Research Report:

Card Sorting

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Design Problem
In addressing the challenge of creating a more user-friendly website, our primary question has been: "How might we make a user-friendly website that makes it easy for organizations to find helpful resources and information?" This question has guided our approach to redesigning the WASCLA website and conducting our user research. Our research focused on organizations that could potentially interact with the WASCLA website, as they were most likely to be the closest connections to individuals who needed help.

Research Method
To better organize the website content according to the preferences of potential users within organizations, I decided to use the card sorting research method. Card sorting, as described by the Nielsen Norman Group (Tankala & Sherwin, 2024), is a method where participants organize cards with content into categories. This method helps researchers understand how users naturally group information, which helps with website navigation and information structure.

Collecting and Analyzing
I prepared my cards for the user research by choosing a program for remote card sorting and familiarized myself with the content that needs to be categorized. After creating the cards, I began seeking out users within various organizations with different understanding of language access and government work. Three users were selected based on their background working with organizations, with two in the government and one in a community outreach program. During these sessions, the data was recorded and analyzed for further understanding.

Results
The results showed that users quickly and frequently sorted cards for contact information, technical help, and event calendars, indicating they found these cards important and easy to understand. In contrast, cards for the mailing list and website-specific news were often sorted later and less consistently, suggesting that users viewed these as less important or were unsure about where to place them. These patterns of card placement and position show that users had varying degrees of importance and understanding, which can be used for our website prototype. For example, cards like contact information and technical help were sorted out quickly by users, showing that these are important and easy to find. This means we should make these parts really obvious and easy to get to on the website. On the other hand, things like the mailing list and website updates were often picked last or not as consistently, which shows that users found them confusing or not as necessary. This tells us that we need to make these parts clearer and easier to find on the website to help users see their importance and use them better.

Next Steps
With the user research completed, the next phase in the design process is to utilize the data gathered from card sorting and surveys and incorporate it into our prototype design. We will be using the information provided under results to guide what areas to make clearer, where to put information, and how to create a better navigation system on the website.

References

Tankala, S., & Sherwin, K. (2024, February 2). Card sorting: Definition and examples.
Nielsen Norman Group. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/card-sorting-definition/