

**STRUCTURING INFORMATION**

# Navigation & Labeling Worksheet

*Pressure-test menu names against real user language*

|                           |                                                  |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Use this when</b>      | Naming or fixing navigation                      |
| <b>Time needed</b>        | 60–90 minutes                                    |
| <b>Who's involved</b>     | Whoever has access to search logs & support data |
| <b>You'll end up with</b> | Labels in your users' own words                  |

## How to use this worksheet

A label is a promise about what's behind it. Good navigation uses the words your users already have in their heads — not your internal product names or clever brand terms. This worksheet audits your labels, gathers the words users actually use, and tests whether people can predict where a label leads.

### 1 • Audit your current labels

List every navigation label. For each, ask honestly whether it's the word a user would use.

| Current label | What lives under it | User's word? (Y/N) | Stronger alternative |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|               |                     |                    |                      |
|               |                     |                    |                      |
|               |                     |                    |                      |
|               |                     |                    |                      |

| Current label | What lives under it | User's word?<br>(Y/N) | Stronger alternative |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|               |                     |                       |                      |
|               |                     |                       |                      |
|               |                     |                       |                      |
|               |                     |                       |                      |

## 2 · Capture trigger words

For each destination, collect the words users actually use for it — mine your site search logs, support tickets, and interview transcripts. These are the words your labels should echo.

| The thing / destination | Words users actually use for it |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                         |                                 |
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|                         |                                 |
|                         |                                 |

### EXAMPLE

*Destination: booking a session. Users say: “schedule,” “book a time,” “get an assessment” — rarely “reserve” or “engagement.”*

### 3 · First-click check

For each key task, which label would a user click first — and does it actually lead to the right place? If the first click is wrong, the label is wrong.

| Task to complete | Label they'd click first | Leads to the right place? (Y/N) |
|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
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|                  |                          |                                 |

## Labeling principles

- **Use their words** — borrow the words from your trigger-words list.
- **Be specific, not clever** — “Pitching analysis” beats “Solutions.”
- **Keep it short** — aim for roughly five to seven top-level items.
- **Make labels predict content** — someone should guess the contents from the label alone.
- **Stay consistent** — same style, case, and grammar across all labels.
- **Avoid overlap** — if two labels could hold the same page, one of them is wrong.