



WORKSHOP DESIGN FUTURES FOR SMES

October 9 - 11

<http://dive.pktweb.com/>

Dear company representatives and designers,

Futures techniques have long been used in large enterprises as designerly means to explore the future and guide innovation. In the automotive industry, for instance, the development of *concept cars* is a technique which has repeatedly proven its value. However, while large enterprises have broadly embraced futures techniques, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have lagged behind in applying them, largely because they are too resource intensive and poorly suited to the SME' needs and idiosyncrasies. To address this issue, we developed *DIVE: Design, Innovation, Vision, and Exploration*, a design-led futures technique for SMEs. Its development began with an inquiry into concept cars in the automotive industry and concept products and services in other industries. We then combined the insights derived from these design practices with elements of the existing techniques of critical design and design fiction into the creation of DIVE's preliminary first version, which was then applied and evaluated in two iterations with SMEs ([Marliou](#) and [Continental Boilers](#)), resulting in DIVE's alpha version.

In view of these iterations, it seems that DIVE suits the SMEs because of its compact and inexpensive activities which emphasize making and storytelling. Although the results of these activities might be less flashy than concept cars, these simple prototypes and videos help SMEs internalize and share a clear image of a preferable future, commonly known as vision. Developing DIVE thus helped us explore how design can support SMEs in envisioning the future in the context of innovation.

After the preliminary iterations in context, we conducted two rounds of evaluations that include five cases with SMEs. This workshop is part of a third evaluation round that serves two distinct goals: to improve the technique and to uncover the benefits and limitations of implementing this type of techniques with SMEs. Through this three days long workshop and given the preliminary evaluations, we expect that both company representatives and designers will receive various valuable insights, such as:

- Company representatives will share with fresh designers that give them ideas and perceptions about their business and its products and services
- Company representatives will receive strategic advice that includes a vision concept, an idea of a futuristic service or product, and some recommendations to reach that vision of the future in the form of a strategic roadmap
- Company representatives and designers will learn how to make and share these vision concepts, as a design-led technique to explore and communicate the future, thus to innovate. This will allow designers to increase their knowledge in the area of strategic design and foresight to strengthen its value offer as designers.

The researchers, Ricardo Mejia ([LinkedIn](#)) and Alejandro Chitiva ([LinkedIn](#)) will have the opportunity to evaluate the performance of the technique with SMEs and designers.

Welcome to a journey to the future!

Ricardo Mejia

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Workshop Design Futures for SMEs

This workshop is part of a third evaluation round that serves two distinct goals: to improve the technique and to uncover the benefits and limitations of implementing this type of techniques with SMEs.

Workshop information

Participants

- *One SME*: two company representatives from the company
- *14 designers* from the Service Design Studio at AHO (The Oslo School of Architecture and Design) Design Master program
- Two service design experts:
 - Dr. ir. Sleeswijk Visser, F.
 - Prof. dr. Snelders, H.M.J.J.
- Three external innovation experts:
 - Eefje Ernst
 - Slava Kozlov
 - Freija van Duijne
- *Two researchers*, a Ph.D. candidate at TUDelft and an MBA candidate at Leipzig University

Schedule



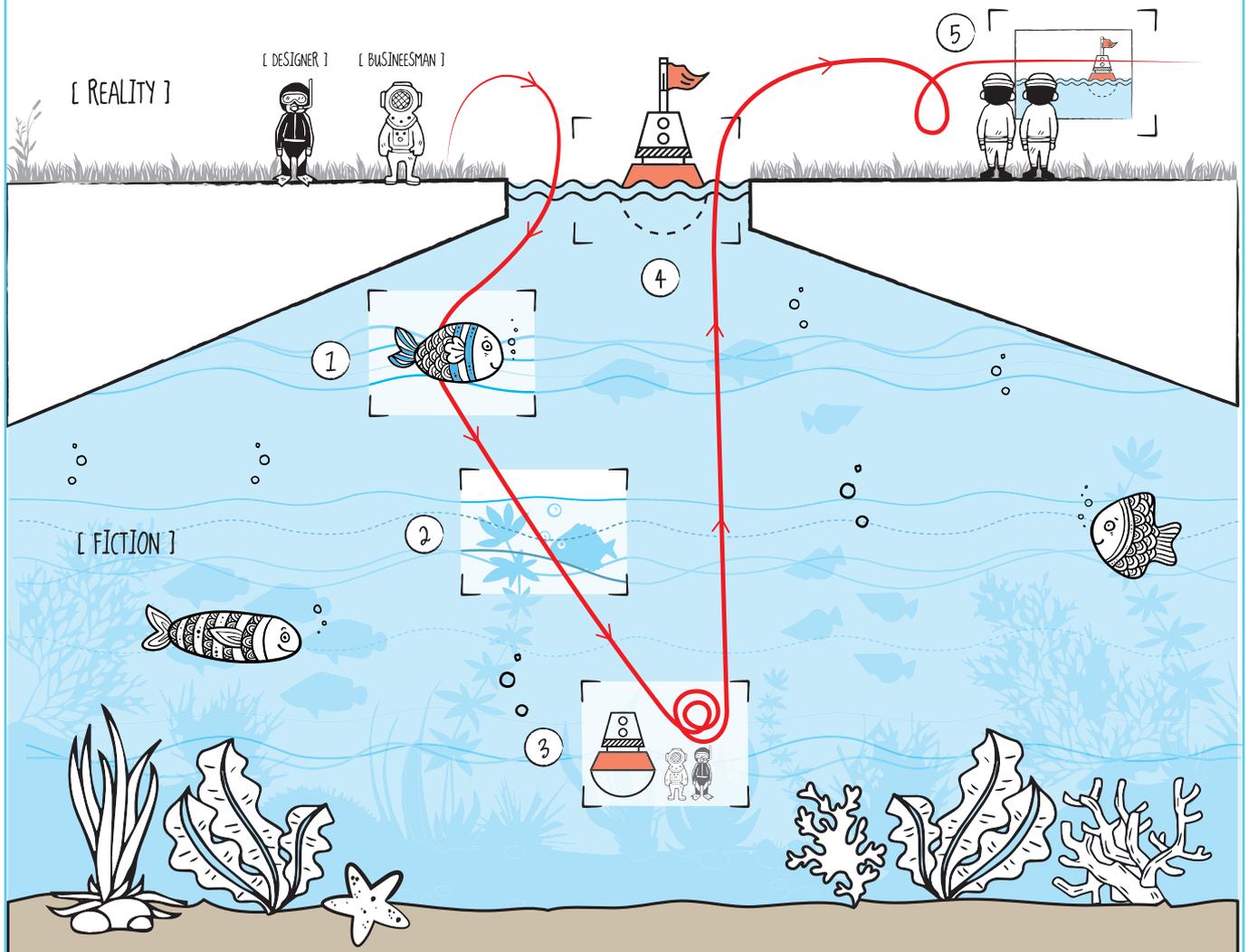
Monday 9/10		
Time	Activity	Venue
14:00	Initial presentation	TUDelft Library , Prometheusplein 1, 2628 ZC Delft
14:30	Activity 1 - Understanding the present	
15:30	Coffee Break	
15:50 18:00	Activity 2 - Approaching the future	
Tuesday 10/10		
9:00	Plenary meeting	Studio Show at IDStudioLab 32B-2-420 IDE , TUDelft, Landbergstraat 15, 2628 CE Delft
9:30	Activity 3 - Exploring the future 1	
10:40	Coffee Break	
11:00	Activity 3 - Exploring the future 2	
13:00	Lunch	
14:00	Feedback from service design experts: Dr. ir. Sleeswijk Visser, E.	
15:00	Feedback from service design experts: Prof. dr. Snelders, H.M.J.J.	
16:00 18:00	Activity 3 - Exploring the future 3	
Wednesday 11/11		
9:00	Activity 4 - Communicating the future	Room Norbert Roozenburg IDE , TUDelft, Landbergstraat 15, 2628 CE Delft
11:00	Coffee Break	
11:20	Activity 4 - Communicating the future	
13:00	Lunch	
14:00	Activity 5 - Looking back into the future	
16:00	Coffee Break	
16:20 18:00	Activity 5 - Looking back into the future	

DIVE

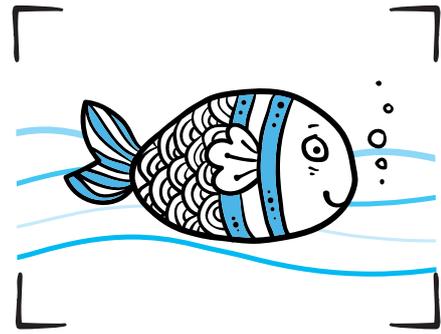
The technique consists of a quick dive into the depths of speculative futures and a swim back to the world as it is. During this journey, designers act as instructors and the company representatives as scuba divers. Initially, underwater, the company is seen as a fish that swims in calm or troubled waters. Instructors then accompany the divers in envisioning future waters and defining a vision. Using this vision as an inspiration, instructors and divers draw, make prototypes, and create stories to set up the vision concept, resulting in a rough prototype and a video. Finally, on land, the instructors use these artifacts to spark a conversation among several people about the future of the fish, shining a light on the decision-making in the present.

DIVE follows a path along five activities:

1. Understanding the present |
2. Approaching the future |
3. Exploring the future |
4. Communicating the future |
5. Looking back into the future

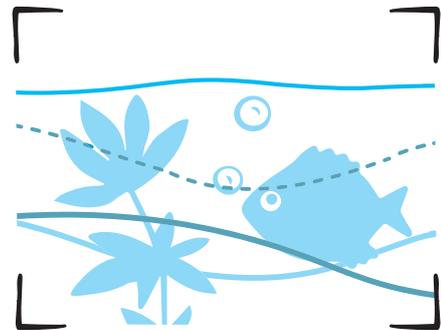


1. UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT



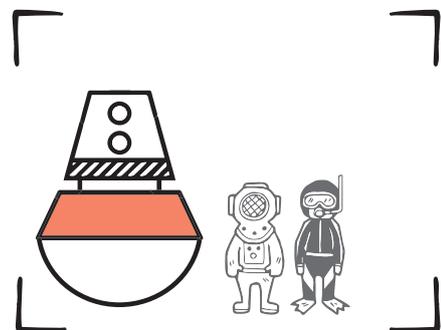
The participants apply the Strategic PES with the company representatives, to set a domain and a time frame. According to Hekkert and van Dijk (2011), the domain delimits the focus area of the process in which designers aim to contribute, “acting as a map that guides [the] exploration of the context and the factors to be taken into account. [It is] (preferably) a particular area in life.” Moreover, the time frame is an interval of time which moves from the world as it is to the speculative future, to help companies map change when they think about the future (Mejia, Pasman, et al., 2016).

2. APPROACHING THE FUTURE



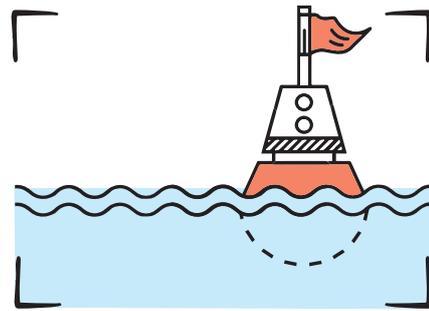
The participants conduct desk research and field work to collect context factors. With this picture of the future, they cluster these factors to define a vision, which captures what the vision concept should do and be before it is made. The vision consists of a statement describing what the designers want to offer people within the domain, including a definition of the interaction qualities (Hekkert & van Dijk, 2011).

3. EXPLORING THE FUTURE



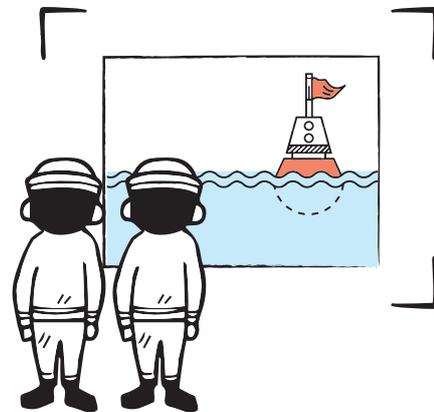
The designers imagine, experience, test, select, transform, develop, and complete early ideas by making different prototypes: sketches, diagrams, and mockups (Sanders & Stappers, 2014). By the end of this activity, they will have a collection of information that describes the vision concept: a concept product, service, or product service system.

4. COMMUNICATING THE FUTURE



The designers make a rough prototype and create visuals and a narrative to share the vision concept. The last two elements support the prototype, placing the vision concept in an image of the future, complete with people, context, and their relationships. This support is important because, as Stappers (2013) argues, rough prototypes are physical manifestations of ideas or concepts that only give the overall idea, to evoke discussion and reflection.

5. LOOKING BACK INTO THE FUTURE



The designers facilitate a conversation with the company representatives and other stakeholders to map the company's future. The designers use the vision concept, embodied in the prototype, the visuals, and the narrative, to help participants express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas about the company's future. Along the conversation, the designers make a road map with strategic recommendations for the near and speculative future of the SME.

This project is part of the research project dive.pktweb.com that involves promoters Prof. dr. Pieter Jan Stappers and Prof. dr. Erik Jan Hultink, and a daily supervisor: Dr. Gert Pasman. It is sponsored by the Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation of Colombia (Colciencias).

