



“I want to...” & “How do I...”
Main Navigation

Active verb-based
user discovery path

VISIONTM

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Introduction

When implemented properly, megamenus provide structured navigation choices for users with panels and sub-sections where options are visible at once.¹ A well-organized action-oriented navigation – menu items starting with “How do I” or “I want to” – can benefit the user in discovery of content and provide better user experience by providing alternate and shorter paths to the same content, especially when the user is not familiar with the site’s organization.² The evidence for this benefit is also observed in our usability testing videos and site visit analytics data.

Which Menu Label – “How Do I...” or “I Want To...”?

Choosing whether to use “How Do I” or “I Want To” is subjective – the difference is in how well their sections are organized and how consistently they are presented.

Two statistics (as of May 2017):

- About 80% of Vision launched sites in the last 2 years use a main menu heading like “How Do I” or “I Want To”
- Of those 80%, roughly 60% use the “I Want To...” and about 40% use the “How Do I...” variants.

“How Do I” and “I Want To” variants observed in Vision sites

I Want To...	How Do I...	< Most frequently used variants
I Want To...	How Do I	
I Want To...	HOW DO I...?	
I’m Looking For...	HOW DO I?	
I Am A...	HOW TO...	

The variations observed include use of letter cases (all caps and other variations), ellipses (...), and the question mark (?).

What Goes Under “I Want To...”

The “I want to...” section can help users navigate to the most popular/visited content on the site. The candidate links to appear under this section can come from the following sources:

1. Analytics data

Ask your Vision project manager for the “Top Tasks” summary after the UX phase is complete. This information will provide a good starting point to create a list of potential redirect pages that would need re-naming/re-phrasing as part of the menu items.

Top Task Summary spreadsheet

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Page	Page Title	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Entrances	Bounce Rate	% Exit	Page Value
2	/	Home	2734	2222	40.38	2183	34.40%	35.63%	0.00
3	/index.aspx	2017 February	2072	1780	127.34	1131	79.66%	56.76%	0.00
4	/index.aspx	Police Blotter	1778	1291	22.79	1012	19.17%	25.59%	0.00
5	/index.aspx	2017 March	1212	931	56.95	36	75.00%	30.36%	0.00
6	/index.aspx	Employment Opportunities	640	451	30.89	147	50.34%	26.25%	0.00
7	/index.aspx	2017 January	619	507	148.52	71	56.34%	28.59%	0.00
8	/index.aspx	Police	452	354	43.76	244	26.23%	25.88%	0.00
9	/index.aspx	2016	449	263	10.69	3	33.33%	3.12%	0.00
10	/index.aspx	Home	415	293	37.15	30	46.67%	21.93%	0.00
11	/index.aspx	Borough Calendar	361	123	18.88	20	40.00%	13.30%	0.00
12	/index.aspx	Utility Billing	351	281	64.65	159	37.74%	27.64%	0.00
13	/index.aspx	Staff Directory	344	201	45.96	21	66.67%	19.77%	0.00
14	/index.aspx	Departments & Services	322	225	18.39	49	16.33%	12.11%	0.00
15	/index.aspx	Forms & Documents	287	167	9.34	3	0.00%	2.79%	0.00
16	/index.aspx	Contact Us	278	226	151.11	96	69.79%	52.52%	0.00
17	/index.aspx	Employment Opportunities : Police Officer	277	234	198.53	56	94.64%	61.73%	0.00
18	/index.aspx	Parks & Recreation	243	154	47.06	72	43.06%	28.81%	0.00
19	/index.aspx	2016 December	239	217	91.08	20	80.00%	27.62%	0.00
20	/index.aspx	2015	212	157	267.09	109	72.48%	55.66%	0.00

2. Re-visit the initial website design Survey question:

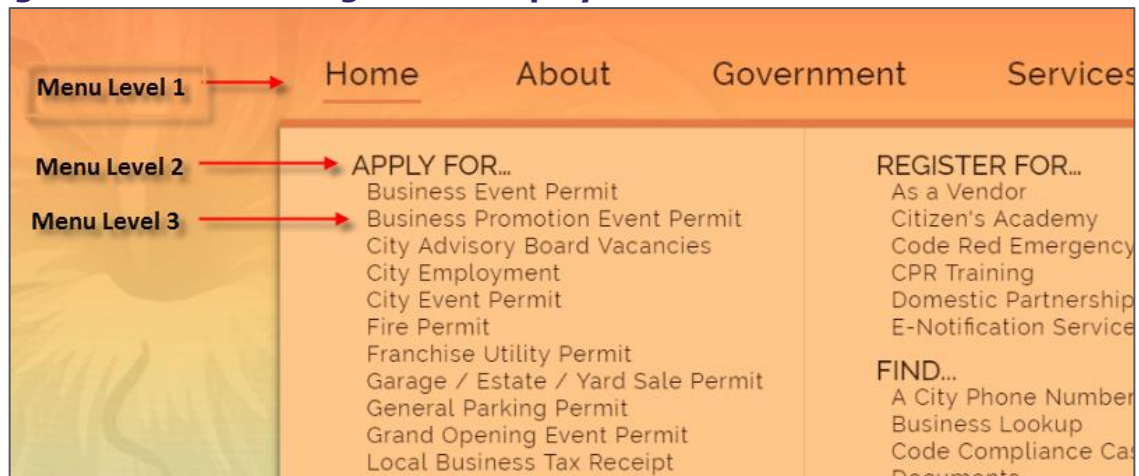
“What are the most frequently asked questions people ask on the phone or via email?”
 Ask your internal team about phone or email requests that are not captured in the analytics.

How to Organize

Now that we have a target page list to create the menu, we'll need to make some decisions. The most important best practice is consistency in selection of words or phrase choice for the navigation. Using the same tense and parallel structure in phrasing help users scan better regardless of the display menu level settings.

The megamenu can be presented in 3 or 2 levels:

Figure 1. 3-Level Megamenu Display



If using a 3-level megamenu display setting, the level 2 and level 3 menu items should generally be alphabetically ordered. (An exception would be if there is ample supporting data that clearly defines different grouping and sequence.) This view provides direct access to target pages on level 3.

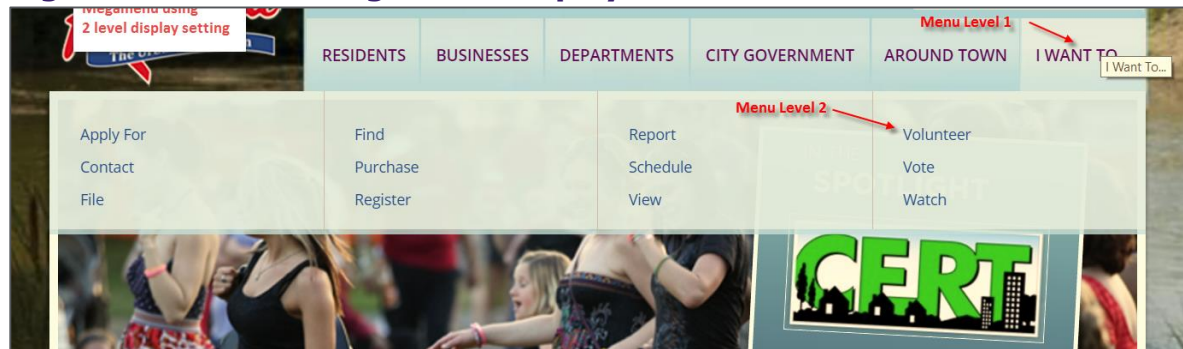
Across Vision clients the top 20 popular action-oriented verbs used in the “How Do I...” menus are:

1. Apply	11. Sign-Up
2. Pay	12. Request
3. Learn	13. Search
4. Report	14. Locate
5. View	15. File
6. Contact	16. Submit
7. Get	17. Visit
8. Find	18. Watch
9. Register	19. Volunteer
10. Obtain	20. Check

How to Organize (cont.)

If using a 2-level megamenu display setting, the menu item is set up so that users will need to go to another page to see the tasks/pages associated with the action verb. By changing the megamenu display level setting in the CMS to "level 2" for Figure 1, it would look something like Figure 2 below. It provides a clean and ordered action verbs to choose from but it will require one additional click to see the options at the next level.

Figure 2. 2-Level Megamenu Display



An alternate way to use a 2-level megamenu is to combine the action verb with the task title in one line like Figure 3. Here the user has a direct access to the page from the menu instead of going to another page. However, it is more difficult for users to scan the content.

Figure 3. Alternate Use of 2-Level Megamenu Display



Best Practices

- Use a 3-level megamenu display setting
- Alphabetize levels 2 and 3 *
- Order vertically in columns
- Use consistent verb tense
- Use parallel grammar structure for menu labels
- Use a medium number of links on the menu to avoid extended scanning time (no scrolling menus!)

These best practices can be challenging to adhere to 100% of the time. Keep in mind though, the more of these recommendations you adopt, the more easily your visitors will find the top information under the “How Do I...” section of your website.

* If there is a clear organizing principle backed up by data, or the grouping is inherently understood, position the most important or frequently used group at the top-left corner.

Example 3-Level Menus Using Best Practices

Services	Government	Visitors	Doing Business	City Projects	I Want To...
Access Online Services Public Library Toilet Rebates Apply For a Job Buy a Parking Permit	Find a park a trail a Map a Street Report department contact information things to do in Bozeman	Pay my citation or view city assessment view my utility bill Request Public Records Services Reserve a Facility a Park Shelter	Schedule Building Inspections Garbage Pick up Update my utility account View city commission agenda document center Watch a commission or board meeting video		

HOME	GOVERNMENT	COMMUNITY	BUSINESS	HOW DO I?
Apply For Business License Yard Sale Permit Employment Bring An Issue to City Council Contact Contact City Council City Staff	Find Buildings & Sites My Polling Location Items Accepted at Recycling Center Get Involved With Albertville Museum Keep Albertville Beautiful Register / Sign Up For Youth & Adult Sports			Report Barking Dogs Property Complaint Tall Grass/Weeds Street Light Outages

Home	About the City	Residents	Business	Departments	Government	I Want To...
Apply For... Advisory Boards Building Permit City License Election Judge Employment Residential Parking Permit Attend... Council Meetings Down by the Riverside Concerts Mayo Civic Center Events Riverside Live! Contact...		Pay My... Library Fines Parking Ticket& Information Residential Parking Permit & Information Special Assessments Utility Bill Schedule A... Building Inspection Sign Up For... Email Updates Emergency Alerts Parks & Rec Classes Sports League			Submit A... Crime Report Ethics/Inquiry Complaint Service Request Suspicious Activity Traffic Concern Website Issue View... Animals Available for Adoption Bus Route Schedules City Council Agenda & Minutes City Ordinances City Ward & Precinct Map 7 Day Weather Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Special Assessments	

Example 2-Level Menu Using Best Practices

RESIDENTS	BUSINESSES	DEPARTMENTS	GOVERNMENT	SERVICES	VISITORS	I WANT TO... I Want To...
Apply for a Job Contact City Council	Pay Traffic Ticket Pay Utility Bill	Request Public Information See The City's InTouch Newsletter	Submit a Crime Tip View Interactive GIS Maps			

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