

# BUSINESS TRENDS OVERVIEW: ILLUSTRATING THE FUTURE FROM THE LENS OF MOZILLA CORPORATION

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## Abstract

This paper discusses how business and social trends will look like in the future. In order to do this, the researchers synthesized the results from an in-depth literature review of business trends that have been developed overtime and predict how they will be developed in the future, as we envision the future trend. By doing this, the potential impacts of sixteen main drivers are mapped onto the corresponding Mozilla's future context, as this provides information on how the business might change in the future. With the use of systematic approach on evidence practices, this research has been able to predict the movement of future changes. In exploring ways on evidence-informed management reviews might be achieved, the researchers evaluated the process of systematic review used in the networking, in order to help open source innovators create businesses to change the world. As a result, business trends might get high impact for the best performance assessment in which it is addressed in various ways.

**Keywords:** Business Trends, Mozilla, Open Innovation

## Introduction

This section provides the understanding on the overview of business trend and how it is changing over time. It is important to understand the evolution of the business trends, as research done before will help us to predict the next wave of evolution and it's characteristic in the future. Moreover, business nowadays is beyond the broad trend that has specific patterns of mobility link within the regions and national economies throughout the world (Jones, 2013). The researchers chose to start this research with the overview of business trends from the start of the industrial age due to the fact that most of the modern management methods have evolved from practices that have been adopted since the British Industrial Revolution (Fel, Gille, Parent, & Russo, 1986). According to (Bititci, Garengo, Dorfler, & Nudurupati, 2008), there are four eras describing the evolution of business trends from the industrial revolution to the present. These eras are:

- i. Just-in-Case Era. During this period most of the wealth was produced by manufacturing companies, in which they produce a limited range of products and primarily focused on efficiency. The companies will also make stock, just in case it is needed. The social and business changes were slow, however it is incremental as well as predictable and this enables the companies to plan for the future.
- ii. Lean Era. This is a period of consolidation and rationalisation in which they are focusing on strategic priorities and removal of anything that will not add value towards the achievement of the strategic objectives. The responsibility of managers is shifted as they are now required to deliver these objectives, and managerial work itself is becoming more complex. During this period, more flexible and more cost effective systems have been developed. The production processes became more complex, as everything has become tight and lean.

- iii. Agile Era. During this period, organisations continue to focus on value- adding activities and started to minimise the distraction of other peripheral activities. These encompass competencies and capabilities, which took the lean principles to another level in which organisations are focusing on their core competencies and outsourcing their non-core activities.
- iv. Networking Era. This period have seen a shift in focus from competition to collaboration, where a new type of work emerges. It is different from both manual-work and knowledge-work. The organising principle is that it should be fast moving towards netocracy, with flexible, flat and ever emerging trans-organisational networks whereby small organisations, and even individuals, are forming and reforming global collaborative networks to deliver innovative value propositions to global markets and customers.

All of these are actually reflecting that the last three eras which are Lean era, agile era and networking era are not mutually exclusive. In contrast, they are actually building each other (i.e. compounding effect). For example, the concept of agile includes Lean Enterprise and networking concept and at the same time this also might include agility (i.e. the need to change) and at the same time being lean. This means that it does not exclude the concept, but Just-in-Case is not included in any of it. This also reflects that the Lean era is the turning point. By looking at the future trend, the risk is that it focuses on the typologies that it is limiting the theoretical capacity and this can be understand similarly with the future trends and trajectories because these categories do not capture the dynamism of corporate activity. Moreover, the mobility business practices will change as context shifts - often rapidly (Jones, 2013). For the future trend business, Sonawane (2012) recommends that one must build two-way communication that will tighten the customer relations, whereby "listening" can be as important as "telling." The entrepreneur must fully utilize the tool and opportunity to create the interaction, and this might involve asking for feedback through Web site and e-newsletters, sending surveys to the customers (online or off-line) and providing online message boards or blogs (Sonawane, 2012).

In addition, Bititci et al. (2008) proposed elaboration on the business eras and key characteristics as presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Business eras and key characteristics

	<b>Just-in-Case Era</b>	<b>Lean Era</b>	<b>Agile Era</b>	<b>Networking Era</b>
<b>Approximate Timings in Decades</b>	Early 1900s to mid-1970s	Mid 1970s to late 1990s	Mid 1990s to late 2000s	Mid 2000s to unknown
<b>Scope, Rate and scale of change</b>	Organisation, Slow and incremental	Organisation Fast, predictable and incremental	Supply Chain Turbulent, discontinuous and radical	Network Disruptive and transformational
<b>Products</b>	Artefacts	Artefacts supported by services	Services supported by artefacts	Social and environmentally responsible services supported by artefacts

<b>Dominant Means of Production</b>	Infrastructure owned by the organisation	Infrastructure and IP owned by the organisation.	IP owned by the organisation. Personal knowledge owned by the knowledge-worker	Knowledge and network connections owned by the net-workers
<b>Competitive Forces</b>	Unclear mix of all factors dominated by costs	Focus and differentiation	Value propositions	Being unique in different ways
<b>Performance focus</b>	Efficiency	Effectiveness and waste minimisation	Competitiveness	Triple bottom line in the context of the network
<b>Work</b>	Manual work	Manual work supported by knowledge work	Knowledge work supported by manual work	Net-work supported by knowledge and manual work
<b>Management Competencies</b>	Planning and production	Scenario planning and change management	Learning and intuition. Rapid response to changes	Global autopoietic networking real-time response.
<b>Scope of Management Responsibility</b>	Business as usual. Operational planning and correctly carrying out the task	Delivering the strategic objectives	Conducting successful ad hoc projects; managing/leading temporary, trans-organisational teams	Managing/leadings networks, people in multiple networks and networks of networks
<b>Organizing principle</b>	Autocracy	Bureaucracy	Adhocracy	Netocracy
<b>Organisational Power</b>	Few powerful individuals	Organisational structure	Processes, process owners and process teams	Individuals/small groups in multiple networks
<b>People</b>	Labour-force seen as necessary evil	Human resources seen as assets	Teams assets and investment	Individuals and autopoietic teams as Innovators and Heuristics
<b>Regulatory system</b>	Contracts, laws and regulations	Contracts, laws, regulations and industry standards	Contracts, laws, regulations, industry standards and accepted best practices	Trust, relationships and network standards
<b>Organisational Relationships</b>	Inter-organisational and Adversarial	Inter-organisational and Cooperative	Inter / trans organisational and Collaborative	Trans organisational, Communities of practice
<b>Market dominance</b>	Producer	Cost-conscious customer	Value-conscious, loyal customer	Disloyal, picky, curious, Impulse-customer

Source: Adopted from Bititci et al. (2008)

Table 1 shows the research done by Bititci et al. (2008) and it pinpoints the development of business eras and its key characteristic. It should be noted that the table should be read not in a very detailed fashion, but what is more important is that the reader need to get the big picture of this table. The table is obviously an oversimplification of the reality. However, it is actually done on purpose. It is impossible to capture the richness of the real world, let alone hundred years of evolution of the business world, and it is impossible to have everyone agree about the details, as different experts will have different perspectives. High level trends can be identified by the aggregate groupings and a more accurate method can identify the business trends that can give high impact to the industry (Wilson, 2014). The purpose and the usefulness of the table is that this simple table will provide clear and reasonably stable points of orientation for those who are exploring something else in this field, without having to spend much effort on understanding all the underlying complexities but rather focusing on their area of primary interest.

By looking at a bigger picture, there will be an incoming trend and there is no need to worry about the allocations – as the details are well-suited with the overall trends and a big picture will emerge from that. Thus, this further reflect that the networking era has emerge which is number of people connecting to each other, open innovation – works highly been done in net environment, as all of these are the messages coming from the table (Ricardo Arechavala-Vargas, 2012; Sharma, 2002; Sungjoo Lee, 2010). The complexity of mobility and ICT will lead the networking era to become more interactive compared to other Eras'. The mediate communication practices will attract the customers and shareholder to look at the business more deeply (Jones, 2013).

## Method of Study

A systematic approach to literature review is based on knowledge that gives a major role in evidence-based practices (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003) was adopted in this research. Process in getting literature review that have been conducted include business trend in general, as well as 'network era'. In this paper we use the terms 'business trends' and 'network era' as an inclusive generated terms. Next, after analysing a patent of the literature, the researchers have adopted single case study approach in order to illustrate how this phenomena – the characteristics of future are applied to the real world context. Moving on from this, the researchers also want to focus and be specific at the highest level possible. As a result, researchers chose Mozilla<sup>1</sup> as it is very different and researchers wanted to explore what is happening on this part of the world. It is clear that Mozilla is one of the future ways of work - as Mozilla is one of the companies that can fit well into the future. Mozilla devotes a significant amount of time and resources into fostering a healthy ecosystem for communities that promote people's ability to freely access modify and distribute software and other creative works<sup>2</sup>. However, it is not the only way of the future. This also reflects that the development of social network research may lead to other research that will further examine the behaviour of the customer and other individual throughout the world. The social network must be linked to the future trends of business for synchronizing the business with everyone (Wilson, 2014).

As a result, in conducting this research, the authors have accessed official company's documentation. The fact that the information has been accessed through the web does not matter. As an alternative, interviews will be carried out, as one may argue that using interviews in the selected company may add additional value. However, the researcher disagree as it does not fit the nature of this case study whereby the observation itself has include an online discussion where the researcher can access and read about other people's opinion, and this carries the same function as interviews. The second point is that, by watching streaming data also has allowed the researcher to understand what people are thinking and saying. There is a need for additional value of conducting interviews to be kept at minimum level. In addition, by conducting additional interviews, i.e. face-to-face

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<sup>1</sup> Background of Mozilla, available at: <http://www.mozilla.org/about/history.html>

<sup>2</sup> Mozilla free culture and open source development at <http://www.mozilla.org/causes/free.html>

interviews with the key people in the network, it will not really bring much difference to the result of this research. This also has raised the point of how we are going to interview networks? On the other hand, by only interviewing people (i.e. Mozilla developers) in the company, it will be considered as 'one sided'. In contrast, by observing people in the networks, it will provide a more balanced view about Mozilla. It is not just about people in the Mozilla organisation, but this also will tap into Mozilla's communities of practice.

## Findings

Review of literature on future trends has identified sixteen (16) drivers which have been established as future context. From the analysis of literature which is in Table 2, this has briefly describes the transition dynamics of future contexts, which reflects the predicted movement of future changes.

Table 2: Predicted changes in business and social environment

Dynamic Transition	Descriptions	References
Web 1.0 to Web 2.0	This transition is from a passive web based technology to a participative social networking web. Web 2.0 provides the platform for participation, collaboration and creativity and allow more people to share their ideas and in more ways (barrier-free).	(Kathleen Gray, 2010); (Gray, Thompson, Clerehan, Sheard, & Hamilton, 2008); (Hendler & Golbeck, 2008); (Needleman, 2007); (Mason & Rennie, 2007);(Hamel, 2007); (Shing-Han Li, 2012)
Ideas and actions originating from the network rather than internally	The transition is where the ideas and actions are not solely built up within the organisation but across the network as well.	(Bard & Soderqvist, 2002); (Hamel, 2007); (Chaudhry, 2013)
Central Regulation to Self-Regulation	This transition is from a wide span of control to self-managed, self-controlled, self-organised processes and decision making where the individual is given more freedom in performing his/her task as well as business ethics.	(Prahalad & Krishnan, 2008); (Bititci et al., 2008); (Norman, 2012)
Contract to Trust	This transition is from formal or legal procedures to relationships based on trust. Trust becomes the main driver for every player to contribute and share their thoughts for relational improvement.	(Crosno, Nygaard, & Dahlstrom, 2007); (Acaccia, Kopacsi, Kovacs, Michelini, & Razzoli, 2007); (Hamel, 2007); (Jahansoozi, 2006); (Malone, 2004); (Norman, 2012)
Legal Regulation to Moral Regulation	The transition is where the relationship is no longer bound solely by procedures and regulation and where there is a greater emphasis on morality. People prefer to make morally correct choices and actions (i.e. doing the 'right thing') in develop strategies of individual behaviour in the business interaction.	(Peter Kesting, 2010) (Ulhøi, 2004); (Bititci et al., 2008); (Hamel, 2007); (Malone, 2004); (Dmitrieva Victoria, 2013)

Increasing Transparency	This transition is from closed to open intellectual properties. The concept of transparency is linked to openness and is described as a required condition for rebuilding trust and commitment in relationships. The higher the level of openness and sharing, the greater the transparency achieved.	(Jahansoozi, 2006); (Ulhøi, 2004); (Bessire, 2005); (Acaccia et al., 2007); (Malone, 2004); (Prahalad & Krishnan, 2008); (Dietmar Nedbal 2013)
Proprietary to Open Source	This transition is from the principle of closed source based on a profit motive to the principle of open source based on a non-profit motive. The transition line is where the rights of ownership are waived and the public are allowed to share and given access without restrictions.	(Hamel, 2007); (Krogh, 2003); (Muir, 2005); (Ulhøi, 2004); (von Hippel & von Krogh, 2003); (Michael Heron, 2013)
Copyright to Copyleft	This transition is from legal rights protection to the waiving of certain public rights. A particular example of Copyleft is the General Public Licence.	(Ulhøi, 2004); (de Laat, 2005);(Risto Rajala, 2012)
Increasing Emphasis on Innovation	The transition line is on the emphasis of innovation in networking where innovation comes in the form of open source innovation as the result of across the network participation and collaboration between internal people and external parties.	(Ulhøi, 2004); (Malone, 2004); (Boudreau & Lakhani, 2009); (Machado & Manaus, 2007); (Prahalad & Krishnan, 2008); (Hossain, 2013)
Bureaucracy to Netocracy	This transition is from hierarchical, procedural and rigid structures to flat, loose and flexible structures. Netocracy in the context of social governing reflects the idea of moving from an industrial society where social values are money driven to a humanitarian society which is knowledge driven.	(Bard & Soderqvist, 2002); (Malone, 2004);(Sillion, 2012)
Clear Organisational Boundaries to Fuzzy Organisational Boundaries	This transition line is from formal and clear organisational boundaries to loose and fuzzy organisational boundaries. This will allow businesses to become more responsive and enhance their ability to change and develop of internal and external environment.	(Bititci et al., 2008); (Malone, 2004); (Alireza Aslani, 2012)
Increasing Emphasis on Community Opinion	The transition line reflects the idea of increasing the emphasis on community opinion with the objective of gaining peer recognition, reputation and community prestige.	(Ulhøi, 2004)

Increasing Emphasis on Continuous Learning	The transition line reflects the idea of increasing the emphasis on learning opportunities and enhancing knowledge literacy mainly through the network. The fastest way for learning is through conversation, blogs and web to ensure competitiveness.	(Ulhøi, 2004);(Institute, 2010)
Increasing Emphasis on Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility	The transition line suggests that businesses go beyond money making via commercial activities and make a commitment to the well-being of the community. e.g. ISO 26000 (Social Responsibility).	(Robins, 2005); (O'Connor & Meister, 2008); (Falck & Hebllich, 2007); (Baron, 2008); (Husted & Allen, 2007); (Yoon, Giirhan-Canli, & Schwarz, 2006); (Castka & Balzarova, 2008)
Loyal Customers to Picky/Curious Customers	The transition line is where customers have become more educated especially the younger generation and so have become highly selective and curious in choosing products or services.	(Chang, Hung, & Ho, 2007); (Demoulina & Ziddab, 2007); (Bititci et al., 2008)
Increasing Pace of Change	The transition line reflects the pull of ideas for improving and rectifying problems more quickly, as the result of breeding ideas and solutions mainly through the network.	(Bititci et al., 2008); (Hamel, 2007); (Prahalad & Krishnan, 2008)

In this paper so far, the researchers have discussed what business and social trends will be in the future. However, the researchers are now making transition into synthesising the finding from the in-depth literature review that has been developed over time (evolved through eras), in order to predict how they could develop into the future.

As a result of this, the researchers will assess how future trends (i.e. networked environment) will change in the future. It is inevitable that this prediction will become consistent with a stream of literature that foresees the future of organisations that lies in networking (Hamel, 2007; Malone, 2004; Salina & Salina, 2007). Therefore, in order to study these phenomena and how they emerge in the future context, the researchers have identified Mozilla organisation due to the fact that Mozilla is already aligned with future characteristics. In saying so, the profiling of the industry is based on classifying enterprises and networks according to their business models. This profiling has assisted researchers and practitioners to gain a better understanding of this rapidly changing industry (Lambert, 2013). The justifications of this approach are further discussed in the following section.

## Discussion

Table 3 below maps the predicted changes in business and global trends in the future (conceptual prediction) against the case of Mozilla (real world context).

Table 3: Comparison between prediction of future context and actual situation at Mozilla

Prediction of future context – Dynamic Transition	Is the future context being implemented in Mozilla?	Justification
Web 1.0 to Web 2.0	YES	Mozilla uses Web 2.0 tools such as forums, chat, blogs, wiki, and news as medium for improvements (i.e. via Mozilla Zine and Quality Mozilla - QMO).
Ideas and actions are originated from the network rather than from the internal	YES	Involving and integrating ideas and actions from communities of practice in order to make internet better for everyone.
Central Regulation to Self-Regulation	YES	Self-regulation and meritocracy are parts of the fundamental cultures of Mozilla.
Contract to Trust	YES	Trust becomes habitual in Mozilla. The commitment of Mozilla in striving free culture, as illustrated in their tagline “Transparent community-based processes promote participation, accountability and trust”.
Legal Regulation to Moral Regulation	YES	Moral regulation is the habit among Mozilla society (communities of practice), as Mozilla practices mutual understanding of codes of practice in contrast to rules and legal regulation.
Increasing Transparency	YES	Transparency is one of the Mozilla principles and has become Mozilla culture (in daily practice).
Proprietary to Open Source	YES	Mozilla promotes and lived up to ‘Free as in freedom’ ideal. Mozilla is truly an open source project and support free culture.
Copyright to Copyleft	YES	All Mozilla products and services are established in a way of copy left and are free for public.
Increasing Emphasis on Innovation	YES	The innovation of Mozilla comes from inside and outside of Mozilla (i.e. Mozilla developers and third parties are mostly from Mozilla communities of practice). In fact, Mozilla’s mission is encouraging choice, innovation and opportunity online.
Bureaucracy to Netocracy	YES	Mozilla is truly a model of netocracy in which Mozilla’s structure is flat, unique and represents humanitarian society, which is knowledge driven (i.e. tapping the needs of communities) in contrast to money driven society.
Clear Organisational Boundaries to Fuzzy Organisational Boundaries	YES	Mozilla’s improvement and innovation are beyond their organisational boundaries as Mozilla also operates, manages processes and integrates within the Mozilla communities.



Increasing Emphasis on Community Opinion	YES	Mozilla welcomes ideas and actions of improvement across the network (i.e. from communities of practice) as everyone is allowed to contribute their opinion for better improvements.
Increasing Emphasis on Continuous Learning	YES	Most of coders/developers are willing to contribute to Mozilla for free, due to the spirit of sharing, gaining personal self-satisfaction as well as part of their continuous learning.
Increasing Emphasis on Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility	YES	Mozilla has positioned as public benefit organisation that is dedicated not to make money but to improve the way people everywhere will experience the internet.
Loyal Customers to Picky/Curious Customers	YES	The growing support from community of practice (i.e. customers and developers) towards the continuous improvements in Mozilla reflects that customers have become more demanding and picky; as they look for better ways in doing things and they are not willing to accept Microsoft Internet Explorer, but want something more (i.e. free as in freedom).
Increasing Pace of Change	YES	The pool of ideas in improving and rectifying problems are much quicker as ideas and solutions are coming from Mozilla communities of practice all over the world.

Based on the sixteen (16) drivers for future networking development, it can be concluded that Mozilla is now prepared to move on to the next level in terms of business performance. In order to make transition from Web 1.0 to 2.0, Mozilla is making their customers their first priority by using few ways: helping the users to get information by tracking them on the Web, make information-sharing process across multiple social networks become quick and easier, bring out privacy and control by using sign-in process, etc. By bringing in trust, transparency and innovation, social networkers have been proactively contributing their ideas, knowledge and information to the open source community.

In order to empower networkers and people, Mozilla has driven the creativity, education and economic growth by focusing on four (4) areas which are:

- i) Education and web-making training - Helping individuals and organisation in constructing their own website
- ii) Open source technology – Extending the values of the web and keeping them in good condition
- iii) Sovereignty of the user–The web is kept open and the priority is for users to share interest and information with each
- iv) Promoting free culture and community – An ecosystem of technology creation will be build and this will be supported by the user community ( individuals and organisations)

Mozilla has also arranged a short-term and long-term schedule as a way to ensure the quality, localization, security as well as compatibility of the web for the convenience of users and global networkers. As a result, Mozilla has managed to create Firefox in which it is competent in delivering a lot of innovative new features with the highest quality experiences that can make their users become very satisfied.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study are limited in the sense that it is only valid to the companies that are underlined into future contexts characteristics. However, the issue of generalization and those findings of other research methodology's literature (Morse, 1999; Stierand & Dorfler, 2010), support the argument that although the conclusions reached cannot be claimed as universally applicable, it is likely that similar studies conducted in organisations similar to Mozilla (i.e. organisations with open source networks-based business model) are likely to yield similar results.

In another dimension of the generalization of findings, it is stated that by learning from this research, with this kind of context and organisation, one can conduct a more competent research in similar cases with less effort in the future. However, even though the Mozilla way is not the only way forward, it is also not the only way it can happen, but it can become reference on how the case organisation has been selected (i.e. prototypal in terms of being open source and competing in the market where others are proprietary). It also represents a type of company rather than only a singular case, the conclusion can be reached that (1) the Mozilla-way is a possible, viable way and (2) learning from the experience we can understand the big picture better and this learning experience can be generalised - which does not mean that it is directly applicable to any other company. But if we looked at another company now, we would understand it more quickly from the point of view adopted in this study.

Similar studies conducted in organisations similar to Mozilla (i.e. organisations with open-source network-based business models) are likely to yield similar results. The lessons are extracted and therefore if the conclusions reached in this research are based on a single case study, it would be inappropriate to claim that the findings are universally applicable for all companies. However, the research methodology used to review (Morse, 1999; Stierand & Dorfler, 2010) literature will support the argument that although the conclusions reached cannot be claimed to be universally applicable it is likely that similar studies conducted in organisations similar to Mozilla (i.e. organisations with open-source network-based business models) are likely to yield similar results.

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