

What is Information Mapping?

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Overview

Introduction

Information Mapping is a revolutionary new way of organizing any type of corporate information which is a critical function in any organization. By breaking the information into digestible "chunks," Information mapping allows the writer to efficiently organize the information in a structured, readable, user-focused, and accurate way for documents such as Procedures, Reports, Proposals, and Manuals.

History

Stage	Description
1965	Robert E. Horn, a researcher at Harvard and Columbia Universities, began research into the design of Information Mapping, initially developed as both a way of visually presenting information and a method for analyzing information to make it easier to communicate, based on the principles of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning theory• Human factor engineering• Cognitive science
1965-82	Robert Horn's research evolved into the Information Mapping® method.
1982-2009	A company was formed and commercialization of the Information Mapping Method continued.
2009	The company was acquired by Information Mapping® International NV, a Belgian company.
2009-Present	The Method has been applied by hundreds of thousands of individuals in 40 countries and adapted to the digital era.

Problem & Solution

Problem

A recent study indicates that 70% of documents are written by employees whose everyday responsibilities and skills don't include writing. This results in a myriad of disparate documents around the corporation written in a wide variety of writing styles, too long, unorganized, hard to read, and contain many inconsistencies and mistakes that lead to:

- errors
- misunderstandings
- wasteful costs
- regulatory noncompliance
- corporate liabilities

Solution

Information Mapping overcomes these challenges by providing writers with a systematic approach to organizing and presenting information so readers can quickly and easily access it, understand it, and act on it, based on the IM concepts of:

- Document Development Tasks
- Information Types
- Research-Based Principles
- Units of Information: Blocks & Maps

Before & After

before → **after**

Reorganization of the company

As you well know, our company has had considerable difficulty this year with the stalled economy, inflation, with the labor difficulties we've had at several plants, and with the development of our new products, especially in the home products system. This situation has forced the management team to assess our entire company and its operations with a view to finding a better way to organize it for improved profits and long-term efficiency.

Some of our departments have been growing and shrinking without much rhyme or reason, and before this occasion we had not made the effort to take a step back and check what we were doing. Instead, we were just making do. The aim of our reorganizing duplication when we could not do it better. Our goal is to bring together all our divisions, so we can work together more effectively.

Now we are announcing a reorganization to take effect on 18 January. We will announce the details on 12 January including dates when new managers will hold meetings with various employees to whom the information is pertinent. We will also, at that time, distribute a complete schedule setting forth who will be working for whom. In the meantime, we are announcing the following changes so the managers in charge of the affected divisions and departments can prepare for the reorganization.

Janice Moreland will move from Vice President for Research to Vice President for Operations. Jack Spotter will be the new head of the Research Department, moving from his position as Assistant Vice President for Operations. Marilyn Belt will become Director of the new Home Products Division, which used to have only project status. These changes in department managerial positions will take place on 5 January. Current Assistant Directors will remain in their positions at that time unless otherwise notified.

Then, on 12 January, changes at the level of Assistant Directors will go into effect. The staffs of these departments will be informed in an email notification from their managers about whether they will be moving with their current managers or staying in their current departments. In most cases there will be no change, as we are trying to keep as many departments intact, with experienced staff, as possible.

Reorganization of the company

Background As you well know, our company has had considerable difficulty this year with:

- the stalled economy
- inflation
- labour difficulties at several plants, and
- development of our new products, especially in the home-products systems.

The management team has decided to assess the entire company and its operations and implement a reorganization to improve profits and long-term efficiency.

New division As well as a Home Products Division will be created as a new division

Management changes The new management positions are described in this table:

Name	Previous position	New management position
Janice Moreland	VP, Research	VP, Operations
Jack Spotter	Assistant VP, Operations	Director, Research
Marilyn Belt	Assistant to the Plant Manager	Director, Home Products Division (new division)

Notification to staff The managers of these departments will inform their staffs via email if they will be moving or staying in their current departments. In most cases there will be no change. We are trying to keep departments intact, if possible.

Effective dates The effective dates for these changes are listed below:

Date	Description
January 5	Changes in Corporate Officers and Division Chiefs.
January 12	Changes in Assistant Directors positions and announcement of details of reorganization.
January 18	Reorganization takes effect.

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Document Development Tasks

Concept

Preparatory steps to make the entire writing project efficient, cohesive, and meets the need of the audience.

Tasks

Task	Description	Result
 ANALYZE	Analyze the <ul style="list-style-type: none">• purpose and desired response• audience, and• information	Task oriented, reader-focused content.
 ORGANIZE	Organize content into modular units of information	Consistent and predictable document structure.
 PRESENT	Present the content visually	Presentation that maximizes clarity and accessibility.

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Information Types

Concept

Information types allow the writer to analyze the subject matter and categorize it according to the purpose of the audience.

Types

Type	Definition	Purpose
 PRINCIPLE	A principle is a statement designed to <ul style="list-style-type: none">• dictate, guide, or require behavior, or• present bigger truths or laws of the universe.	To tell what should or should not be done.
 PROCESS	A process is a series of <ul style="list-style-type: none">• events• stages, or• phases that occurs over time and has a specific result.	To tell what happens or how something works.
 PROCEDURE	A procedure is a set of steps and/or decisions that the reader performs to accomplish a task.	To tell how to do something.
 CONCEPT	A concept is a class or group of things that share a critical set of attributes.	To tell what something is.
 STRUCTURE	A structure is anything that has parts and boundaries.	To show what something looks like.
 FACT	A fact is a statement that is assumed to be true.	To tell what the facts are.

Research-Based Principles

Concept

Allows the writer to organize information effectively so that it is easy to access, understand, and remember.

Principles

Principle	Definition
 CHUNKING	Group information into small manageable units.
 RELEVANCE	Limit each unit of information to one purpose, topic, or idea.
 LABELING	Label each unit of information.
 CONSISTENCY	Use similar terms, formats, organization, labels, and sequences for similar content.
 INTEGRATED GRAPHICS	Use graphics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to clarify, emphasize, or add dimension to the text, and• within, rather than separate from, the text.
 ACCESSIBLE DETAIL	Provide the detail that all readers need, and structure it so that those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• need the detail can easily access it, and• do not need the detail can easily bypass it.

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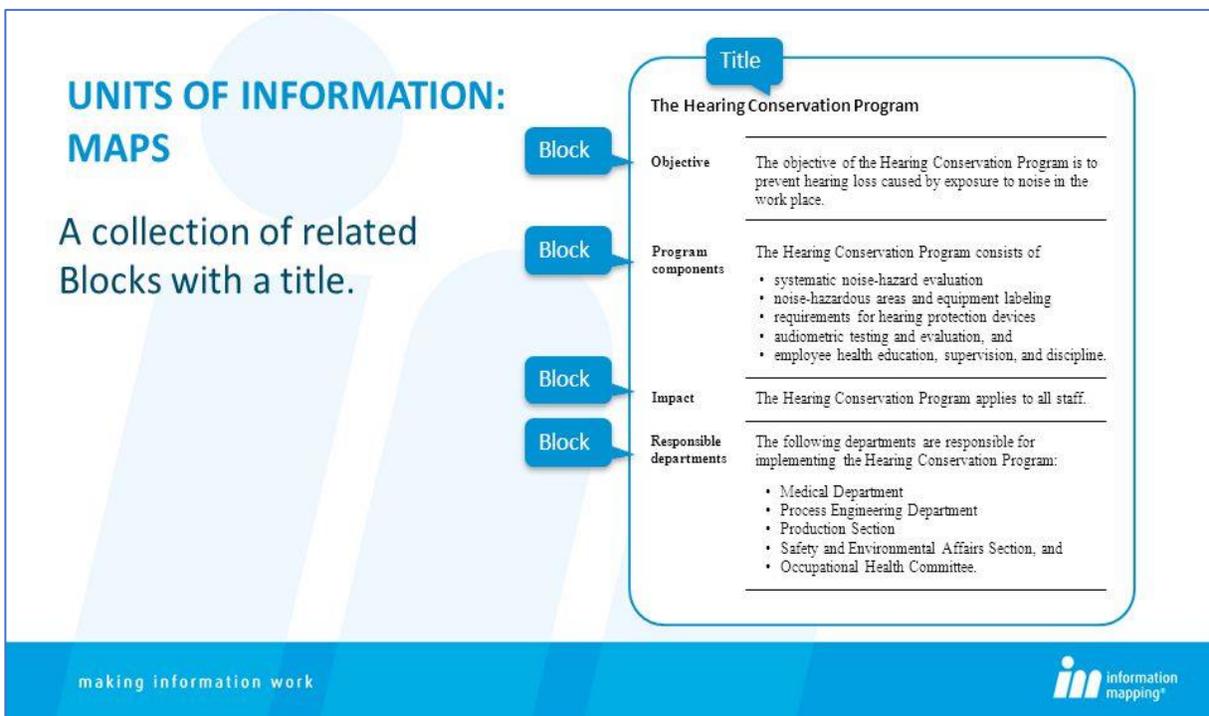
Units of Information: Blocks & Maps

Concept Blocks and Maps create standard information modules that contain one clear purpose.

Block A Block is a manageable chunk of related information with a label and something that separates it from other Blocks.

Map A Map is a collection of related Blocks with a title.

**Related Blocks
Organized
Under a Map**



Value Proposition

Proven Impact on Readers

- 70% less time needed to create and review the document
 - 50% less reading time
 - 90% less questions about the content
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Overall Benefits to the Corporation

- Sets a “Content Standard” for the enterprise:
 - easy to retrieve
 - clear and understandable, and
 - easily reusable.
 - Corporate risks are reduced
 - Safety and compliance are increased
 - Cost of documentation and related support is cut in half
 - The time to market products goes down
 - Customer satisfaction improves
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Online Accessibility

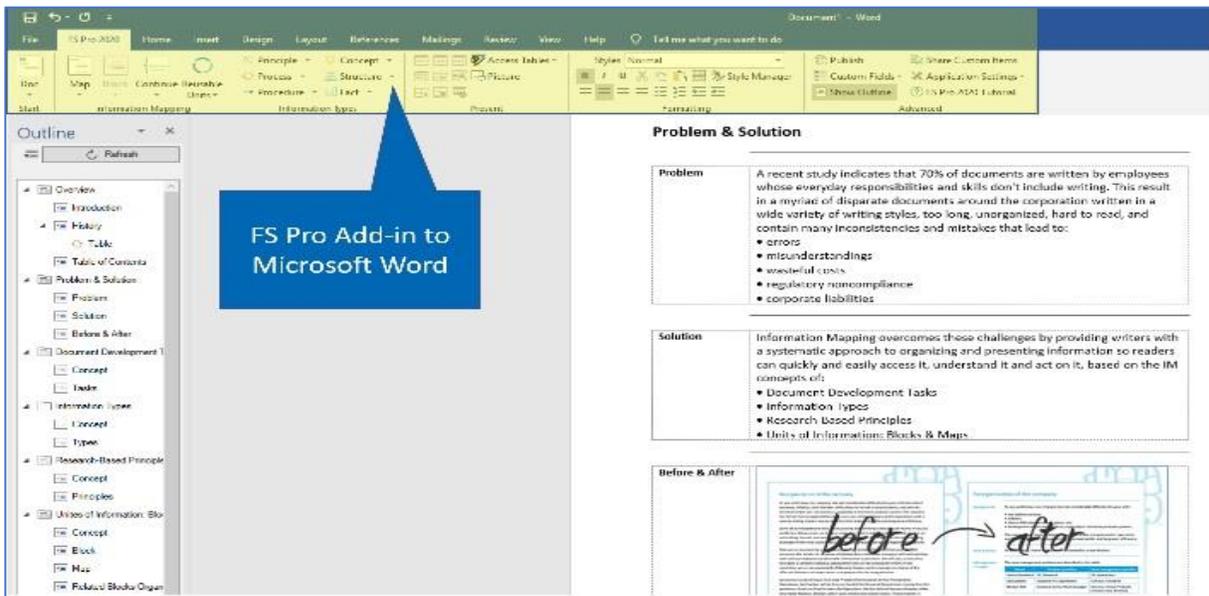
- The writer can easily self/publish HTML and XML files to the cloud without any need for IT staff
 - With all the “maps” and “blocks” of information and associated graphics stored in the cloud, these blocks of information are instantly available to anyone in the organization by a simple download to their PC or any type of mobile device
 - The tedious and sometimes unsuccessful task of trying to find the right document, in the right location, and then to find the right information within that document, is not necessary. Information becomes immediately searchable and available by simple download in text, graphic, and video formats
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Information Mapping Products and Services

Software

- FS Pro is a software program that helps the writer create clearly structured documents by providing formatting and layout tools
 - FS Pro also allows the writer to achieve consistency easily, both within a document and between documents
 - FS Pro is an add-in for Microsoft Word by means of an additional ribbon (as shown in yellow highlighted area below).
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FS Pro Add-In



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Services

Information Mapping provides public, private and online video training and certification.

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