The
Holistic View

A report by the
Digital Tourism Think Tank
as part of the

12 Stages of Transformation Series

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ABOUT THE DIGITAL TOURISM THINK TANK

The Digital Tourism Think Tank is the industry platform that promotes digital leadership in the tourism industry. Comprising a tightly-nit network of highly engaged marketers, thinkdigital.travel is a truly connected market place, where thought leaders share experiences and best practices. We've put together a team of experts in diverse and varied fields of the tourism industry and we've been connecting destinations worldwide, from the Faroe Islands to Cape Town.

INTRODUCTION

With an increasing demand for tourism and an expected annual growth of 4-5% in the number of international tourist arrivals, as forecasted by the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer[1], there is no doubt that tourism is one of the major driving forces of the economy nowadays. The tourism sector is fragmented by definition, because it encompasses many different actors and players which form part of the tourism experience. But the role of the DMO is slowly shifting from a marketing-only perspective to a management perspective. This has fostered change in the sector and today many DMOs have already started their transformation journey to become the primary subject of reference for the coordination of the tourism players at the destination.

In fact, in order to be competitive on the market, destinations need to embrace the digital era and adapt to the ever changing needs of visitors, but starting a transformation journey for a DMO is not necessarily easy.

This is why the **Digital Tourism Think Tank** has developed a framework to help destinations to shift their role from *DMO* to *DxO*, where the "*x*" stands for the mathematical symbol.

The focus of this type of organisation nowadays is not marketing-only anymore, it can be experience, data, management, innovation, product, partnerships, storytelling, etc.

Transformation is not an exact science. We work with a thoroughly thought-through methodology and adapt it to the unique needs of each destination fostering collaboration, transparency and productivity within the team. The transformation journey in this sense is;

Organisational	**Strategic**	**Tactical**
Starting with the organisation itself, we work with DMOs to become glass box brands, to transform inward to out.	A global vision, an acute understanding of macro trends and a long-term view underpins the strategic process.	Strategic development is translated directly through the process into planning, structuring and delivery as needed.

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[1] http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2018-01-15/2017-international-tourism-results-highest-seven-years

The **12 Stages of Transformation Series** is a comprehensive pack of resources created by the DTTT Team which follows the Transformation Framework, a model built around 12 key topics that form the basis for the Destination Transformation.

12 Stages of Transformation

The Holistic View

Complete look at the four key pillars of the organisation including its culture people, process and purpose.

The Visitor Cycle

Strategic assessment of strategic positioning considering message, channels and touchpoints.

Product & Experience

Prioritising the importance of strong product as a living part of the brand, we'll look at it from multiple angles.

Shaping the Brand

Conducting a full brand review, we'll identify the right tone and pitch and produce guidelines underpinning it.

Markets & Audiences

An assessment of current market strategy in view of shifting demographics and the rise of emerging markets.

Content & Engagement

A deep strategic planning Methodology to draft, build and nurture the right content approach around the brand.

Targeting & Distribution

Auditing, development and refining of content targeting and distribution strategy putting data at the core.

Performance & Measurement

Evaluating marketing performance, setting clear KPIs and a process of evaluation and iteration.

Partnerships & Alliances

Unlocking the potential of partnerships to build narrative around and amplify the potential of the brand.

Technology & Disruption

Reviewing current use of technology and identifying disruptive forces emerging and how to tackle them.

Knowledge & Insight

Establishing a culture for knowledge exchange internally in the workflow and externally through industry.

Exploration & Innovation

Prioritising innovation as a process to tackle challenges, evaluate trends and identify opportunities.

Each month we are launching a chapter of the series according to each stage of the model, including:

- Relevant Case Studies and Best Practices.
- Relevant Talks from the #DTTT events.
- A package of Templates with relative explanatory video on how to use them.
- An online learning course to understand and embrace the digital transformation with your team.
- An Asana project plan to integrate into your workspace.

THE HOLISTIC VIEW

In a digital world, where true digital natives and the consumers are today's workforce, we aim to engage with brands which align with their values, becoming a glass box brand[2], authentic and value driven inside as well as outside. Every organisation should be able to represent itself on the outside mirroring the values, long-term view and people who form part of it, it should become a glass box where transparency is one of the fundamental values and customers are aware of what happens inside the organisation.

> **"Your brand was a black box. Now it's a glass box."**
> David Mattin, Global Head of Trends & Insights at TrendWatching
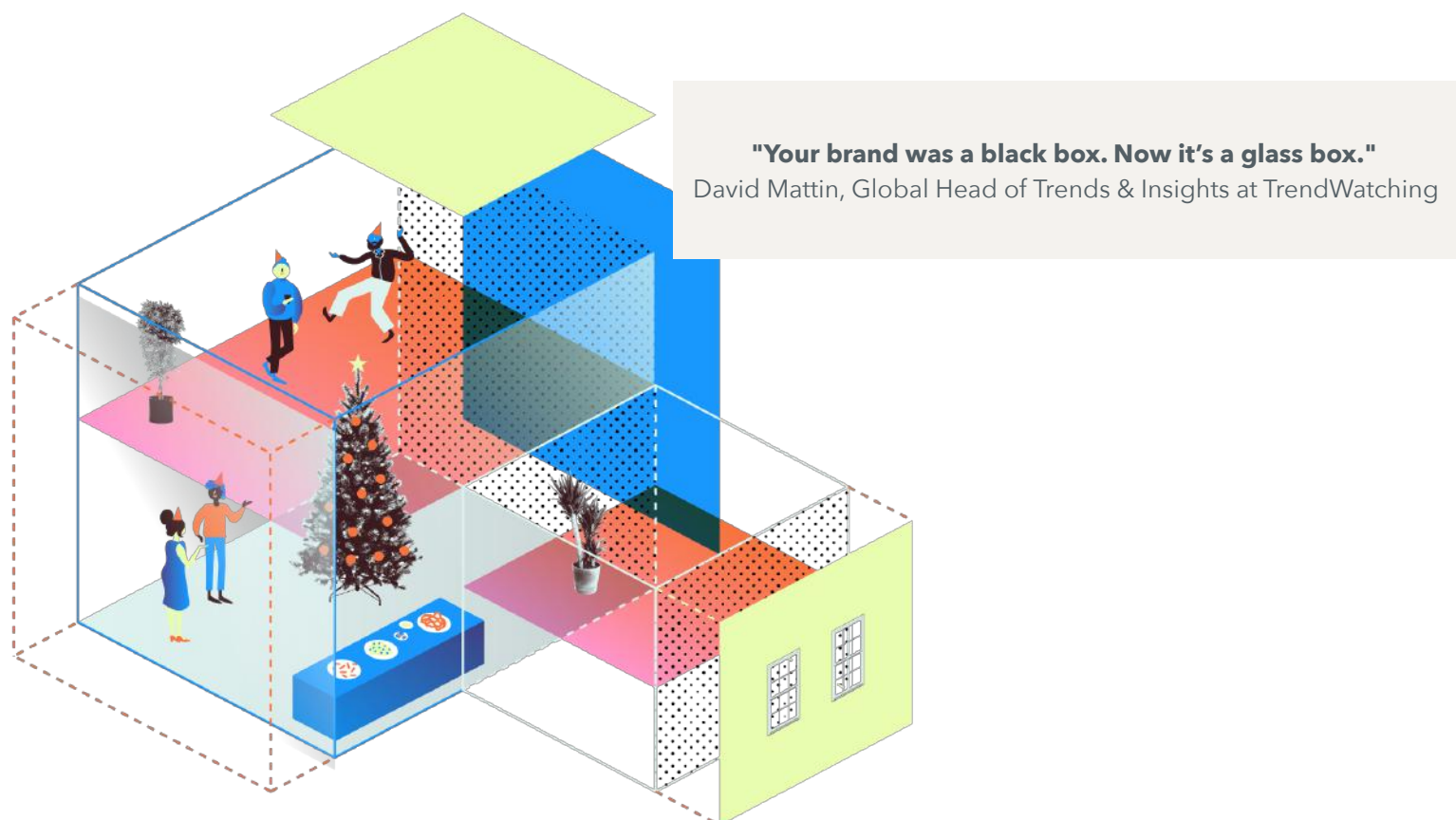
For this reason, it is fundamental to know the values and culture rooted at the heart of the organisation before starting a transformation process. This process in itself must begin with a holistic view on the organisation, a complete look at what is driving the organisation from the values that underpin it to the workflow and delivery, aiming to get an initial snapshot of how the teams are functioning and the overall culture fostered within the organisation.

In order to assess the Holistic View of an organisation what is needed is a clear definition of the four pillars of the organisation: **people**, **culture**, **values** and **processes**. As a start, defining the answers to the following questions might be useful:

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[2] https://trendwatching.com/quarterly/2017-09/glass-box-brands/

People	How do our passions, values and individuality translate into what we do as a team?
Culture	What can the right company culture do for the experience we deliver to our customers?
Values	Which values drive us every day? How do these values align with those of our visitors?
Processes	How do we structure processes? How is the workflow and collaboration among team members?

To answer these questions, if they are unclear, a series of audit tools could represent the starting point to understand the pillars. **Internal surveys** are easy to produce and do not require additional costs if free platforms are used. A survey based internal auditing could benefit the organisation in understanding the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and problem areas that employees within the organisation see.

If the answers to an internal survey are not clear enough, another method to understand the organisational issues could be **one-to-one interviews** carried out with the team members from an external person aimed at identifying the core issues. These methods could prove sufficient to have a holistic view and assessment of how teams are functioning and what is the overall culture fostered within the organisation.

The holistic view is also the assessment of the internal workflows, methods, processes and tactics to improve collaboration and creativity. The development of the creative angle within the organisation can be done through the application of methods aimed at supporting better interaction and collaboration. **Human Centred Design**, that will be further discussed, is a useful method to innovate decision making processes within the organisation.

People

People are the value in your business, so don't forget to empower them and make them amazing. People and workplace culture go hand-in-hand, ensuring the right 'fit' is key to a team.

Great businesses also think 'how can we inspire our team'?
Think about things you can do to connect people, from weekly 'show and tell' to company retreats or team building activities. Don't forget, work is important but mental health is just as important, so make sure your people feel good.

What can do you do to make people feel good?
Promote mindfulness and techniques such as meditation or mental rest. Invite your team to say what would inspire them, or make the workplace more inspirational. Create spaces for enjoyment in the workplace. Create reasons for people to come together. Be a bit more '*Hygge*'!!!

FACTS!

In Denmark, most companies provide lunch for all their staff. It's considered important to take that break together and spend time de-toxing in a busy work day. They also, religiously, drink milk at lunch!"

In Finland, most companies have a mid-morning coffee break. An opportunity to break the work day, connect with each other and just get in a good place before carrying on with their work.

Bigger companies like Google provide canteens to bikes to events; you don't need to do everything, but small things make a big difference.

Culture

The organisational culture is a sum of values, philosophy and attitude that characterise an organisation and its people.

Why is culture important in a workplace?
Everyone has heard about the Start-up culture or the differences between the American vs. European workplace culture, where the former is usually more informal than the latter. Keeping up with our visitor's needs, means keeping up with our own needs. This is why attracting the right talent into our teams depends on the right culture within them.

Promoting creativity in our work, requires the right environment to inspire. Supporting a fresh view on trends and change, requires a dynamic space to do so. Getting the best out of people, means at work they should feel at home. Seeing your workplace as a place for idea, might also shift what comes out of it too… keep it in mind!

If your brand is deeply passionate about cycling, a team cycling club makes sense, if tech curiosity is part of your culture, then a culture of testing and sharing tech know-how is great too!

Values

It is very important to have a clear definition of the corporate values. Values are necessary to convey the identity of the organisation, to set clear strategic goals and vision and to translate these to the brand.

Values underpin everything. The first exercise any team should do is understanding values and this is a key part of this module.

- Values underpin your strategy
- They define your image

- They shape your decisions
- They connect the dots

With values, you can work towards 100% alignment, or 'circular design' where everything you do has a logical connection with everything else that's being done.

Without values, you have:
- No brand
- No direction
- No meaning
- No purpose

Your values should reflect:
- Your product
- Your people
- Your vision
- Your philosophy
- Your decisions

Setting values isn't complicated either. Hold value setting workshops, start wide, ideate, try to vote on core values. Run an anonymous survey, you'll be surprised when everyone aligns! Also co-create a value charter.

When values are clear. Print them, share them, post them and abide by them.

Processes

Processes drive everything from creativity to performance to efficiency. We've shifted from working over-time to working in real-time. Today everyone should be encouraged to throw ideas into the mix and collaborate in a democratic ideation process.

Co-creation is vital to provide a greater sense of ownership, purpose and involvement. User and visitor centric design is key getting the right approach for customers. Larger teams have shifted to reflect the startup ecosystem applying these principles:
- Agile - able to move rapidly with change
- Velocity - able to develop concepts and go to market faster
- Design - putting human centred design to ensure creativity runs strong

Here at the #DTTT, we use key tools which have enabled us to transform processes:

- **Mural** - A design thinking tool, great for remote teams to use design thinking
- **Asana** - An agile team tool, great for productivity and 100% responsibility in teams

Understanding the digital workflow

The digital workflow should be the heartbeat of your team. Today we depend on technology for pretty much everything we do. The way we communicate socially has shifted in the past ten years and so too has the way we communicate at work. Whilst digital is seen by many as a barrier, we want you to see digital as an enabler for your strategies and processes.

In the last few years, digital has seen a rise in completely new methods of working, in particular project management:

- The old 'Silos' work structure should be a thing of the past
- Collaborative work environments, fuel idea exchange and creativity
- Creativity must be rooted deeply into the process
- Soft skills are of increasing importance, with change, requiring adaptability

CASE STUDIES

In order to better understand the holistic view, we provide three examples of DMOs who we think successfully became 'glass box brands' and redefined their role as DxO.

Visit Copenhagen - Working as an Agile Team

2017 for Visit Copenhagen marked the year in which the new 2020 strategy was launched. The process that led to the creation of this strategy reflects a fundamental shift that has started to take place internally, both in mindset and attitude towards digital marketing. The bold strategy headline "The end of tourism as we know it" is a very strong acknowledgement of the need for destinations to transform as the travel industry is entering a new era. Visit Copenhagen is actively embracing the emergence of a new traveller type and the opportunities that come with 'localhood', a term coined by the DMO that describes the new momentum and experience that the tourist board will focus on. Visit Copenhagen also recognise the need to change the role that destination management organisations play, shifting their focus to supporting the industry, collaborating and co-creating long-term, sustainable value for all. This is an ambitious step that Visit Copenhagen is now taking, looking beyond tourism in direct response to the need to demonstrate value as a destination.

Watch the interview and listen to our conversation with Signe Jungersted, Director of Development at Wonderful Copenhagen, explaining the strategy and how the organisation contributed to it through the involvement of stakeholders and locals.

Watch the case study

Helsinki Marketing and Human Centred Design

A couple of years ago, the team of Helsinki Marketing has been undergoing a complete transformation process aimed at changing the city brand, strategy and overall focus of their city marketing. With competition growing among destinations, Helsinki as a city needed to set themselves apart from other Nordic Capitals with a rather understated strategy which encompasses all aspects of the city's economy and focuses on strengthening the brand equity of its exports, including talent, startups and of course tourism.

Listen to the team from Helsinki Marketing share some insights on their overall approach to create a compelling digital brand through the many different strands that reflect it but also how this fits in with the wider government strategy to democratise data and remain a world leader as an innovative place to live, visit and work. We interviewed Tia Hallanoro (Marketing Communications Director), Vappu Mänty (Marketing Director) and Laura Aalto (CEO) at Helsinki Marketing to understand what this transformation meant for them and the organisation.

Watch the case study

TALKS

Visit Oslo on Value Driven Storytelling

At #DTTTCampus 2018 Tord Baklund from Visit Oslo shared the amazing storytelling projects they launched and demonstrated how they made it to respond to overcrowding in destinations in an innovative and fun way. Oslo's storytelling is based on the values that portray the city as a very inclusive place where pride is celebrated and a tranquil place where no overcrowding will ruin the tourism experience. Watch the talk and the campaigns portraying the amazing Oslo.

Watch the talk

Visit San Francisco on Value Driven Marketing

At #DTTTGlobal 2017, Dan Rosenbaum showed the recent promotional successes of San Francisco Travel, the official DMO of the city, demonstrating that the city's shared values can be a very powerful means to promote the destination. After the travel ban imposed by Neo-elected president Trump in the US in 2017, San Francisco Travel decided to involve strategic partners and re-envision the teamwork structure in order to create a marketing campaign based on the strong value of inclusivity and openness that has always characterised the city, proving that a strong message to visitors is a good choice.

Watch the talk

Les Îles de la Madeleine on Design Thinking

The DMO of Les Îles de la Madeleine, in Canada, is working extensively with Design Thinking techniques that helped the destination to create projects and promote tourism. At #DTTTGlobal 2017 they shared their experience of working as a destination on storytelling and product development, involving partners and stakeholders of the industry to be part of the destination's development. Watch the talk and see how they learned to create a collaborative open innovation process with their stakeholders.

Watch the talk

Copenhagen on Redefining Values in Tourism

In this Talk from DTTT Global 2018, Signe Jungersted, Director of Development at Visit Copenhagen, talks about the redefinition of values that the city has undergone since the launch of the Copenhagen 2020 strategy. Focuses and values have shifted from commercial to community, from destination to 'localhood', from tourism as a goal to tourism as a tool for development. When a DMO starts a journey of transformation it is very important to acknowledge which values are fundamental and which are defining the role of the organisation at the destination. Sometimes the answer is not that difficult, but we need to change the way we think about it in order to come up with it.

Watch the talk

TEMPLATES

The transformation journey for any DMO might be complicated to start from scratch. For this reason, the DTTT has developed 'ready to use' templates that can be printed in giant sheets or used digitally as a roadmap to understand the organisational processes and craft target oriented strategies.

As mentioned above, the first chapter of the Transformation, the Holistic View, is an overview of the organisational culture, values, people and processes of a DMO. It is therefore fundamental to have a clear view of these pillars before starting any projects involving the company's employees.

We've created three useful templates and a guide to use within your team in order to better understand these pillars and the role of the DMO, which sets the basis for any decision and project management.

1. The Holistic View for DMOs

This template provides a complete look at what is driving the organisation from the values that underpin it to the workflow and delivery. It allows organisations to identify their strengths and weaknesses as well as any problems and/or any opportunities for growth.

The Holistic View for organisations also allows DMOs to identify their stakeholders, partners, and visitors, as well as to identify what their current workflow and processes are like, and how their workflow and processes can be improved. This template also allows DMOs to discuss their values, and discover where hidden talents exist within their teams.

Download the PDF   **Mural template**

2. Think of your brand as a glass box, no longer a black box

Trendwatching introduced the notion of the 'Glass Box Brand' and since then we've really ran with it as part of our thinking around The Holistic View in tourism. We've spent decades designing logos, slogans and values based on frankly very little, now its time to say STOP to whitewashing and YES to transparency!

The internet has changed everything, transparency being one of the biggest game changers for brands. We can no longer make up values which don't truly represent us as the nature of the digital age means that just doesn't work. This worksheet is all about drawing up values, which live internally inside the DMO and help shape the values outside it.

To get started, gather a multi-disciplinary team, and discuss the different elements on this downloadable worksheet and start thinking about how you can both 'say' and 'do' with some collaborative thinking behind it.

Download the PDF   **Mural template**

3. Finding your x as a DxO

The DxO is a new concept to help you redefine your role as a DMO. We've seen a huge shift thanks to the disruptive nature of digital, in how we think about the value we create as 'Destination Marketing Organisations', so beyond marketing, what's your value?

Start out by asking yourself this;

- How has your DMO shifted from marketing in recent years?
- Are your still well placed to market your destination successfully?
- Can you compete effectively on your own as a brand?
- Where can you best create value for visitors and stakeholders?
- How has the field changed and what does that mean for your role?

This downloadable worksheet is best used in a workshop environment. Consider printing several copies in A2 and organising a 1-hour session for groups to discuss and write down their own thoughts on how you might reconsider your role as a DMO, defining your x.

Introducing the DxO Model

1 Defining Needs

Visitor Needs	Stakeholder Needs	Our Needs	Industry Needs	What does this mean for us?
"Our visitors need ...	"Our stakeholders need ...	"We need ...	"Our industry needs ...	

2 Defining Your Focus: Initial Ideas

Destination X Organisation

innovation experience management product

"What could our focus be? What is our x?"

How do we create Value as a DxO?

Destination X Organisation

3 Defining Your Focus: Implementing Change

Who will we be?	What should our organisation do?	What is our core business model?	Internal Change & Transformation

What structures do we need?	What changes need to happen?	How can we develop a roadmap for change?	Strategic Change & Transformation

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[Download the PDF]

[Mural template]

4. Introduction to Human Centred Design

At the DTTT we work extensively with design thinking processes and methods, and we apply them to our projects daily. Human Centred Design is the principle behind design thinking, an approach that is valuable and useful for many reasons.

This canvas gives an overview to Human Centred Design, explaining what it is, why it is important and how you can apply it to your work, with a focus on why it benefits the tourism industry and the DMOs.
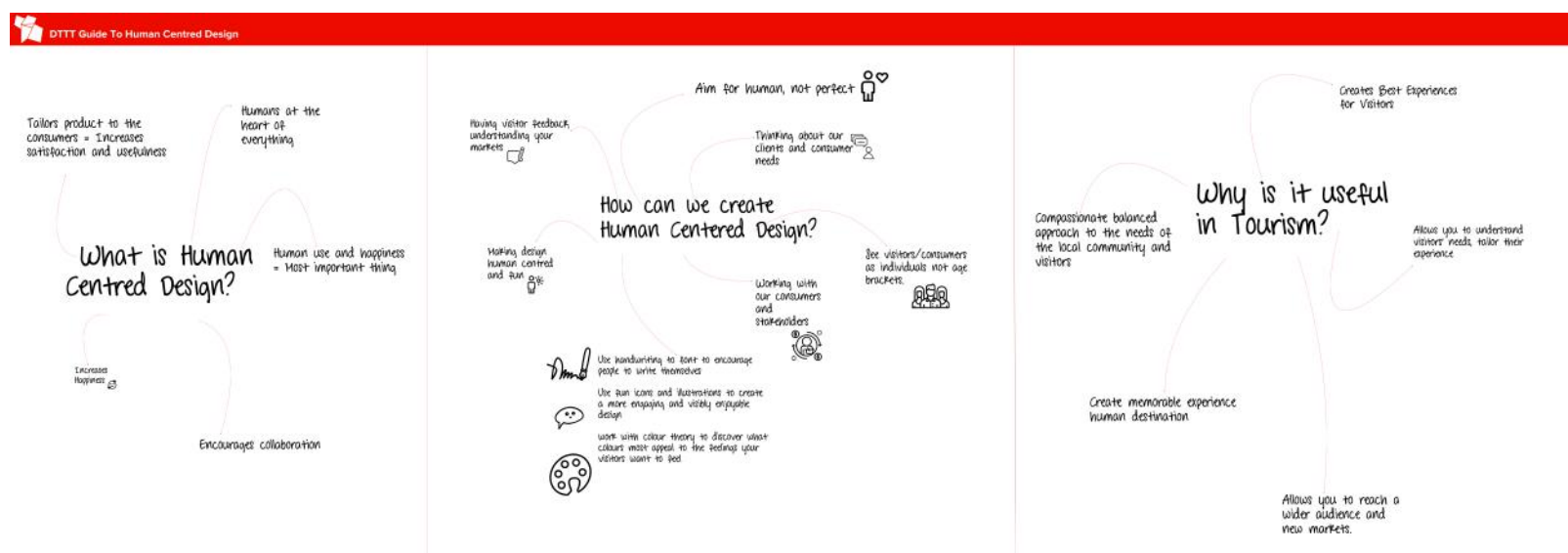
[Download the PDF]

ONLINE LEARNING

Additionally to this PDF, we've built an **online learning course** to help you go through the Holistic View in a hyper structured way, with tutorials and guidance along the way. This course is a video led course, so you should find completing it nice and easy! There are lots of additional resources, material, case studies and snippets to help you along the way.

Once completed, you'll get a certificate which shows you are equipped to start changing your organisation with the #DTTT's seal of approval.

Click on the link below to join the course. If you are a DTTT Member you will receive a voucher to access the course for free. If you don't have a voucher, contact the DTTT Team through the chat on the Launchpad or by email at michela@thinkdigital.travel.

[Go to the online course!](#)

ASANA PROJECT TEMPLATE

Applying all of this is so important which is why we've built a full **Project Template** which you can install in one click using our API, connecting you directly to Asana.
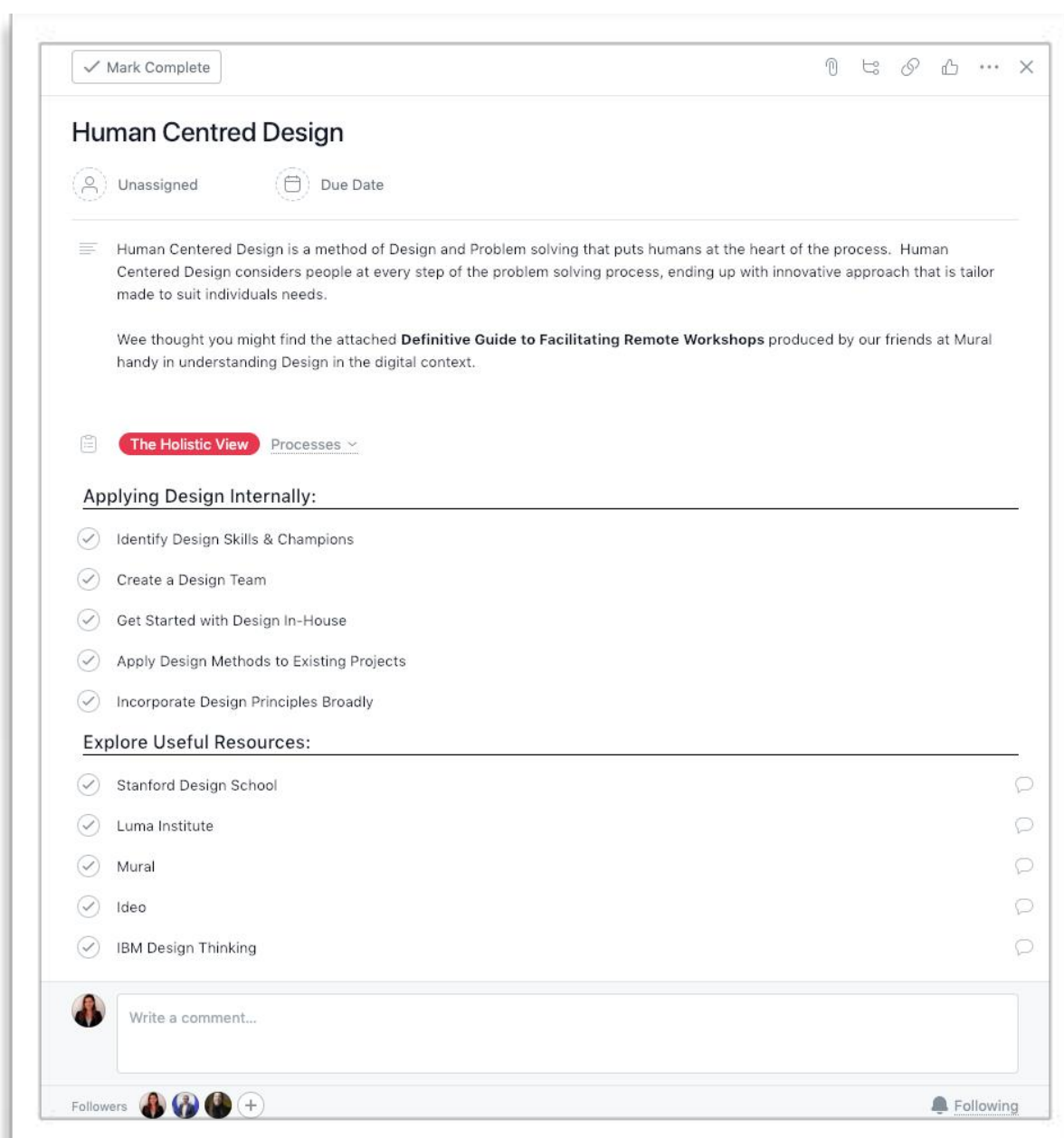
With this, you'll have your first step tasked out and ready to go. Inside, we've included each action you need to take and even steps for each showing you how to do it. This leaves you only to schedule the tasks, then you're good to go.

[Go to the Asana Project](#)

Overview of the project
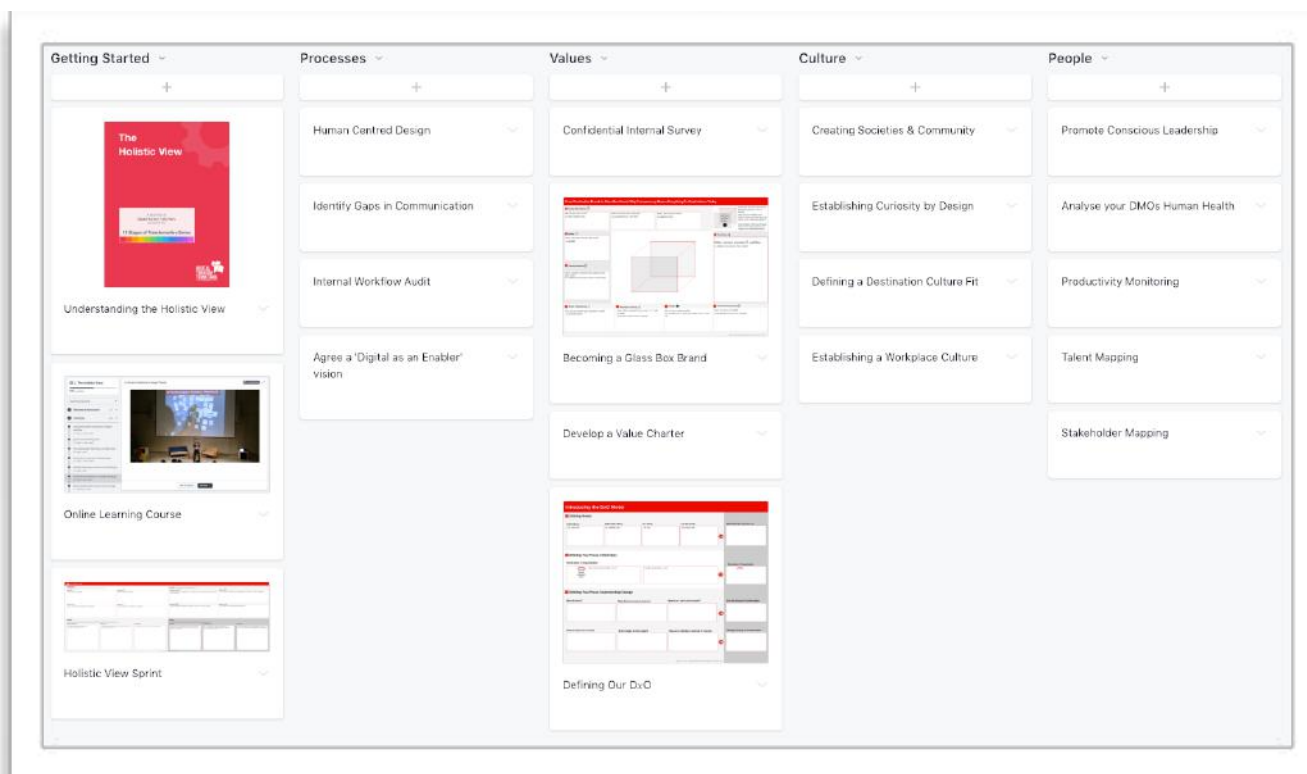
Example of a project task

FURTHER READING

We collected a series of additional links for you to understand a bit more about collaboration, transformation and becoming a DxO. If you would like to expand your knowledge about the Holistic View have a look at these resources:

Collaboration Tools Report:

https://www.thinkdigital.travel/all-insights/cloud-based-dmos-collaboration-tools/

Destination Transformation Report:

https://www.thinkdigital.travel/all-insights/transformation-report/

Rewatch Circle on DXO

https://www.thinkdigital.travel/all-insights/dttt-circles-dxo-the-future-dmo/