

Card Sorting: Contract Me

February 26, 2017

This document presents the card sorting results for the Contract Me Website.

Amy Schlachter
IAKM 60101: Information Architecture I

Executive Summary

An open card sort of five website features was conducted with three participants on February 22, 2017.

Results

The participants similarly grouped most of the features. C2 & C5 and C1 & C3 were grouped together by all five participants. Two of the participants grouped C4 with C1 & C3 while one participant grouped it with C2 & C5. Universally all of the participants used variations of the terms Reviews and Contractors to label the groups.

Recommendations

1. Utilize a two category main top navigation titled Contractors and Reviews, respectively, which maintains a constant presence on all pages of the site.
2. Group content from C1, C3, & C4 under the Contractor category and content from C2 & C5 under the Reviews category.
3. List the content in the Contractor category in the following order: C1, C3, C4
4. List the content in the Reviews category in the following order: C2, C5

Card Sorting

Test Objective

Discover how the Contract Me site users view the grouping of features and functionality identified for the initial release of the website, utilizing card sorting methodology.

Methodology

Three study participants were chosen at random. The facilitator then conducted an open card sort utilizing index cards labeled with the five website features the site founders had prioritized for the initial release of the site. The cards were randomized for each participant. Participants were asked to organize the five features into as many related groups as they deemed necessary, with the only request being that they not leave all the cards in a single group.

Features Sorted

- C1: Read how to choose a contractor
- C2: Write and submit a review
- C3: View a list of contractors
- C4: Read reviews about local contractors
- C5: View a list of reviewers

Card Sorting Results

Similarity Matrix

The table below represents the participant's groupings and label recommendations. In addition, it includes a similarity matrix comparing pairs of cards, and displaying participants perceived relationship of the cards. Similarity ratings are based on a 0-1 scale. Scores closer to 1 show a strong relationship between cards, while scores closer to 0 show no relationship between them.

	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3
Group 1	C2, C5- Reviews	C2, C5- Reviews & Lists	C2, C4, C5- Reviews
Group 2	C1, C3, C4- Contractors	C1, C3, C4- Choosing Contractors	C1, C3- Associated Contractors

Card Matrix	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Sum	Similarity Rating
C1 & C2					
C1 & C3	+1	+1	+1	3	1
C1 & C4	+1	+1	---	2	.67
C1 & C5					
C2 & C3					
C2 & C4	---	---	+1	1	.33
C2 & C5	+1	+1	+1	3	1
C3 & C4	+1	+1	---	2	.67
C3 & C5					
C4 & C5	---	---	+1	1	.33

Data Interpretation

High Similarity Pairings

Of the 10 possible card pairings, 4 fell within the high similarity category. For this study, high similarity was defined as a similarity score of .67 or above. There were two pairings that all three participants agreed upon, giving them a perfect similarity rating of 1, indicating a strong relationship between terms like Reviews and Reviewers, and features including the word Contractor(s).

- C1 & C3: Read how to choose a contractor & View a list of contractors
- C2 & C5: Write and submit a review & View a list of reviewers

Participants also felt there was a strong similarity between 2 other card pairings, giving each a similarity score of .67. Again, this indicates a strong perceived relationship between features including the word Contractor(s).

- C1 & C4: Read how to choose a contractor & Read reviews about local contractors
- C3 & C4: View a list of contractors & Read reviews about local contractors

Low Similarity Pairings

Of the 10 possible card pairings, 6 fell within the low similarity category. For this study, low similarity was defined as any pairing with a similarity rating of .33 or below. It should be noted that of the three participants, only one did not group C4 with C1 & C3, causing the low similarity ratings below. The following combinations had a similarity rating of .33:

- C2 & C4: Write and submit a review & Read reviews about local contractors
- C4 & C5: Read reviews about local contractors & View a list of reviewers

In addition to the combinations above, there were a number of cards that participants universally saw no correlation between. The similarity rating for these groupings was 0. These include:

- C1 & C2: Read how to choose a contractor & Write and submit a review
- C1 & C5: Read how to choose a contractor & View a list of reviewers
- C2 & C3: Write and submit a review & View a list of contractors
- C3 & C5: View a list of contractors & View a list of reviewers

Labels

After grouping the cards, the participants were asked to label their groupings. There was a strong relationship between the words participants used when labeling the groups. Common words that were used when describing the two groups were Reviews and Contractors. Below is the listing of cards with their suggested titles.

- C1: Contractors, Choosing Contractors, Associated Contractors
- C2: Reviews, Reviews & Lists, Reviews
- C3: Contractors, Choosing Contractors, Associated Contractors
- C4: Contractors, Choosing Contractors, Reviews
- C5: Reviews, Reviews & Lists, Reviews

As a whole, the participants used similar labels when grouping the cards with the exception of user 3 placing C4 in a group with a Reviews label when the other two participants grouped it with a Contractor based label. Aside from this variation, the remainder of the cards were grouped under similar headings with C1, C3, and C4 being commonly associated with Contractor based labels and C2 and C5 with Review based labels.

Data Limitations

While the results were fairly consistent amongst participants, it should be noted that there is a limitation to the data's accuracy given the small sample size. Typically, I would recommend a sample size of around 20 participants to be sure we are getting a representative sample of users to ensure our results aren't skewed in one direction or another. In addition, the utilization of such a small number of cards automatically

dictates a recommendation of a small number of groupings. If a larger set of features were used, you may find that the groupings of information and labeling may result in slightly different recommendations than the broad recommendations that we have discovered here.

Recommendations

After considering the above data, I would make the following recommendations.

Number of Groupings

The participants universally agreed there was a need for two main groupings of features. Given the frequency of the use of the words Reviews and Contractors, it is my recommendation that the two categories simply hold these titles. I would recommend that these categories be placed at the top of the website, and remain present in this area throughout the sites pages.

Information Groupings

It is my recommendation that the similarity ratings be followed, and the information is grouped as follows:

Contractors

- C1: Read how to choose a contractor
- C3: View a list of contractors
- C4: Read reviews about local contractors

Reviews

- C2: Write and submit a review
- C5: View a list of reviewers

Although the participants did not have a preference in the ordering of information, I would recommend that Contractors be listed first in the main navigation, and include the content from C1, C3, and C4. In addition, it is felt that C1 should be the first link within the contractors section. Given that one would first need to understand how to choose a contractor before taking any other action, it would be advised to present this information first. From there, I feel the order of the remaining information is less important, but do recommend sticking to the ordering listed above. The reasoning for this is that once a user determines how to choose a contractor they will be more likely to search for a contractor and then read reviews, rather than reading reviews first without determining that there is a contractor in their area.

The second grouping of information should then be Reviews. This section should include the content from C2 and C5. It is recommended that the information remain in the order listed above as it is likely a user would be more inclined to write or submit a review before searching for a reviewer.