Website Design Methodology

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Document Overview

Provided in this document, is a brief overview of the three key phases in successful website design.
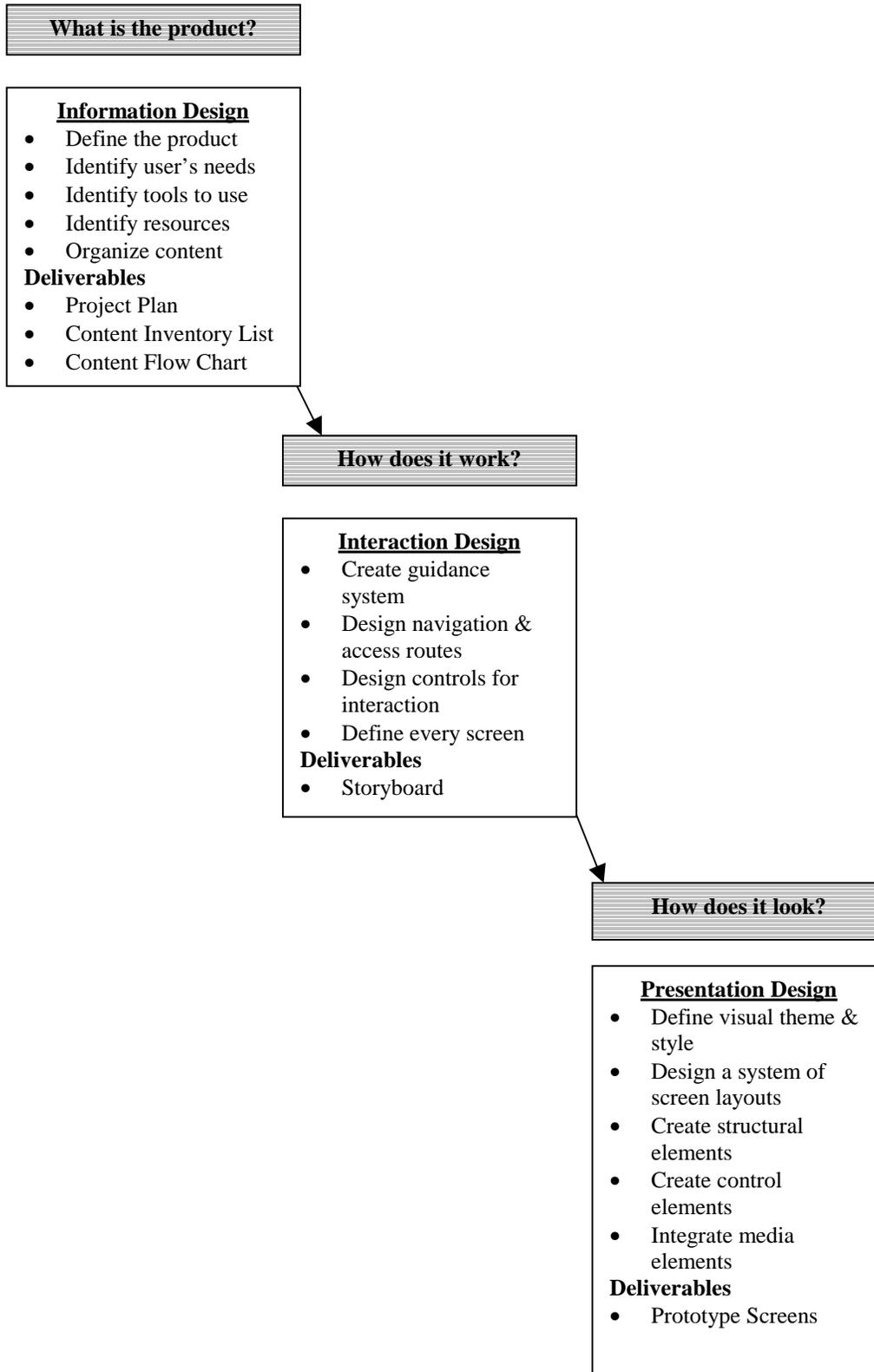
Information Design addresses the process of organizing and categorizing information into clearly distinct and logical groupings. This phase involves identifying the required resources to complete accurate project plans.

Interaction Design is the process of creating a clear, user friendly and logical navigation system. This allows users to navigate through the information that has been organized in the previous phase. The goal is to keep users oriented at all times, giving them the confidence and freedom to fully explore the product.

Presentation Design is the process of defining how the product will look. Identifying key design elements that will yield an attractive and consistent layout throughout the website.

These three phases, together, help to create a cohesive website that users will enjoy using, time and again.

Process Overview

What is the product?

Information Design
- Define the product
- Identify user's needs
- Identify tools to use
- Identify resources
- Organize content

Deliverables
- Project Plan
- Content Inventory List
- Content Flow Chart

How does it work?

Interaction Design
- Create guidance system
- Design navigation & access routes
- Design controls for interaction
- Define every screen

Deliverables
- Storyboard

How does it look?

Presentation Design
- Define visual theme & style
- Design a system of screen layouts
- Create structural elements
- Create control elements
- Integrate media elements

Deliverables
- Prototype Screens

1. Information Design

Purpose
To organize all of the content/information for the product in order to accurately meet specific requirements:
- Identify the product goals
- Identify user's wants/needs
- Identify required resources and how to use them effectively
- Identify the required tools to complete the project
- Identify and organize all necessary content
- Create a project plan

Critical Tasks
- Define Product Goals
- Define audience wants/needs
- Create Content Inventory List
- Create Project Plan
- Organize Content
- Produce Content Flow Chart

Deliverables of Information Design

i)   Project Plan

ii)   Content Inventory List

Example:

Section	Content Item	Task	Have	Need
Home Page	-Logo art -Background images	-Digitize -Obtain and scan	x	 x
Section 2	-Header Images **Copy** -Instructions -Information	-Create -Write steps to…		x x x
etc. . .	etc. . .	etc. . .	etc. . .	etc. . .

iii)   Content Flowchart

- Gives a sense of how product will work.
- A living document that is referred to throughout the project, as the basis for decisions about structure & navigation.

Example:

Point of Entry

Access Route

Main Menu

Major Topic Level
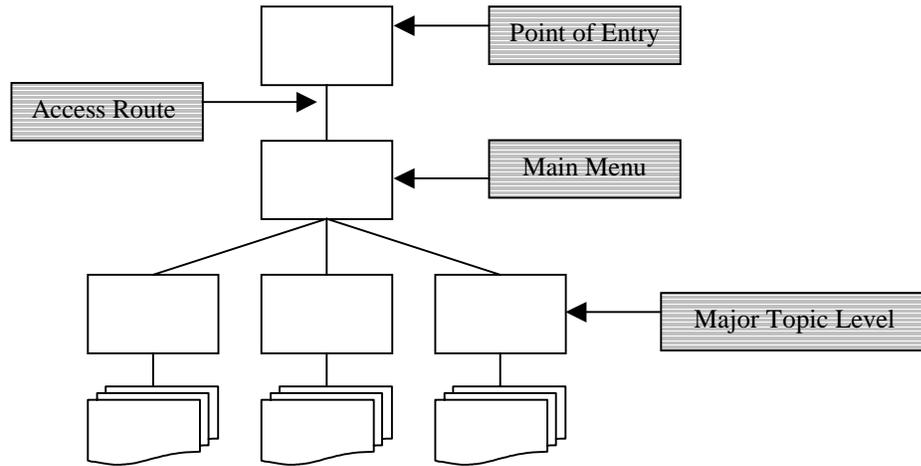
2. Interaction Design

Purpose
To create the features that allow users to travel through and manipulate the content:
- Give users clear guidance and options
- Create an interesting &/or clear path through the information
- Give users controls that allow them to go where they want and do what
  they want, but **always know where they are, how they got there, and how to go back to where they came from (keeping the users oriented).**
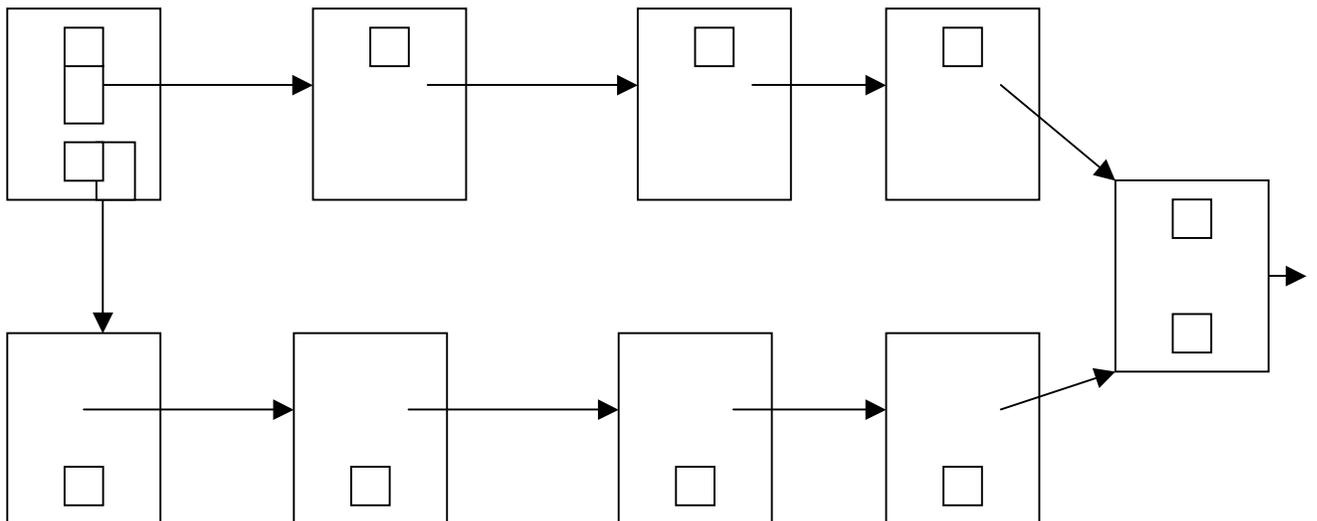
Critical Tasks
- Create guidance system to orient users.
- Design navigation & access controls
- Define what happens in every screen
- Design controls for interaction
- Create storyboard

Deliverables

i)   Storyboard – provides all necessary details of each screen.

Example:

3. Presentation Design

Purpose
Define the style and layout of the elements on the screen. These elements are the content and controls you've defined by answering the questions "What is the Product?" and "How Should it Work?"

Critical Tasks
- Define the visual theme and style
- Define a system of screen layouts
- Create the structural elements of each screen (backgrounds, windows, etc.)
- Create the control elements (buttons etc.)
- Integrate the media elements (images, etc.)
- Create prototype screens

Deliverables

i)   Prototype Screens