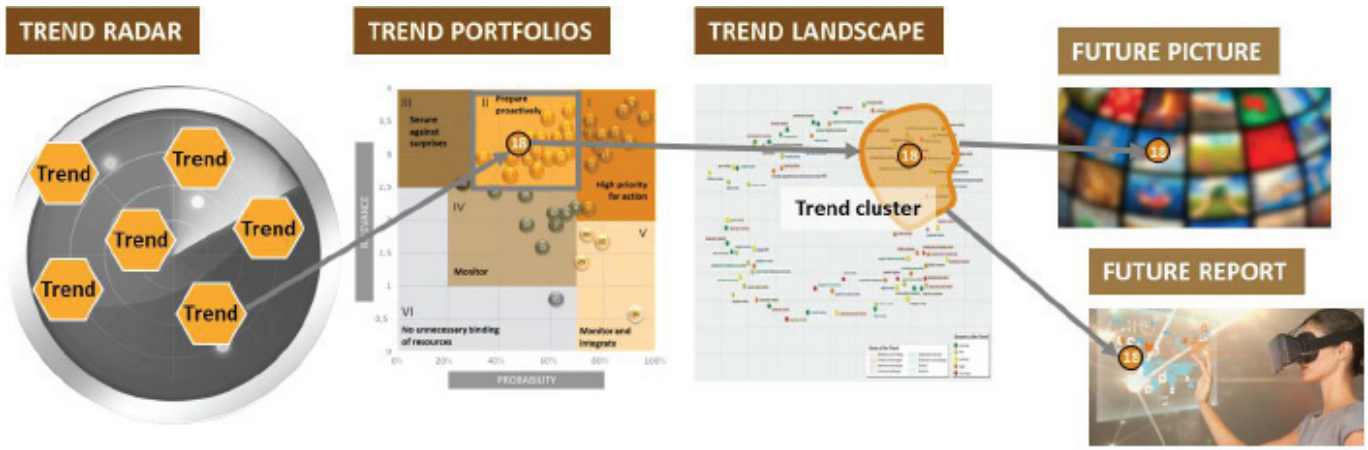
ScMI
Scenario Management International
Aktiengesellschaft für Zukunftsgestaltung
und Strategische Unternehmensführung

Trend landscape: With trends to a clear future perspective



Trend collection	Trend analysis	Trend interpretation	Application
What overarching (general) and specific (industry-related) trends can be identified? What is the common understanding of these developments?	*How are the trends to be prioritized? Which trends have a concrete influence on the markets, the own industry and the own organization? How likely are they to occur?*	*How are future developments connected? What does a networked trend picture (trend landscape) look like? Which central clusters can be identified?*	*Which processing of the results is target-oriented and which concrete application (product innovations, communication, etc.) is optional to support?*

Interpret and apply trends

How working with a trend landscape reveals clear perspectives

The speed of change, whether on the market or technologically, is rapid and a large number of companies are also dealing with these developments. However, the process-related superstructure and a clear derivation of target images for the organizations as a result of these processes are often missing. A common understanding of the future becomes necessary at the latest when I want to discuss the common path into the future with stakeholders, such as customers or employees, or when I think about innovations as well as the business models of the future. Targeted foresight with trends is a helpful tool here when it comes to developing a shared picture of the future. In practice, this means using a collection of trends and subsequent trend analysis and interpretation to create as precise a picture as possible of relevant future developments and their interaction, and visualizing this in the form of a future map. Ideally, there are three process steps on the way to a future landscape.

Trend collection: Based on research, expert interviews and workshops, trends are identified for relevant future fields and described on the basis of a common understanding. On the one hand, this *trend radar* contains trends of a very specific nature that may be derived from developments in the direct industry environment, but on the other hand, it also contains general and thus overarching trends that result, for example, from social or general technological developments**.**

Trend analysis: The next step is to evaluate the trends collected. A wide range of evaluation criteria are available for this purpose. The resulting *trend portfolios* provide initial implications as to which trends are really relevant and should be given special attention.

Trend interpretation: The next step is to evaluate the interrelationships and overarching networking among the trends and to present them in the form of a *trend landscape*. This step makes it possible to move away from the often too narrowly defined and not very effective individual consideration of trends and to highlight logical connections and overarching developments.

There are two basic formats for presenting the results:

- In the *future picture*, the results from the trend interpretation are visualized and presented in a single-course format. The aim is to convey the contents of a future picture in a concise manner and to lay the foundation for innovation projects or marketing activities, for example. This format is also suitable as a basis for starting discussions on a common future direction with all conceivable stakeholders of organizations

- The *Future Report* pursues the goal of a systematic and thus rather technical description of trends and their interrelationships.

Application in practice:

Continental Future Perspective: Development of a shared vision of future mobility in the urban ecosystem as a building block of corporate development

What did the project aim to achieve?

Mobility is changing - that much is certain. However, there is often disagreement about where it is headed, even within a company. This is due not only to the diverse, dynamic framework conditions, but also to the sheer number of innovation ideas that are already predicted to have a great future in terms of mobility concepts. The diversity and divergence of ideas stands in the way of a clear focus on a common goal.

Based on a comprehensive trend analysis, a picture of locomotion in the city of the future was to be drawn for Continental. The aim was to set a beacon for targeted product and future design within the company.

How can clear target images and visions be formed in dynamic environments?

In this case, the first step is a broad-based scanning of recognizable or conceivable future trends. These can be obtained through interviews and surveys as well as through the evaluation of existing databases and research results. As a rule, an almost unmanageable number of fragments of a picture of the future are found in this way. These have to be systematized and prioritized to form a common vision. For prioritized trends, further detailed analyses, such as an evaluation of relevance or an assessment of the probability of occurrence, were created, as were detailed descriptions of the trends. These must also be made comprehensible for subsequent processes and stored in suitable plug-in briefs.

By examining the interdependencies between the individual trends, a trend landscape can be generated that reveals essential clusters as well as possible contradictions. In a joint

discussion of this map, consensus can be formed on the essential core trends. This also creates a common picture of the future. The outlined procedure of the future landscape was chosen in the above-mentioned example of Continental „Future Persepctive“.

How is a future picture visualized?

ScMI AG has extensive expertise in the development of future images based on trends and scenarios. ScMI has numerous partnerships for the media preparation of these images. Among others, ScMI works together with the company Zielbildner. The Wiesbaden-based company specializes in the visualization of future images and strategies and closes the gap between future analysis and communication. For this purpose, formulated images are analyzed in detail, translated into concise visualization concepts and these are then realized. In the example outlined here, Continental has involved its own partners and experts in the field of visual representation in the preparation of the results.

Where is the benefit of the vision picture and the key to success in implementation?

A shared understanding of a normative image of the future is able to stimulate ideas within the company and at the same time effectively focus forces on a single target point. Thus, within the picture of the future, potential „value spots“ for the company can first be identified. Subsequent quantification of these future potentials makes a significant contribution to future positioning. A significant factor for success here is the visualization of the future image through images, animations or virtual reality. Here, two essential aspects are in the foreground.

On the one hand, visualization forces the company to become concrete. Abstract descriptions of a future are not sufficient for a visual representation. Trends and developments must be translated into visible products and applications. However, this sometimes exhausting process of searching for so-called manifestations represents an enormous added value, as it mercilessly reveals existing weaknesses in the picture of the future.

On the other hand, visualization closes the gap between the creation of the future pictures and their application. Only when the future can be experienced can employees be won over for the realization of this goal or workshops for the derivation of suitable response strategies or innovations be conducted in a targeted and efficient manner. The animated „Future Perspective“ on the future of mobility has proven to be a valuable management tool for Continental. Here, more general trends such as „Autonomous Logistics Systems“ initially become tangible in the city of the future through the depiction of walking robots for parcel delivery

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