

Planet Centric Design

VINCIT

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A photograph of three people in a modern office setting. A man with glasses and a beard is on the left, looking at a large sheet of paper. Two women are on the right, one pointing at the paper and the other writing on it. The paper has several colorful sticky notes attached to it. The background shows large windows and an orange chair.

Planet Centric Design



Vincit has developed Planet Centric Design to create sustainable business opportunities based on a mindset of responsibility, transparency and systemic thinking.

The natural is taken to mean “the environment,” nature, the non-human and even non-living. Social involves that which is human and the lifestyles, organizations and institutions we have created as a part of society. Technological systems are those tools which we have developed to extract and transform resources into value for people, be they the homes we live in, the cars we drive, or the software that powers our phones. Currently, the dynamic interplay of these systems does not produce sustainable outcomes. Our modern societies diminish the life providing capacity of natural systems, and technology is primarily used to extract more.

Doing Planet Centric Design means working at the interface between natural, social and technological systems. The task of Planet Centric Design is to understand how they are connected, what makes them out of sync, and to design integration that is mutually beneficial to all systems. The interplay of natural, social and technological must be designed to produce sustainable outcomes.

Planet Centric Design recognizes that we are in an age of transition. Natural, social and technological systems are so out of sync that we are faced with a choice to accelerate our sustainability transition, or continue as we are and face collapse. Either way, radical change is coming.

Planet Centric Design recognises that the sustainability crises we face, in all their existential complexity, essentially boil down to the fact that natural, social and technological systems are out of sync.

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Doing Planet Centric Design means working at the interface between natural, social and technological systems.

At Vincit, we are working to create a world without fear for tomorrow - more specifically, a world that lives within the resources of 1 planet and keeps global warming under 1.5 C. To get there, we must recognise that there are many real-world challenges for organisations and society generally to successfully integrate these systems and produce sustainable outcomes. The sheer complexity of the challenges, the scale of change needed, and the deeply entrenched, legacy

systems built up for centuries overwhelm our collective ability to act and to imagine.

To accelerate the sustainability transition rather than collapse, Vincit has developed Planet Centric Design to open a new space for organisations to think differently about their role and what is possible to achieve collectively. Just as important, we developed Planet Centric Design to navigate the complexity that comes with rapid change. That is why Planet Centric Design uses a wider lens for design that is responsible, systemic and transparent. With this wider lens and new design-led tools for tackling sustainability issues, Planet Centric Design can help any organisation accelerate the sustainability transition while delivering profitable services and products.



Challenges



In order to live sustainably on planet Earth, we must rethink the way society operates. This is no easy task, as the ecosystem is complex in ways that humanity does not fully understand. Planet Centric Design seeks to bring stakeholders to work together to navigate complexity while using different thinking to accelerate the sustainability transition.

The Role of Design



Society hasn't been designed to be sustainable and businesses will need to evolve to develop products and services that align with the planet and consumers.

We, humans, are pushing the health of our planet beyond its critical limits. We have littered our oceans with plastic; a material heralded as a miracle since the 1940s. In developing countries, explosive population growth coupled with rapid economic development is upsurging energy needs, which are met by burning fossil fuels. In well-off western countries, consumers desiring luxury lifestyles are purchasing more and more environmentally costly services, nondurable goods and power-hogging personal devices. Businesses are happy to produce them with relatively little consideration given to matters of sustainability and responsibility in favour of higher profit margins.

Over the long term, trends like these foreshadow a catastrophic change to our climate and ultimately, to ourselves. But how did we end up in this situation without any foresight? As designers, developers, entrepreneurs and business professionals, haven't we always been in a pivotal role to make decisions about how exploitative the products and services we create are to our planet?

Don't trust the process blindly

Most modern businesses use some form of design thinking -inspired process to drive product and service innovation. The process suggests that the sweet spot for creating winning products and services

is at the junction between desirability for end-users, viability for business, and technological feasibility. For decades, striking the right balance between these three factors has proven to be a winning recipe when combined with a bit of luck, good timing and creative marketing.



Whenever businesses attempt to go beyond greenwashing to do real good, these actions often lack one critical element: transparency

Even today, this mindset stemming from the union between desirability, viability and feasibility is leading the operations in most companies. Creating products and services that are on an environmentally sustainable base is still a secondary concern. The money that could well be spent on operating with ecologically sound practices is channelled into marketing "of being green" - commonly known as greenwashing.

Whenever businesses attempt to go beyond greenwashing to do real good, these actions often lack one critical element: transparency. Transparency of activities and their consequences. In holiday advertising, climate compen-

sation for air travel is all the rage. As a consumer, can you clearly track where the money you pay to offset your carbon emissions is going? Is it used to fund initiatives that plant forests to combat emissions or something else? Is the company you fly with directing the funds to the initiative with the most measured and verified impact? How big of a percentage of your carbon offset compensation is burnt on organisational expenses? Do the initiatives operate in a sustainable, transparent, and responsible manner too?

One battle that you need to win

Public awareness, direct action, shifts in consumer behaviour and legislative changes are quickly turning sustainability into a must-win strategic battle for any business that wants to be relevant in the future. Environmental laws are rapidly changing around the world. Within the EU, the current goal is to reduce greenhouse gasses by 40% compared to 1990 levels within the next 11 years. Finland has pledged to be carbon neutral by 2035. Among consumers, millennials and Gen Z'ers are increasingly making purchase decision based on factors such as authentic support for a cause, transparency and responsibility.

How could a business navigate and flourish in this complex network of synchronous changes that are revolution-

ising their competitive landscape? Clearly, businesses need a radical shift in their mindset to build competitive products and services that align well with market demand in the future. Up to recent times, many of them have operated by looking no further than legislative restrictions and their immediate competitive landscape as their sphere of reference.

A wider lens

We believe that in a highly complex world where problems are systemic by nature, only a systemic design approach can yield products and services that are financially viable and contribute positively to the state of our planet.

This approach needs to be driven by a framework of sustainability, transparency and responsibility - the very same values that resonate positively with consumers and make it less painful for businesses to comply with legislative changes. While the value delivered by a traditional design thinking -inspired approach is still alive at the core, the work of solving complex environmental and social issues needs to start by examining the larger context first. We call this Planet Centric Design.

In Planet Centric Design, we approach systemic sustainability challenges through the following five steps or phases:

► **Prepare:** We focus on how your organisation can prepare to work with sustainability. The goal is to ensure that everyone shares a similar mindset and has the essential knowledge for working with systemic problems of sustainability. This phase clarifies the organisation's and the individuals' roles in climate change and empowers them to act.

► **Understand:** In the second phase, we create a clear understanding of how your company creates value to its customers. It illustrates the steps in your value chain and related user journeys. This phase highlights problematic areas in your value chain that your organisation needs to address from the point of view of sustainability.

► **Envision:** The third phase examines how we might define what sustainability means to your organisation. Together, we create a strong narrative of your role in fighting climate change and prioritize sustainable operations as a key goal for your organisation. This step results in a sustainability vision that aligns with your company's strategy.

► **Create:** In the fourth phase we co-create new, sustainable and responsible concepts for your business. Your business' strategic team will be heavily involved in the creation of these concepts.

► **Release:** In the last step the focus of the work is on communication - How should an organisation communicate about matters of sustainability, and how could they empower other individuals and organisations with their planet centric work?



Only a systemic design approach can yield products and services that are financially viable and contribute positively to the state of our planet.

Our time is running out

For the first time in the history of modern business, we're facing a mass extinction threat not only to our businesses but to humanity itself. Climate change and the impending environmental crisis can't be solved by one industry, country, city or a company alone. We need radical collaboration, openness, responsibility and systemic thinking to bring about a positive future.

Ask yourself. What kind of a contribution do you want your company to have on the world that your children will inherit?





Radical Change

We live in an age of transition. Radical change to the planetary system has already occurred and we must adapt to the uncharted territory we have entered as a species.

So far, some of the problems described are things that most of us hear about daily. Just as predictably, I'm sure a lot of people also start to tune out the background noise of crisis, simply to get through the day to day. That's just natural at some point. For many, there are simply too many things going on in our immediate context to think about a melting iceberg, extinct species, or bleached coral. Life, whether or not we want to admit it, is just so complex.

The problem with complexity, and the complex systems that our society is built on, is that we start to become connected only indirectly with much of the life supporting activities we need. Our dependencies on each other - on the natural environment - become distant and even more so now as a global society, which is running up against planetary climate systems too immense to possibly imagine.

An age of transition

But what to do about it? To answer this, one must ask "how bad is it?" The thing is, if we are indeed driven by science, not that this is the only thing that we should consider, but if we listen to scientific consensus, the situation is actually existential. The likelihood for a stable, life-supporting habitat and a flourishing global society is diminishing and it seems that we keep learning that it's happening more rapidly than we expected. This is

where science has led us. In fact, we are in totally uncharted territory as a species. The last time carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere were this high was nearly 3 million years ago before our species existed.

The rapidity of the carbon dioxide increase over the last couple of centuries means that, without a doubt, we are in an age of transition. Planetary systems are changing, will continue to change, and could ultimately lead to a large-scale collapse of many of the life-supporting systems of the planet. So, we have a choice. We can either continue as we are to face near-certain collapse or we can adapt. Either way, radical change is upon us.



We are in totally uncharted territory as a species. The last time carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere were this high was nearly 3 million years ago before our species existed.

If you're still reading this, you might be starting to have a twitch of uneasiness with what we're saying. Change, sustainability, society - these are highly contentious

topics and some reading might already be saying that this is a misreading of the science. If radical change, i.e. systems change, is still sounding alarmist, I implore you to look into the recent IPCC reports on 1.5 C global warming, the oceans and land. They do not mince words, transformational change is required. If this is all sounding like too much, please do continue reading - as there are always low-hanging fruit that we can work on together to design for more environmentally friendly organisations.

However, if a call for radical change doesn't come as alarmist rhetoric, and you agree that small fixes around the edge will not suffice, that if we want to remain within planetary boundaries and avoid a hot-house earth, then what? Even if you agree that a massive mobilisation of society from top to bottom, from the local to the global is required - it is still immensely complex to figure out what to do about it.

Which way to go?

Unfortunately, scientific facts are not self evident, logical pathways to solutions. Even with all the data in the world, the "right" choices, the proper "solutions," are ultimately value-based and difficult to decide on. The next steps are political in the sense that there is no one right way, we must have a dialogue, find some

alignment and work together to make it through the mess of a deteriorating natural environment for life on planet earth. And there's no shortage of work to do. But, again, in such a complex world - interests and needs are so numerous that proposed solutions often create problems elsewhere and ultimately this leads to inaction or even regression. Except inaction and, obviously, growing emissions and resource use simply won't work so we must find a way forward.

Some think the solutions come from the private sector, others think this is government's role, and others think it's time to take things into our own hands and protest in the streets. In reality, it is the dynamic interplay, the integration of these spheres that will determine the future path(s) for humanity and life on the planet.

Accelerate the Sustainability Transition

If you're still with us in this conversation, what we are saying is that we believe society critically needs a process for radical change that we do not yet have a model for.

The current trajectory for humanity, as stated, is one that will not avoid catastrophe in the near to mid-term future and so, somehow, we must accelerate our transition to a world without

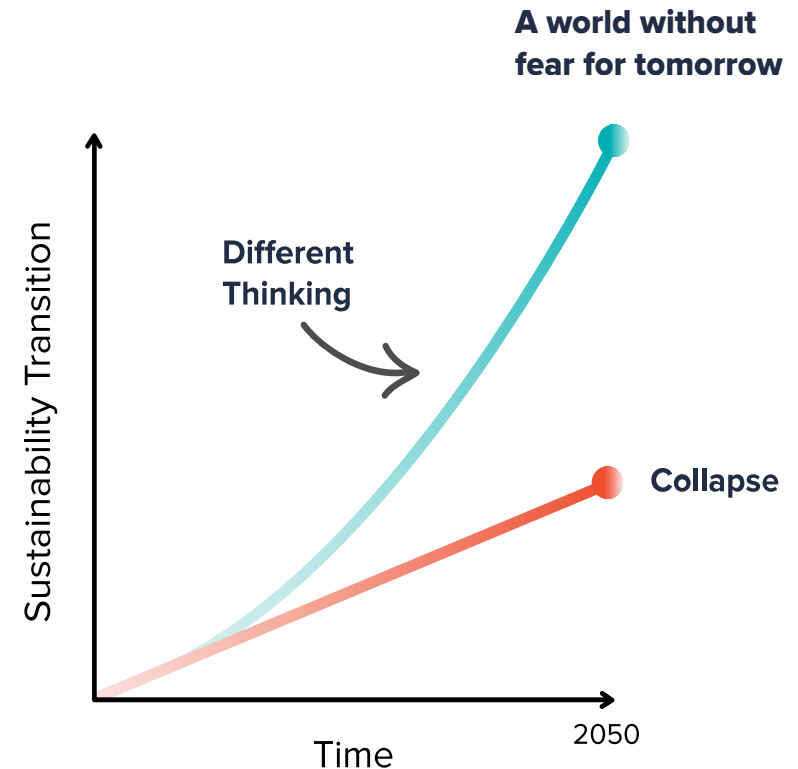
fear for tomorrow, that is, a world that lives within the resource of one planet and limits global warming to 1.5 degrees.



Society critically needs a process for radical change that we do not yet have a model for.

To do this, we must steepen the curve of change over the next several decades but it will require innovation enabled through different thinking and it must also navigate the complexity that comes with accelerating change.

Planet Centric Design seeks to be a way for actors in society, be they companies, public sector organizations or people in their communities to work together to navigate complexity while using different thinking to accelerate the sustainability transition.



To accelerate the sustainability transition, we will need different thinking and to navigate the complexity that comes with change.



Different Thinking



Accelerating the sustainability transition won't happen with the same thinking that got us into the problem.

So, you might ask, how exactly do we get there?

Without doubt, the sustainability transition will require action - lots of action. But to guide that action, we must develop and leverage a different kind of thinking that is critical, creative and innovative which ultimately asks the question, "what is worth sustaining?" to help us bring along what we can, to leave behind the unsustainable and then create something new where it is needed.

Clearly, to ask the question "what is worth sustaining" requires a critical perspective and to be critical is to accept that we do not have all the answers, that the current way of doing things is out of sync with the needs of the planet and many of the species on that planet. So, we must problematise how we provide value. This criticality may seem obvious, but evaluating our embedded assumptions about the world is no easy task.

To be critical is to ask questions, even if they're uncomfortable, even if the answers do not immediately follow. Many of the answers to critical questions may be hard pills to swallow, because, in a sense, the foundations of the society we have built must be evaluated critically. But it is absolutely essential that we grow and nurture a critical perspective that opens up new pathways to explore toward sustainability.

Shifting the narrative

Once we start to question, probe and inspect the current way of doing things with a critical lens, a world of creativity can emerge in which we start to think about how we might prefer things to be, how we might live differently, and how we might do business sustainably. We must generate as many creative spaces and visions for the world as possible. Out of the critical perspective, a diversity of creative ideas must flow to help answer the questions of how to proceed as an organisation and a global society. But critical, creative thinking won't be enough to reach a world without fear for tomorrow. We must also make concrete choices as to where we want to go.

Being critical and creative can help us orient toward new goals, to develop a lighthouse out there in the distance amidst the fog of tomorrow, but we must make sail and go toward that light.

To put it bluntly, this requires innovation. Innovation enables us to harness critical, creative thinking and make practical steps toward a stated goal of a sustainable future through experimentation, learning, adapting and applied solutions. Innovation is solutions-oriented, and sustainability must be solutions-oriented. It is not enough to generate questions and ideas for alternative possibilities - they must be

applied in situ and tested to understand how best to deliver on our critical, creative ideas for desirable futures.



Innovation enables us to harness critical, creative thinking and make practical steps toward a stated goal of a sustainable future through experimentation, learning, adapting and applied solutions.

Being Critical, creative and innovative is the different kind of thinking needed to enable a sustainable transition for society and a world without fear for tomorrow. Planet Centric Design is and must be all of these things. If we can use different thinking to accelerate the transition toward sustainability, we will also have to navigate the complexity that comes with fast-paced large-scale change. In fact, we already understand the complexity of the world far enough too little, which is evidenced by the crises we face. So, we will certainly need to integrate a more complex understanding of the world and learn how to harness it to get to where we want to go.



Complexity



Navigating complexity means understanding how systems work and influencing them to produce sustainable outcomes.

Complexity is a buzz word we hear about all the time. It's also something we can see and feel everyday. Ten minutes of news on any given day will fill you in on a complex world. Sometimes it all just seems like a mess. What this shows is that we all, inherently, have a sense of complexity, a so-called "systems literacy."

Unfortunately, as humanity has globalised and a reductionist, limited view of the world has become predominant, our ability to understand complexity has diminished. The good news is, the field of complexity has actually become a mature science with numerous tools to help us understand the world around us and how to do business sustainably.

That's right, complexity is not just a buzzword, it is actually a science. Words like "emergence," "equilibrium," or "phase space," can get quite technical as complexity science has grown out of various technically-oriented fields like physics, biology and engineering, but they are highly relevant to sustainability and how businesses will need to adapt in the future. In fact, recognising the dynamics of complex adaptive systems is one of the most essential tools for accelerating the sustainability transition. In particular, we must recognise the inherent interdependence between natural, social and technological systems. Secondly, we must accept that uncertainty is a core feature

of complexity and adjust accordingly to create sustainable change. Finally, to navigate this complexity, we need a new model for collaboration to integrate the systems that are out of sync.

An Interdependent World

Another keyword that has been mentioned several times now is "system," which we can also call a "network." These can sound like just another buzzword like complexity but there are some very fundamental realizations to be made about the nature of networks or systems.

First, networks or systems are interconnected things that interact in such a way that they produce particular and observable patterns of behaviour over time. A concrete example is something like a business. As linkages are made within the business, certain outcomes are enabled, like good customer service. Those outcomes, or patterns of behavior, are determined by the characteristics of the "things" in the network, but more fundamentally, by the connectivity and interaction between those things in that system.

Why this matters is because we often try to make a change by looking at one "thing" in the system and swapping it out for a new one or we might try to look at each "thing" and describe it as accurately as possible while neglecting how each

"thing" is connected to others and how they influence each other. We often expect changing a CEO will fix all problems in a company or voting for a new president will fundamentally change the whole country - but change isn't always this simple due to the nature of systems.

So, if a system is held together by the vast connectivity and interaction throughout the system, the negative outcomes are similarly distributed among the things and interactions within the system. In other words, this means that problems, like waste or harmful emissions, are characteristics of the system as a whole. One example could be of a factory which is polluting. The simple solution would be to shut down that factory and create another one. However, the factory is part of larger systems related to industrialisation, capitalism, consumerism, globalisation, etc.,



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which incentivizes that factory to produce things a particular way. Without changing the interactions throughout the system, the next factory is likely to work the same way. Essentially, it is how the system is connected and interacting which contributes to that factory polluting as it does and responsibility is therefore distributed.

However, one cannot expect to change everything at once, so an artificial boundary must be created when designing that can integrate the wider systemic context with your factory in a way that it can produce sustainable outcomes. If a wider systemic perspective is needed to change the pattern of behaviour at that factory, then sometimes you must look “up stream” for design solutions. Many times, you must look at multiple systemic scales at once and find ways to integrate them differently to produce sustainable outcomes.

Systems are Natural Phenomena

This points to another key aspect of complexity and interdependence, which is that systems can “live” within other systems and those systems are embedded in other systems, and on and on. You can talk about systems on the level of our solar system, with interconnected “things,” a.k.a. planets, which exhibit a pattern of behaviour over time, like revolving around the sun at certain speeds and distances based on their

characteristics (like mass) but also based on their relative position, or connection through gravitational pull, to the other planets within the system. But within a solar system, you can talk about planetary systems on earth, certain ecosystems within the planet or human, social systems within larger, natural ecosystems. Each one of these systems, on any scale one can look, has particular behaviour unique to the system, as stated, but these systems are embedded within and entangled with each other.

Every day, you and I are a part of many social, natural and technological systems. A lot of times, we interact with them all at once. As you purchase food at the grocery store, there are of course the natural systems related to the vegetables you buy, but there are also the technological systems involved with the packaging, storing and display of the food, and lastly there are certain expectations that people bring like, “how much should something cost?”, “what kind of food do I desire?” and, “how should I behave in the store?” This is just one, rather simplistic example but it should illustrate how even in the simplest of activities, there can be a complex web of connections between natural, social and technological systems. For more complexity, the moment you walk into the store is also intrinsically connected to the interplay of natural, social and technological systems that occurred on the

farm where your food came from. Planet Centric Design must understand this kind of connectivity, find what is out of sync between these systems and integrate them to produce sustainable outcomes.



We want natural, social and technological systems to coevolve in a way that the outcome, or pattern of behavior that emerge out of systems are drastic reductions in resource use and emissions.

One more critical element is that complex adaptive systems produce themselves. They are self-organising and coevolving, meaning the structure of a network or system changes overtime based on the interaction within the system and so, too, can the outcomes of that system. Going back to the solar system, one could ask, how did that system come about? Over time, various “things” interacted and locked into a particular pattern of behavior over time as a system in equilibrium. In relation to Planet Centric Design, we want natural, social and technological systems to coevolve in a way that the outcome, or pattern of behaviour that emerge out of systems are drastic reductions in resource

use and emissions. This will happen by enabling systems to evolve in a way that the people and organisations within them are able to change their behaviour toward more sustainable practices.

We are all connected to this problem

Unfortunately, systemic interlinkages and interdependence are often used to scapegoat others instead of taking action ourselves. Anyone who’s paying attention to the dialogue around sustainability has heard how it’s not Finland’s problem to reduce emissions, because what about China? Or it’s not my business’s problem because someone else, earlier in the supply chain should change how they manufacture things. Or it’s not companies, people need to change what they buy. Or government isn’t the problem, it is corporations...and on and on.

In systems, these problems are not related to only one thing but are distributed based on the way things interact in the system. This means we have to take a different approach to solutions. Sometimes, solutions do require swapping in a new piece in a system, but often it means adjusting the interaction among things in the system to produce a new outcome.



Complexity and Silos Don't Mix

If we accept this kind of radical interdependence connecting you and I and all of us into different systems that connect to yet other systems including the natural environment and technology, then it is quite clear that silos and complexity simply do not mix. In order to understand the connectivity within systems and the interface between natural, social and technological systems, we must integrate all the relevant knowledge to the task of creating solutions. Currently, there is no clear model for integrating such a wide

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range of knowledge, jobs, and skills into a focused process that will get society to a world without fear for tomorrow. Planet Centric design seeks to be that collaborative model which integrates natural, social and technological systems into a synchronous whole, producing sustainable outcomes which meet the needs

of each system. Therefore, radical and systemic collaboration must be built to match the inherent interdependence of the world. This means deploying a systemic response with a broad coalition of actors who can work collaboratively toward redesigning systems to enable sustainable outcomes.

To a large extent, we have designed our world to exclude this interdependence. It doesn't mean that the interdependence is gone, we just haven't designed for it. Currently, many of the outcomes of the systems we have developed to deliver value for society are providing diminishing returns and negative externalities. What that looks like is massive waste, emissions that change global climate systems, holes in the ozone, a sixth mass extinction, etc. One might hear this and say, well you can't change the whole system, it's too difficult. However, there are many tools available for analysing complex adaptive systems that help a planet centric designer understand leverage points for change and the Planet Centric Design Toolkit is meant to help people do this kind of work.

Certain of Uncertainty

Adopting a complex view means acknowledging that as connectivity in a system grows, whether it is your business, a city or a global financial system, the impact of our actions in that system become harder

and harder to predict. Many have heard about Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, which describes how on a quantum level precise predictability becomes impossible. In a sense, this is also true on a much larger scale in relation to natural, social and technological systems, as well. However, this does not mean that everything is just chaos. In fact, systems typically "live" within a phase space, that is, an

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equilibrium in which one can reliably say that the system is likely within a general range of possibilities. What this looks like in a more concrete sense is that one can analyse the interactions happening at a cafe or a subway station, or a business and know generally what will happen at that place.

One cannot predict with certainty exactly what will happen next. Maybe the espresso machine turns on, someone drops their phone, or a colleague starts an argument. Even more, we can't know exactly how these actions will impact the interactions within the surrounding cafe, the others on the subway platform or the productivity of the business for that day. However, the cafe, subway station or business exist within a particular context which is largely governed by external pressures and the kind of connectivity within the system that creates the "structure" of the cafe, subway station or business environment.

If we are to accept complexity and therefore uncertainty into our work, particularly as we do Planet Centric Design, we must adopt a new approach to change. Planet Centric Design means taking a systems approach to change and understanding, to the best of our ability, how a change to one part of a system affects the whole system. We also can't know how the system will react and so our actions toward sustainability must enable rapid feedback and we must adapt as the system respond to our actions. What Planet Centric Design must do is embrace uncertainty to carefully influence systems in ways that produce more sustainable outcomes and this requires a complex view of the interactions between people, nature and technology.

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Solutions

Desirable Futures and Sustainable Digitalisation help organisations to think differently about their future and how they use digital technology to accelerate the sustainability transition with new, innovative solutions.



Desirable Futures

Think differently about your role in a sustainable world with new visions and pathways to align them with the changing needs of consumers and the planet.

What is becoming more evident by the day is that we are living through an age of transition. People across the world are developing new values and governments are building new metrics for responsible business. On top of that, problems related to climate change are increasingly known and media coverage has gathered momentum.

Right now, it seems like everyone is talking about environmental issues like climate change, but still, we can say that considerably little has been done on the scale necessary to avoid catastrophe for life on earth. The fact is, sustainability is a global, intergenerational problem that organisations are not currently programmed to address.

Systemic Consensus

The reality is, just knowing why an issue like climate change is happening, won't be enough to stop it. Now that science has developed a wealth of knowledge and media is increasingly covering issues related to climate change, what is still required and absolutely critical is to build systemic consensus around what should be done about the problems.

Just as important, we must build systemic consensus on how to implement solutions - and we must do this at the scale of the problem through mass mobilisation and co-creation. What we need, at all levels

of society, is to create shared visions for a truly sustainable society. We must start to answer questions in the "messy middle," that help us actually develop long-term visions and strategy into concrete actions with new processes, services and products.

Building broad, inclusive consensus and implementable pathways toward sustainability requires out-of-the-box ideas and seemingly preposterous visions. But what we imagine our future to be is disastrously confined by the logic of today. The same kind of thinking that got us into this mess will not be the thinking that gets us out of it.



Building broad, inclusive consensus and implementable pathways toward sustainability requires out-of-the-box ideas and seemingly preposterous visions.

So, as we build consensus and innovate for the future, the process must enable different thinking to emerge so we can meet the challenge of a sustainable transition at the necessary scale.

Without critical, creative and innovative thinking as we build new visions, services and products for organisations, we cannot

create a society integrated with nature and technology to produce sustainable outcomes.

A Mandate to Innovate

This is an opportunity like never before. Organisations now have the mandate to reassess their role in society and to do something significant, even historic, with entirely new ways of working, new services and new products. With all the difficult challenges facing organisations, now more than ever, doing the responsible thing is what people want to buy and this is a very promising development. There is actually demand to do the right thing and the organisations who can find a way to do it, will be rewarded by consumers.

Desirable Futures empowers your organisations to think differently about its role in a sustainable world by hacking your legacy strategy to probe, prototype and unleash a new model for sustainability-driven innovation. Whether your organisation needs a sustainable plug-in, or a new operating system, Desirable Futures is your navigation bar on the journey to a responsible vision, profitable business opportunities and transparent services. Those who begin now can start using visionary and strategic insight to evolve their organisations immediately by developing profitable new offerings that align with the emerging values of people, governments and the planet.

Key Activities

▸ Visions for the Future

Co-create your sustainability vision that is systemic, responsible and transparent.

▸ Change Management

Measuring success and navigating complexity of large-scale transitions over time.

▸ Service & Product Concepts

Conceptualise new planet-centric services & products in planet-centric design sprints.

▸ Network Management

Interaction coordination among diverse stakeholders. Bringing in relevant expertise from academia and civil society.

▸ Strategic Pathways

Co-create a roadmap of actions and unblocking barriers with our toolkit.

▸ Capacity Building

Develop new capabilities to tackle complex Sustainability issues.





Sustainable Digitalisation



Connecting data, users and natural resource in new ways that create efficiency and enhanced brand value with AI, IoT and transparent digital services.

Forget everything you know about being “environmental.” Forget everything you know about “Sustainability.” That mental picture that came to your mind the second I said environmental or sustainability—yeah, forget about that for now. This will not help you see how digitalisation and sustainability actually go hand in hand, better than we can even imagine.

The efforts to digitalise society have been vast and the impact has been monumental. The fact is, people do not interact with the environment like we used to. To fulfill our needs from natural resources, you and I do not simply go out into a field and pick ourselves a carrot, chop down a car, or mine an Iphone.

No, in order to get the things we “need” from natural resources, we interface with systems, which interface with systems, which interface with even more systems, and through all these systems, material objects from natural resources flow to us eventually in the form we need or desire. Even in the rare case that you or I are actually plucking a carrot from the ground to put on a plate, we still interface with “natural” systems.

Digital is Everywhere

The amazing and at times terrifying thing about this is that almost anywhere you look at those systems that get natural resources from the earth to us, they are critically enabled through digital technology - more than ever before in human history. In fact, digital is embedded in nearly all the systems that get resource A to person B. Digital technology is so intricately entangled with social and natural systems, that imagining a world without digital essentially renders a global society of 7.7 billion people impossible. Today, society depends on a massive, unthinkably vast digital infrastructure.



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However, even though software and digital services enhance so many aspects of our modern lives and at times digitalisation can seem like the ultimate upgrade,

impacts have not all been positive. In many ways, the core function of digital systems are to make it even easier to extract, consume and waste resources as the material world becomes masked behind a digital interface. Even more, technology is not a neutral tool. It is embedded with the values and social software of people. Essentially, our personal agendas or even biases can enable and disables behaviour by users through technology. So, being conscious of how we digitalise and what kind of things we incentivise with technology, can influence whether people act sustainably or not.

A Critical Leverage Point

What this means is that there is a largely untapped and globally networked potential for transformation by using these same digital systems for sustainability. With digital so deeply embedded in society, it can touch the lives of nearly everyone on the planet. Put this way, digital is clearly a powerful leverage point for sustainability, but we will have to reconfigure how we do it based on our new visions and strategies for desirable futures. Here, too, we must employ different thinking to change the course of digitalisation toward more sustainable outcomes. The current model for designing digital services to be viable, feasible and desirable does little to consider environmental impact. But using a wider lens that is Responsible, Systemic

and Transparent can help us unleash technology for good.

As always, Planet Centric Design works at the interface of natural, social and technological systems. But Sustainable digitalisation does this by connecting and integrating data, users and natural resources in innovative new ways that measurably reduce waste and emissions while enabling sustainable lifestyles. Artificial Intelligence, IoT and service design creates efficient processes and new profitable new services for your organisation to deliver value.

Just as important, sustainable digitalisation opens up the black box created by digital technology, to make the connection between people's actions and natural resources transparent and understandable. By doing this, Sustainable Digitalisation also makes sustainable choices easier. Making these choices easier for people ultimately enhances brand value.

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Key Activities

▶ Operational Analysis

Measure resource use and target waste with embedded software, IoT and data analytics. Optimising resource use with data-driven decision-making.

▶ Planet Centric Service Design

Build digital services by connecting people, data and resources in new ways that enables sustainable behaviour and circular resource use.

▶ Network Mapping

Understand key drivers in your business ecosystem and identify leverage points for change.

▶ Transparent Digital Design

Bringing the impact of value-chains to users to inform and enable sustainable choices. Open-source solutions, knowledge sharing for greater impact.

▶ Green Coding

Efficient software development and sustainable digital infrastructure.

▶ User-Research

Understand users to design behaviour change and make sustainable choices easy and desirable.

Methodology



Our methodology includes a wider lens to integrate sustainability as part of our everyday work and a toolkit to take action.



Wider lens

Planet Centric Design builds on top of human centered design which only focuses on desirability, feasibility, and viability. These principles do not take into account systemic effects of design, nor do they consider the impact on the planet. So, we need to design with a wider lens that is responsible, systemic

and transparent to integrate sustainability into our everyday work. This wider lens opens up room for a whole new way of conceptualising products and services, enabling different thinking that can navigate complexity. We use them across our work as a core part of our methodology.



Responsible

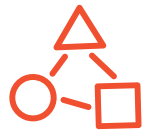
We need to be accountable for our actions and the products we put in the world. We all need to realize that we have a role to play in transitioning to a sustainable society.

Being responsible starts by being critical. It is necessary to question the impact of what we do, before falling in love with our ideas or lowering our heads to focus only on the task ahead of us. To do so, we need to be aware of our personal biases and blindspots. This awareness requires putting aside our ego, deep listening and having empathy for people and non-humans alike.

Being responsible is being aware that designing products and services shapes the future by enabling particular values, behaviours and ways of being in the world.

We must be conscious of the impact these changes have on the planet. Through design, we are diminishing the world's capacity to sustain and create life. Ultimately, humanity is determining what lives and what does not, and that is a massive responsibility. That is why we all need to start holding ourselves accountable for our role in contributing to the overall system dynamics of a rapidly deteriorating natural environment.

Besides, taking responsibility involves doing our best to influence our networks to be planet centric. Therefore, being responsible implies considering the collective, how our cumulative actions impact the ecosystem, and how we can help others decrease their impact on the environment.



Systemic

Reflecting on how society develops products and services, it's not difficult to realize how limited the scope of development is. Generally, we consider how our product is directly affected and how our actions can reflect on us. However, we do not consider indirect consequences and impact on the ecosystem. For example, we might consider how fluctuation in oil prices increases the value of natural resources, but not so much the waste that we generate while we develop our product. One reason for this is that it is complicated and might seem overwhelming at first. But to develop genuinely sustainable products and services, we have to consider the bigger ecosystem and the direct and indirect impact we have on it. We need to

embrace complexity instead of designing around it.

We embrace complexity by thinking in multiple scales of interaction over time to understand how our products impact systems and evolve. Also, we are not able to map and navigate these systems by ourselves. This navigation requires radical collaboration between different fields of knowledge. Consequently, to be systemic, we have to collaborate and break down silos between different departments in a company, various industries, academia and industry, etc. Collaboration is a critical element in embracing complexity and enabling the sustainability transition.



Transparent

Consider the digital services that you regularly use, such as food delivery, online shopping, travelling, or e-learning. These are generally made to be seamless and easy-to-use. However, this means that people do not realize all that it takes to deliver these services to them. In an attempt to add convenience to our lives, services are not informing on the impact that they have on the planet. Digital services are an easy example to realize this lack of transparency, but the same typically happens in all products.

Being transparent requires showing what our impact on the environment is. It requires making visible how people relate to the system, how the system relates to nature, and how they all impact each other. It is necessary to start making these

connections to integrate the parts of the system that are out of sync. For example, being transparent with resource overexploitation accelerates the change needed to stop it. Therefore, being transparent helps us to be more systemic, as the interconnectivity of the system becomes more evident, and it is easier to make the necessary changes.

Opening up our processes and informing customers of what it takes to deliver a service to them, raises awareness and accelerates behaviour change. As people become more aware of their impact, they become more responsible for their actions. This change empowers them to choose more sustainable lifestyles and contribute to the sustainability transition.

Toolkit

What is the purpose of this toolkit?

This toolkit was designed to help you create products and services that do not harm the planet. It will help you create concepts that are desirable and profitable, but also put the planet in the centre of the design process.

We recognise that this is a challenging task as planetary systems are complex and intertwined in ways that humanity does not fully understand. So, this toolkit helps you live up to the challenge, by offering activities to navigate complexity, collaborate and create better solutions for society that fit within Earth's boundaries.

Welcome to the new direction of design.

For whom is it for?

You might be a designer, a strategist, a developer, or have any other background. You might work at a corporation, a public institution or a non-profit. You are probably interested in innovation approaches, project development or design methods. You probably work in a team setting, and you aim to integrate sustainability in your projects, but you are not sure how.

This is a toolkit for anyone interested in integrating planet centricity in their projects. We designed it for co-creating projects with people from different backgrounds and points-of-view. Our goal is to enable collaboration and break down silos.

Therefore these tools are good conversation starters around complex topics that are hard to grasp at first. For example, what is your sustainability vision? How does your value chain look like? This toolkit helps you break down these blockers and start working with sustainability.

How do we use it?

This toolkit was designed for teamwork. Use it by drawing each canvas on a wall or large piece of paper that allows participants to gather around it and contribute actively. We recommend inviting a facilitator to help you keep track of time and navigate through the activities. The tools are organised in a suggested order, but you should feel free to reorganise according to your needs. Each canvas has a broad estimate of time that it will take to complete the exercise. However, this varies depending on your project. So the facilitator should decide how long to spend in each exercise.

What sort of questions does this toolkit answer?

It takes you through the main stages of a project. There are five stages and a total of twenty tools.

► **Prepare:** How might we prepare to work with sustainability?

► **Understand:** How might we understand the environmental impact of our organisation?

► **Envision:** How might we define what sustainability means in our organisation?

► **Create:** How might we create planet centric concepts?

► **Release:** How might we empower others with our planet centric project?



Prepare

How might we prepare to work with sustainability?

Value Proposition

We ensure a base of collective knowledge on sustainability. We unblock sticking points in the organisation and create a shared mindset on how to deal with such complex topics.

Output

A shared understanding of the current world problems and the role of the organisation in solving them. A collective motivation to tackle the sustainability challenge and contribute to the solution.

Required roles

Client: All stakeholders involved in the project

Vincit: Facilitator, designer

External: Sustainability expert

Methods

Planet Centric Bootcamp

Bigger impact

App disruption

Pre-requisites

None



Understand

How might we understand the environmental impact of our organisation?

Value Proposition

We create a clear understanding of the current state of your value chain and user experience and identify your product or service's sustainability-related problems.

Output

The identified problems that the organisation must address.

Visualisations of the value chain and user journey that communicate the current state and the necessary changes.

Required roles

Client: Supply chain manager, product owner, in-the-field employees, customer-relations

Vincit: Facilitator, designer, software developer

External: Key suppliers and distributor representatives, users

Methods

Behind The Scenes

Influence/Impact

Planet Centric User Journey

Pre-requisites

None



Envision

How might we define what sustainability means
in our organisation?

Value Proposition

We co-create a compelling and robust point-of-view of your role in climate change and define sustainability as one of your organisation's must-win battles.

Output

A sustainability vision that integrates with your organisation's strategy, a roadmap of actions to achieve it.

A visualisation of the roadmap, to be used in your organisation's internal communication.

Required roles

Client: Decision-makers and in-the-field employees who are a representative sample of your organisation.

Vincit: Facilitator, designer, strategist

External: Sustainability expert

Methods

Here and Now

Wider Lens

North Star

Jobs To Do

Blockers Breakdown

Pre-requisites

None



Create

How might we create planet centric concepts?

Value Proposition

Co-create truly sustainable and responsible concepts for new products and services.

Output

Crystalised planet centric concept and a strategic team to involve in its development.

Required roles

Client: Decision-makers and in-the-field employees, that are representative of who makes your organisation

Vincit: Facilitator, designer

External: Sustainability experts from different fields, such as sociology, biology, environmental sustainability, sustainability design

Methods

Planet Centric Ideation

Radical/Realist

Systemic Touchpoints

Planet Centric Concept

Business Model Flip

Strategic Team

Pre-requisites

Create a compelling understanding of your current situation with the Understand element and define your sustainability vision with the Envision element.



Release

How might we empower others with our planet centric project?

Value Proposition

Build a closer relationship with clients through transparent communication and scale up the impact of your solutions with open-sourcing.

Output

Distinguished marketing and communications, that create a transparent relationship with users and increase brand value.

Required roles

Client: Project owner, Marketing representative

Vincit: Designer, software developer

External: None

Methods

Sustainability Storytelling

Open-Source Scaling

Pre-requisites

Develop a planet-centric project.

Conclusion

We have developed Planet Centric Design to accelerate the sustainability transition and create better ways of integrating social, technological and natural systems.

Our answer to an unsustainable world is to co-create Desirable Futures, visions and strategies with organisations to unleash a new model for sustainability-driven innovation that also enhances brand value. On top of that, Sustainable Digitalisation connects data, users and natural resources using IoT, AI and service design to reduce emissions, create efficiencies and enable sustainable lifestyles.

To navigate complexity, we are building a new methodology for design, incorporating a wider lens that is responsible, systemic and transparent.

Our goal is to empower businesses to make the necessary change and to be thought-leaders in this movement that will be decisive in the 21st-century narrative.

Let's embark on this journey and create a better tomorrow, together.