

Navigation and its role in raising the efficiency of the website

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Abstract:

After the internet became the only way for all people to get all the information, users became confused and lost due to the huge amount of information available on the websites, hence the importance of navigation systems come, as it provides the necessary assistance to guide users, and reduces the problem of loss and improves the effectiveness of searching for information. the search problem relies in not observing the principles of navigation that guarantee the success of the Arab website, and the research aims to identify the various methods of navigation and their aesthetic and functional standards that guarantee the success of the site, it also describes the relationship between the type of navigation and the user, content, and activity of the institution.

• Research problem:

The research problem was formulated in the following questions:

- What are the different methods to navigate through websites? What are their aesthetic and functional standards?
- Is there a relationship between the type of navigation and the content of the site or company activity?

• The importance of the research:

After the Internet has become the only way for all people to obtain all the information, it must be taken into account that some of these websites lack many design standards for navigation methods, in addition to directing the attention of designers to the importance of those standards that improve the quality of websites.

• Related studies:

1) Chris J Pilgrim, Website Navigation Tools - A Decade of Design Trends 2002 to 2011
Center for Computing and Engineering Software Systems, Faculty of ICT Swinburne University of Technology, Proceedings of the Thirteenth Australasian User Interface Conference (AUIC2012), Melbourne, Australia

The research includes:

- Recent trends in design practices for navigation tools on commercial sites over the past decade, especially the site map.

The researcher benefits from:

- Learn about one of the tools for navigating commercial sites, which is the site map and its rate of use.

The current research differs in:

- The study was interested in studying all of the methods, mechanisms and types of navigation, and it was not limited to one type.

- **Definition of navigating through the website:**

- They are links, whether it is text or graphics on one page that connects to another page or a different site within one page.
- All links, tags and other elements that provide access to pages that help people direct themselves while interacting with a specific website.

- **The importance of navigation or navigation design**

Well-designed navigation is a useful strategy to enhance the design of the site, as it provides the user with quick access to the required information and allows the user to know where to navigate the site, how to return to the previous lists, and what are the options in each stage, as well as preventing people from getting lost between lists and windows. It also plays a fundamental role in how users interact with products. **A good navigation design provides the following:**

- Provide credibility to the product.
- Provide access to information.
- increase access time and the lower bounce rate.
- Reflects the brand.
- It informs users of their current destination and location.

- **Website navigation mechanisms**

Each mechanism has a different role in the overall navigation system. Each site contains a specific mechanism that must be compatible with the structure, as it differs from one site to another according to the different subject it raises and also the category that uses it, and below the navigation mechanisms can be classified according to its visual structure to:

- Paging Navigation -Step Navigation -Rewind and Fast forward
- Breadcrumb Trail -Tree Navigation -Site Map -Mega menu
- bars and tabs -vertical menu -Hamburger Menu -Drop Down Menu

- **Categories of navigation through websites:**

Most types of navigation are divided into three main categories:

- 1. Structural Navigation:**

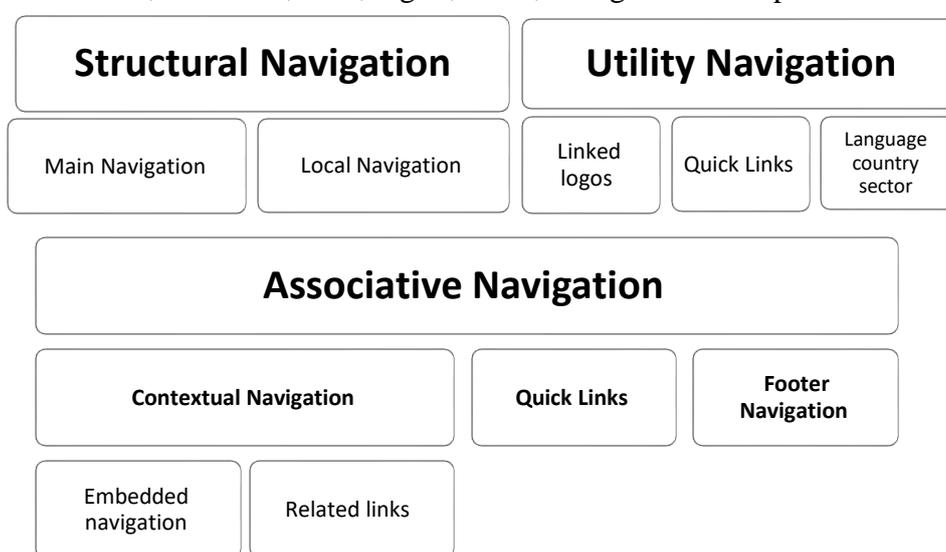
A page is linked to another based on the site's hierarchy, and as its name suggests it follows the structure of the website and allows people to move up and down the site's hierarchy points, and it can be divided into two types: main navigation, and local navigation.

- 2. Associative Navigation:**

It links pages to similar topic and content, regardless of their location on the site. There are three common types of relational navigation and they are (Contextual Navigation- Embedded navigation- Related links).

- 3. Utility Navigation:**

Links tools and features that help visitors to use the site. It consists of secondary actions and tools, such as contact, subscribe, save, log in, share, change view and print.



- **Types of web pages**

Navigation type and page type are closely related. The navigation system may have a different purpose for different page types. Where people understand navigation through the context of the page type it appears in. There are three main categories of pages:

- 1. Navigation pages:**

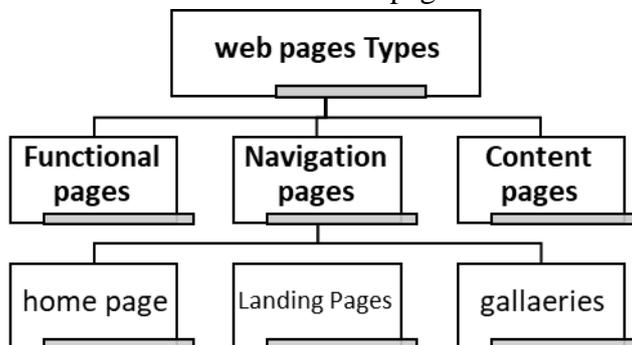
It directs visitors to their ultimate goal, whether it is content or functional pages, as it plays an important role in telling the story of the site, also supports research and helps in directing, and influences purchasing decisions. Examples include: home page, landing pages, and galleries.

- 2. Content pages:**

They are information websites, they contain texts, articles and pictures, and they are the essence of the site as they are what people are searching for. Examples include sites that contain texts, stories, articles, product pages, biographies, blogs, news, company history and indicative information.

3. Functional pages:

These are pages that allow visitors to complete an online task such as conducting a search or verifying email; Examples of these pages include search forms, data entry forms, and web applications. It may contain little or no text on these pages.



- **the qualities that should be available through the websites navigation system:**

- **Balance:** refers to the number of list items visible on the page and the number of hierarchical levels in the structure. The smaller the number of navigational elements, the deeper the structure; the more elements of the navigation, the lower the hierarchy levels on the websites.
- **Ease of learning:** the purpose and function of the navigation should be immediately visible to the user.
- **Simplicity:** Providing a small set of navigation options that are briefly described in one or two words to remove confusion and distraction from the most important topics, so that visitors can quickly and effectively find the information they need.
- **Consistency and Inconsistency:** Consistency in navigation is the basic principle of the design of the site interface, and this usually refers to the mechanisms and links that appear in a fixed place on the page, and behave predictably with the user's expectations, and has uniform designations/ Inconsistency must be used wisely to make the site appears strong and this can be achieved by making one of the navigation options distinct from the rest.
- **Efficiency:** All links, tabs and icons should be easy to see and easy to click
- **Clear Labels:** When naming links, you should avoid brand names, and smart or obscure abbreviations. The more clear and easy the naming of links, the more easily the user can navigate.
- **Response:** The navigation design must respond to display on different media.
- **Visual clarity:** Color, font, and layout all contribute to a richer information experience, and visual design not only makes things look beautiful, but rather creates a better sense of direction and ease of use.
- **Appropriateness for Type of Site:** The success of navigation is related to the type of site on which it appears, so we must consider the type of site
 - Information sites: News sites work in providing information, so navigation is crucial to achieving success in these sites. Using the wide navigation screen provides a better overview of this type of site.
 - E-commerce sites: Failure to follow common practice in navigation design can cost money. Since people cannot buy what they cannot find, the user needs to see options, as in the case with hyperlinks suggesting related products.

- Community sites: online communities are places for people to exchange ideas and discuss topics. Site navigation should support these activities. There are several designations and terminology "internal" used for navigation, including acronyms.
- Entertainment sites: The navigation experience may be perfectly acceptable with entertainment sites. Game site visitors are more tolerant of hidden navigation than news site visitors.
- Learning sites: The design of navigation should be simple and clear in distance education programs, online training, and in such types of sites. For example, the instructions and mechanisms for moving forward are crucial during a test online.

● **Results:**

- It is easy to deal with websites that take into account the target group and the content or activity of the institution when designing navigation.
- Navigation design supports both aesthetic and functional role.
- Ignoring the navigation standards leads to decrease in website usage rate.
- The abundance of navigation elements helps to increase the efficiency of the website and achieve the desired goal.
- The ease of navigation makes users very likely to find what they look for.

● **Recommendations:**

- It is recommended that further research on the development of navigation methods in the design of websites to raise the level of designs produced in the Arab world.
- It is recommended that the design of sites be assigned to specialists in order to improve the final result of the project and improve its efficiency.

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