University of Cincinnati

Date: 8/2/2011

I, Shiyuan Fu, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Design in Design.

It is entitled:
A COMPARISON AND CONCLUSIVE INTEGRATION OF TREND ANALYSIS PROCESSES

Student’s name: Shiyuan Fu

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee chair: Margaret Voelker-Ferrier, MA
Committee member: Paul Zender, MFA
A COMPARISON AND CONCLUSIVE INTEGRATION OF
TREND ANALYSIS PROCESSES

A thesis submitted to the
Division of Research and Advanced Studies
Of the University of Cincinnati
In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

Master of Design

in the School of Design
of the College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning
2011
by

Shiyuan Fu

Bachelor of Engineering, Donghua University, China, 2009

Thesis Committee:
Voelker-ferrier Margaret, Chair
Zender Paul
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to develop a comprehensive trend analysis process. As trend grows in importance, learning how to forecast upcoming trends has become an important skill for all designers. The problem is even though there are quite a few books discussing trend forecasting methods and trend analysis processes, beginners still have difficulty choosing the appropriate method. Different scholars focus on various parts of the procedure, which creates diverse forecasting methods. All these facts may confuse new learners and companies. A guideline is needed for selection of the appropriate trend forecasting method for designers.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It’s a pleasure to thank my thesis committee members and friends who made this thesis possible.

First I would like to thank and send my best regards to Professor Voelker-ferrier for her patience, motivation and inspiration. She explained trend forecasting clearly and made it interesting to me, which helped me develop my thesis from the beginning. Throughout my thesis-writing period, Professor Voelker-ferrier provided inspirational suggestions, ideas as well as great encouragement. She is not only the chair of my committee but also my mentor and friend for the future.

Professor Zender provided a lot encouragement and patience when I had difficulties to decide the thesis topic. He introduced trend forecasting to me based on his understanding about my strength and interesting. Writing thesis is hard especially for me, a foreign student. Sometimes when I doubted myself, Professor Zender always encourages me and offers wise advices.

I really appreciate Professor Voelker-ferrier and Professor Zender offered helps with my spelling and syntax errors.

Beyond my committee members, Ms. Velerie Jacobs Kremer is another person I want to thank. I have learned so very much from her trend forecasting class.

I also want to give special thanks to Xijia Wang and my other friends. They always encouraged me when I had difficulties during my master period and offered countless help.

And finally I would like to thank my dearest parents for their selfless love and support.
# Table of Contents

List of Figures .................................................................................................................. 3

Chapter 1: Introduction ........................................................................................................ 5
  1.1 Problem Statement ....................................................................................................... 5
  1.2 Methodology ................................................................................................................ 6

Chapter 2: Literature Review ............................................................................................. 7
  2.1 Trend ............................................................................................................................ 7
  2.2 Trend analysis .............................................................................................................. 7
  2.3 Trend forecasting ........................................................................................................ 8
  2.4 Selection tree for forecasting methods ...................................................................... 9

Chapter 3: Existing Methods Analysis ......................................................................... 12
  3.1 Overview of trend analysis process .......................................................................... 12
  3.2 Analysis of traditional trend analysis process ......................................................... 12
    3.2.1 Overview of traditional trend analysis process .................................................. 12
    3.2.2 Pro and cons of traditional trend analysis process ......................................... 14
  3.3 Analysis of Higham’s process .................................................................................. 16
    3.3.1 Overview of Higham's process ......................................................................... 16
    3.3.2 Illustrate of Higham's process ......................................................................... 18
    3.3.3 Pro and cons of Higham's process .................................................................. 20
  3.4 Analysis of Raymond’s process .............................................................................. 22
    3.4.1 Overview of Raymond’s process .................................................................... 22
    3.4.2 Illustrate of Raymond’s process .................................................................... 25
    3.4.3 Pro and cons of Raymond’s process ................................................................. 32
3.5 Conclusion .......................................................................................................................... 33

Chapter 4: Existing Methods Integration .............................................................................. 36

4.1 Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 36

4.2 Process Illustration ............................................................................................................. 36

4.3 Proposed Process .................................................................................................................. 39

  4.3.1 Defining the problem ......................................................................................................... 40

  4.3.2 Background research ......................................................................................................... 41

  4.3.3 Information collection and selection ..................................................................................... 41

  4.3.4 Trend forecasting methods selection ...................................................................................... 43

  4.3.5 Trend forecasting ................................................................................................................ 45

  4.3.6 Trend Implementation ......................................................................................................... 46

4.4 Conclusion ............................................................................................................................. 47

Chapter 5: Conclusion ................................................................................................................. 48

Bibliography ................................................................................................................................. 49
List of Figures

Figure 1 Characteristics of forecasting methods and their relationships (Armstrong 2001) ................................................................. 9
Figure 2 Stages of forecasting (Armstrong 2001) ................................................................. 9
Figure 3 Selection tree for forecasting method (Armstrong 2001) .................................. 10
Figure 4 Recurring fashion cycle (Singh, 2011) ................................................................. 12
Figure 5 Traditional trend analysis process (Kremer, 2002) ......................................... 14
Figure 6 Who to study (Higham, 2009) ........................................................................ 15
Figure 7 Identification methodologies (Higham, 2009) ............................................ 15
Figure 8 Trend mapping (Higham, 2009) ....................................................................... 16
Figure 9 Main trend initiators in different ages China .................................................. 19
Figure 10 Higham trend analysis process (Higham, 2009) ........................................... 19
Figure 11 Intuitive forecasting (Raymond, 2010) ........................................................... 22
Figure 12 Relationship between Intuitive forecasting and Network forecasting (Raymond, 2010) .............................................................................. 23
Figure 13 Network forecasting (Raymond, 2010) .......................................................... 23
Figure 14 Cultural triangulation (Raymond, 2010) ...................................................... 24
Figure 15 Articulate communication of FemiNation ..................................................... 25
Figure 16 Drivers of FemiNation .................................................................................. 26
Figure 17 Drivers of sub-trends .................................................................................... 27
Figure 18 Articulation communication of Internal uprise ......................................... 28
Figure 19 Manifestations of Internal uprise ................................................................ 29
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Problem Statement

Trend has become crucial today. A good example is Apple, which focuses on new trends, quickly responds to them, and adapts them to the company strategies with huge success. Trends also have expanded to every corner of the world during the past decades. More companies have become trend driven instead of market driven when they are developing new products. Some international design agencies such as LPK, Ziba even set up trend department to meet increasing demands.

In this case, managing the skill of forecasting upcoming trends has become a necessary skill for all designers. However based on my research, I have found that there are several different books discussing the methodologies of trend forecasting, but most of the time different scholars focus on different parts of the procedure and trend forecasting methods used may vary. Even for me, who has knowledge of trend forecasting was confused by these different methods and sometimes had a hard time to decide which method to use. So a practical and detailed trend analysis process is definitely necessary. Therefore a guideline for selecting different trend forecasting methods is needed as well.
1.2 Methodology

The research process of this thesis is: first, compare and analyze existing theories. Among these theories, I will choose the three most representative ones. The first trend analysis process I learned was from Ms. Valerie Jacobs Kremer’ master thesis “Towards Expanding a Methodology: Utilizing Scenario Planning in Fashion Forecasting”. The second was from William Higham’s book “The Next Big Thing” and finally Martin Raymond’s “Trend Forecaster’s Handbook”. Then I analyzed the pros and cons for each theory, what they are lacking, and what can be improved in all.

Second, I integrated the three trend analysis processes and referred to J. Scott Armstrong’s selection tree as a trend forecasting methods model.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Trend
The word “trend” exists in our daily life; consumers can get information about the latest trends from newsletters, television and the Internet. For most people, a trend is one of the most important factors to help them make decisions. But trends are more complex and more important than we think: Consumer trends sometimes can affect a company’s business strategy, even a whole industry as well. So it is crucial to understand what trends are and how a new trend starts and develops. In William Higham’s book “The Next Big Thing”, a trend is defined as “a long-term change in consumer attitudes and behaviors that offers marketing opportunities”. (Higham, 2009)

As Sociologist Henrik Vejlgaard concluded, trends are in some way like a forest fire: they will spread only if the environment is ready (Vejlgaard, 2007). Trends also need a spark to start. In the trend world the spark is called trend initiator. Trends initiated by changes that happen in politics, economics, society and technology. Trend drivers in this case act as wind, blowing trends to grow and spread from one adopter to another in a systematic way.

2.2 Trend analysis
So what is trend analysis? This phrase is frequently mentioned in the stock market; the idea is to predict the future of a stock based on the existing data. In the design world, predicting the future is just one part of the whole trend analysis process. The trend analysis process usually begins with field investigation and data collection, sometimes,
using historic research for comparison. The trend forecast is the next step, followed by the trend implementation step.

2.3 Trend forecasting

The word “forecasting” is mostly used in the fashion world. Brannon defines forecasting as “the process of anticipating future developments by watching for signals of change in current situations and events and applying the forecasting frameworks to predict possible outcomes.” (Brannon, 2000)

In the design world, trend forecasting first started in fashion industry, where the most “in” object changed constantly: new colors, new fabrics, and new textiles come out every other season. But when you go through each micro trend, you would find it belongs to a certain macro trend, which fits it into the trend-developing curve. In this case trend is actually predictable. Trend forecasting in the design world is closely related to consumer habits and behaviors. “Predicting the preferences of consumers in the future” is the major concern of forecasting. (Brannon, 2000) But the most important objective about forecasting is as Martin Raymond mentions: “forecasting is not just about focusing on the new and the next, it is also about paying attention to the different and the diverse, the patterns that we recognize, and the anomalies that disrupt and confound them.” (Raymond, 2010)

Today forecasting is used not only in the fashion industry, but also in other consumer product industries. More and more global corporations are recognized as trend-driven, some design agencies such as LPK and Ziba even developed their own trend department.
to analyze and market new products. Understanding what the current trend is and forecasting how it develops can help designers design new product for the future world.

2.4 Selection tree for forecasting methods

Armstrong, (was the editor of “Principle of Forecasting: A Handbook for Researchers and Practitioner” and a professor at the University of Pennsylvania in The Wharton School) developed a guideline to select forecasting methods.

In this handbook, Armstrong invited 39 scholars to be co-authors about their prior research. These ten different forecasting methods including role playing, intentions, expert opinions, conjoint analysis, judgmental bootstrapping, analogies, extrapolation, rule-based forecasting, expert systems and econometric methods.

Figure 1 Characteristics of forecasting methods and their relationships (Armstrong 2001)
Figure 2 Stages of forecasting (Armstrong 2001)

Armstrong’s process starts with defining the problem, then doing researching and collecting all the existing data. The core part of this process is to select the appropriate forecasting methods according to statistical analysis. Armstrong developed a specific guideline for selecting the best methods among ten forecasting methods based on a given situation, which is called “selection tree” for forecasting methods.

Forecasting methods are categorized based on judgment or statistics. Judgmental methods used to be considered widely used in the design field while statistical method is used in
business world. (Armstrong, 2001)

Figure 3 Selection tree for forecasting method (Armstrong 2001)
Chapter 3: Existing Methods Analysis

3.1 Overview of trend analysis process

Professor Voelker-ferrier concluded the trend analysis process into five steps:

1. Notice what you notice
2. Collect information about your design project
3. Look at history for similar development: looking for clues about what could happen with future trend from what happened in ancient time (car/communication methods)
4. Find out what’s in the pipeline (what’s going to come out in the following year)
5. Future broadcast (5 years and beyond)

Most of trend analysis processes fit in these five steps, but methods used by different trend researchers are not always the same. There is no common widely acknowledged exact trend analysis process among trend researchers.

Of all of these books, I’ll select three of the most representative methods for further comparison in this thesis, what are traditional trend forecasting methods, William Higham’s and Martin Raymond’s.

3.2 Analysis of traditional trend analysis process

3.2.1 Overview of traditional trend analysis process

In Valerie Jacobs Kremer’s master thesis, she combined Brannon’s method of fashion forecasting and Sproles and Burns methods of fashion forecasting processes together as six steps:
Step one: Defining the problem. This step is to clarify what is the goal of the whole trend analysis process, and how the forecast results will be applied.

Step two: Market research. This step is usually divided into target market research, and product segment research for consumer trend analysis.

Step three: Historical perspective research. This step is to understand what has happened to the target consumer, the market environment and product segment. By analyzing what has happened in the past, trend researchers will be able to create a trend-developing pattern, which can be used in the following forecast step.

![Recurring Fashion Cycle](image)

**Figure 4** Recurring fashion cycle (Singh, 2011)

Step four: Environmental scan and competitive analysis

After researching the historical development, it is important to understand what is happening. In order to enhance the understanding of current condition, trend forecasters need to do an environmental scan and competitive analysis. In Valerie’s book, she breaks down trends into eight categories, including demographic trends, social trends, cultural trends, economic trends, political trends, technological trends, environmental trends and industry and market trends. Information needs to be gathered for various categories.

Step five: Application to the forecasting frameworks

All the information gathered in the previous steps will be used in the following forecast step. In this stage, forecasters need to take all the information into consideration and
apply to several forecasting frameworks. Brannon concluded the goal of trend forecasting into four parts, which are “identify the source, fundamental mechanism, direction, and tempo of the trend” in the book “Fashion Forecasting”

Step six: Preparing the forecast

In this step, the forecaster needs to compile and interpret all the information and data discovered in the previous steps into a presentation for clients, explaining to them 4W and 1H (what the trend is, where the trend comes from, who is leading the trend, why the trend is developing and how the trend is developing). In Valerie’s book, she describes this final narrative as inspiration. “Audience can form their own unique interpretations based on the material presented by the forecaster”. (Kremer, 2002)

3.2.2 Pro and cons of traditional trend analysis process

The first process is the combination of two scholars: Brannon and Sproles and Burns’ methodologies. According to the content of each step of the Traditional trend analysis process, the whole process can be concluded into two stages: trend identification and trend forecasting (see Figure 5). The advantage of this trend analysis process is: instead of considering a single trend alone, it stands on the consumer and product point of view to analyze the trend. Starting with defining the problem and target market and product segment research, forecasters can develop an initial idea about the project they are working on. This stage is very important but ignored by many scholars. Meanwhile, in current environmental scan step, taking competitive analysis into consideration and finding their weakness in order to find more opportunities.
From Figure 5, we can see the trend identification stage takes the largest portion of the whole traditional trend analysis process, which offers a forecaster a solid database and sufficient information to use. However, this process serves more as an overall guideline without specific methodologies and detailed ways to action. Meanwhile, since the thesis I am referring to was written in 2002, some methodologies and theories referred to are no longer. Besides, the whole process leans towards the trend identification stage, the trend-forecasting stage, on the other hand, is not comprehensive enough for beginners to follow and hard to implement to business strategy.
3.3 Analysis of Higham’s process

3.3.1 Overview of Higham’s process

In the book “The Next Big Thing” William Higham concludes the whole trend analysis process into three stages: Identification, Interpretation and Implementation.

In his book, trend analysis process starts from identifying new trend. This stage is to observe signs of changes among consumers and spot trends, then study consumers, observers or both of them (see Figure 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumers</th>
<th>Observers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innovators</td>
<td>Journalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influentials</td>
<td>Academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early adopters</td>
<td>Researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-consuming</td>
<td>Reduce the amount of time spent on physical observation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6 Who to study (Higham, 2009)

In this stage, trend forecasters can use either observational or theoretical methods to identify new trends (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 Identification methodologies (Higham, 2009)
The interpretation stage is the second phase of the whole trend analysis process in William Higham’s book. This stage is mainly focusing on how the trend might develop, where it goes, and the potential impact to the market.

Once a trend has been identified, the next step is to analyze or judge it in order to predict how it will develop. Trend forecasters need to map any trend they identified against key trend factors (see Figure 8) to understand the strength, longevity and its potential influence.

Figure 8 Trend mapping (Higham, 2009)

In the implementation phase, trend forecasters need to take an identified and interpreted trend and find ways to convince and inspire clients, and then build it into their company strategy. (Higham, 2009)
3.3.2 Illustrate of Higham’s process

Following case study is about how Chinese women’s beauty habits have changed since the late 70s. And the story is about a Chinese girl named Shoo.

In the past 30 years women have been changed a lot in China, either in social status or lifestyles, or habits. I want to discuss the reasons that have caused these changes. I decided to use one girl as the main character of this story to see how these reasons influenced her beauty habits between the 70s and the 80s.

The main character is a girl called Shoo, who was born in 1959 in a well-educated family in the city of Shenyang. She also has a sister who is 3 years younger. The 70s were the age of madness, even though I am less concerned about Politics, I have to admit that it is the driver of almost everything especially in that age. Because of the long lasting Cultural Revolution, people’s tastes were led in a very strange direction. It was seen as capitalistic to show the body shape and dress in bright color. So women in that age almost are all equated to short and fat. Young people were asked to quit school and go to work in the country. Shoo was always wearing a shape-concealing, grey military uniform, which were her only clothes. So in 1977, just after she finished her high school education, she wore this one to go to the country with all her classmates. In the very same year, because of the resumption of the college entrance exam, Shoo was lucky enough to have a chance to go to college. So she went back to the city to get a college education after 3 months of working in the country. In 1978, reform and opening up more or less released people’s minds in some way. So Shoo got her first Dacron shirts, which could show her body shape although it was pretty uncomfortable to wear this airtight material. But people still could only use coupons to buy a certain amount of clothes. Even though lacking material,
Shoo and her friends used their intelligence to be beautiful using less cloth: they made detachable collars! In the same year, Pierre Cardin took some garments and models to China; Versace and Rolex came into China in the very same year. At that time Chinese people were not able to afford to buy them, but they still had symbolic meaning, especially when in 1979, China and the US established diplomatic relations and the western world began to show its true face. To Chinese women, like Shoo, it was a whole new world.

Then we came to the 80s. “New wave” is the term mostly mentioned in that age. Women in China wanted to speed up to catch the world’s fashion steps. But their ideology still stayed the same as the late 70s; most of the time they aimlessly copied what the movie stars wore and got lost in fads. Young people were so excited to welcome this whole new world. In these pictures, Shoo wore red bell-bottomed pants and sportswear just simply because all the “fashionable” young girls wore it. When she got her first salary, the first thing she did was spend half of it to perm her hair and cut it short like Momoe Yamaguchi. Meanwhile the local beauty care industry developed very well because of the high demand. Shoo’s beauty care products were all made in China at that time. In 1988, ELLE magazine came into China; it cost Shoo 8 Yuan to buy it. It was the beginning of foreign brands coming into the Chinese market. Shoo was amazed that women could be dressed so prettily. Shoo began to think about what fashion and beauty has become since then. Politics were not the main trend driver anymore.
3.3.3 Pro and cons of Higham’s process

In the book “The next big thing” William Higham from the trend marketing point of view to explain how to identify, interpret and implement new trends. In the first stage, all the data is categorized into two groups: statistical and observational. First learners can easily understand the function of each group of data as well as the sources to get it. In the interpretation stage, the author introduces how trends develop and the reasons behind it that drives the development. The best part of William Higham’s trend analysis process is the trend implementation stage connecting the forecasting process with the real business world, which make the whole process more practical.

Historical perspective plays a very important role in the trend implementation stage. The main idea is: observing what is happening today and comparing with what happened
yesterday. This methodology acts as a tool to forecast the future. But the effects of this methodology are limited in some way and cannot be applied to all situations. However William Higham’s trend forecasting stage overly relies on this tool and lacks more powerful forecasting methodologies.
3.4 Analysis of Raymond’s process

3.4.1 Overview of Raymond’s process

Compared with the previous two books, “The Trend Forecaster’s Handbook” is more like a toolbox for trend forecasters.

In this book, the author Martin Raymond introduced basic trend identification process such as Cultural Brailling, Cross-cultural analysis and some related knowledge.

Cultural Brailling is a technique, which forecasters use to locate new trends. To better understand a new trend, trend forecasters should ask themselves questions such as who innovates a new trend, what a new trend should be named after it is innovated, where a new trend begins, why a new trend starts and develops-the drivers behind a new trend, and when should we look for a new trend.

Cross-cultural analysis is another one, which forecasters use to determine whether a trend is going to become a long-term and highly influential or not. Trend forecasters need to go through different resources such as books, magazines, newspapers, blogs, websites, and television programs to identify the significance of products, which could be assembled to a new trend. “Cultural Brailling has to be done across cultures and in away that is analytical and measured”. (Raymond, 2010)

The general process is going through various kinds of resources, pulling all the ideas together, mapping evidence on the wall, searching for the pattern and something new among all the evidence, supporting the idea with “three-times rule”, listening to your expert panel’s advise, using materials from evidence wall to formulate trend thesis, deep diving self hunches with expert panel, thin slicing data, form trend cartograms, which
contains six parts: trend framing, trend innovators, trend drivers, trend impact, trend consequences, trend futures.

In this book, Martin Raymond also introduces four frequently used trend-forecasting methods, which are Intuitive forecasting, Network forecasting, Cultural triangulation, and Scenario planning.

Intuitive forecasting contains three different types of intuitions: gut intuition, expert intuition and strategic intuition. This method allows trend forecasters to “use their power of intuition to synthesize the knowledge of the many into a single view of the future”.

Network forecasting is like a crowd of intuitive forecasting, instead of single brain approach such as intuitive forecasting; network forecasting is a collaborative work.

Compared with the previous intuitive forecasting and network forecasting, the cultural triangulation method is a more structured and strategic approach, which “underpins the soft skills of the forecaster (intuition, cultural brailling, cross-cultural analysis, etc) with the hard skills (data driven) of the market researcher, economist, and statistician.”
Cultural triangulation is a comprehensive process, which combines three stages together: interrogation, observation, and intuition. This process is now used by some global brands, because it offers quantitative methods to proof the forecasting results are believable.

Scenario planning is a methodology used after trend forecasting. The goal of scenario planning is to illustrate how the trend forecasting result may affect our future life.

Scenario planning process contains nine stages: determining the question, contextualization, external drivers, ranking and ranging, naming and framing, logic and narrative, distillation and dialogue, validation and refinement, interpretation and implementation. (Raymond, 2010)

3.4.2 Illustrate of Raymond’s process

In the winter quarter 2011, I took the trend-forecasting class. The objective of this course is to master the technique of trend forecasting to help evaluate design concepts. In this class, we learned Raymond’s trend analysis process and have a good chance to excise this technology and use the Gut intuition and Expert intuition to do the forecasting jobs.

The name of overall trend of our four people group is FemiNation. The articulate communication, which supports the overall trend: the notion of women’s rights has been a forerunner of political debate and activity in the Western culture for centuries. However with increased media coverage of developing countries’ progression in congruence with a
sense of compassion and need for change, advancements in this field are rippling through emergent countries’ ideologies and sparking change for all those involved.

Figure 15 Articulate communication of FemiNation
The four drivers of the overall trend are: information exchange, steady globalization, accomplished education and economic independence.

Information Exchange: The infiltration of social media and Internet browsing play a significant role in organizing the flow of information throughout undeveloped nations.

Steady Globalization: As all components of globalization trickle into emergent countries, the adaption of Westernized customs are leaked into the global market.

Accomplished Education: The increase of education, privately and publicly, to women of emergent countries, offers access to tools and skills that serve as a catalyst to the success of women’s movements.

Economic Independence: The higher demand for the exchange of goods and services within emergent countries has set up the increased economic independence of countries which fuels the need for skills and education.
Based on the overall trend, each group member has a sub-trend to build on, which are: Empathetic Elevation, External Empowerment, Internal Uprise, and Crusading Technology. Among all these four, Internal Uprise is the sub-trend I was working on. Here I would like to explain how this trend starts and the driver behind. The driver of Internal Uprise is: Higher-societally educated organizations act as a big sister to women through their development process.

Figure 17 Drivers of sub-trends

The articulate communication, which supports this trend is: The desire to take on more significant roles in society has led to new means of achievement in education and knowledge by women in developing countries. Higher-status members and organizations of the community serve as mentors in the progression of uneducated women leading to the infusion of Western and emergent modes of development.
The three manifestations, which support this trend are: “Educate girl, empower woman”, “Economic Example” and “Women for Women International”.

Figure 18 Articulation communication of Internal uprise
Educate the girl, empower the woman:

Women in Law and Development in Africa, a pan-African network brings together individuals and organizations from 23 countries, and believes that educating girls with both formal and practical education is key to addressing the gender imbalances and breaking the cycle of poverty.

Economic Example:

Ten women from South Africa, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mozambique, Senegal and Rwanda started a mentor program. Businesswomen from the six countries are reaping the dividends of peace, but they still strive for greater economic freedom, which allows women greater participation in government decisions.

Women for Women International:

Women for Women International works with socially excluded women in eight countries where war and conflict have devastated lives and communities. When they enroll women in the one-year program, they learn job skills and receive business training so they can earn a living. They come to understand their rights and how to fight for those rights in their homes, their communities and their countries and become leaders.
where war and conflict have devastated lives and communities. When they enroll women in the one-year program, they learn job skills and receive business training so they can earn a living. They come to understand their rights and how to fight for those rights in their homes, their communities and their nations and become leaders.

Based on previous findings, the future forward implications of the Internal Uprise trend are: “Traditional Beauty” and “UN-Divided Attention”.

![Image](image_url)

**Figure 20 Traditional beauty**

Traditional Beauty is that companies like L’Oreal will launch a project themed “discover traditional ways of being beautiful” by sending researchers to different developing countries to interview local women to learn their traditional methods to being beautiful. For example, African women have access to many natural botanical ingredients; Ancient Egyptians devoted themselves to beauty and its preservation, so much so. All of these can be adapted and used today in skin care products.
UN-Divided Attention is that the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women will push for stricter humanity laws in the abuse of women in developing countries. With support from worldwide women’s rights groups, male dominant groups will be targeted and punished for violations.

3.4.3 Pro and cons of Raymond’s process

Among all the three books regarding trend analysis process, the approach in trend forecaster’s handbook is most current and practical for forecasters to use and even used as textbook. Some global brands such as Procter & Gamble, Nokia, IDEO and Microsoft use Cultural triangulation as analyzing tool.
This book can also serve as a toolbox for all trend forecasters: in chapter two of this book, author not only go through the complete trend analysis process, but also list the sources to get the data and information, as well as the appropriate techniques to use. Moreover in the last half of his book, author explains three mostly used trend-forecasting methods, which provides learners more options to choose, instead of just single instruction to follow. The only drawback of this process is that this book contains a large amount of information including various methodologies; beginners may have difficulties to select which one to use. A guideline to select different methodologies is needed in this process.

### 3.5 Conclusion

The following charts demonstrate the general approaches of each trend analysis processes.

**Traditional trend analysis process**

Figure 5 Traditional trend analysis process (Kremer, 2002)
The traditional trend analysis process can be divided into two stages: trend identification and trend forecasting.

Pros: Thorough background research incorporating competitive analysis and historical environment analysis into the whole process, which offers a solid database for the following forecasting stage.

Cons: Trend-forecasting stage is not comprehensive enough and disconnect with company strategy.

William Higham trend analysis process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collect data and identify new trend</th>
<th>Find out trend developing pattern</th>
<th>Implement trend data into company strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trend identification</td>
<td>Trend interpretation</td>
<td>Trend Implementation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10 Higham trend analysis process (Higham, 2009)

Pros: Author divides the whole trend analysis process into three stages and names them as trend identification, trend interpretation and trend implementation, which express the efforts of each stage vividly. The trend implementation stage connects the forecasting process with the real business world, which make the whole process more practical.

Cons: William Higham’s trend forecasting stage overly relies on predicting from historical trend developing pattern. This forecasting method cannot be applied to all the situations. For example, if the emerging trend is an absolute new thing and cannot be traced back, then the effect of this forecasting method is limited and Higham’s process lacks more powerful forecasting methodologies.
Martin Raymond trend analysis process

Figure 22 Raymond trend analysis process (Raymond, 2010)

Pros: Martin Raymond’s trend analysis process is a very comprehensive and detailed handbook for beginners to learn.

Cons: This book contains a large amount of information including various methodologies; beginners may have difficulties to select which one to use. A guideline to select different methodologies is needed in this process.
Chapter 4: Existing Methods Integration

4.1 Introduction

All three books above discuss the trend analysis process. From previous chapters we can understand the basic elements of each process. Each process is representative and highly recommended by scholars. With in-depth analysis, we can see the development of the trend forecasting field and its achievements. But for beginners, each process still has a room to be improved. In this chapter, I will propose an integrated, detailed and practical trend analysis process using the selection tree model designed particularly for beginners.

4.2 Process Illustration

By analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of the three trend analysis processes, constructive elements can be selected from each process to integrate into a new method (see Figure 23).
Background Research | Current and historical environment analysis | Data analysis and forecast
---|---|---
Trend identification | Trend forecasting |

Collect data and identify new trend | Find out trend developing pattern | Implement trend data into company strategy
---|---|---
Trend identification | Trend Interpretation | Trend Implementation

Cultural Brailling | Build data wall, deep dive | Build your cartogram
---|---|---
Inspiration stage | Translation stage | Immersion stage

Intuitive forecasting | Network forecasting | Cultural triangulation
---|---|---
Implement trend data into company strategy | Product development stage

Figure 23 Selection of trend analysis processes

Traditional | Higham | Raymond
---|---|---
Trend Identification | Trend Identification | Inspiration Stage
---|---|---
Trend Interpretation | Translation Stage | Immersion Stage
---|---|---
Trend Forecasting | Trend Implementation | Product Development Stage

Figure 24 Columns of trend analysis processes
In Figure 24, each column of different colors represents each process. Red dash lines highlight the advantage parts of each. (see Figure 25).

Figure 25 Advantage parts highlighted

Figure 26 Integrated trend analysis process
Following the structure of Higham’s theory, the integrated process includes a trend identification stage, a translation & immersion stage, and a trend implementation stage (see Figure 26).

![Diagram of proposed trend analysis process](image)

**Figure 27 Proposed trend analysis process**

Notice, before the actual forecasting starts, that this is a pretty necessary way for beginners to select their forecasting method. All four stages together form the comprehensive trend analysis process (see Figure 27).

### 4.3 Proposed Process

In the proposed trend analysis process, there are four stages: trend identification, methods selection, translation & immersion stage, and trend implementation. These four stages can be divided into six steps: defining the problem, background research, information
collection and selection, trend forecasting methods selection, trend forecasting and trend implementation (see Figure 28).

![Figure 28 Steps of proposed trend analysis process](image)

### 4.3.1 Defining the problem

The whole process begins with defining the problem, which is selected from the traditional trend analysis process. This step is critical but often overlooked by practitioners. This step is to understand the purpose of forecasting and what the forecasting result will be used for. In Brannon’s book “Fashion Forecasting”, four factors should be considered in “defining the problem” step.

- The time frame for predictions—five years ahead, a decade, or more;
- The techniques used for capturing signals;
- The methods used to interpret the signals and make the forecasts.
• The range of the forecasts, whether general or restricted to certain countries or an
economic system, particular cohorts, or specific industries. (Brannon, 2000)

Since four factors are selected from the traditional trend analysis process, when applied to
the new process, the importance of each step may vary. Among these four factors, “the
time frame for predictions”, “the techniques used for capturing signals” and “the range of
the forecasts” should be initially considered in this step. “The methods used to interpret
the signals and make the forecasts” will be discussed in the fourth place of the new
process.

4.3.2 Background research

In the traditional trend analysis process, background research contains two main parts:
target market research and product segment research. The purpose of target market
research is to understand the target consumers in five ways: attitudes, lifestyle, behaviors,
spending habits and the economic impact. Understanding internal offerings and competitive analysis needs to be finished in the
product segment research stage (Kremer, 2002). The advantage of this stage is taking
competitors into consideration in order to make a practical strategic plan before forecasting.

Before collecting information and data, it is crucial to research the background and
understand the consumer, the products, the market, and the competitors.

4.3.3 Information collection and selection

The methods to collect information are common in Higham and Raymond’s processes:
derstanding the 5Ws, which are who, what, where, why and when, then collecting data
by going through various kinds of trend-driving media on a daily basis. Attend field
related exhibitions or conferences to get first hand information. Forecasters need to document the information that is surprising and interesting for future use by tagging it via websites such as Delicious. This is also a good way to share information with group members and co-workers and get their feedback.

Figure 29 Delicious web page

After collecting sufficient data, the next step is to select useful information for the following stages. Building your own evidence wall is an effective way to select data. This step is also called “Post-it”: write the idea on the post-it and list the source, post it on the wall in order to build your own evidence wall. Then forecasters can use the expert interview as a method to get in-depth information about the field they are working on, which will shape the thought process. According to Raymond, “it is important to seek out evidence from a range of people from across different sectors and from all points along the Diffusion of Innovation curve (Raymond, 2010).”
4.3.4 Trend forecasting methods selection

When finished selecting information, the following step is to select the specific forecasting method based on the current situation. Armstrong’s selection tree for forecasting methods is widely used in the business field. This approach is low-cost, effective, simple, and accurate. It is a flow chart helping forecasters select among ten forecasting methods based on certain limitations. The process is to select the proper method, then apply the method to the forecasting project. Forecasters can evaluate the selected method when forecasting. If the method is not accurate or effective enough, forecasters can go back through this process to select again.

![Figure 30 Selected stages of forecasting (Armstrong, 2001)](image)

When doing trend forecasting in design and business fields, the process is the same (see Figure 30). The limitations of data and forecasting methods also exist; this situation is the same as the business field. So Armstrong’s selection tree for forecasting methods is adaptable.

Based on the limitation of each forecasting method, I developed a new selection tree (see Figure 31) for trend forecasting methods in the design world.

With sufficient information, Cultural triangulation, which is also called a data driven method, is more accountable than six other methods because it offers more quantitative tools rather than just replying on intuition.
A basic criterion to select among judgmental methods is to determine if a crowd of people is involved in the forecasting stage. If the answer is no, the forecasting method belongs to Intuitive forecasting. Then based on the previous background research, forecasters can decide if the forecasting subject has a history, such as forecasting the next generation communication devices. Forecasters can trace back to the invention of the telephone. This means the forecasting subject, communication devices in this example, has a history. Then the proper forecasting method is to use Strategic intuition. If the subject does not have a certain history, but the forecaster is experienced in a related field the forecasting method should be Expert intuition. Otherwise it should be Gut intuition. If there is a crowd involved in the forecasting process, the forecasting method goes to Network forecasting. If the responsibility of each member in the network overlaps, Collaborative networks would be the proper forecasting method to use; if there is no overlap between each member, then forecasters need to consider whether the network has only one decision maker or not. If there is only one decision maker, the forecasting method should be Hierarchical networks. Otherwise, it is Distributive networks.
4.3.5 Trend forecasting

In this step, forecasters can use trend cartograms to illustrate data and categorize information in a less formal way. According to Raymond, forecasters can re-organize their evidence wall into five categories: trend innovators, trend drivers, trend impact, trend consequence, and trend futures. Then they use selected forecasting method to frame the information. “Frame a trend is about imposing a more logical, visual, and texturally coherent framework around all the data you have collected so far (Raymond, 2010).” By doing this, forecasters can conclude the characteristics of the trend, what drives the trend to develop, and its potential impact to the market.
4.3.6 Trend Implementation

Trend implementation is about applying trend forecasting results to the company strategies in order to help companies make the right decisions. According to Higham, trend forecasters need to decide whether the trends are a booster or a barrier for the company strategy. Booster trends have positive affects to the company. Barrier trends, however, have negative effects. (Higham, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Booster Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New trend stimulates demand for brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New market grows that likes brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional market for brand grows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old market now dislikes brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New market grows that dislikes brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New trend negates brand usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New trend reduces brand revenue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 32 Booster and barrier trend (Higham, 2009)

If a new trend is defined as a strong booster trend, forecasters need to consider how it will influence company strategy into the 4Ps: product, promotion, place and price.
Then the trend forecaster and the clients should work together to do further research and decide the following actions about the trend.

### 4.4 Conclusion

The proposed trend analysis process contains four stages: trend identification, methods selection, trend forecasting, and trend implementation. The four stages can then be divided into six steps: defining the problem, background research, information selection and collection, methods selection, trend forecasting, and trend implementation.

Compared to the existing trend analysis processes, the new trend analysis process is more effective, up dated and easy to use in the meantime. For beginners it will be a perfect tool to start learning from because of its simplicity.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the Tradition, Higham and Raymond trend analysis processes, I summarized the advantage and disadvantage of each process, selected the advantage parts for the following integration stage based on the effectiveness and practicability. The integrated process was formed by the trend identification stage of Traditional trend analysis process, the trend implementation stage of Higham’s process, and the information collection and selection as well as trend forecasting stage of Raymond’s process. Additionally, the new process adds an important stage ignored by all the three processes- methods selection before forecasting stage. Inspired by Armstrong’s selection tree for forecasting methods (see Figure 3), I developed a selection tree for trend forecasting methods in the design field as the methods selection.

The new trend analysis process is effective, practical, easy to learn, and it is a good tool for beginners. For future research, the new process should be applied and verified in practice in order to improve the methodology. Meanwhile, system thinking is a good tool to adapt to the trend implementation stage, when deciding whether the new trend would benefit the company or not.
Bibliography


Singh, D. (2011). *Pink is out but Blue is in... Understanding Fashion & trend forecasting?* From www.fibre2fashion.com:
