

Information architecture

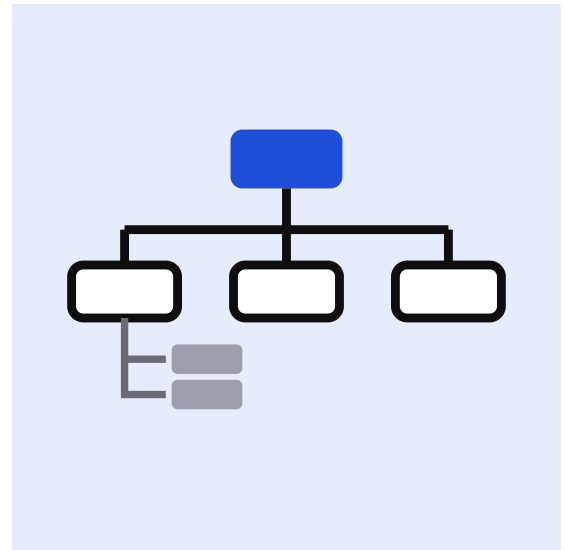
Organizes, labels and connects the content of a website, an app or a service so people find what they are looking for and understand where they are.

In Spanish

Arquitectura de la información

Origin

Popularized by Wurman (1970s); on the web, Rosenfeld and Morville (1998)



What problem it addresses

When there is a lot of content, existing isn't enough: if it can't be found, it might as well not be there.

Principles

Organize

Decide how content is grouped.

Label

Choose names that make sense to the person searching.

Navigate

Show where you are and where you can go.

Search

Find something specific without going through everything.

Applications in design

✓ Use it like this

Test your menu labels with people before building it.

✗ Avoid

Copying the company's org chart into the menu.

👁 Don't fall for it

A search box doesn't fix poor organization: people also browse.

Connections

Builds on

 Hick's law

 Mental model

 User experience honeycomb

Related to

 Card sorting

 Search design

 Content design

 Web design

 Content strategy

 Tree testing

 Wireframe

Authors and works

1996	Richard Saul Wurman	Spread the idea of the information architect, who organizes complex data so it can be understood.
1998	Louis Rosenfeld and Peter Morville	Described the organization, labeling, navigation and search systems of a website.

Sources

Original sources

- Wurman, R. S. (Ed.). (1996). Information architects. Graphis.
- Rosenfeld, L., & Morville, P. (1998). Information architecture for the World Wide Web. O'Reilly.

Last reviewed: October 22, 2026