DESIGN

ACUPUNCTURE

Finding the right designers for YOUR SME!


www.shift-project.eu
This booklet accompanies a “needs-wheel” for SMEs and “design service cards” for designers. These constitute a game which serves as a tool for designers/design agencies and SMEs to collaboratively find design services for the needs of the enterprises. Through the game, the participants are encouraged to discuss needs and design support options.

The essential of the game is a needs-wheel and design service cards, where SMEs can identify their needs and find a suitable design service together with designers.

Designers and SMEs are encouraged to use the game-platform to explore which design services can satisfy an SME’s needs. This provides a common ground for discussion and helps to overcome misunderstandings and other barriers through an open and playful approach to create mutual understanding and support.

The game is developed as a part of the European research project SHIFT-Support Systems for Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Transformation.

For more information please see: www.shift-project.eu
WHAT ARE THE (DESIGN) NEEDS OF SMES?

The SHIFT-project aims to find ways to improve the support system for eco-innovation and has therefore looked into the needs of SMEs and especially eco-SMEs. It seems that when it comes to design support, general SMEs experience similar difficulties and challenges as eco-SMEs.

For the purpose of helping SMEs and designers to discuss how design services can support the enterprises, a list of needs has been identified: Product & service development, Strategic Process Development, Help with prototyping, Making products more attractive, Increase usability of products, Increased product visibility on the market, Growing sales, Market: support in penetration or initiation, Online representation.

These needs are identified through literature about SMEs generic and specific needs; through a survey done in collaboration with Suomen Yrittäjät for the SHIFT-project in 2014 where the respondents were asked about their collaboration with design service providers; and, through an exercise about current and future needs of SMEs done with local Finnish SME partners of the SHIFT-project.

SMEs write their needs onto the needs-wheel. This serves as a starting point for discussion among the designers and the SMEs and aims to help the SMEs to clarify and find appropriate design services to meet these needs. SMEs can add any of their specific needs to the wheel. The SMEs and designers then agree the next actions.
UNDERSTANDING DESIGN SERVICES

Designers can place the cards which describe different design services on an SME’s needs-wheel. Here are the basic description of the design services.

COMMUNICATION DESIGN
embraces a combination of textural, figurative, formal and time-based elements to convey messages and meanings in an effective way. Closely related to graphic design and visual identity design.

CONCEPT DESIGN
is about developing ideas which test what is (presently) acceptable, culturally or technically. It may involve using various ideation methods to generate lots of ideas then develop the best ones.

DESIGN MANAGEMENT
is integrating design activities with everyday management, operations, production and service practices in an enterprise with strategic decisions for competitive advantage and improved performance.

DESIGN RESEARCH
can include any design field, discipline, activity and approach as theory, practice and/or explorations. It frequently involves collaborations with for-profit and non-profit enterprises on specific projects or challenges around new technologies, materials, markets and communities.

ECODESIGN/SUSTAINABLE DESIGN
involves developing products or services which minimise their impacts on the environment throughout their lifecycle. Sustainable design includes ecodesign but also embeds ethical, social and economic considerations.

SPATIAL DESIGN (EXHIBITION, INTERIORS, RETAIL)
is the design of specific spatial environments for exhibitions, retail outlets or any interior space where an enterprise does business.

GRAPHIC DESIGN/VISUAL IDENTITY DESIGN/BRAND DESIGN
are inter-related design activities which organise text, images, icons, logos and illustrations to communicate specific messages and stories. Closely related to communication design.
**INTERFACE DESIGN**
is about improving experiences at the common boundary between an enterprise and its products or services and maximising the benefits to the user or customer by facilitating tasks.

**(NEW) PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**
is about re-designing existing products or creating new products through a variety of processes where designers and others take a design brief with a defined challenge, create a solution and deliver it to the market.

**PRODUCT/INDUSTRIAL DESIGN**
is the conceptualisation, design and making of objects, artefacts or products which are functional and useful while meeting contemporary aesthetic needs.

**SERVICE DESIGN**
is the design of the functionality, form and experience of services from the perspective of the customer and through the analogue or digital interfaces they need to access to acquire the service.

**STRATEGIC DESIGN**
aims to improve the performance of an enterprise in the eyes of its management, designers, customers and, even, competitors.

**USER-CENTRED DESIGN/USABILITY**
is an approach to designing which involves the users from initial conceptualisation to testing prototypes or models and delivering them to the market.

**WEB DESIGN**
is about the conceptualisation of the 'look and feel'(graphic and visual design) of a web site and its integration with the underlying structure and functionality. (The aim of good web design is for users and customers to access information, products and services efficiently and that, overall, it is a satisfying experience.)

**OTHER SERVICES** (add other specific design services)
Designers can fill in blank Design Service Cards

See below for more comprehensive descriptions of each design service, why SMEs should use them, and what value they add. These descriptions can be modified by SMEs and designers.
Communication Design embraces a combination of textural, figurative, formal and time-based elements to convey messages and meanings in an effective way. Depending upon the chosen medium of communication, and the intended audience, it is related to graphic design, visual identity design, brand design, interface design, audiovisual design, broadcast design, game design, web design and more.

Why use it?
• deliver consistent, concise messages with specific meanings about the enterprise’s value proposition i.e. what benefits and value they can give to the customer
• capture new customers and/or as a means to satisfy existing customers
• help customers differentiate between different brands, products and services
• build relationships between the enterprise and its customers

How does it add value?
Tangible value includes: an increase in customers and sales; an increase in customer retention; an increase in brand value as seen in assets and/or share prices. Intangible value includes: differentiation in the marketplace; and improved brand reputation.

Designer’s further comments:

SME’s further comments:
Concept Design is about developing ideas which test what is (presently) acceptable, culturally or technically. It can involve a wide range of analogue and/or digital techniques including sketching, visualising, prototyping, modelling or other means to communicate the conceptual design. It may involve using various ideation methods to generate lots of ideas then develop the best ones.

**Why use it?**
- challenge and push the boundaries of what enterprises and their customers consider feasible, acceptable and do-able
- initiate early thoughts about new product or service development, perhaps to engage an internal (enterprise) or external (supplier, customer) audience
- use it as a pilot project, experiment to try it out with different audiences to learn about the potential of the concept with users, suppliers, investors or other parties.

**How does it add value?**
Tangible value includes feedback from users, suppliers, investors or other parties which can better inform decisions in the enterprise. Intangible value includes: developing a culture of innovation within the enterprise.

**Designer’s further comments:**

**SME’s further comments:**
DESIGN MANAGEMENT

Design management is integrating design activities with everyday management, operations, production and service practices in an enterprise with strategic decisions for competitive advantage for improved performance. It embraces writing proposals, developing design briefs, new product and service development, brand development, overseeing production and quality control and fulfilling business objectives at a strategic level. The latter is called strategic design.

Why use it?
• help improve and integrate creativity and functionality within an enterprise
• raise levels of collaboration and innovation within an enterprise
• maintain a consistent application of design thinking and doing which helps internal and external efficiency, delivery of products and services, and consistent company image

How does it add value?
Tangible value includes: development of new methods, practices, knowledge and Intellectual Property; contribution to more efficient production or service delivery processes and potential cost savings; better market reach and/or position. Intangible value includes: developing a culture of creativity and innovation within the enterprise; raising levels of strategic business and operational awareness.

Designer’s further comments:

SME’s further comments:
DESIGN RESEARCH

Design research is conducted by universities, independent research institutes and non-profit organisations. It can include any design field, discipline, activity and approach as theory, practice and/or explorations. It frequently involves collaborations with for-profit and non-profit enterprises on specific projects or challenges around new technologies, materials, markets and communities. Design researchers work collaboratively in ‘open’ and ‘closed’ Intellectual Property environments, according to the needs of the enterprise. They also work closely with users, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders using participatory or open design methods, often generating special market intelligence and developing unique products and services.

Why use it?
• work in a collaborative, innovative environment
• raise expertise, skills and knowledge within the enterprise
• convert problems or challenges into solutions and opportunities

How does it add value?
Tangible value includes: Creation of Intellectual Property and the testing of new prototypes, products or services. Intangible value includes: increasing knowledge, skills and capacity within the enterprise; developing new perspectives on customers, users, market opportunities and innovation potential.

Designer’s further comments:

SME’s further comments:
Ecodesign/sustainable design involves developing products or services which minimise their impacts on the environment throughout their lifecycle, from their creation to their production, use, and re-use or recycling at end-of-life (EoL). Sustainable design includes ecodesign but also embeds ethical, social and economic considerations in the production, use and disposal or re-use of a product or service.

Why use it?
• comply with existing environmental and trade legislation and regulations
• reduce production and take-back costs
• enter new markets for the green, circular and fair-trade economies
• improve the image of the enterprise with existing and potential customers

How does it add value?
Tangible value includes: cost reductions by avoiding waste production or pollution; increases ability to enter specialised but growing markets for green and socially-conscious consumer and B2B products and services; can enable eligibility to supply public sector organisations sourcing ‘green’ suppliers. Intangible value includes: improves brand image and reputation; reduces harm to nature and other humans.

Designer’s further comments:

SME’s further comments:
Spatial Design (Exhibition, Interiors, Retail) is the design of specific spatial environments for exhibitions, retail outlets or any interior space where an enterprise does business, such as offices, one-off promotional events and so on. Spatial designers liaise with graphic/visual identity/brand/communication designers to ensure a consistent 'look and feel' and to deliver consistent messages and stories which reflect the enterprise’s products, services and mode of operating.

**Why use it?**
- help build a consistent reputation in the marketplace and give confidence to customers, suppliers and other stakeholders
- reach specific audiences for customer sales, investment and so on

**How does it add value?**
Tangible value includes: Strengthens physical presence and visual identity in the marketplace and protects market share. Intangible value includes: Raises confidence and builds trust in customers, suppliers and stakeholders.

**Designer’s further comments:**

**SME’s further comments:**
Graphic design can inform, advertise and/or decorate and can be placed in forms and arrangements to constitute a consistent visual identity and/or brand for an enterprise. Visual identity design can reach across all an enterprise’s activities, for internal and external communication and management. Brand design is more closely associated with logos, marks and other specific symbols but can also embrace the whole ‘look and feel’ of products and services.

Why use it?
• maximise the efficacy and effectiveness of an enterprise’s communication with its customers, suppliers and other stakeholders
• ensure consistent ‘messaging’ of an enterprise’s products and services
• cost efficient presentation of the enterprise, internally and externally
• protect market share or to enter new markets

How does it add value?
Tangible value includes: increased recognition and retention of customers; and/or increase in customers by entering new markets by offering more consumer or B2B choice and a different ‘image’. Intangible value includes: increased awareness of the brand and its potential value in the market.

Designer’s further comments:

SME’s further comments:
Interface design is about improving experiences at the common boundary between an enterprise and its products or services and maximising the benefits to the user or customer by facilitating tasks. This might involve attention to ergonomics and ease of use for all types of users/customers with different abilities (sometimes called inclusive design or universal design), allowing the customisation and personalisation of interfaces, integrating complex systems and data, and human-computer interaction (HCT) especially in enterprises using digital technologies involving service design, screen design, web design and games design.

Why use it?
• facilitate and increase usability of analogue/digital or digital technologies
• improve experiences when using products, services or product-service-systems (PSS)

How does it add value?
Tangible value includes: increase in brand reputation; increased market reach or share; increased in proportion of satisfied users or customers; improved efficiency for users or customers. Intangible value includes: better perceptions of the product or service and/or brand experience; increased user or customer trust in the enterprise.

Designer's further comments:

SME’s further comments:
(New) Product development is about re-designing existing products or creating new products through a variety of processes where designers and others (other professionals, users, suppliers) take a design brief with a defined challenge, create a solution and deliver it to market. Product development involves many phases from research, ideation, concept design, prototyping and testing, brand design, packaging design, product design, service design, design management of the production, and communicating about the (new) product to the market. These days products may also be developed in participatory and open processes, involving co-design and open design approaches where knowledge and Intellectual Property (IP) are shared.

Why use it?
• create new products and services to enter new markets or to strengthen an existing position in a market
• attract new customers
• meet targets and the ambitions of a strategic business plan and/or obtain returns on financial investment
• be competitive and innovative

How does it add value?
Tangible value includes: retaining existing customers and/or attracting new customers; getting good ROI, return on investment; by meeting the strategic objectives of an enterprise. Intangible value includes: increasing the skills and competences in the enterprise;

Designer’s further comments:

SME’s further comments:
Product/Industrial Design is the conceptualisation, design and making of objects, artifacts or products which are functional and useful while meeting contemporary aesthetic needs. The fields of ‘product’ and ‘industrial’ design blend and merge according to whether the object is for business to business (B2B) or business to consumer (B2C) markets and the specific materials, engineering and/or digital expertise needed to create a functioning object. Objects can be utilitarian and ubiquitous, luxurious and rare, or specialist depending upon their purpose and can be existing objects re-designed or be new objects (often referred to as ‘new product development’, NPD).

**Why use it?**
- take advantage of over 200 years of professional experience in conceiving, testing and making products over
- ensure that new technologies can be adapted and successfully incorporated in existing and new products
- to reduce the risk and costs of failure of introducing re-designed or new products to the market

**How does it add value?**
Tangible value includes: re-designed products can help retain existing customers; new products can attract new customers and help develop new markets; well designed products are recognised in the marketplace by the media and citizens; studies show that Return on Investment in product design can be high, up to 200% of the original investment. Intangible value includes: helps create visibility in the marketplace; reinforces and builds brand value.

**Designer’s further comments:**

**SME’s further comments:**
Service Design is the design of the functionality, form and experience of services from the perspective of the customer and through the analogue or digital interfaces they need to access to acquire the service. Service designers aim to understand the customer journey and their ‘touch-points’ with the service at the same time as understanding the service provider’s requirements. This is a complex environment so usually involves developing a service ‘blueprint’ and testing it with the enterprise and its customers or users. Service design can better help meet current needs and/or help develop and evaluate new services in private, public and social sectors.

**Why use it?**
- maximise customer or user or client satisfaction
- ensure good ‘back office’ and ‘front office’ communication and delivery to the customer/user/client
- understand behavioural patterns and to predict future service needs
- explore if existing products and be converted into ‘product-service-systems’ where product ownership is replaced by various service options

**How does it add value?**
Tangible value includes: increased existing customer satisfaction; increased penetration of existing markets or development of new markets with new services; increased efficiencies for the enterprise and for the customers. Intangible value includes: increases in brand visibility and reputation.

**Designer’s further comments:**

**SME’s further comments:**
Strategic design aims to improve the performance of an enterprise in the eyes of its management, designers, customers and, even, competitors. It does this by applying design processes and thinking to improve organisational communication, knowledge and understanding within the enterprise and to promote consistent brand identity and communication design in the marketplace. Strategic design also helps an enterprise to improve their competences to work with market trends and develop future scenarios to assist with short- and long-term planning of the business.

Why use it?
- help the enterprise plan effectively for the future and, thereby, reduce unforeseen risks
- ensure integration of the enterprise’s internal operations with its external operations, messages and brand image and value

How does it add value?
Tangible value includes: reduction of risk, through foresighting and scenario planning, coupled with improved capacity to see market and other opportunities; increased market profile and sales. Intangible value includes: integration of internal elements of an enterprise; adds to perceived brand value.

Designer’s further comments:

SME’s further comments:
User-centred design/Usability is an approach to designing which involves the users from initial conceptualisation to testing prototypes or models and delivering them to the market. Users test the functions of products and services to ensure they are ‘usable’ and exhibit ‘usability’. It embraces the notion of inclusive design, universal design and ergonomics to ensure that all types of users, of different abilities, can use the product/service.

**Why use it?**

- reduce the risk of product or service failure in the market
- apply the collective intelligence of users from target audiences to improve the customer experience

**How does it add value?**

Tangible value includes: reducing the risk of failure in the market and its potential financial losses; gathers market intelligence which is specific to the enterprise. Intangible value includes: builds expertise within the enterprise about users’ needs; can stimulate ideas for new products and services.

**Designer’s further comments:**

**SME’s further comments:**
Web design is about the conceptualisation of the 'look and feel' (graphic and visual design) of a web site and its integration with the underlying structure and functionality through the graphic user interface (GUI) of multiple digital devices (computers, laptops, pads, phones and others) using different operating systems and web browser applications. The aim of good web design is for users and customers to access information, products and services efficiently and that, overall, it is a satisfying experience.

**Why use it?**
- reach 4 billion internet users via the World Wide Web. Having a web site has become an essential tool for enterprises to communicate with existing customers and to advertise or market to potential customers.
- ensure that there is a coherent and consistent presentation of the enterprise to external audiences, including customers, suppliers and other stakeholders.

**How does it add value?**
Tangible value includes: increase in traffic of existing and potential customers; conversion of potential customers into actual customers; increased sales; increased operational efficiency of the enterprise; provides a 'one-stop' point of contact. Intangible value includes: develops a consistent brand message which helps build brand value and reputation.

**Designer’s further comments:**

**SME’s further comments:**
OTHER TYPES OF DESIGN (PLEASE SPECIFY):

Why use it?
- 
- 
- 

How does it add value?

Description:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Designer's further comments:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

SME's further comments:
NOTES
NOTES
SHIFT - www.shift-project.eu
Helsinki Design Week, 08.09.2015
© 2015, Aalto ARTS; Nodus Reserach Group, Shift Project.

Contacts: Alastair Fuad-Luke, alastair.fuad-luke@aalto.fi
Anja-Lisa Hirscher, anja.hirscher@aalto.fi
Malin Bäckman, malin.backman@aalto.fi