Reorganizing Information Architecture

Shannon Kelly

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Logo via: Cool Tools

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Reorganizing Information Architecture

Tasks:

1. **Organization schemes:** Identify as many different organization schemes throughout the site.

2. **Organization structures**: What is the predominant organization structure(s)?

3. **Re-organizing Cool Tools**: Identify at least 3 ways that the organization could be improved.

4. **Justify recommendations:** How will they help the site users?

About the site
Cool Tools is a website that provides recommendations on useful tools, including the best and most affordable options.

Identify organization schemes throughout the site.

18 September 2023

Painting

Tools for Possibilities: issue no. 52

Once a week we'll send out a page from Cool Tools: A Catalog of Possibilities. The tools might be outdated or obsolete, and the links to them may or may not work. We present these vintage recommendations as is because the possibilities they inspire are new. *Sign up here* to get Tools for Possibilities a week early in your inbox.

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Totem Word/Life Magnified stamps/Go Hang It!

Recomendo - issue #375

Sign up here to get Recomendo a week early in your inbox.

Find a daily Totem Word

Cool Tools' posts use a chronological organization scheme, ordered from newest to oldest.

Additional sidebar local navigation also allows users to browse chronologically via a calendar view.

After reviews, the homepage is then organized topically:

- Editors favorites
- Cool Tools Show Podcast
- What's in my bag?
- About Cool Tools

Each section's content (aside from the About) is organized chronologically with contextual links.

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Identify organization schemes throughout the site. [Cont.]

The site's global navigation is hybrid of task and topical schemes as there are task related links like "submit a tool" and "email list" but also topical options like "What's in my bag?" and "About us."

SEARCH — Task (Search)

TODAY'S REVIEW — Topical
STOREFRONT — Task (Shop)
YOUTUBE CHANNEL — Task (Watch)
EDITOR'S FAVORITES — Topical
READER FAVORITES — Topical
ARCHIVES BY DATE — Task (Browse)
PODCAST — Task (Watch/listen)
WHAT'S IN MY BAG? — Topical
ANNOUNCEMENTS — Topical
SUBMIT A TOOL — Task (Submit)
FAQ — Task (Learn)
ABOUT US — Topical
EMAIL LIST — Task (Sign up)
RSS FEED — Task (Follow)

CATEGORIES

Topics, alphabetically

Announcements
Aural
Autonomous Motion
Backpacking
Big Systems
Clothing
Communications
Community
Computers
Consumptivity
Craft
Culture
Dead Tools
Deals
Design
Destinations
Dwelling
Edibles
Every Day Carry
Family
Gardens
Gareth's Tips
General Purpose Tools

Local navigation (side bar) "categories" contains a topical list organized alphabetically.

KEVIN KELLY SITES

Lifestream
The Technium
True Films
Extrapolations
Screen Pub
Quantified Self
New Rules
Street Use
Asia Grace
Silver Cord
Wink

Kevin Kelly Sites (additional local navigation) is a topical, subjectively-ordered scheme linking to different external sites with specific subject matter.

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What is the predominant organization structure(s)?

Cool Tools presents its users the flexibility to navigate through its site using global, local, and contextual navigation methods. These navigation methods utilize various organizational schemes, (chronological, alphabetical, topical and task) and as a result, the predominant structure of the site is a Matrix.

Identify 3 ways to improve the organization & justify recommendations.

1. To improve the global navigation, it would be helpful to group the task schemes in a more hierarchical structure. To achieve this, create parent categories that are broader in scope and child sub-categories that are more narrowly focused. By establishing this top-down structure, users can find the information they need more quickly. Additionally, introducing a breadcrumb navigation can help users understand their contextual location within the site.

Moving the global navigation to the website's header will make it more distinct from the local navigation in the sidebars. This move will improve its visibility within the hierarchy of the page. By doing so, users can easily comprehend the task-based structure while still having the option to choose their preferred way of browsing and accessing content.

Current site

Global Navigation

Start of local navigation

Proposed new global navigation structure

COOLTOOLS   SEARCH

(1)

Main global navigation – Parent categories - task-based scheme

BROWSE BY
Latest Reviews
Podcasts Episodes
Editor's Favorites
Reader Favorites
Archives

NEWS
Announcements
What's in my...?

RESOURCES
About Us
FAQs
Gareth's Tips

SUBSCRIBE
Email Newsletter
RSS Feed
Youtube

SUBMIT A TOOL

Child options (grouped by popularity or alphabetically)
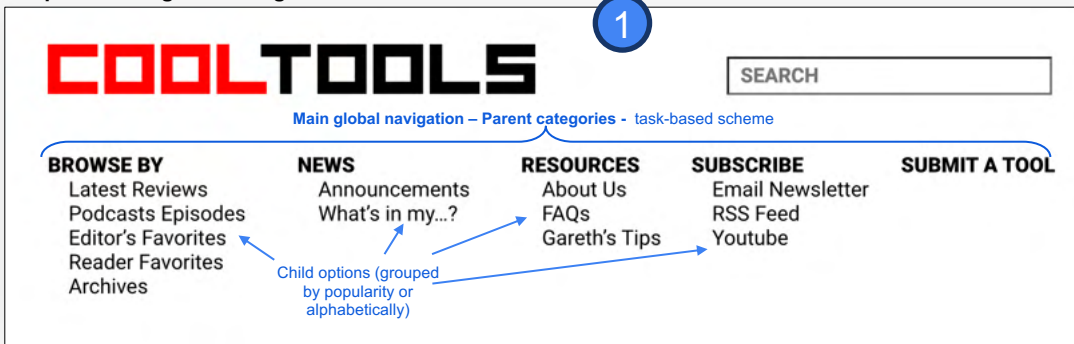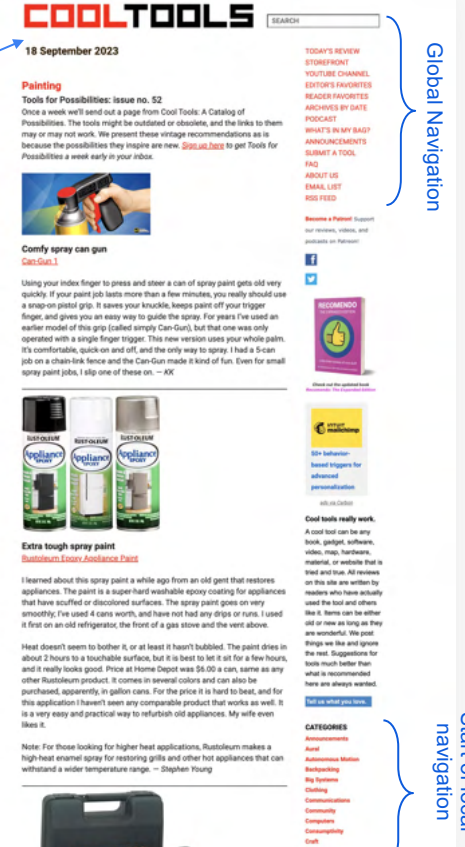
Identify 3 ways to improve the organization & justify recommendations. [Cont.]

2. Move the "Categories" and "Creative Commons" calendar (renamed to "Browse by Date") options in the local navigation in the sidebar up to the top of the page where the original global navigation used to live. This move will give users better visibility of the category and date tags and make it easier to sort by content type.

Consolidate the Categories tag list into a parent/child hierarchy and focus parent category labeling as general product types with expandable child sub-categories. Rename some category tags for less ambiguity. Users will benefit as browsing content categories becomes more efficient and will experience less redundancy, confusion, and overwhelm.

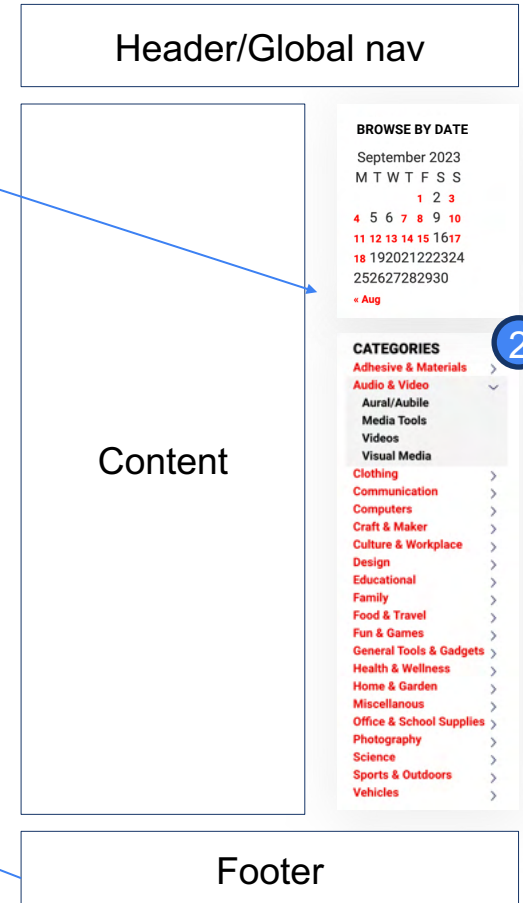3. Lastly, move Kevin Kelly's site links to footer navigation (along with social icons) and away from sorting/browsing options. That way, users aren't accidentally confusing the external links with other sorting options and navigating away from Cool Tools content.

Proposed Footer Organization

Header/Global nav

Content

Footer

BROWSE BY DATE

September 2023
M T W T F S S
          1 2 3
4 5 6 7 8 9 10
11 12 13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30
« Aug

CATEGORIES
Adhesive & Materials
Audio & Video
  Aural/Aubile
  Media Tools
  Videos
  Visual Media
Clothing
Communication
Computers
Craft & Maker
Culture & Workplace
Design
Educational
Family
Food & Travel
Fun & Games
General Tools & Gadgets
Health & Wellness
Home & Garden
Miscellanous
Office & School Supplies
Photography
Science
Sports & Outdoors
Vehicles

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Kevin Kelly Sites
Asia Grace   Quantified Self   The Technium
Extrapolations   Screen Pub   True Films
Lifestream   Silver Cord   Wink
New Rules   Street Use

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