

Information Architecture: Halm's Horseradish

The information architecture below proposed for the Halm's Horseradish site was informed by several weeks of research, including a client survey and extensive analysis of online competitors. The final stage of the process was an affinity diagramming study based on a list of questions potential customers are likely to have when visiting the site. After a thorough investigation of the navigation structure of competing sites, it was possible to identify common categories of content and likely consumer questions. However, labeling of content was very inconsistent across the industry and specific to each individual brand; necessitating further consideration of a naming scheme that will provide simple, yet informative content labels on the Halm's site.

Affinity diagramming: 10 volunteers were recruited to participate in an online card sorting exercise via Optimal Sort. Participants were given some background information on the brand and product prior to their participation. The study was conducted as an open sort and the average time for completing the study was 7.76 minutes.

Below is a table listing the 25 questions that were determined to be most prevalent among site visitors and utilized in the card sorting study. Questions were selected based on potential customer scenarios and information gleaned from the competitive analysis. Because Halm's is a very small business, some questions are directed towards content that will not be available immediately on the site. These questions were included in order to take into consideration the future growth of the business. Although the site will be launched with somewhat limited functionality (i.e no e-commerce option for online orders), the site architecture will be designed to accommodate updates and expansions over the next several years.

The results of the study were used to help inform the content groups and information architecture proposed for the site. Participants created an average of 4 content groups for the data. The proposed architecture of the site reflects this structure, with 4 main links in the primary navigation (along with redundant a "Home" link). Each primary content group has a subset of information relating to that subject. This content will be distributed either on the content group main page or sub-pages as appropriate and dictated by the volume of text and media required.

25 Questions Posited for Card Sort

Question
Where can I buy this sauce?
What ingredients are in the sauce?
Is this sauce organic?
What's the story behind this sauce?
How much does this sauce cost?
How do you use the sauce?
Who makes this sauce?
Do they make other products?
Are there recipes available?
How do I contact the owner?
How do you purchase this sauce wholesale?
How do I get this sauce carried in my local store?
Can I buy this sauce online?
Can I visit their headquarters?
Can I follow them on social media?
Are there any online coupons?
Where are the ingredients sourced from?
Can I see photos?
Can I get a job here?
What is horseradish anyways?
Can I create an account here?
Can I send products as a gift?
Do they have gift certificates?
Can I sign up for an e-newsletter?
Are there any allergens in the sauce? Nuts, dairy, gluten, shellfish, etc?
Is the facility nut-free?
Is there a blog on the site?

Similarity Matrix Results from Optimal Sort Study

Similarity Matrix

Where can I buy this sauce?																											
100	Can I buy this sauce online?																										
80	80	How do I get this sauce carried in my local store?																									
70	70	80	How do you purchase this sauce wholesale?																								
70	70	70	70	Do they have gift certificates?																							
70	70	70	60	80	Are there any online coupons?																						
70	70	70	60	80	100	Can I send products as a gift?																					
60	60	60	60	80	70	70	How much does this sauce cost?																				
10	10	10	20	20	10	10	30	Is there a blog on the site?																			
10	10	10	10	10	20	20	20	90	Can I sign up for an e-newsletter?																		
10	10	10	10	10	20	20	20	80	90	Can I follow them on social media?																	
0	0	0	10	0	0	0	10	60	60	70	How do I contact the owner?																
0	0	0	20	20	0	0	10	50	40	50	70	Can I visit their headquarters?															
0	0	0	20	20	0	0	10	50	40	30	50	80	Can I get a job here?														
20	20	20	30	30	30	30	30	70	60	50	30	40	40	Can I create an account here?													
20	20	10	0	0	10	10	10	10	10	0	10	20	30	20	Can I see photos?												
10	10	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	10	20	40	30	20	0	50	What's the story behind this sauce?											
20	20	10	10	10	10	10	20	10	10	10	30	20	20	0	50	90	Who makes this sauce?										
10	10	0	0	0	0	0	20	10	10	10	20	0	0	0	40	50	50	How do you use the sauce?									
10	10	0	10	10	0	0	20	20	10	10	10	10	10	10	30	50	50	70	What is horseradish anyways?								
10	10	0	10	10	0	0	20	10	0	0	0	10	10	10	30	20	20	50	60	Where are the ingredients sourced from?							
20	20	10	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	20	20	50	50	90	Is this sauce organic?						
10	10	10	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	10	10	30	30	70	80	What ingredients are in the sauce?					
10	10	10	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	10	10	30	30	70	80	100	Are there any allergens in the sauce? Nuts, dairy, gluten, shellfish, etc?				
0	0	0	10	10	0	0	20	10	0	0	0	10	10	10	20	10	10	30	40	80	70	90	90	Is the facility nut-free?			
0	0	0	0	0	10	10	10	10	20	20	0	0	0	10	30	20	20	70	50	50	50	40	40	40	Are there recipes available?		
20	20	20	30	20	10	10	30	10	0	10	20	30	20	20	40	40	30	40	40	40	30	20	20	30	30	Do they make other products?	

Proposed Information Architecture

