

## LAB ↗

## Try out the Trend Topics technique

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- lifestyle magazine
- access to the Internet to search the web for images

**1** Take a lifestyle magazine or decide to spend two hours on the Internet and use a search engine with an image view (for instance Google Image).

**2** Formulate an area of interest, a 'radar' to start your trend research, for instance, a lifestyle activity (e.g., dining, sporting, etc.), an industry (cars, drones, retail), or a product/market/technology combination (coffee machines, 3D printing, etc.).

**3** Capture images that are new and innovative and in some way express a promise for the future. Go for quantity and collect about fifty images.

**4** Cluster the images that have similar elements and label these elements. Identify trends with a second round of clustering the image clusters. Create larger clusters that connect or unify the image clusters to each other and propose a term for the trend cluster.

**5** Arrange the trend clusters on the decision grid of user impact and innovation fit (see figure 6.5). Rank the trends from high to low impact and high to low innovation urgency.

**6** Choose the meaningful trends with significant to high impact on user values for your top 10 listing of trend topics.

**7** For each trend topic, create an inspirational title, a few sentences of explanation, and one characterising image.

This kind of try out you could easily do in one sitting, usually in less than four hours if you're taking this simple, hands-on trend technique. It's a perfect opportunity to try out your creative trend research skills.

## LAB ↗

## Value mapping session

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- note book
- laptop
- large sheets of paper
- sticky notes
- pens

**1 BRAIN DUMP**  
On 'Changes in the world important into the future'. You can start by telling each other which change in the world you're interested in and be open to each other's reactions and interpretations. There is no wrong and right about the future. The goal here is to encourage the generation of a whole bunch of ideas on future changes and find those that resonate in the roadmapping team. In this way, you can learn a lot about how your team members think and what they might want out of a future vision.

**2 TURN TRENDS INTO VALUE DRIVERS**  
'Trends and forces directly affecting our organisation'. To learn what's happening in the more direct environment, this step consists of sharing the outcome of the creative trend research and the technology scouting with a series of short presentations or talks. This sheds light on how users and organisations are, or could be responding to environmental changes, in search of new value wishes.

**3 CREATE VISION STATEMENTS ON THE 'DESIRABLE FUTURE OF OUR ORGANISATION'**  
This step is to 'digest' these inputs by creating a vision of the organisation's most desirable future in subgroups of 3-5 people (see Lab ↗ Expression on a desirable future). The outcome is a series of agreed upon vision statements. These statements may include but are not limited to a definition of three to five value drivers.

**4** VALUE MAPPING

Then the groups report out their vision statements to the whole group. Disagreement/differences will, of course, surface during this future visioning reporting. Create an agreed and disagreed list using the two questions that follow here to manage this part of the process:

→ Do you have any questions for clarification? As each group presents there are a number of terms and words that are discussed to avoid confusion and make their meaning plainly evident. Once everyone is clear, you can go on.

→ Is there anything up there in that desirable future of your unit that you could not live with or are not prepared to make happen? you can go on.

These two questions help rationalize, not resolve, conflict between groups so they can recognize and build common ground. (If they failed to ask these questions the groups can focus on what was different in their perspectives rather than what is common or similar). Once such conflict is rationalized, the roadmapping team is ready and committed to act in concert toward establishing innovative and creative relationships between the organisation and its environment.

**5** DEVELOP A CREATIVE EXPRESSION OF THE FUTURE VISION FOR YOUR ORGANISATION

Then begin focusing on the areas of agreement — and integrating the work that the subgroups produced on the goals for the desirable organisational future is - which usually are a good stretch. By visually plotting out elements of envisioned product or service, you can learn a lot about the future vision. Not only will this help you refine what your future vision is, it can also reveal who will use it, where, and how. The idea of creating an image is to make something really rough as a way to help you think the vision through.

**6 WRAP UP**  
Round off with commitment on the agreed upon desirable future. Then look back at the disagreed list to see if any of the items are still relevant — to the value drivers of the agreed upon desirable future. Any that still remain may be constraints to reaching the desired future. Move those for discussion in the next roadmapping session.

## LAB ↗

## Expression on a desirable future

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- sticky notes
- big sheets of paper
- white board or wall

**1** Form a subgroup of 3-5 design and innovation professionals from the roadmapping team.

**2** Start the conversation about a future vision by telling each other which value desires and wishes you're interested in, and which you consider to directly affect your organisation. One by one you'll go around the room, and capture your perceptions, ideas, sketches and stories on sticky notes. It's critical to pay close attention to your team mate's stories, learnings, and hunches.

**3** Be open to each other's reactions and interpretations. Encourage the association of ideas on how users and organisations are, or could be responding to these value desires and wishes. Generate a bunch of ideas on strategic value opportunities in the future. These may include but are not limited to new user experiences, new technology interactions or new service desires. If there is an idea that does not resonate, drop it and move on to the next.

**4** Put those value opportunities that resonate in the roadmapping team on the big sheets of paper so that you can start formulating the vision statements by its strategic value drivers. Gather your group around the sheet with sticky notes. Move the most compelling, common, and inspiring values together and sort them into categories.

**5** Look for patterns and relationships between your categories and move the sticky notes around as you continue grouping. The goal is to identify key strategic themes - value drivers - and then to translate them into the vision statements. Arrange and rearrange the sticky notes, discuss, debate, and talk through what's emerging. Don't stop until everyone is satisfied that the clusters represent rich value drivers.

**6** Take the value drivers that you identified and put them up on a wall or board. Now, take three (max. five) of the value drivers and rephrase it as a short statement and sketch an image that illustrates it. - People don't need to be a great artists to create great images on the future.

This lab provides guidelines on the team activity of future imaging and how to converge that into the formulation of a future vision expression. It proposes to organise a creative conversation with the result objective of an agreed upon future vision expression. In a shifting and uncertain world, a well-defined desirable future is often expressed in three to five strategic value drivers.

At the same time, you are working on making your organisation as actively adaptive as possible, in relation to achieving those values and in relation to changes that will occur in the external environment. An agile organisation has the ability to align their actions to value drivers, as well as modify, drop or add a particular value driver as the environment changes by recurring creative conversations on the desired future.

## LAB ↗

## Tear down the system you are roadmapping to establish a system architecture

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- screwdriver
- camera
- big sheet of paper
- note book, pen
- laptop

**1** To begin, get a hold of the current version of the device or system you are making a roadmap for and prepare to take it apart at your workplace.

**2** Take a screwdriver, or whatever tool is appropriate and dismantle the device part by part. Exercise caution during disassembly. Inspect all the parts.

**3** Keep track of each step of the disassembly and take pictures and notes as you work. Most importantly, take a photo featuring the complete teardown, with all the components neatly organised.

**4** Use the teardown shot to add images or drawings of software packages that have been programmed in-house or that have been bought off the shelf.

**5** Use the teardown overview for establishing the system architecture. Decide which parts are strategically interesting for users and consumers and which ones are common and hence easily purchased from a supplier.

**6** Cluster the user value parts of both hardware and software into modules that can be developed as incremental upgrades.

**7** Cluster the common parts into modules for suppliers. Tag each cluster with a module name, and generate keywords for the module to inform and direct technology scouting efforts.

## LAB ↗

## Map design clocks

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- note book
- laptop
- large sheets of paper
- sticky notes
- pens

**1** A good way to start the timeline design of your roadmap is with a historical timeline. Sketch or print out a large one and put it up in your workspace.

**2** Now mark the key moments of prior product/service launches of the business you are working for or, if your business is just starting up, for a similar business category.

**3** Answer questions like, What is the time interval between two incremental innovations of design value enhancement? What is the innovation clock for these model changes? What is the time interval between two new user-centred products/service designs and between radically new value proposition designs? Take these intervals as the starting points for your design clocks.

**4** Now that you've got a sense of your design clocks, look at the past launches of one to three competitors. For instance, you may choose to study the market leader, an innovative new entrant, and a similar size company. Carry out the same retrospective analysis on the time intervals for the different types of design innovations. Fine-tune your design clocks with this market information.

**5** Consider if the users you work for have expectations regarding critical new technologies. If they do, look at the suppliers of these technologies and analyse the innovation clock of subsequent technologies. Fine-tune your design clocks with this technology information.

**6** Now sketch or print out the future timeline for the roadmap and put it up in your workspace. Label the start point of Horizon 1 on the timeline with the present year (and quarter if you like). Build it up with three horizon sections. For the endpoint, roughly indicate a year in which the radical new value proposition design, of Horizon 3, will be launched. For Horizon 2 indicate a year in between for user-centred design.

**7** Decide on sensible time intervals for the design clocks of your future launches. Mark these key moments of first exposure of the designed solutions to the users on the future timeline. Consider the key moments for the different types of innovation, value enhancements, value creation, and value proposition development. The number of key moments you map may vary. Consider what might be most critical to the persons for whom you are designing.

**8** Mark the key transition moments. They could be seasonal changes, important expos, public holiday dates, or recurring deadlines of budget reporting.

As you set out to design a roadmap, your first mapping challenges are the timeline and setting the speed of innovations by the creations of design clocks. This gives you a chance to do some research on the timing of the business you work for. Reflect on the historical timing of valuable innovations launched by the business, its competitors, and its partners. Getting a good handle on the design clock can set a structure and rhythm for the temporary activities of design innovation. You can use this first mapping of design clocks as a starting point for building a more descriptive roadmap. Your roadmap will change as things evolve, and that's perfectly okay. You can always amend things.

## LAB ↗

## Design a collage of roadmap metaphors

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- access to the Internet to conduct a web image search
- roadmap image matrix : 6x6 rows x columns digitally created.
- blanco sheet for the collage - for instance an One Note sheet.

**1** Collect roadmap images and metaphors from the web that appeal to you. Use the search engine image view to pick visuals you like.

**2** Fill out your roadmap image matrix with images that appeal to you for each of the 6 innovation elements on the roadmap: User Value, Market, Product-Service, Technology, Timeline (see figure 1.2 for the roadmap elements). Use one row per element and make a collection of several images per element until you completely filled the 6x6 matrix.

**3** Pick 6 favourites out of all the images in your roadmap image matrix. Which 6 elements really stand out to you in your image matrix?

**4** Take the sheet to portray the centerpiece of your collage. Pick one of your favourite elements, and give it centre stage on your sheet. It's up to you how much space on the paper you use, but remember that this will be the primary focus of the collage.

**5** Arrange the other 5 favourites from your matrix and portray them around the centrepiece on the collage. Things to think about: do you want to arrange it symmetrically or asymmetrically? Would you draw two identical versions or two variations on the same theme? Are the images similar to your centrepiece or do they create contrast? There's lots of room to play here, so have fun!

**6** Choose another set of images from your matrix, and arrange them anywhere on the collage. You can take the same approach as you did in the last step. At this point, your composition should be coming into its development.

**7** Create or draw a pattern that connects or unifies the images on your collage, touching elements from each area. Think of this as a way to give an extra layer of background detail to your collage.

**8** For the remaining white space, mentally divide the collage in half, then finish each half by colouring, rearranging, removing and adding images. Keep it simple. This final step will help you make your composition saturate the collage in subtle ways.

Creating a collage that centres on metaphors will encourage your ability to distil complex ideas into digestible sets of images. Starting with a simple, hands-on approach using the image search in your web browser, here is a perfect opportunity to prepare for your design roadmapping skills.

This is the kind of creative activity that you could easily do in one sitting, probably in less than four hours. The objective of the Lab is to activate your design roadmapping ideas and generate your first visual ideas for design roadmaps.

## LAB ↗

## Create your roadmap template

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- note book
- laptop
- large sheets of paper
- sticky notes
- pens

**1** Identify which target audience(s) you're designing for: senior management, project programmers and network partners. And within these target audience(s), ask yourself which types of stakeholders you want to address and what their needs are with regards to the roadmap. In other words: identify what you need to communicate to whom.

**2** Decide on the number of roadmaps- Use one map if you think it can achieve all your communication goals. Otherwise, design different roadmaps for different (groups of) stakeholders. Try to limit the number of roadmaps as much as possible to prevent confusion within the organisation and keep version control manageable (a roadmap is a living document).

**3** Choose the format for your roadmap- Understand how often the roadmap will be updated, who will be involved, and through what medium the roadmap will be shared. Based on these requirements, choose the best format for your situation – a printed poster, digital presentation, video, website, etc.

**4** Structure and direction- Design the timeline and the template format for your roadmap: this is the core structure of the map. Start with some clean sheets of paper and begin sketching. Iterate towards a clear and sound structure that effectively communicates the strategic direction, the future narrative.

**5** Content, relations and key events- Map all roadmapping elements in your template. A simple way to do this is to take a large piece of paper, sketch out the structure of the roadmap and then use sticky notes to position the elements which constitute the actual content of your roadmap. Identify relationships and draw lines to connect different roadmap elements. Iterate your way towards a simple, well-structured and logical layout.

**6** Graphic Design- Use your graphic design skills to turn the roadmap into an effective communication tool. This means designing something that is elegant and inspiring. Make consistent use of colours, icons and fonts and limit the amount of text. The map should also communicate well as a slide in a presentation or printed out on paper. Your goal is to make the target audience feel interested, happy, and upbeat when reading your roadmap.

**7** You will likely have to go through between 3-5 iterations in this step to finalise your template design. You are not just reiterating the graphic design of the template, but the structure and content as well. The best way to approach this is to have 2-hour in-depth discussions with a small team to discuss the roadmap and identify improvements. You create a new version, have another in-depth discussion, create a new version . . . until you and the key stakeholders are happy and proud of the result.