



# TREND ANALYSIS

## When can the method be used?

Trends are changes in society that occur over longer periods of time, about 3 to 10 years. They are related not only to people's evolving preferences, for example in fashion or music, but also to wider-sweeping developments in the economy, politics and technology. Trend analyses are usually performed at the beginning of a design project or in the strategic planning process. Not only can they be a rich source of inspiration, they also identify the risks involved when introducing new products.

## How to use the method?

With Trend Analysis you try to find answers to the following questions: What developments in the fields of society, markets and technology can we expect over the next 3 to 10 years? How do these developments relate to each other? Where do they stimulate each other and where do they block each other? How do trends influence the strategy of an organisation? What are the resulting threats and what are the opportunities? What ideas for new products and services can we come up with now on the basis of the trends?

For an analysis, a trends pyramid can be used. Trends can be examined at four levels:

- A micro trend is at a product level and has a time horizon of one year.
- A midi trend is at a market level and has a time horizon of one to five years.
- A maxi trend is at a consumer level and has a time horizon of five to 10 years.
- A mega trend is at a societal level and has a time horizon of 10 to 30 years.

A trends pyramid covers a single theme, for example political trends or technological trends.

**Trend Analysis methods help you to identify and analyse customer needs and business opportunities in order to develop business strategies, design visions and new product ideas.**

## Possible procedure

### STEP 1

List as many trends as possible. Identify trends from a variety of sources such as newspapers, magazines and the Internet.

### STEP 2

Use checklists, such as DEPEST, that help you to ask the relevant questions and to structure your findings:

D = Demographic; E = Ecological;  
P = Political; E = Economic; S = Social;  
T = Technological.

### STEP 3

Remove trends that are similar and identify the hierarchy in trends. Identify whether trends are related and define these relationships.

### STEP 4

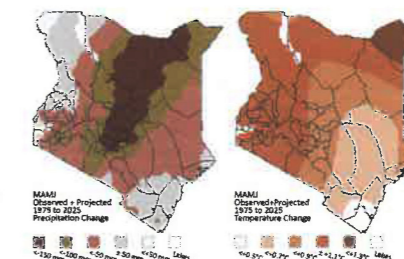
Place the trends in a trends pyramid. Set up various trends pyramids according to, for example, the DEPEST structure.

### STEP 5

Identify interesting directions for new products or services based on trends. Also, combine trends to see whether this would inspire new products or services.

## Tips & Concerns

- In the first step, list as many trends as possible and do not pay attention to redundant or similar trends.
- Examining trends is useful for two reasons: it provides a tool that enables you to process and structure the enormous amount of (trend) information generated, and facilitates assessing the consequences of trends.
- You can also use it to identify the preferences of the target group.
- Try to combine trends as much as possible.
- Make use of as many different sources as you can.
- Try to visualise trends just like with scenarios.



Above: in meteorology, changing rainfall patterns indicate trends that might be connected to global warming. Right: population pyramids visualise trends in birth rates and how a country's population develops over age groups. After World War II, for example, there was a significant baby boom, especially in western countries.

