AAO ARCHEION ICA-AtoM Migration Project

Usability Testing: User Interface Mock-ups

April 12, 2011

In response to the findings from the AAO ICA-AtoM Usability Study conducted in March 2011, a series of changes to the current ICA-AtoM user interface have been suggested. These have been translated into a set of UI feature mockups which are presented in this document.

These feature UI mockups address obstacles to effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction with ICA-AtoM as reported in the AAO usability testing conducted at the University of Toronto iSchool. Please note that the overall "look and feel" of the site will be part of a general graphic design overhaul during the second phase of the AAO ARCHEION migration project.

As noted in the summary of the findings, the overall response to ICA-AtoM by Usability Study participants was positive; however usability obstacles were identified. Some of these require further analysis to determine the technical and/or design solution to address them. These include:

1. a confirmation screen after uploading digital objects or making edits to archival descriptions,
2. clarifying the different functionality of the digital object labels
3. providing drop-downs instead of auto-completes for fields linked to controlled vocabularies.

In the meanwhile, six usability obstacles identified during testing have been prioritized for revision and will be included in the ICA-AtoM release 1.2 for use in the new ARCHEION site. UI mockups with descriptions are included below for each:

1. Edit Existing Archival Description
2. Boolean Searching
3. Browse Results Sort Order
4. Display Number of Search Result Hits
5. Browse Buttons
6. Log-in Menu

1. Edit Existing Archival Description

Problem(s): Edit button in toolbar at bottom of page activates a lengthy edit interface that does not provide enough context for users to confidently locate the individual fields within the descriptive areas and enter information. Users preferred to edit specific areas within the archival description but needed a more obvious method to activate this functionality on the page.

Solution(s): Add an explicit edit link next to the area title within the archival description and remove the edit button from the bottom tool bar.

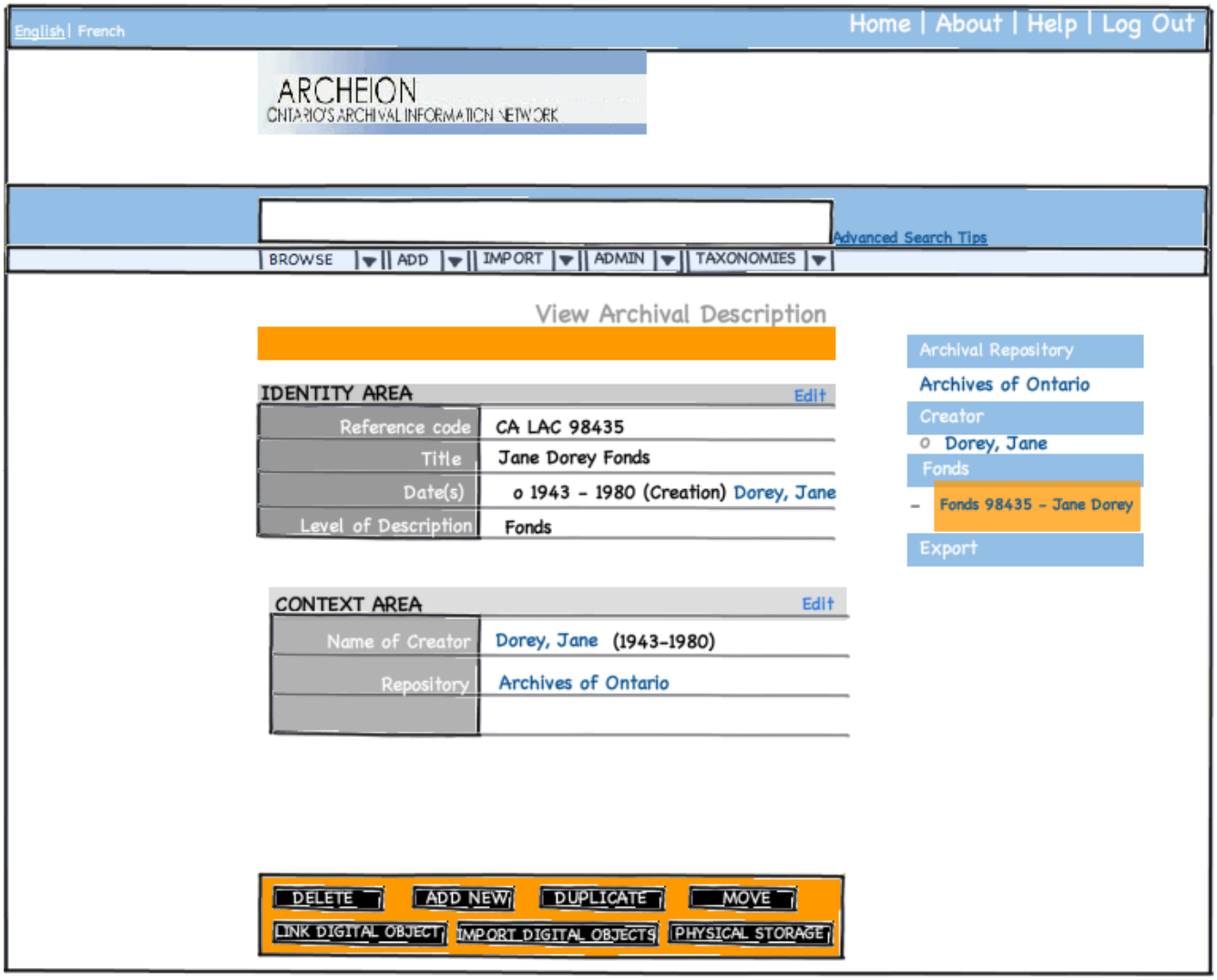

Illustration 1:

2. Boolean Searching

Problem(s): Users did not assume that boolean logic could be used in the ICA-AtoM search box. It has been observed that the default value being used in the ICA-AtoM search is “OR” between two terms and not “AND”, which is the approach taken by Google.

Solution(s): Insert an Advanced Search Tips link. [Illustration 2]
Provide Boolean Search help on the Tips page. [Illustration 3]

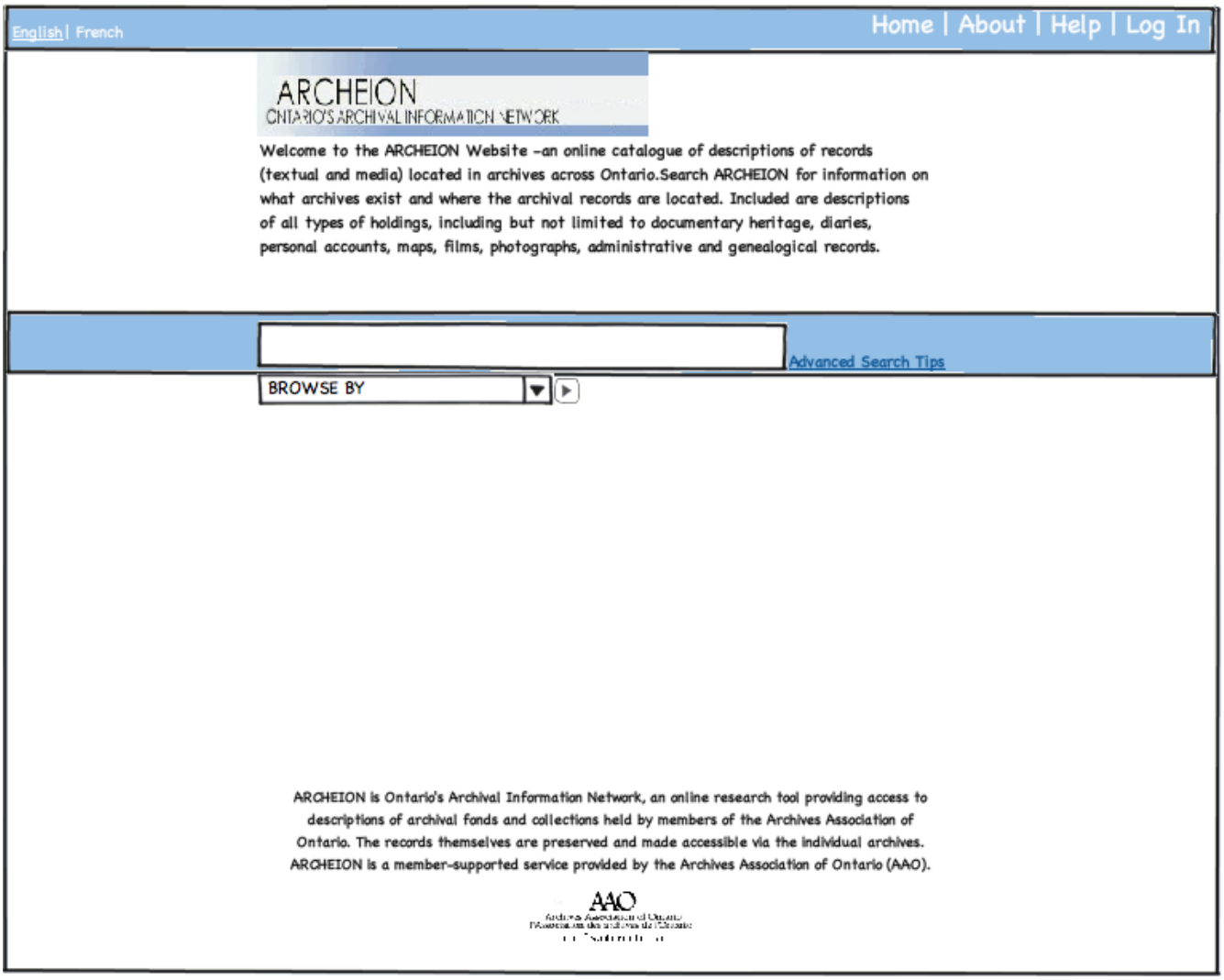

Illustration 2:

English | French

Home | About | Help | Log In

ARCHEION
ONTARIO'S ARCHIVAL INFORMATION NETWORK

Welcome to the ARCHEION Website –an online catalogue of descriptions of records (textual and media) located in archives across Ontario.Search ARCHEION for information on what archives exist and where the archival records are located. Included are descriptions of all types of holdings, including but not limited to documentary heritage, diaries, personal accounts, maps, films, photographs, administrative and genealogical records.

Advanced Search Tips

Archeion Search utilizes Boolean Logic:

Use quotation marks for exact term searching. "Toronto Bridge"

Results retrieve all the records containing the exact term, spelling is important.

Use "AND" to search for all of the terms. Bridge and Toronto

Results retrieve all the records containing both of the search terms.

Use "OR" to search for any term. Bridge or Overpass

Results retrieve all the records containing one term, the other term, or both of the terms.

Use "NOT" to exclude term pairing. Bridge not Toronto

Results retrieve only one of the terms present, the one selected.

AAO

Illustration 3:

3. Browse Results Sort Order

Problem(s): Users desired to sort the browsed topic in a variety of ways (alphabetically, date updated, repository type etc...)

Solution(s): Add functionality to browse header to enable users to sort any column. Selected column for sorting would be indicated by an arrow pointing down, and unsorted columns would display arrows pointing upward. Users may click on any arrow to sort by that column attribute.

4. Display Number of Search Result Hits

Problem(s): Users did not want to scroll the bottom of lengthy pages searching for the total number of hits resulting from a search query.

Solution(s): Repeat number of hits at top and bottom of page.

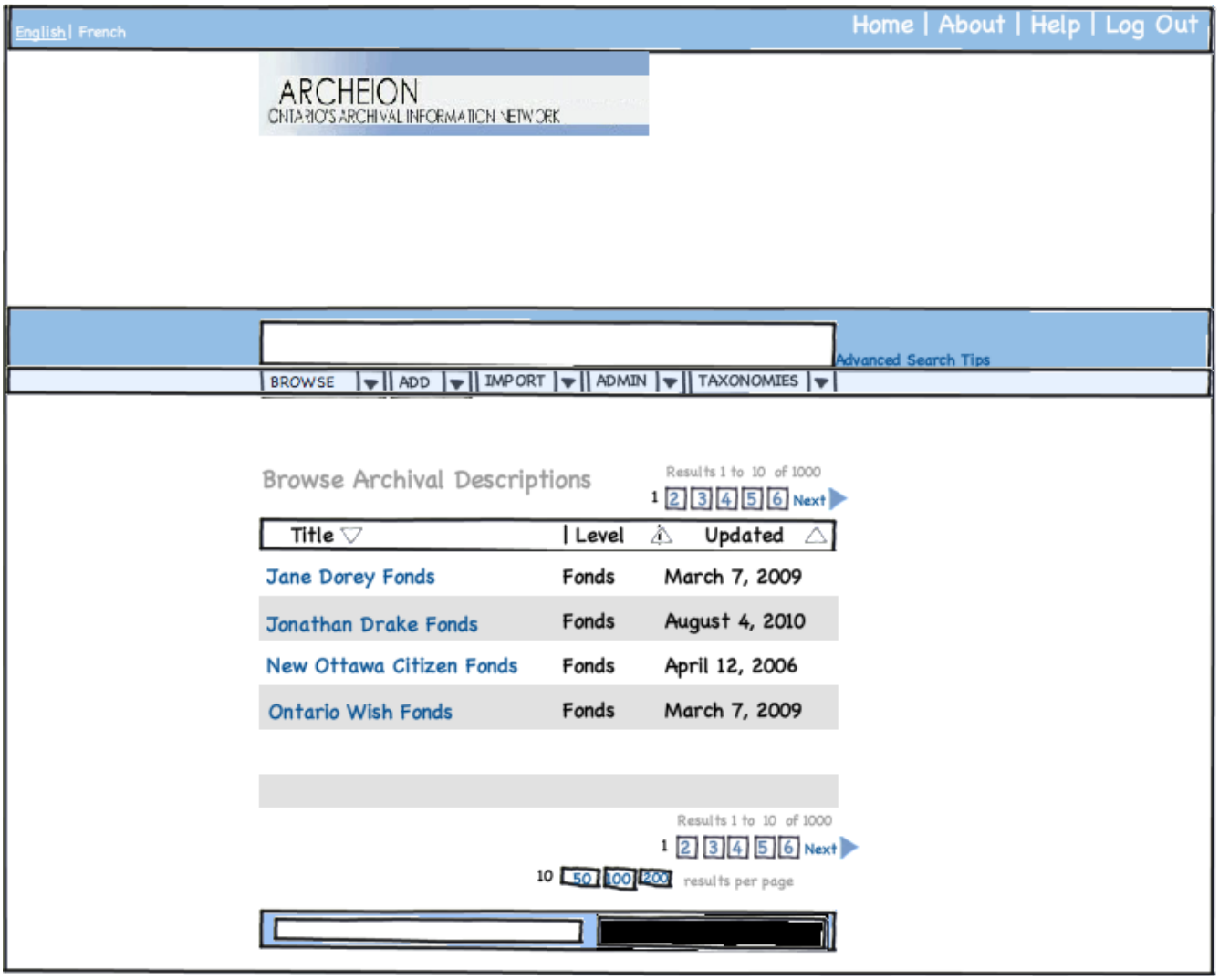

Illustration 4:

5. Browse Buttons

Problem(s): Users did not understand the relationship between the browse buttons and the search bar and could not accurately exploit their functionality.

Solution(s): Transform the browse buttons into a drop-down browse by menu.

6. Log-in Menu

Problem(s): Users could not find the location of the Log In link.

Solution(s): Increase the size of the font for the Log In link. Note: this view of the homepage is the view seen prior to log in and available to any online user.

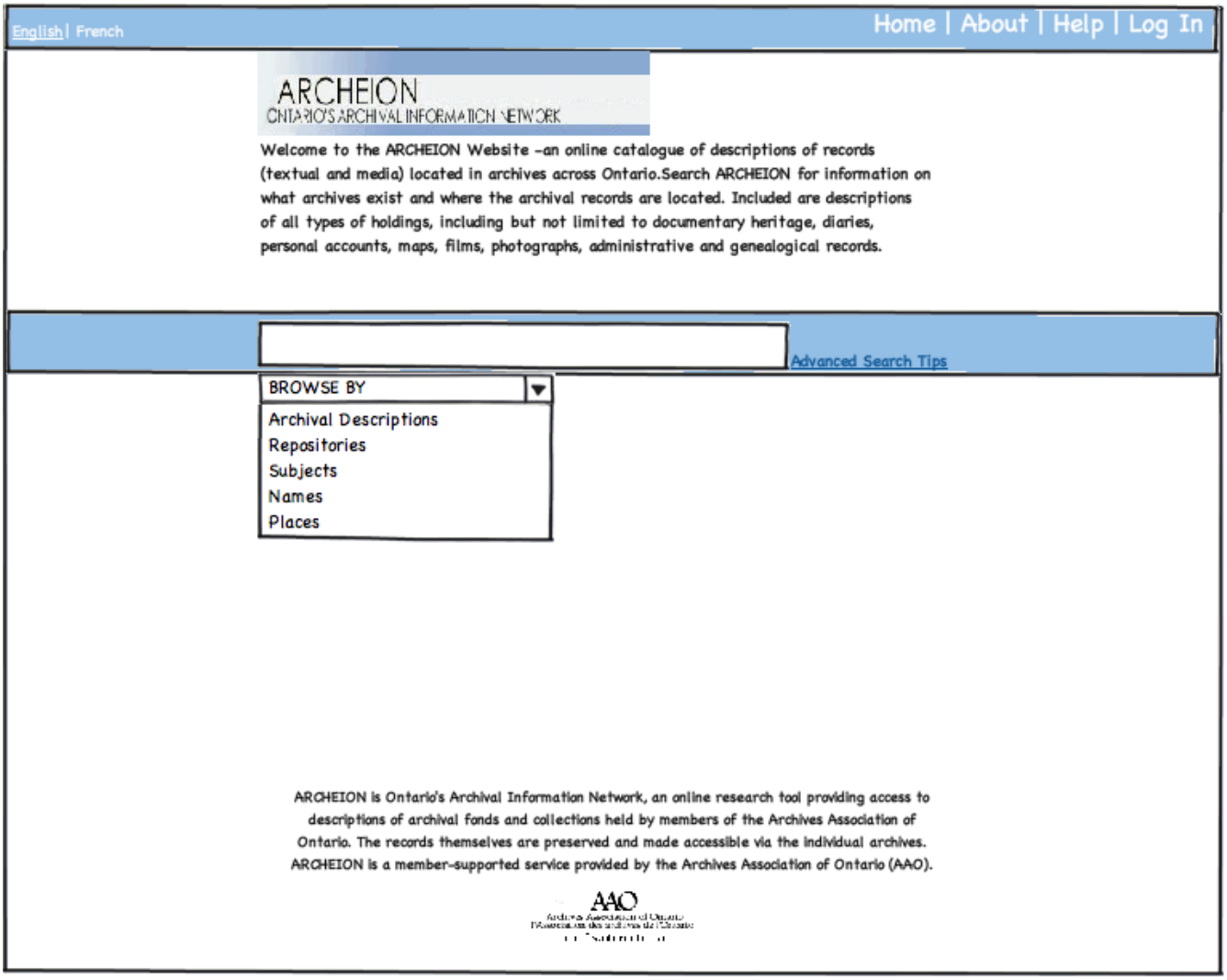

Illustration 5: