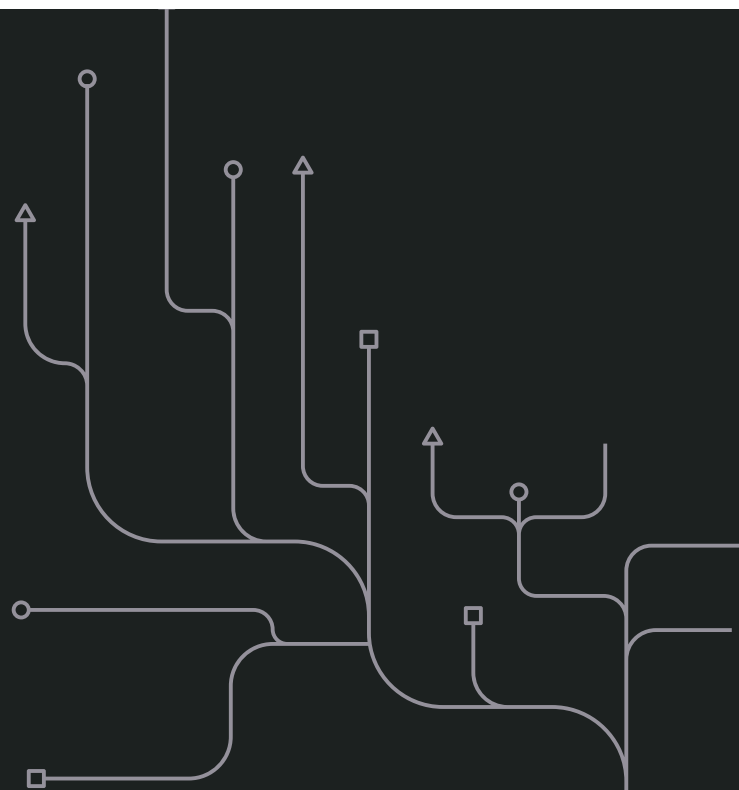


# INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

Kai Walker



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# INTRO

1



## **What is Information Architecture (IA)?**

There is no exact definition of IA, but it is generally viewed as the structuring and ordering of information. Below are some quotes to provide a working definition:

**"It's about creating groups that make sense to the people who use them." (Spencer 17)**

**"Information architecture is the way that we arrange the parts of something to make it understandable." (Covert 10)**

**"A blueprint and navigational aid to the content of information-rich systems."  
("Information Architecture")**



### **What is the purpose of this white paper?**

This is an informative summary for my classmates to know more about IA and its importance within graphic design.

### **Why did I choose it?**

I chose IA as my topic for this report since it is an integral part in my interest in UX writing and technical writing.

### **Why is it important?**


Without IA, there is no logical way to present or communicate knowledge.

### **What does it entail?**

It is a process of considering how to group pages or sections of content and objects while also evaluating the overall navigation (searchability/findability) and hierarchy.

### **Who does this?**

Anyone can take on this role, but those familiar with graphic design, user experience (UX), or technical writing may learn it easier and quicker due to skills they have already acquired. By taking on this role, they are formally considered an information architect.





### **What should be considered?**

This is a heavily interdisciplinary field and due to this, there is a wide variety jobs, from apps and software to websites and documentation. One architect's project may look radically different from another's.

### **What mindset is needed?**

Since this field evolves with digital spaces, it requires someone who is open and creative.

## **How does it relate to digital rhetoric?**

“We’re talking about the challenges inherent in language and representation. No document fully and accurately represents the intended meaning of its author. No label or definition totally captures the meaning of a document. And no two readers experience or understand a particular document or definition or label in quite the same way... And here’s the paradox of defining information architecture: by defining and clarifying semantic concepts, IA makes them more understandable and findable, but at a cost, because definitions are so imperfect and limiting at the same time.” (Rosenfeld et al. 24)

## **How does it apply to digital media production?**

Seeing as digital media production is about the creation of content, information architecture is applied through its curation of it.

# INTERLUDE

2





**1996**

**Richard Saul Wurman (graphic designer) creates the term “information architecture” which can be seen in his book *Information Architects* (“Information Architecture”; “Richard Saul Wurman”).**

**1998**

**Peter Morville and Louis Rosenfeld co-wrote and published *Information Architecture for the World Wide Web* (“Information Architecture”).**

**2010**

**Dan Brown introduces the eight principles of IA (Rosenfeld et al.).**

**2015**

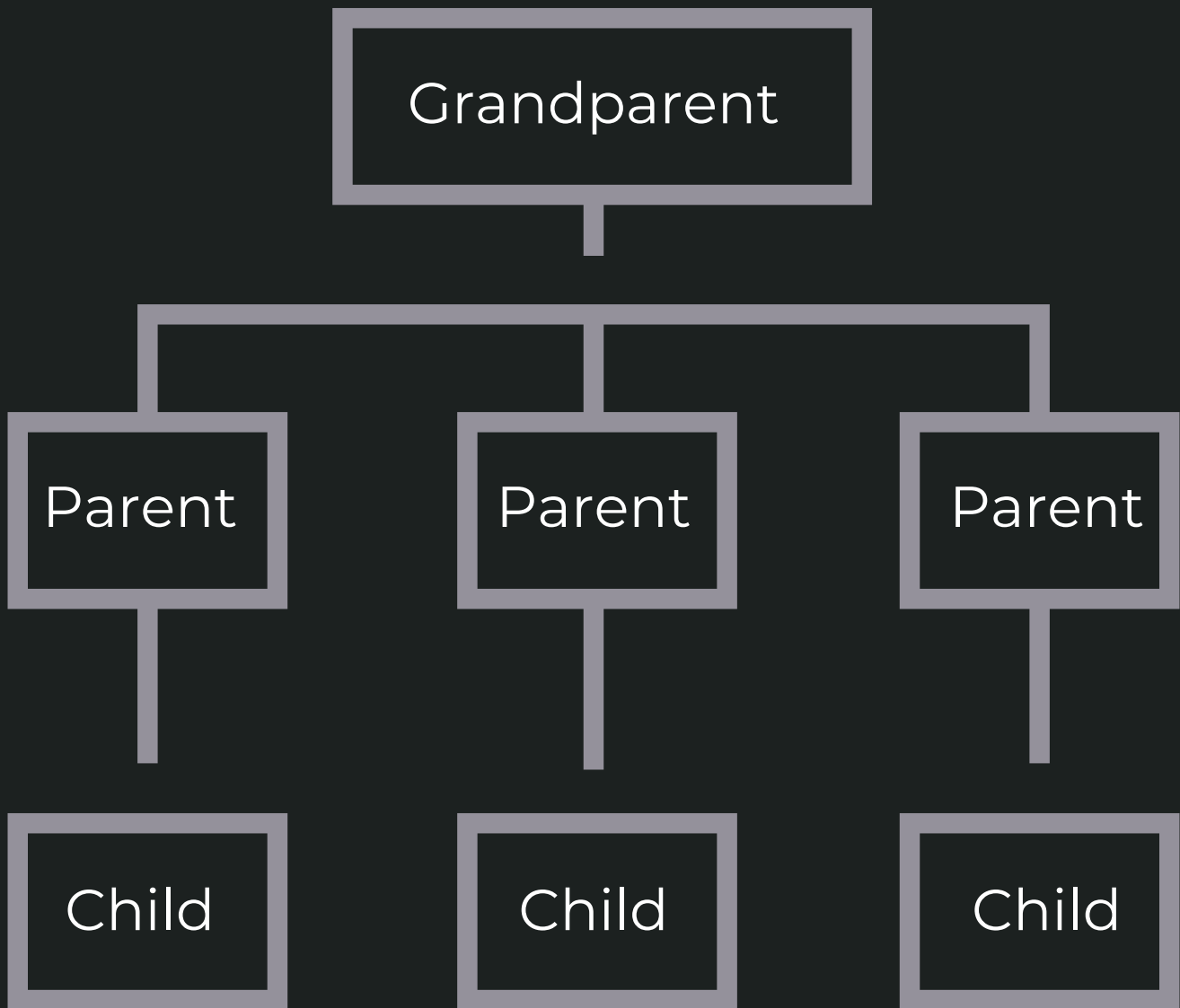
**The latest edition of *Information Architecture for the World Wide Web* is released (“Information Architecture”).**

**User-experience**

**Graphic Design**

**Information Architecture**

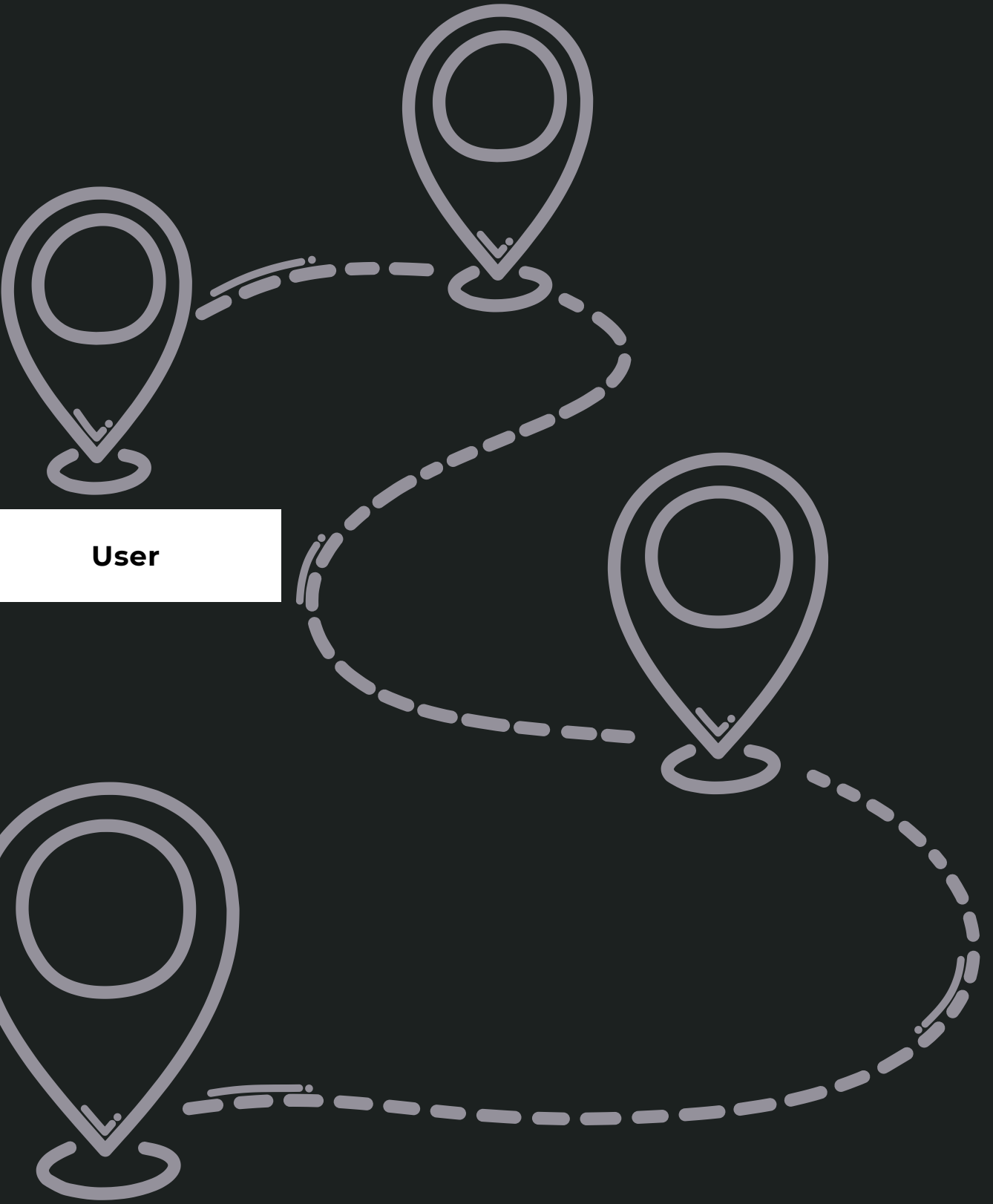
## Visual Hierarchy/ Site Map



**Roadmap**

**User**

**Destination**



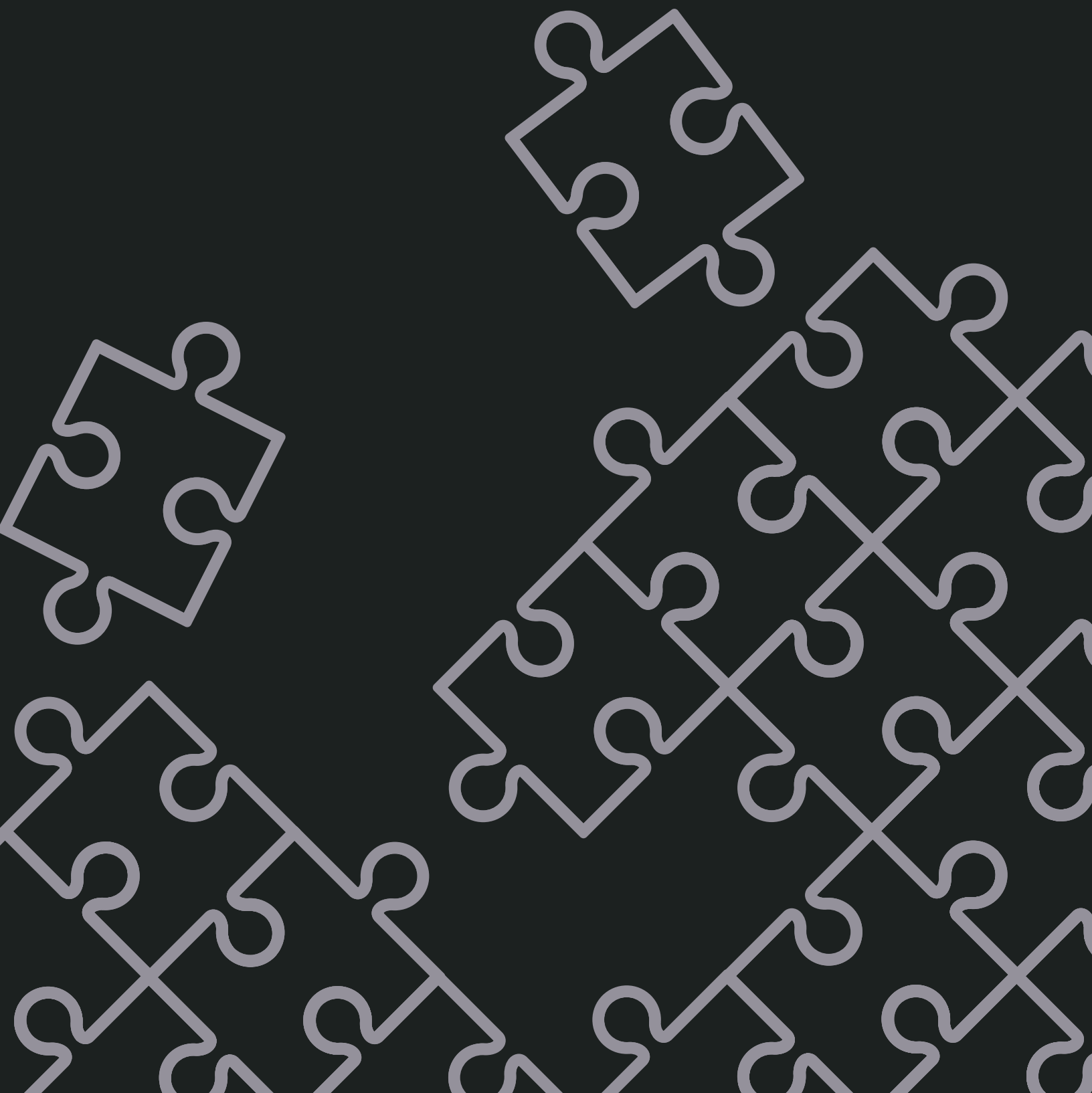


**Hyperlink**

**Embedded Link**



**Both are navigational options to lead users to more information or a new page/section.**



## The eight principles are:

- Objects - the behaviors and attributes of content
- Choices - presenting the user limited but relevant choices
- Disclosures - giving essential but brief information for a user to make a choice
- Exemplars - content examples
- Front Doors - every part of the website has clear and easy navigation
- Multiple Classification - filters, categories, sub-menus, search bar, footer, etc.
- Focused Navigation - streamlined and consistent navigation
- Growth - built-in flexibility and scalability

(“What Is Information Architecture & Why Does It Matter?”)

## **Essential terminology to know are:**

- User - who will be interacting with or using the content
- User Experience (UX) - the overall feelings and experiences from the user
- Cognitive load - the amount of information a user can recall within a specific length of time
- Gestalt principles - common design choices such as proximity, continuity, and similarity
- Classification system - how a person categorizes content such as chronological, hierarchical, and thematic
- Placement - analyzing how and where content will be presented
- Content audit - examining all content to determine its usability and relevancy

("The Difference Between Information Architecture (IA) and Navigation"; "What Is Information Architecture & Why Does It Matter?")







**Information architecture's purpose is to structure and order information logically so that it can be comprehensible and usable. Without it, information would be a chaotic and difficult mess to sift through. Proper application avoids this blunder and enables efficiency.**



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THANK YOU

