Background** (white) #FFFFFF
- **Sidebar** (light gray) #CCCCCC

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Schedule for Project



Scheduled meetings with client as indicated on matrix (with X); other meetings arranged via phone conferences.
 Scheduled meetings with team members every class meeting and as required outside of class for production.
 Scheduled meetings with my supervisor every class meeting.
 My role for this project was Information Architect, Researcher, Project Manager, and Production Artist.

1. Website development per client's needs	6. Implementation
2. Information Architecture, plan report	7. Usability testing, debug
3. Photographs, PDFs, text	8. Beta test
4. Scanning, optimization	9. Client approves project—revisions
5. Dreamweaver, BBEdit, HTML coding	10. Completion of project

Figure 4: Schedule for Building Website

Meetings with Client

We have already had two meetings with the client. They have decided on their content and developed text more fully per my recommendations. The flow chart was ready for review at our second meeting. The client will have text ready for use in a MS Word document. The client told us they have to produce their PDF documents for us to include on the Website. They have no idea about what is necessary or required for the production of a Website, so we have to give them step-by-step instructions about the process of Website design, developing information architecture solutions for their Website.

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HTML Editor

We are doing the HTML code from scratch and then importing it into Dreamweaver (HTML documents), including development of templates and forms.

Flow Chart and Information Architecture

We have to meet with the client to discuss the information architecture, including the structure on the newly developed flow chart by Steven Heitman, Information Architect, (an easier to see flow chart, see Figure 5, in a larger format is included online at http://www.stevenheitman-ia.com/html/ia/yjc/html/yjc_3.html and in this PDF).

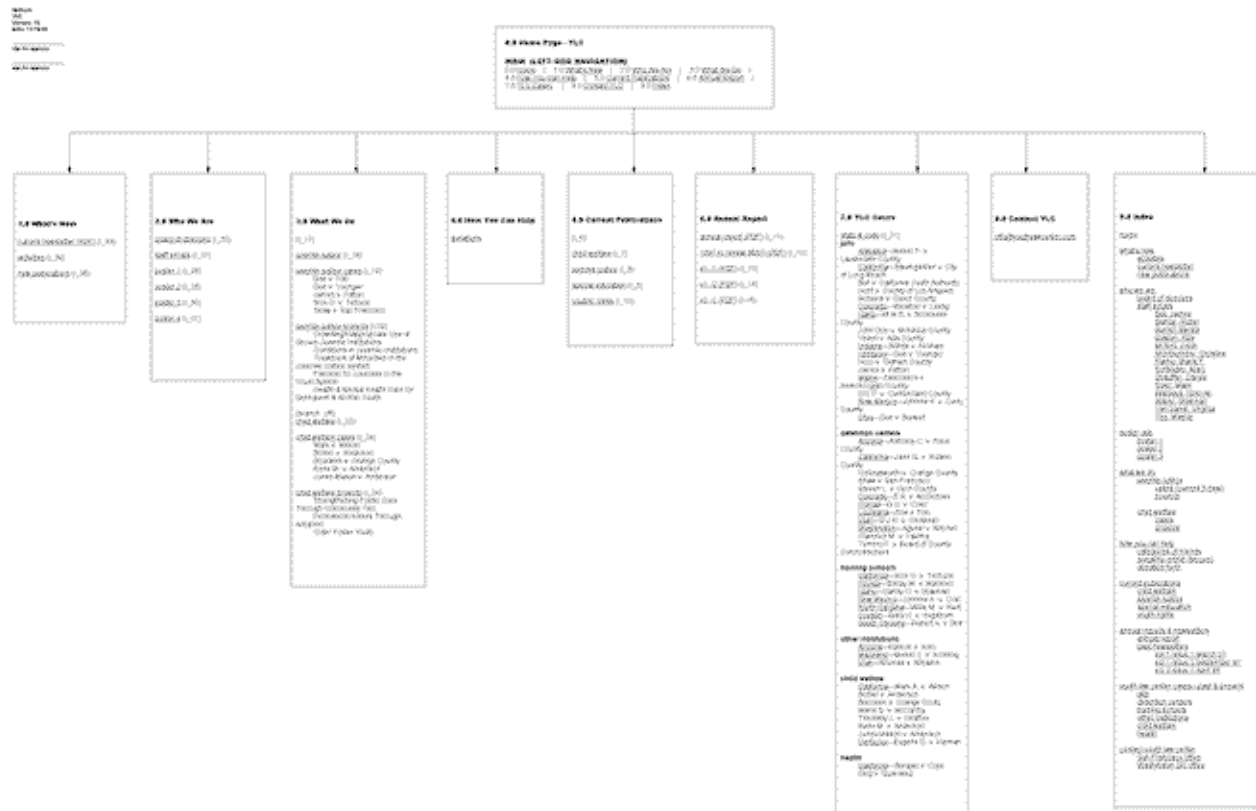


Figure 5: Flow Chart for YLC

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Interface Design

The client has no logo or current branding established. They cannot afford to pay the photographer for his previous photos, so his photos cannot be used on this Website. They told us they have no legal right to reuse them. This client has never been able to afford to pay for a graphic designer (because they are a non-profit agency) for any work, and this is the reason there is no graphic design or branding done on previous projects. The reason there is no branding or graphic design incorporated into the Website's design on this project, which makes for bland Web pages as communicated to client.

Content

The client has agreed to have their technical writer produce text, per my direction and in an MS Word document for easy access for our team. They will have it delivered to me by messenger later on in the week when it is ready.

Size of Web Page

The Web pages and sub pages are approximately 550 pixels by 650 pixels. This is considered a good design for end users who have small computer screens and easy to print out. In addition, we can use PDF files for the newsletters for easy download to end user. This is for easy access and effortless printing at any time by end users. At the time of this project (1998), end users usually did not have large computer screens to use; now end users, most likely, have larger screens to use for viewing.

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Two User Scenarios

User Scenario No. 1

Mr. Justin O'Reily, Esq., is a judge in San Francisco, California, works primarily with children's cases. He likes having access to a Website where all the legal code is organized by geographical location. He says, "Makes it easy for me to look up legal codes, and saves time." He told me it was a lot of "legal codes to remember." His typical day is hectic. He sees so many cases that it is difficult to keep track of them all. He believes it would be nice to be able to refer people to the Website because "the information on it is very useful and valuable." He does not have a lot of time to watch graphics download. He remarked, "Better to have quick access." His surfing experience has increased significantly within the last 2-3 years. However, he still has trouble when surfing online since he has to learn about how to use a new Website under time constraints. "Sometimes I can't find what I'm looking for...if I can't find it fast, I usually give up." He uses the Internet at least 3-5 times per week for 20-30 minutes via a slow Internet connection.

User Scenario No. 2

Ms. Johnson, Esq., is an attorney at Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro—a large law firm in San Francisco, California. She does a lot of pro bono work for clients. She has extensive experience using computers and Internet. She says, "Having a Website to refer clients to will be great for them...very good idea as it will cut down on the time I have spend explaining legal issues to them." She believes the Website should be simple "without too many graphics" for fast download to end users. She uses the Internet about an hour every day. She has extensive experiencing in surfing online and knows how to do research via the Internet.

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Conclusion: Successful Completion of Project

My client's feedback was extremely positive about my Information Architecture skills and work done on their project, including providing me with a letter of recommendation. See Figures 6, 7 below of final product.



Figure 6: Youth Law Center's Homepage



Figure 7: Who We Are—Poster Ad 1