

Information Architecture Project

Overview

Project Description

Group 6 has selected the [Rakuten Global Market](#) shopping website for our Information Architecture project. *Rakuten Global Market* (hereinafter referred to as “Rakuten”) is owned by Rakuten, Inc.—a Japanese internet and e-commerce company based in Tokyo, Japan. As of 2013 Rakuten hosts approximately 40,000 Japanese businesses and services online.

Currently, it is extremely difficult to navigate and to search for any particular item in Rakuten because of its deeply-nested menu and navigation structure. Moreover, the categorization of products and services is incoherent and inconsistent. The site is challenging to use for both first-time and frequent visitors. Therefore, our goal for this project is to create a more intuitive organization of the site’s products for its users in the North America region. For our design process, we (1) completed a content audit of the current Rakuten site, (2) recruited 8 participants for card sorting, and (3) created a sitemap for the proposed navigation structure and drafted a set of high level wireframes showing the new site organization. Finally, we also included two [core tasks](#) using the suggested site layout.

Design Process

1. *Complete content audit of the interface*

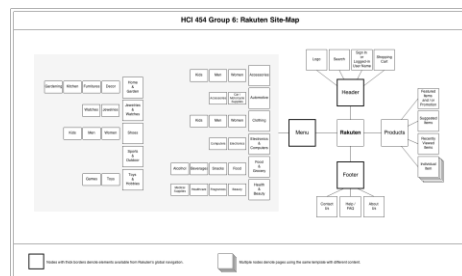
- Create page inventory of the existing Rakuten website.
- Include top 3 levels of page categories and subcategories and their content. See [\[1\]Content Audit Group6.xlsx](#).

2. *Perform card sort for the website navigation structure*

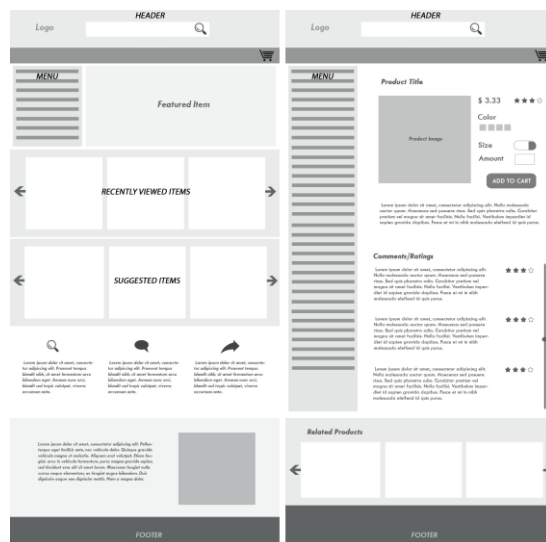
- Choose 100 items for individual card sorting.
- Select [WebSort.net](#) (subsequently rebranded to OptimalSort by [Optimal Workshop](#)) as the card sort tool.
- Perform card sort
 - Choose group of participants that fit website’s audience criteria, a total of 8 participants recruited.
 - Gather participants’ results and compare.
 - Choose most popular categories that the participants sectioned the content into.
 - Group content within same categories into broader selection. See [\[2\]Categories Group6.xlsx](#).
- Use new categories from card sort results for sitemap, e.g. significantly decrease depth of navigation structure with a small increase in breadth.

3. Present future state of the application

- Create the future design/organization of the Rakuten website based on its current state and the card sorting outcome.
 - Produce sitemap showing new application structure, how the system pages interact with each other and how the content of the site interlinks.
 - Create individual draft versions of the sitemap. See [Sitemap Sketches](#) in **Appendix**.
 - Combine ideas and prepare a more detailed version of the sitemap (image below). See [\[3\]Sitemap Group6.pdf](#).



- Create high level wireframes to define new functionality with a simplified layout of the application; include homepage wireframe and product sub-page wireframe.
 - Collect initial sketches of wireframes for discussion. See [Wireframe Sketches](#) in **Appendix**.
 - Research successful e-commerce sites to determine well-received elements for inspiration.
 - Select the best wireframe representation from the sketches; collectively provide additional recommendations and necessary changes (image below). See [\[4\]Wireframes HighLevel Group6.pdf](#).



Core Tasks

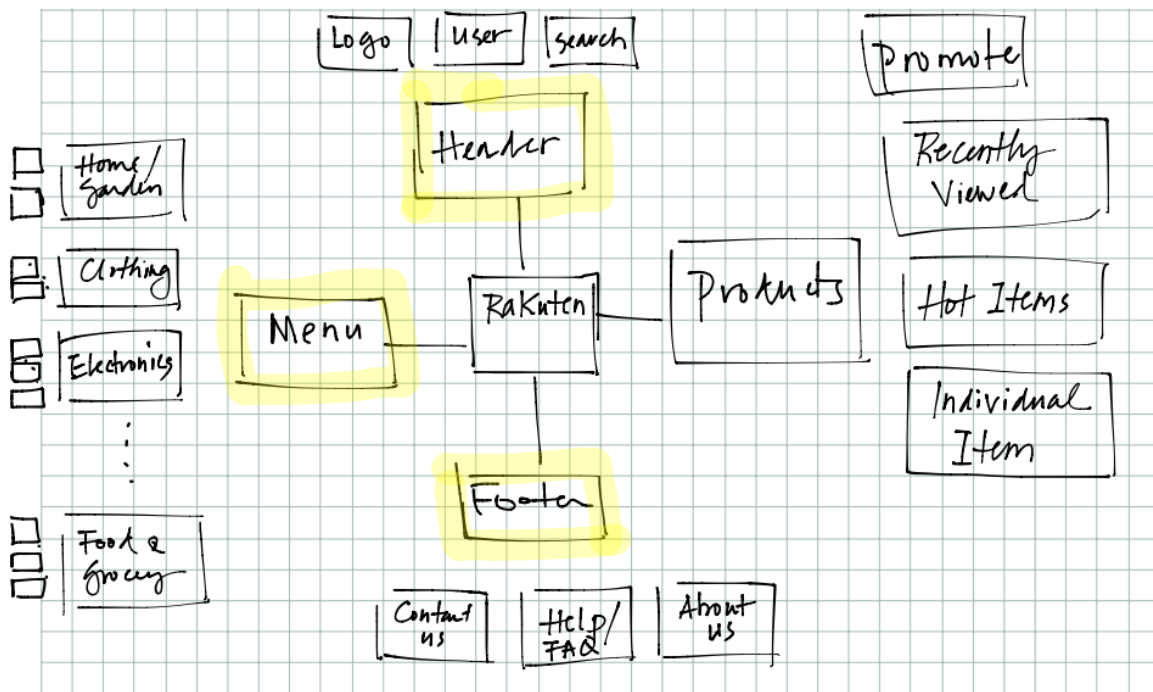
We prepared a separate set of wireframes depicting the following tracks of core Rakuten tasks.

- A. *Navigate: using menu*** – See [\[5\]Wireframes_CoreTaskA_Group6.pdf](#)
 - Site visitor wants to browse for watches, clicks the “Jewelries & Watches” category in side menu
 - Visitor clicks the “Watches” sub-category
 - Site displays a list of all watches in a grid layout; site also shows pagination when applicable
 - Site displays product page if visitor clicks an individual product from the list
- B. *Search: using search box*** – See [\[6\]Wireframes_CoreTaskB_Group6.pdf](#)
 - Site visitor enters search term/phrase, e.g. mirrors, in search box, which is centered across the header based on best practice
 - Visitor clicks the conventional search icon to initiate search function
 - Site displays a list of items matching the search term/phrase in a grid layout; site also shows pagination when applicable
 - Site displays product page if visitor clicks a specific product from the search results

Appendix

Sitemap Sketches

Sub Navigation										
Accessories	Automotive	clothing	Electronics Computers	Food Grocery	Health Beauty	Home Garden	Jewelry watch	shoes	Sports outdoors	Toys
<u>Women</u>	Cars/motorcycle supplies	women	<u>Electronics</u> Camera	<u>Food</u> snacks Beverages Alcohol	<u>Beauty</u> Fragrances Haircare Medical supplies	<u>Decor</u> Furniture Gardening Furniture Housewares Kitchen	<u>Jewelry</u> Rings Earring Neckless Bracelets watch	<u>women</u>		Toys Games
Belts scarves Hats sunglasses Hand bags wallets	Accessories									
<u>Men</u>		Men	<u>Computers</u>				women Men Kids watch Accessories	Men		
Belts Hats scarves sunglasses bags										
<u>Kids</u>		kids								



Wireframe Sketches

