

Information Architecture for Internet Capital Group

An Exploration of Three Options

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Information Architecture

Selecting the Content Architecture for Your Site

The purpose of this document is to present three models for structuring the content architecture of the Internet Capital Group (ICG) online presence. Each option provides a unique approach to the site's structure while housing the same core content.

Determining this core architecture is critical as it provides the foundation for all design and content development, sets the stage for the overall user experience, and carries long-term effects in the maintenance and growth of the site.

Methodology

In the following pages, Saltmine provides the following:

- An overview of each option with a site map, which indicates how the content could be named and organized within each top-level area
- A list of pros and cons for each option
- Example page schematics, which indicate the approximate user experience and structural blueprint for design motiving

All three options address the goals and requirements identified by ICG and Saltmine for defining the Internet Capital Group experience.

Next Steps

This exercise is a critical step in the content and design process. Selection of an information architecture approach will allow us to:

- Finalize the site map
- Identify the context of every individual feature and piece of content
- Track content development and file organization based on the site map
- Develop the design motifs
- Prototype navigational solutions

Option 1: All Things Equal

The All Things Equal architectural option organizes the site into main content groupings, giving no content area more emphasis than the other options.

Site Map

Figure 1 shows a high-level outline of how the site content would be organized within the All Things Equal architectural option.

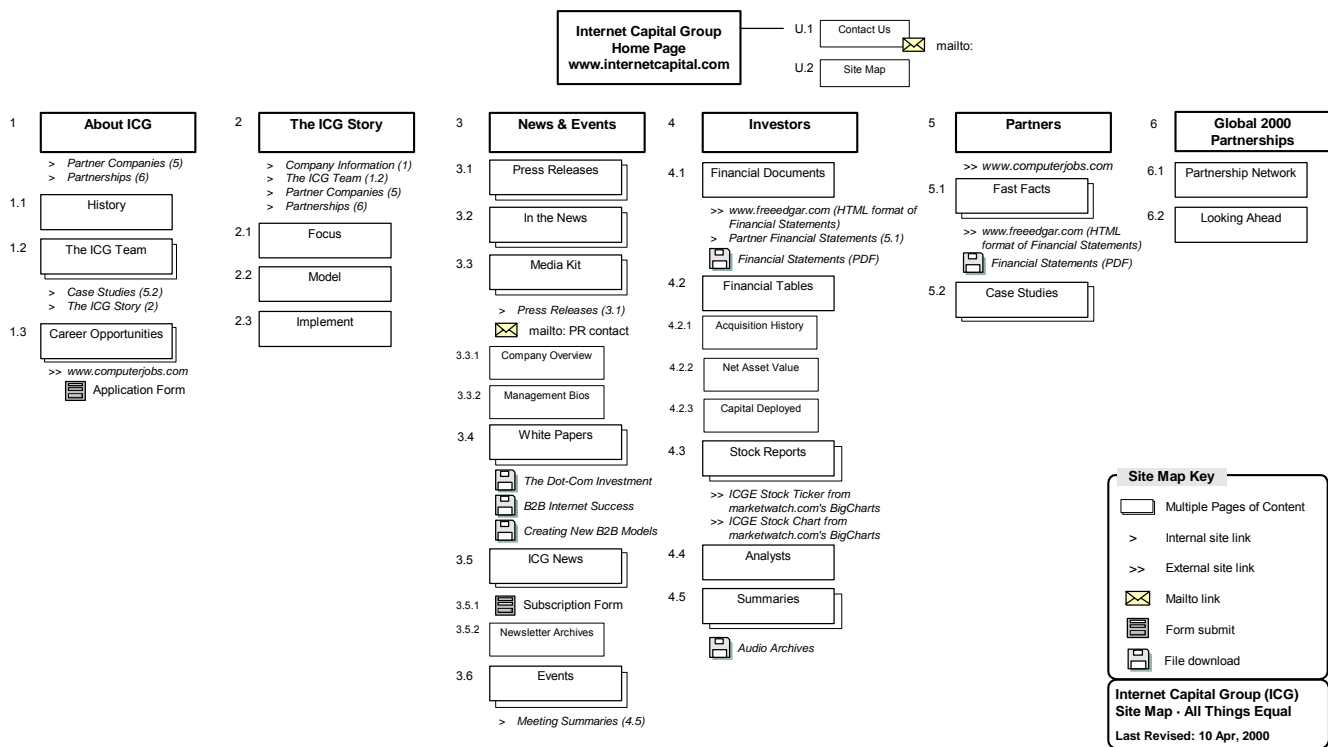


Figure 1. Site Map, Option 1

Overview

Site visitors go directly to the main home page. The six areas of navigation ensure that all top-level areas are treated equally and are kept within easy reach of the site visitors.

Pros & Cons

Pros

- All major site areas receive equal weight (none are designated as more or less important)
- All audiences receive equal weight (none feel more or less important)
- Naming and categorization is easy to understand at a glance (except the difference between *Partners* and *Global 2000 Partnerships*)

Cons

- A lot of navigational choices may overwhelm the visitor from digging deeper into the site
- Unclear messaging
- Not immediately clear on difference between *Partners* and *Global 2000 Partnerships*
- Not immediately clear on difference between *About ICG* and *The ICG Story*

Schematics

The following schematics offer a rough template of how the All Things Equal architecture could translate into a user interface.

Note: These are not design motifs or navigational models. The visual motif and navigation design will be produced immediately following the choice of architecture.

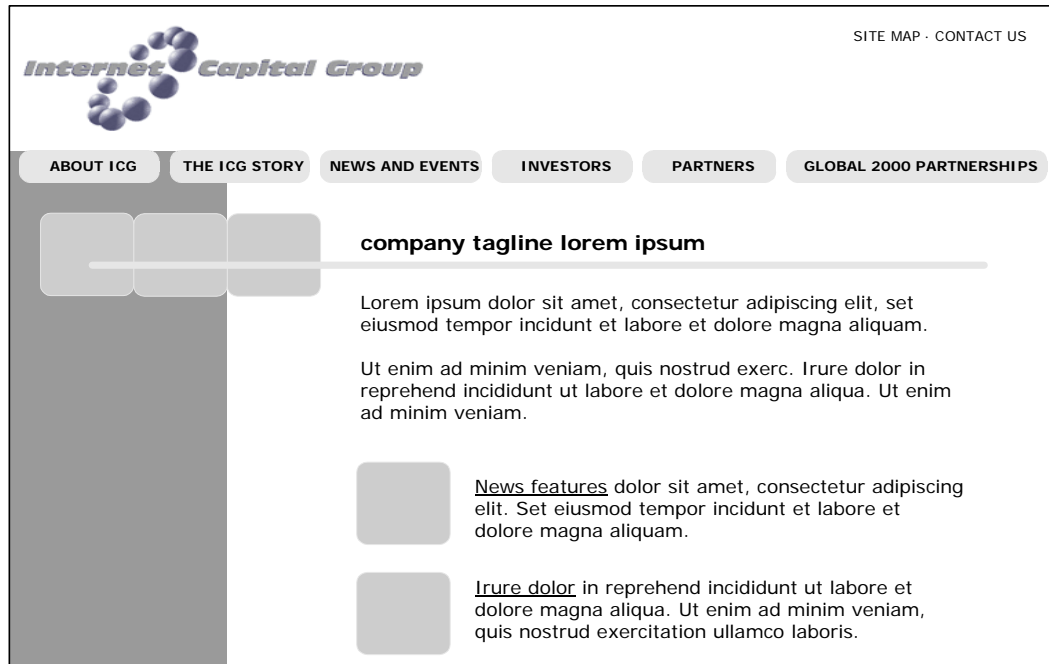


Figure 2. Home Page, Option 1

The ICG Story

Focus

Focus

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, set eiusmod tempor incididunt et labore et dolore magna aliquam.

Model

Model

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, set eiusmod tempor incididunt et labore et dolore magna aliquam.

Implementation

Implement

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, set eiusmod tempor incididunt et labore et dolore magna aliquam.

Figure 3. Main Section Page (Level 1) , Option 1

Option 2: Directional Approach

The Directional Approach architectural option organizes the site into five main areas — Focus, Model, Implement, News & Events, and Investors. This option focuses on the ICG story and messaging (focus > model > implement), and challenges the site visitor to dig deeper into the site.

Site Map

Figure 4 shows a high-level outline of how the site content would be organized within the Directional Approach architectural option.

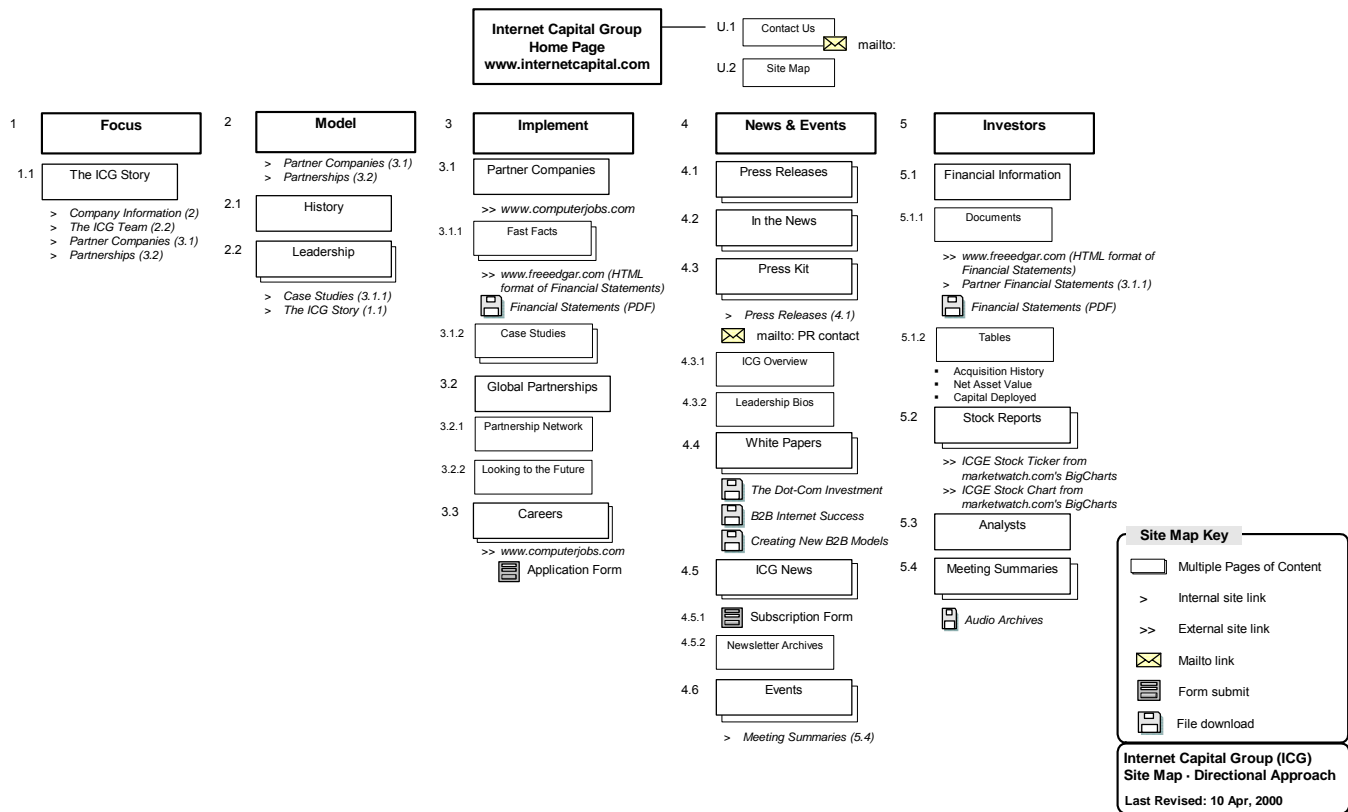


Figure 4. Site Map, Option 2

Overview

Site visitors go directly to the main home page. The focus of this page is ICG's story and messaging:

- **Focus** — Tells the ICG story, giving the site visitor a clear understanding of what ICG does and who ICG is (gives the visitor focus)
- **Model** — Shows that ICG is the model through its exemplary team and company direction
- **Implement** — Demonstrates the model once implemented by telling visitors about Partner Companies, Global Partnerships, and Careers with ICG and its partner companies

Pros & Cons

Pros

- Challenges the visitor, drawing them into the ICG story (focus > model > implement)
- Messaging is clear, demonstrated throughout the site

Cons

- Site navigation is not named intuitively (visitor cannot clearly identify what will be contained in the Focus, Model, and Implement areas)
- Nomenclature is somewhat esoteric, forcing visitor to invest some discovery time
- Content is difficult to locate
- Visitor feeling overwhelmed, discouraged from digging deeper into the site
- Site administrators and content developers have difficulty in identifying where new pages and information should reside

Schematics

The following schematics offer a rough template of how the Directional Approach architecture could translate into a user interface.

Note: These are not design motifs or navigational models. The visual motif and navigation design will be produced immediately following the choice of architecture.

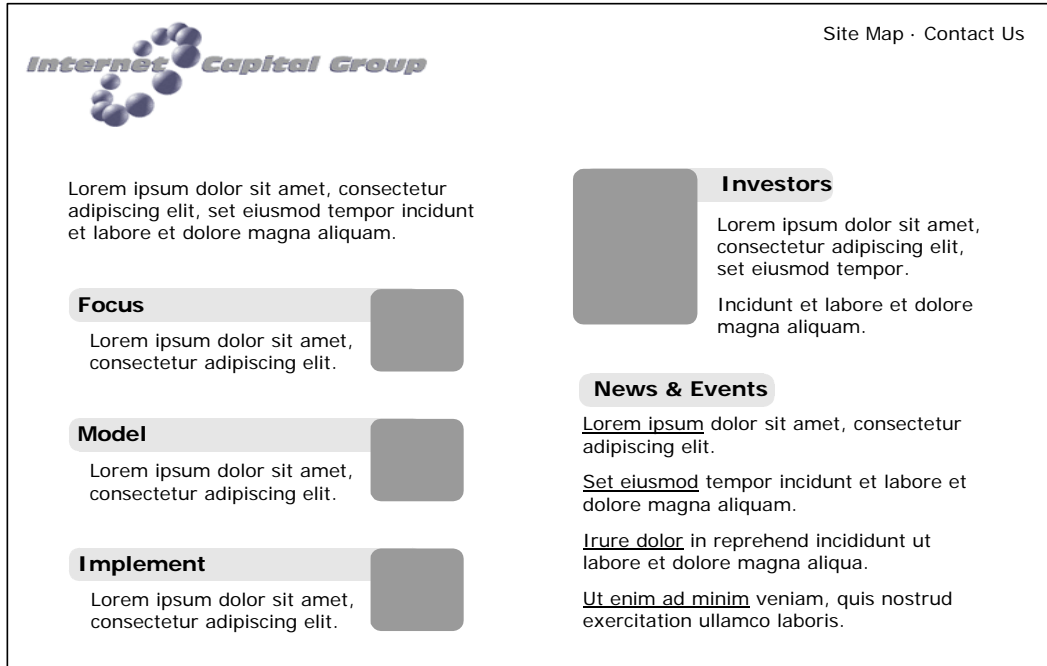


Figure 5. Home Page, Option 2

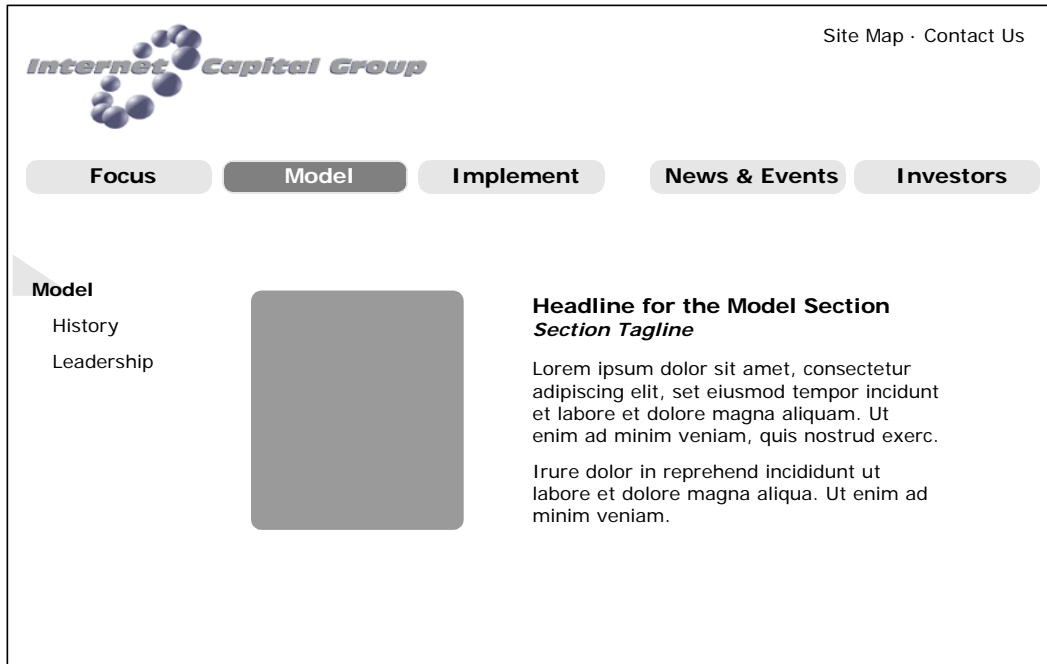


Figure 6. Main Section Page (Level 1) , Option 2

Option 3: Target Audience

The Target Audience approach organizes the site into main content groupings, providing a very streamlined approach with equal weight given to the site's primary audiences — investors, the media, partners, and Global 2000 CEOs.

Site Map

Figure 7 shows a high-level outline of how the site content would be organized within the Target Audience architectural option.

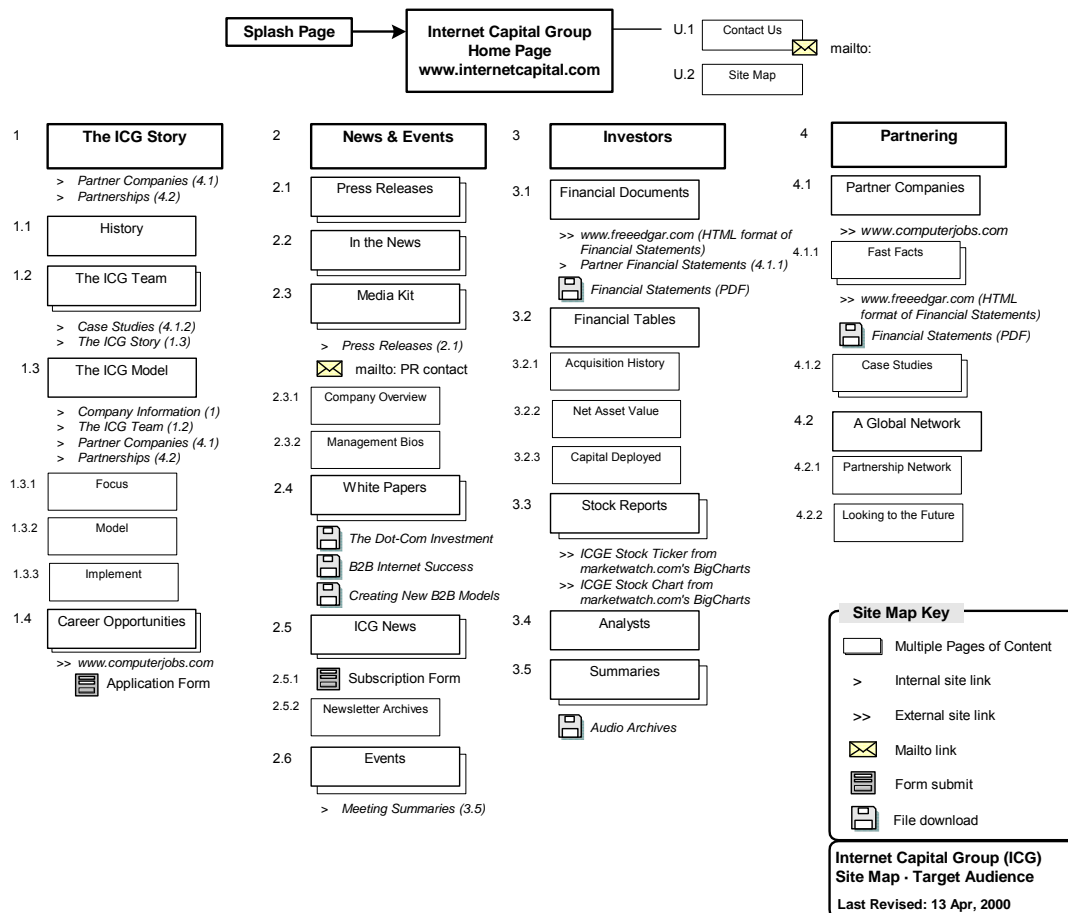


Figure 7. Site Map, Option 3

Note: Name change from *The ICG Story* to *The ICG Mode*, and *The ICG Story* naming convention takes on a new meaning in the examples presented in this option.

Overview

From the splash page, site visitors go directly to the main home page. The ICG model could be presented on the splash page to provide more space for the home page's focus.

The focus of the home page would be high-level messaging (who is ICG, how does this relate to you) and visuals, with space for timely articles and announcements. However, the most natural fit for timely content within this structure would be on the main section pages — The ICG Story, News & Events, Investors, and Partnerships. These could function almost as sub-sites featuring timely content oriented for each audience.

Pros & Cons

Pros

- Content is organized intuitively by audience
- All audiences receive equal weight (none feel more or less important)
- Navigation has a streamlined, confident feel
- Options are easy to access, not overwhelming
- Presents ICG as audience-oriented
- More partner-focused than other options

Cons

- Primary message may be hidden — solution would be to link the ICG story (focus > model > implement) from the home or splash page

Schematics

The following schematics offer a rough template of how the Target Audience architecture could translate into a user interface.

Note: These are not design motifs or navigational models. The visual motif and navigation design will be produced immediately following the choice of architecture.

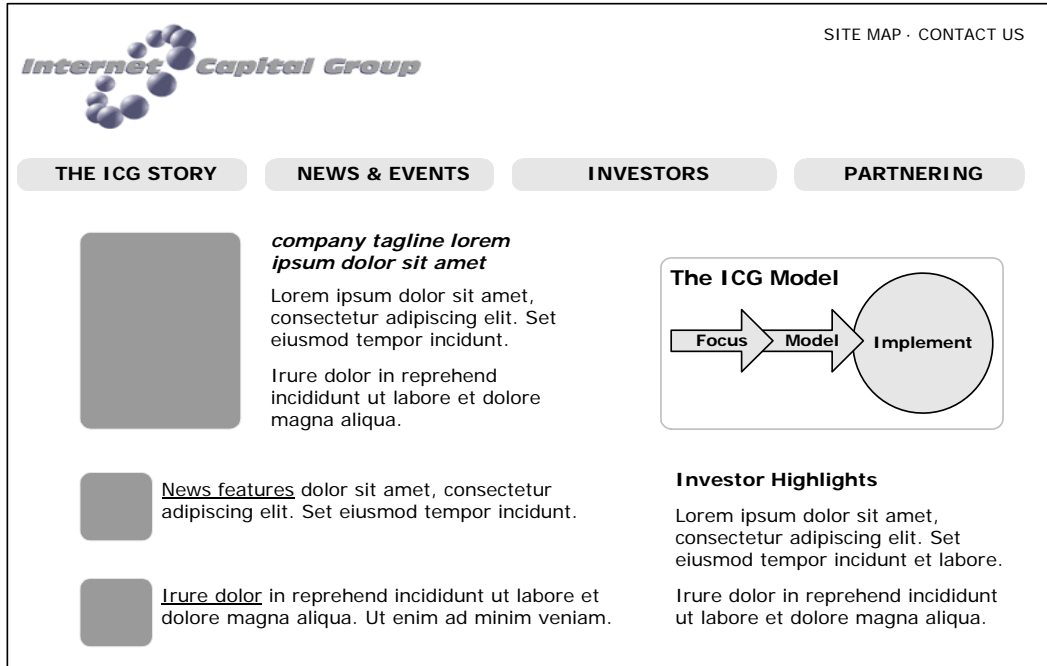


Figure 8. Home Page, Option 3

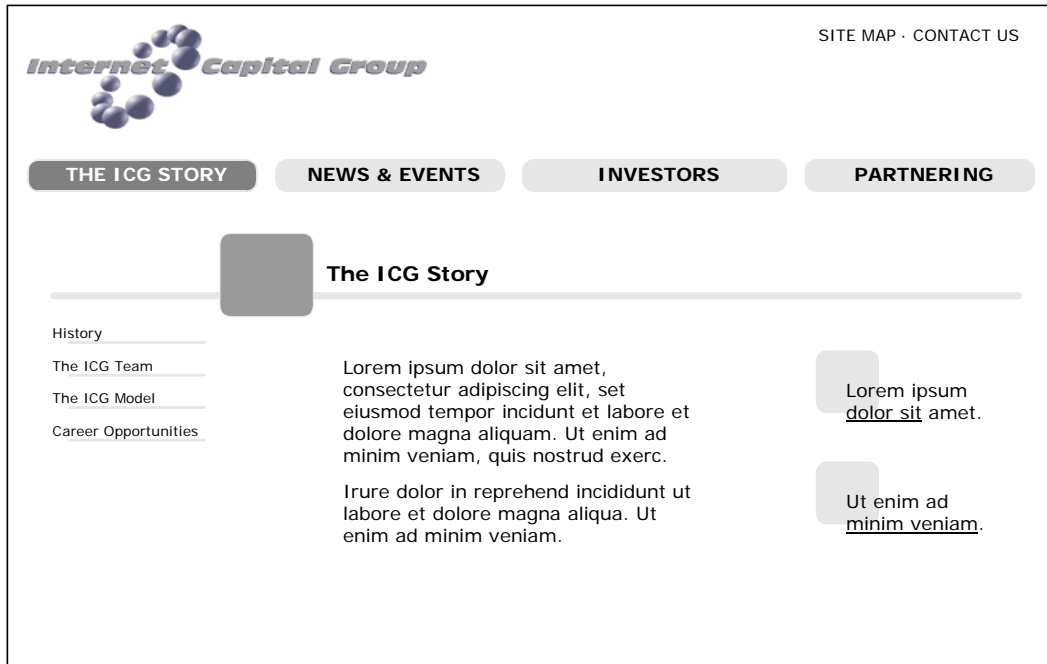


Figure 9. Main Section Page (Level 1) , Option 3

Milestones

This section includes the project milestones that will be used as review points during the development of the project.

Schedule

The major milestones and scheduling goals are:

Week 4

Tuesday	04/11	Review Features & Requirement document with Sam & Nina (Approval)
Friday	04/14	Information Architecture Meeting — review and approve information architecture

Week 5

Friday	04/20	Review motifs in meeting with Sam & Nina*
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Week 6

Tuesday	04/25	Final content & motif review
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Week 7

Tuesday	05/02	Template Review by Sam & Nina
Friday	05/05	Final build of Web site to be reviewed by client & tested by Saltmine

Week 8

Friday	05/12	Launch
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* Indicates dates that Saltmine would like to meet with Sam & Nina in person.