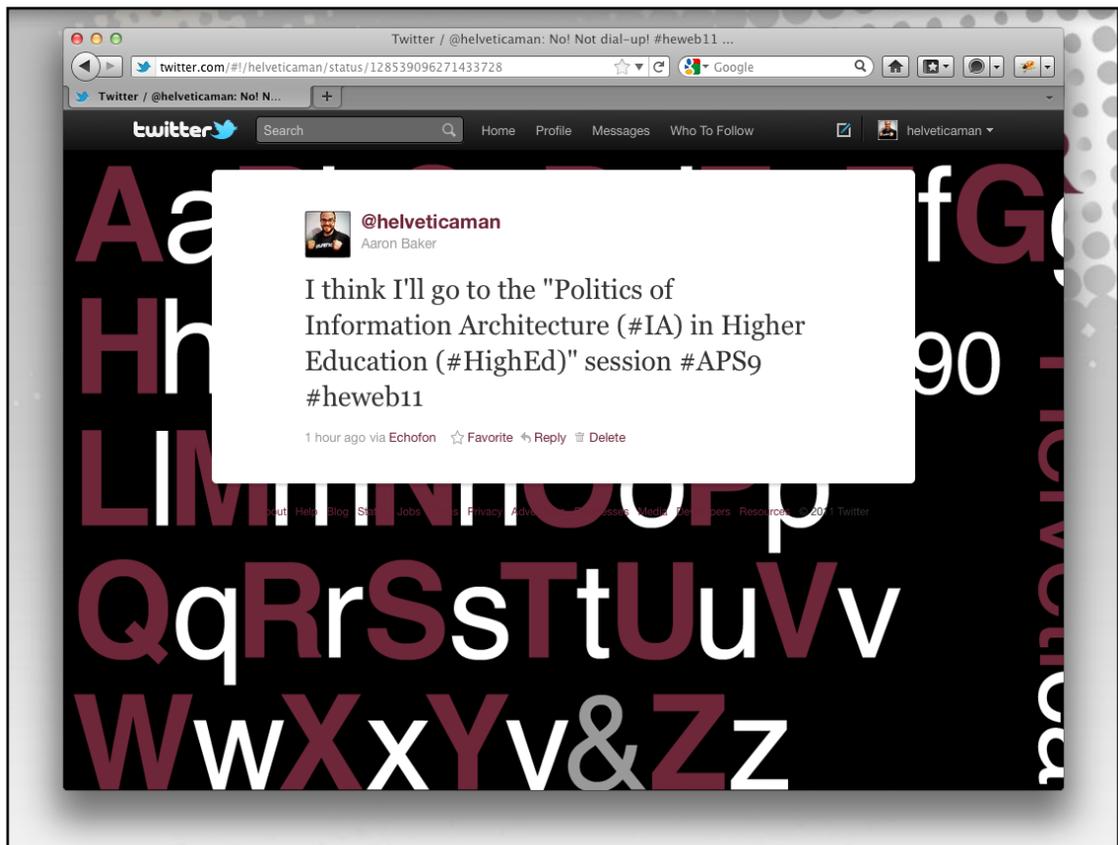




# #IA for #HighEd

The Politics of Managing  
Information Architecture  
in Higher Education

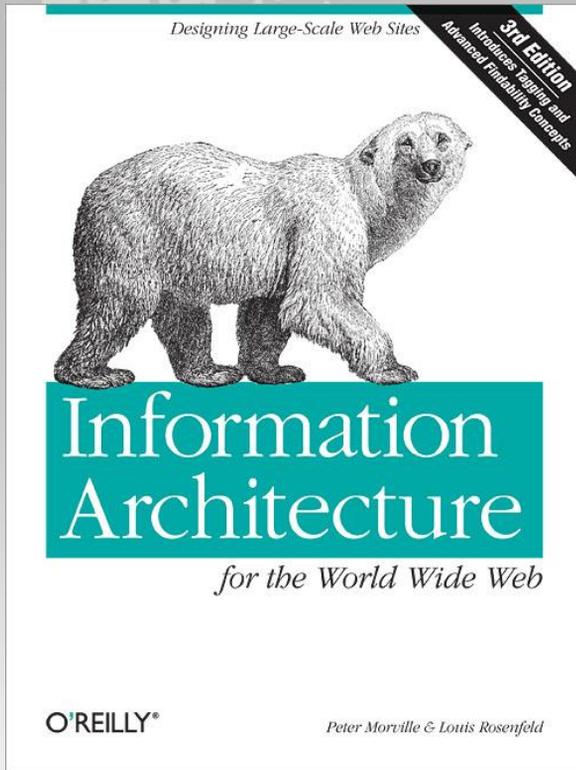
<http://bit.ly/highedia>



# What is IA?

How to explain Information Architecture





Peter Morville  
Louis Rosenfeld

# What is IA?



The combination of organization, labeling, and navigation schemes within an organization

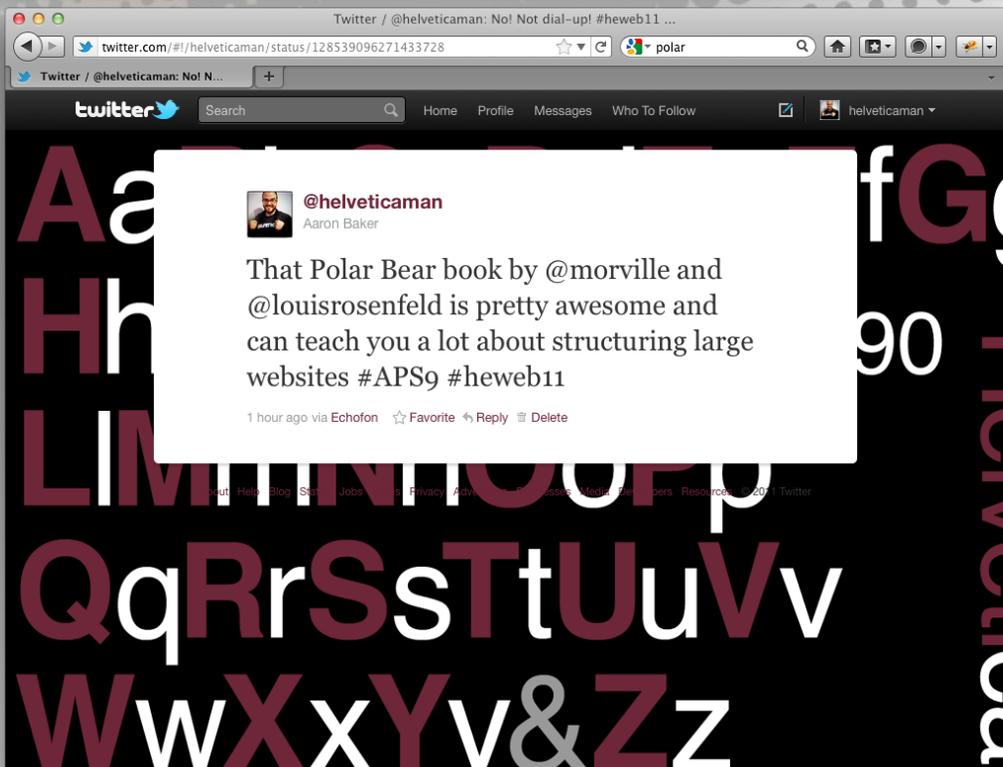
The structural design of an information space to facilitate task completion and intuitive access to content

# What is IA?



The art and science of structuring and classifying websites and intranets to help people find and manage information

An emerging discipline and community of practice focused on bringing principles of design and architecture to the digital landscape



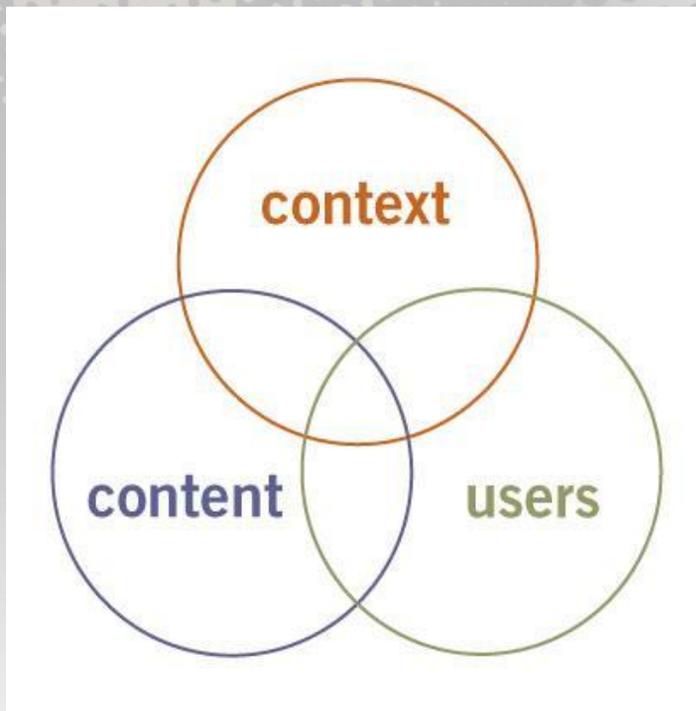
# IA is Convergence



Users: Audience, tasks, needs,  
information seeking behavior, experience

Content: Document or data types, content  
objects, existing structure

Context: Institutional goals, funding,  
politics, culture, technology, resources,  
and constraints



Source: Semantic Studios

# IA Principles



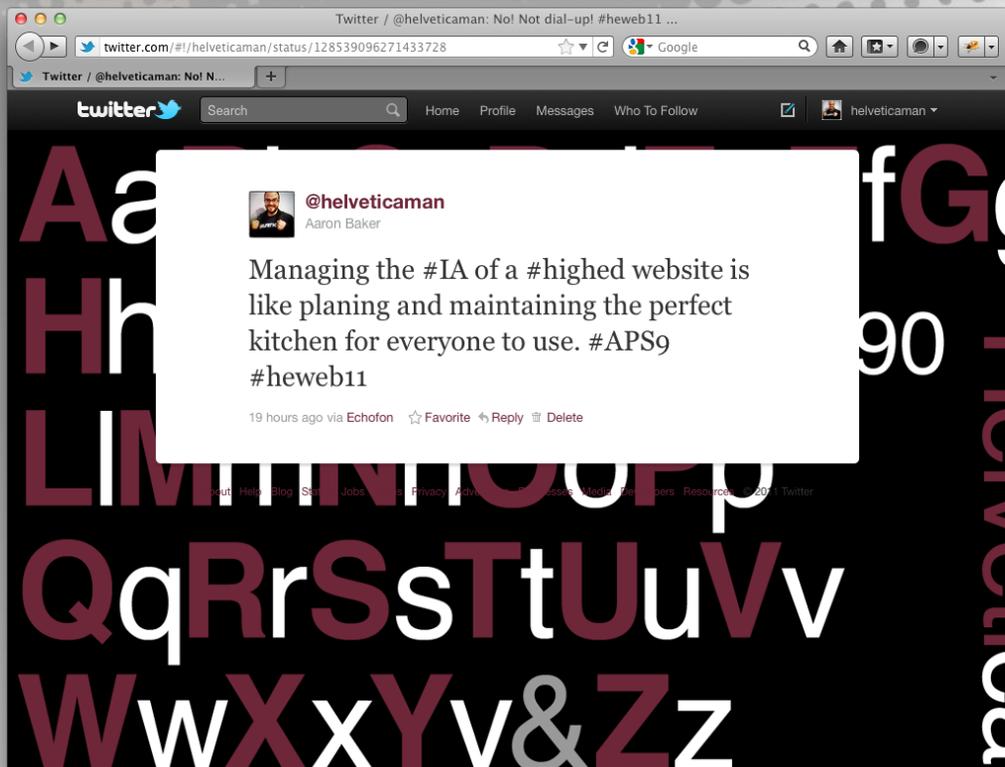
Organization

Labeling

Navigation

Search

Controlled Vocabulary



University of Arkansas at Little Rock

http://ualr.edu/

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

UA LR UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

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http://ualr.edu/www/2011/07/11/fall-2011...Fall&utm\_campaign=Fall+Homepage+Banner

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**News**

**Asriel Rolfe Named Women's Basketball Director of Operations**

Former UALR women's basketball standout Asriel Rolfe has been named the Director of Basketball Operations for the program.

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**Fall 2011 Regular Registration Begins**

**Aug. 13 All Day** Regular registration for Fall 2011 starts August 13. Visit [ualr.edu/registration](#) for more information. [\(more details\)](#)

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### Events

**Fall 2011 Regular Registration Begins**

**Aug. 13** Regular registration for Fall 2011 starts August 13. Visit [ualr.edu/registration](#) for more information. ([more details](#))  
**All Day**

---

**Fall Classes Begin**

**Aug. 18** Fall 2011 classes begin today. ([more details](#))  
**All Day**

---

**Campus Closed**

**Sep. 5** The University is closed in observance of Labor Day. ([more details](#))  
**All Day**

[more events](#) ▶ [academic calendar](#) ▶

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Graph by:   



**This action recorded 291,238 total events via 7 event labels**

Events **Site Usage**

Views:     

Total Events	Unique Events	Event Value	Avg. Value
<b>291,238</b> % of Site Total: 81.54%	<b>259,741</b> % of Site Total: 89.58%	<b>0</b> % of Site Total: 0.00%	<b>0.00</b> Site Avg: 0.00 (0.00%)

Event Label	Total Events	Unique Events	Event Value	Avg. Value
1. <a href="#">Blackboard</a>	136,492	123,982	0	0.00
2. <a href="#">Email</a>	118,454	103,482	0	0.00
3. <a href="#">BOSS</a>	25,437	22,567	0	0.00
4. <a href="#">Class Schedule</a>	5,003	4,396	0	0.00
5. <a href="#">AZ Index</a>	4,314	3,888	0	0.00
6. <a href="#">Campus Map</a>	1,022	945	0	0.00
7. <a href="#">Apply</a>	516	481	0	0.00

# Controlled Vocabulary



A defined subset of natural language

Metadata and thesauri

Equivalent, related, or sibling terms

Holds systems together

# IA Process



- Research
  - Strategy
  - Design
  - Implement
  - Administer
- In each step:
- Think
  - Articulate
  - Communicate
  - Test



## What about politics?

None of this could *possibly*  
be political, right?

## Prevention



Understand your existing political climate.

Have a web policy that explicitly states which person or what process determines IA.

Do your homework and have data ready questions that may come up.

Make yourself known and be transparent about the actions you take and why.

Navigation Theory and Practice at ualr.edu | Web Services

http://ualr.edu/webservices/2009/04/29/navigation-theory-and-practice-at- navigation at ualr.edu

Navigation Theory and Practice ...

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UA LR Web Services

## Navigation Theory and Practice at ualr.edu

APRIL 29, 2009 Comments Like Be the first of your friends to like this.

I consider [information architecture](#) and navigation development to be one of the most important parts of my job. There are over 300 individual websites related to the University at ualr.edu, and for some users the homepage (<http://ualr.edu/>) is the only way to get around the website.

When modifying the top-level navigation for any site, here are the considerations I make:

1. How is my audience grouped and which group is primary? What are the primary tasks of each group?
2. How has the content been organized in the past?
3. What navigational structure will be used?
4. How will organizational hierarchy affect navigational hierarchy?
5. What are the constraints imposed by the design or theme?

### Users and Tasks

Building an effective website must begin with an adequate understanding of users (who they are, what they're like) and tasks (what are they trying to do, what do we want them to do). For the University homepage, the audiences are defined by task-based constituencies: prospective students, current students, alumni, prospective employees, faculty, staff, community members, and other visitors. Within each of those groups, it's important to consider and respect all kinds of user behavior.

The primary audience for the homepage is prospective students. Their primary task on the website is figuring out if they want to come to school here; our primary goal for them is to apply. There are many more tasks and goals defined for each audience, but

Twitter / @helveticaman: No! Not dial-up! #hweb11 ...

twitter.com/#/helveticaman/status/128539096271433728

twitter @helveticaman: No! N...

twitter Search Home Profile Messages Who To Follow helveticaman

 **@helveticaman**  
Aaron Baker

Be transparent about your #IA process and the choices you make when managing an information space; example:  
<http://bit.ly/ualrnav> #APS9 #hweb11

19 hours ago via Echofon ☆ Favorite ↩ Reply 🗑 Delete

out Help Blog Site Jobs Privacy Advertisers Medical Professionals Resources © 2009 Twitter

QqRrSsTtUuVv  
WwXxYy&Zz

# Stop. Look. Listen.



Recognize when potential conflicts are headed your way.

Take a neutral position and engage everyone involved.

Don't be afraid to try it both ways, and measure the difference.

Do more reasearch.

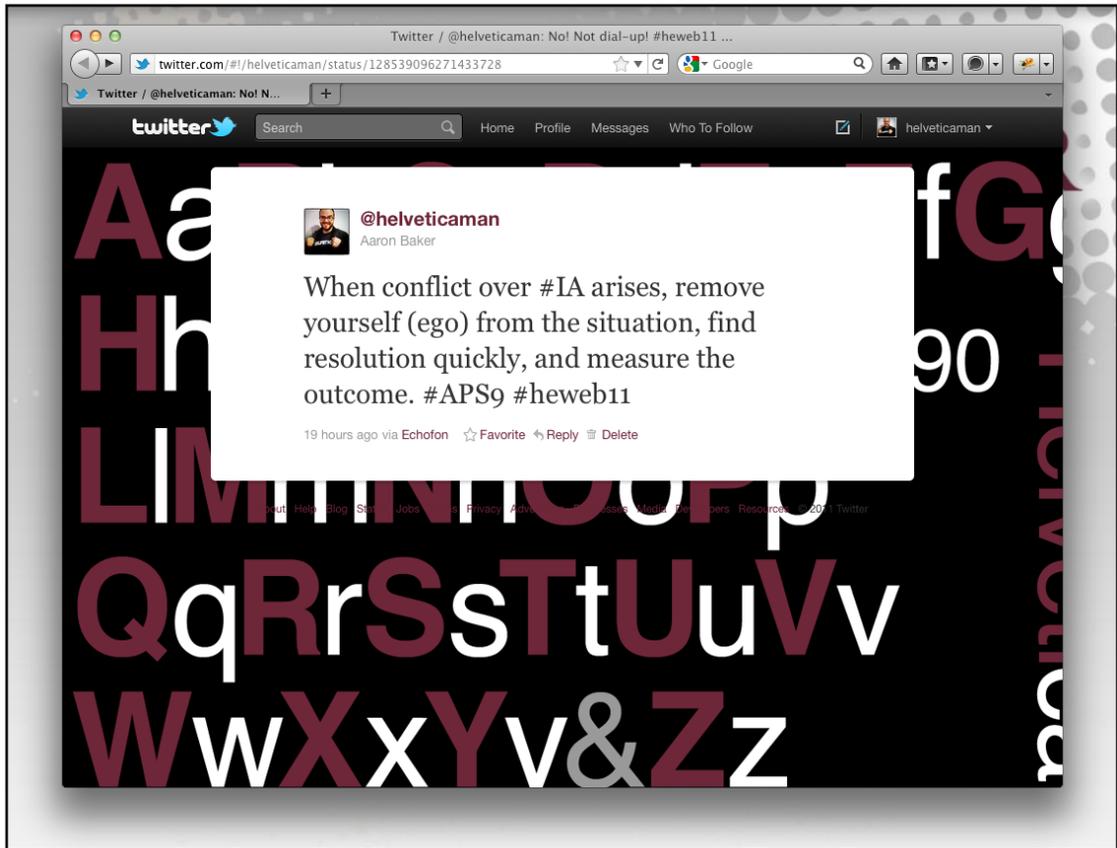
# It's too late for that.



When conflicts arise, and you're in the middle of them, find resolution quickly.

If necessary, reframe the larger issue and take the decision to the next level.

Whatever the outcome, measure it.



A presentation slide with a light gray background featuring a pattern of small, semi-transparent circles. In the top right corner is the UA LR logo in maroon. The main text is centered and reads: "Discussion" in a large, bold, black font, followed by "What is your IA story?" in a smaller, black font.