

Intro to Information Architecture

Jon Kolko
Savannah College of Art & Design

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Overview

- What is it, what is it about, and where did it come from?
- Major players in the field
- Various types of information design
- Types of jobs available
- What the course covers
- What the course doesn't cover

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What the Heck Is It?

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- :: the condition of being informed: communication of knowledge
- :: orderly arrangement of parts; structure. (an architect: one that devises)
- :: a field relating to computer science, graphic design, and library sciences
- :: data is bits of content. everything is data (!?!)

What the Heck Is It?

"Effective information architects make the complex clear; they make the information understandable to other human beings"

Richard Saul Wurman – coined the phrase Information Architect



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Major Tenants of Information Architecture

Language is important

Data is useless without context

The visual and semantic whole is greater than the sum of the parts

You will be overwhelmed so your user won't be

Notice that none of these points has anything to do with technology!

Why not?

Humans have always made meaning out of data.

The Internet [and technology] has made Information Architecture *more important than ever*.

Why?

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Major Players in the Field (people & books)



Edward Tufte

www.edwardtufte.com

Visual Explanations

Envisioning Information

The Visual Display of Quantitative Information

Richard Wurman

www.wurman.com

Information Anxiety

Peter Morville

www.semanticstudios.com

Information Architecture for the World Wide Web

Argus Associates

Louis Rosenfeld

www.louisrosenfeld.com

Information Architecture for the World Wide Web

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Major Players in the Field (people & books)



That's it? Where are the rest of them?

Information Architecture as a formal discipline is, at most, thirty years old!

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What does an Information Architect Make?

Pamphlets, brochures and manuals



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What does an Information Architect Make?

Instructions



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What does an Information Architect Make?

Signage



What does an Information Architect Make?

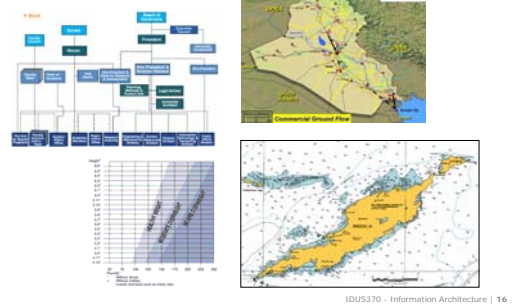
Websites, Intranets & Interactive Media



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What does an Information Architect Make?

Maps, Charts and Graphs



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So Wait, You Want Us To Make Maps?

Yeah. Maps.

What is a map?

A map is a guide to a system.

- Highly visual
- Context specific
- Usability matters (recall Think Aloud from HCI)

What happens when a map fails?

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Types of Jobs Available

Information Architects can make a lot of money. Why?

Also known as:

- Information Design
- Interaction Design
- User Interface Design
- Instructional Design
- Library Sciences
- Information Sciences

Not to be confused with:

- A Technical Architect
- An Integration Consultant
- An Information Technology Specialist

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An Example ..

.. [From MTV?!](#)

(pay attention to the information visualization techniques used)

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Placement ..

IDUS370 : Information Architecture.

Why is this class taught in the field of Industrial Design?

Consider the course in the context of Interaction Design Minor:

:: ANTH101 : Anthropology

:: IDUS315 : Human Computer Interaction

:: IDUS317 : Interactive Product Design

:: IDUS370 : Information Architecture

:: IDUS375 : Perceptual and Cognitive Human Factors

:: IDUS435 : Interaction Design Studio

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What This Course Covers

- **Charting, writing, plotting, and organizing**
large, domain specific chunks of data
- **Visually exploring** new, unique, usable and aesthetically pleasing ways to present various forms of information
- Understanding the importance of **usable, effective** information design in our creations
- **Conceptual methods and discussions** surrounding the field of Information Architecture
- A discussion of **linguistics** and the **meaning of words**

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What This Course Doesn't Cover

- **Any software package**
- **Website design** (although that's part of it)
- **Visual design** (although that's part of it too)

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