The Information Architecture Institute

WHAT IS INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE?

Have you ever been in a building where you couldn't find the bathroom?

Or visited a company's website and have to hunt for their phone number?

Those kinds of problems, and more, are what information architecture has emerged over three decades to solve.

Information architecture is about helping people understand their surroundings and find what they're looking for—in the real world as well as online.

The practice draws on deep roots of library science, cognitive psychology, semiotics, cybernetics, discrete mathematics, and of course, architecture itself. While the term has been in use since the 1970s, the advent of computers has made the HCI and user experience fields take an interest also. This makes IA so interdisciplinary that everybody wants to lay claim to it, or does it already under some other name. If you work in an office, chances are you've done some form of information architecture at some point and not even known it.

The job of the Information Architecture Institute is to get the word out about the practice, connect the people who are passionate about it, and serve as a memory for the history, knowledge and methods of information architecture.

We define information architecture as:

1. The structural design of shared information environments.
2. The art and science of organizing and labeling web sites, intranets, online communities and software to support usability and findability.
3. An emerging community of practice focused on bringing principles of design and architecture to the digital landscape.

About the IA Institute

The Information Architecture Institute is an international organization committed to advancing and promoting the concept, craft and community of information architecture. Visit us at http://iainstitute.org.