Organizing Information

AGCJ 407
Web Authoring in Agricultural Communications

Overview
- Structure
- Levels of Pages
- Navigation 101

Importance of Structure
- Hierarchy
  - How are you going to present your information?
  - What are the crucial elements in organization and presentation of information?
  - Does Web site structure affect whether users will continue to use or visit your site in future searches on the Web?

Importance of Structure (cont.)
- Pyramid of Information
  - Home page and top level pages are small (containing general information)
  - Pages below gradually get bigger (more detailed information)
Importance of Structure (cont.)

Levels of Pages

- Front entry page (index.html)
  - Fits on one screen
  - Critical content at the top
  - Contains general information
  - Obvious, easy-to-follow links to the next level (level one) pages
  - Level one pages (pages linked to the home page)

- Level One Pages
  - Mini-home pages for the various sections of the site
  - Organize your topics
  - General information with very little detail

- Level One Pages (cont.)
  - Clear descriptive links to sections deeper in the hierarchy of the site
  - Obvious links back to the home page
  - Level two pages (pages linked to level one pages)

- Level Two Pages
  - Include more detailed information
  - Designed consistently within each section; clearly part of the same Web
  - Include an obvious link to level one pages and the home page
  - Include links to lower level sections/pages of your site
Levels of Pages

Key Ideas to Remember
- Home page is your front door
- Usually the first thing a user sees when accessing your site
- Think about what sort of first impression you want to make
- Home pages should establish the overall design (structure and "look") of the site
- How do you establish the overall design?

Navigation 101

Purpose of Navigation
- Help users find what they're looking for
- Tell users where they are
- A guide so users don't feel lost
- Tells the user why they are there
- Tells how to use your site
- Gives user confidence in the site creator

Elements of Navigation
- Site ID
- A way Home
- Sections
- Utilities

Site ID
- Building name recognition
- Need to be on every page
- A brand, logo, or sign (graphics)
- Distinctive
Site ID Examples

- MSNBC
- Amazon
- AT&T

Navigation 101

- Sections
  - Primary Navigation
  - Links to Main Sections of Site
  - Level one pages
  - Follows the user everywhere

- Utilities
  - Important elements but not part of the Content Hierarchy
  - About Us/Contact Us
  - Aids in the use of the site (i.e. Help, Site Map, Shopping Cart)
  - Facilities sign in a store: needed but not crucial to store content

- A Way Home
  - Can use the Site ID as a button
  - A Reset button
  - Offers reassurance
    - No matter how lost, can always start over

- Other Important elements
  - Page Names
    - Street signs on the Web
    - Must be on every page
    - Prominent
Navigation 101

- Other Important elements
  - "Your are Here"
  - Highlight current user location
  - Need to stand out
  - Shows user how they got there

Examples of Navigation

Bibliography

- Web Authoring That Works
  - http://www.umext.maine.edu/webauthor/intro.htm

That's All Folks!