



FORGE NEW NORMS

ENSŌ FORESIGHT 2020
INFORMATION SOCIETY TREND #03

Imprint

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Smart homes, facial recognition software, self-driving cars – each of these and other emerging technologies bring unprecedented changes in the ways we live and work together. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have come to a better understanding of the significance of digitalisation and how both companies and consumers have come to rely on it.

Rapid technological advancement encourages companies to keep up with the culture of innovation to stay competitive in the market. Yet at the same time, these innovations demand that companies adopt new responsibilities in the areas of ethical standards, privacy, and the environment.

Meanwhile, new norms are emerging. On the one hand there are social movements, such as Black Lives Matter or Fridays for Future, which urge companies to position themselves politically. On the other, there are new legal frameworks and standards, such as the European Data Protection Regulation or the ARGUS automotive cyber security requirements, that push companies to rethink the ways they develop products and services.

While companies around the world see these new norms and obligations as threats to their services, they can also be translated into valuable business opportunities – this is because they indicate the emergence of new markets, the necessity for resilient business models, and point out unexplored terrain for digital products and services. What follows is a deeper dive into three of these new opportunities.



1. The move towards ethics in artificial intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is at the centre of public debates. Although it promises breakthroughs in medicine, law, and the automotive industry, people also fear it as a threat to their jobs and to their integrity as human beings.

Researchers and activists around the world are increasingly asserting that artificial intelligence (and, to be more precise, machine learning systems) have a social impact that should not be ignored. For example, it has been found that machine learning algorithms often make decisions that are not transparent, and which cannot be explained. Because of this, they tend to mask accountability if the system does any harm.

Consumers increasingly demand ethical standards of machine learning services and urge companies to take responsibility. In the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement, several tech giants have decided to abandon facial recognition software and have chosen not to deliver it to US police forces. They have realised that digital responsibility is often better than digital disruption.

So, what?

Instead of taking on board the emerging consensus of AI as a threat to innovation, take advantage of the new demands on machine learning systems. Discover new market opportunities by setting first-mover standards for ethics in AI.

Ensure your corporate digital responsibility by:

- Re-evaluating values and norms within the organisation
- Setting up ethical standards based on transparency, accountability, and accessibility - and re-evaluating them regularly
- Developing AI-products and services with diverse groups of people that are affected by these technologies

2. Towards diversity and inclusivity in tech

Diversity and inclusivity encompass societal trends that affect all industries. The numbers prove that diversity pays off – companies in the top quartile for gender, racial and ethnic diversity are more likely to have above-average financial returns and a higher potential for innovation.¹ Diversity fosters creativity – conversely, this means that businesses consisting of people of similar backgrounds tend to overlook innovative ideas and perspectives.

The tech industry is a particularly interesting field in this context, as on the one hand it claims to be the top innovative industry and on the other, is characterized by a white, male environment that needs to become more welcoming to people from diverse backgrounds

The incidents of technology-related discrimination that result from this discrepancy are numerous – algorithms on online labour marketplaces that rank the profiles of white men higher than those of women or black people.² Or the fact that women are more likely to die in a car crash, because the crash-test dummies are based on average male bodies.³ As consumers and businesses of all industries and backgrounds become ever more reliant on technology, it is now critical for companies to rethink and achieve diversity in technology.

So, what?

Including diversity in the organisational strategy leads to competitive advantage, enables the development of new target groups, and contributes to the common good.

Take diversity seriously by:

- Assembling a diverse team to guarantee a range of different perspectives and therefore a higher potential for innovation
- Thinking about products and services from the perspective of vulnerable social groups and thus making them as accessible as possible. The trend towards individual-centred design, which goes beyond a 'one-size-fits-all' approach and allows inexpensive and easy modifications, is a step in the right direction

¹Rock, D. & Grant, H. (2016). Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved on July 20, 2020 from <https://hbr.org/2016/11/why-diverse-teams-are-smarter>.

Turban, S., Wu, D. & Zhang, L. (2019). Research: When Gender Diversity Makes Firms More Productive. Retrieved on August 11, 2020 from: <https://hbr.org/2019/02/research-when-gender-diversity-makes-firms-more-productive>

²Orwat, C. (2019). Diskriminierungsrisiken durch Verwendung von Algorithmen. Baden-Baden: Nomos.

³Bose, D., & Segui-Gomez, M. (2011). Vulnerability of female drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes: an analysis of US population at risk. American Journal of Public Health, 101 (12), 2368–2373.



3. From disruptive technology to sustainable tech

“Not a day passes for me without seeing the many ways in which digital technology can advance peace, human rights and sustainable development for all.” This quote by António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, is visionary for several reasons. First, it states the importance and urgency of sustainable development that is directly linked to human rights and peace. And second, it illustrates that digital technology can contribute to a sustainable, future-orientated world.

However, there is still a lot to do, particularly in the tech industry – Blockchain mining currently causes an enormous carbon footprint and data centres that support the Internet consume a huge amount of energy. As a fast-growing and forward-looking field, it is now time to work on products and services that combine innovation, economic growth and sustainability.

Tech companies need to think of sustainability as a central quality of their products and services. The good news is that several frameworks already exist that show strategies⁴ to

⁴e.g. The Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations

improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth while tackling climate change. They can be applied readily by companies.

So, what?

Sustainability is a competitive advantage and a necessity for long term organisational strategies. Rethink products and services to make sure they are resilient and contribute to a liveable future on this planet by:

- Ensuring a service and product development process that puts sustainability first and guarantees a sustainable product life cycle, which includes lifelong education, waste reduction, or mental health of employees
- Focusing on the development of products and services that promote sustainable living, such as technologies that help to reduce the carbon footprint or provide cleaner water
- Developing products that are repairable, reusable, upgradeable, and renewable



Conclusion: Towards equitable design

Design can be a powerful tool to translate new norms into responsible products and services. Right now, we offer a multitude of emerging design approaches that help to implement ethics, sustainability, and diversity into processes and technologies.

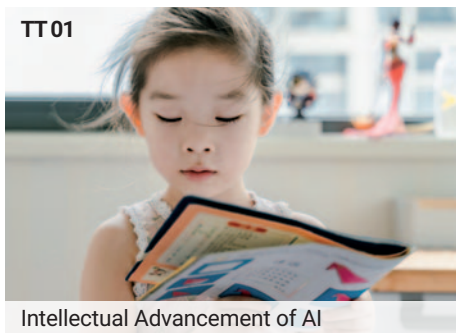
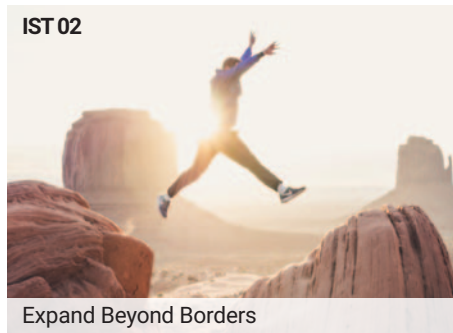
- **Ethics by Design:** This approach identifies values and moral standards within organisations and society and helps to apply them to decision-making processes.
- **Privacy by Design:** This approach acknowledges the new market trend of privacy-friendly digital products collecting and safely storing only the user data that is essential for the product to function correctly. The basic assumption is always that the data is owned by users and vendors can transparently employ “data diplomacy”, trading added value for usage rights of this – ideally anonymised – data.
- **Society-Centred Design:** This approach starts from the premise that as well as its effects on individuals, we must also consider the effects of a product or service on society as a whole. This allows teams to prioritise the social impact of a digital product in their design processes.

ENSŌ FORESIGHT 2020

START TO BUILD YOUR COMPANY'S FUTURE NOW!

In 2020, the whole world is in a radical transition – the COVID-19 crisis is forcing millions of people to work from home, while climate change urges us to rethink our consumption habits. Social transformations also require new norms. Those norms need to be represented within the design of technological innovations, particularly since life and work are increasingly dependent on digital technologies. In order to contribute to a liveable future and to ensure a solid business model, companies need to develop technology that is responsible throughout its whole life cycle – and beyond.

Take a look with us at all “Ensō Foresight” trends, that will drive change over the next three to ten years. The following Information Society Trends provide our perspective on the evolution of society and business. The Technology Trends summarise our views on innovative technologies and their impact on the world. Get to know all trends on our microsite: foresight.ensot17s.com



Set your course for your desired future with one of our foresight formats, developed in our co-creation and innovation space
Enso – The Space for Creators

FROM PAPER TO DEFINITIVE ACTION

**“If you do not change direction,
you may end up
where you are heading”**

Lao Tzu, Chinese philosopher.



But to remain a profitable and sustainable business, which direction should you take? Set your course to your desired future with one of our foresight formats, that we have developed in our co-creation and innovation space “Ensō – The Space for Creators”.

Ensō Foresight Workshop **MICRO**

Spend half a day with us and let us dive deep into 1-2 selected foresight topics, full of interesting insights, interactive parts and great discussions.

Ensō Foresight Workshop **MEGA**

In one full day, we will deep dive into 4-5 selected foresight topics, make the topics tangible by showing live demos and give you some tips on experimenting with latest technology on your own. In several interactive sessions, we will work together on tackling challenges and creating solutions that work first time.

Ensō Foresight Workshop **GIGA**

Most Impact

If you spend two days with us, you will gain insights into the future of society, generating an understanding of your future customers. Using a human-centered design approach, you will build visions for your products and services while getting to know relevant technology by trying out demos in a “Tech Fun Fair”.

Ensō Foresight Keynote

With a keynote speech, we can give many people new insights and impulses to use in a short amount of time. Using stunning presentations and high-quality visualizations, we make it easy for people to follow and to keep the key aspects in their minds during their daily life.

**Don't wait for the future to happen.
Contact us and let's start creating it!**



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