Stage 2 - Creative Concept

After completing your project plan, the next stage is to add more detail to the design concept of your multimedia application. To accomplish this you need to perform a number of tasks and ask a number of questions particularly about the information that you wish to include. What do the users need to know versus what is nice for them to know? What information comes first, second, and third? How will the information be categorised, ordered and presented. This will be accomplished by producing a content list. **Remember –** the information will take many forms, text, images, animations, sound and video.

Content List

Category	Information Type	Flowchart Reference
Big Cats: Overview of big cats around the world. Picture of Globe to select area.	Text Still image	
Sub-category		
Lion: Details about lions and how they live. Picture of male lion Sound of lion roaring Picture of lion pride	Text Still image WAV file Still image	
Sub-category		
Tiger: Details about Tigers and where they live. Picture of Tiger Area map of Tiger locations	Text Still image Still image	
Sub-category		
Cheetah: Details about Cheetahs and running speed Cheetah running	Text/Comparison table Video clip	

Once you have collated and categorised the information you will need to draw a Flowchart of how the information is to be presented.

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Flowchart

In order to establish the sequence of the flowchart you again need to ask yourself certain questions. What is the major or universal design of the multimedia application? How will the user interact with it? Will it be menu driven? Will there be multiple levels of menus? What will the user see when the CD-ROM first plays?

The sample flowchart in Fig 1 shows an application that starts with a title screen then moves to a main-menu screen. This hierarchical arrangement allows the user to access another menu at a second level of the program, a couple of text or animation items, a video segment, or lets the user quit the program. The second-level menu allows the user to access three more text or animation items or return to the main menu. Dependent on storage space available on the CD and the parameters of your content, you can have multiple hierarchical levels. This constitutes the overall interactive design of the multimedia project.

At this stage you need to provide details about how the pages in the application will be navigated. You do not need to include details of your actual design for the navigation tools, i.e. buttons, bars or hotspots, this will be included in stage 3 - Storyboarding.
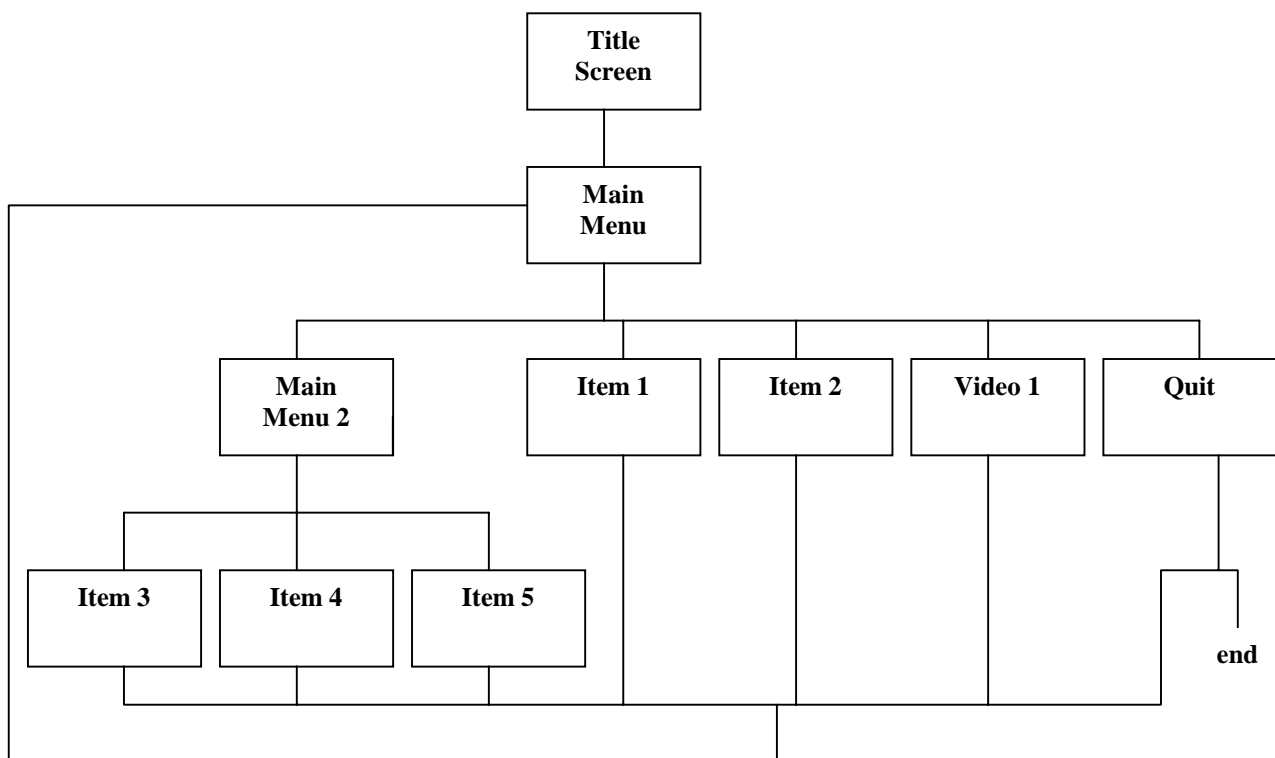

Fig 1

There are also flowcharts of the micro designs of segments of the CD-ROM application. For example, figure 2 shows a sample flowchart for a Usemap. Each box on the same horizontal level is a selected co-ordinate of the Usemap. In this instance, the user would choose to follow one of the three paths available by clicking on an area of the Usemap image.

Note: Before starting application production, a well-established flowchart is paramount to aid in storyboarding, application development and prototyping.
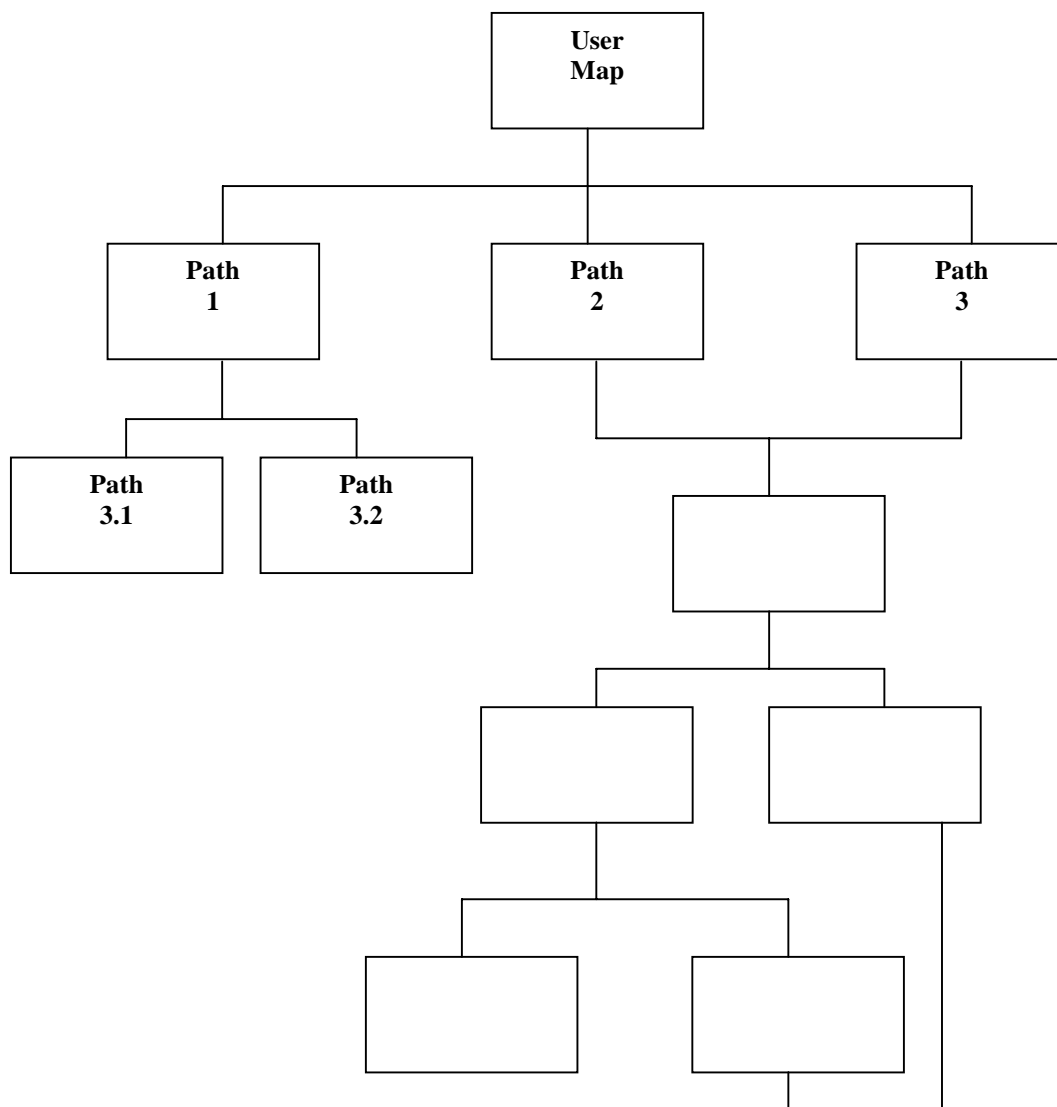
Fig 2