

THINK BUSINESS DESIGN



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Pictures of the Deloitte innovationZone™ in Johannesburg.



Richard Perez,
City of Cape Town
director for World
Design Capital 2014.



Gert de Beer,
lead director of Strategy and
Innovation for Africa at Deloitte.



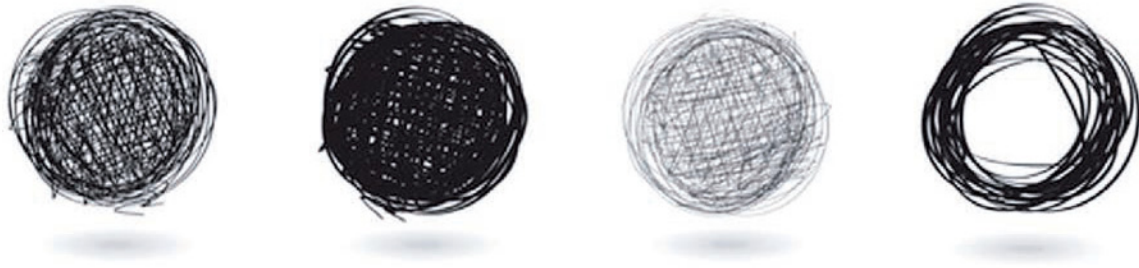
Since the announcement of Cape Town as World Design Capital 2014, *design* has become a much talked-about topic. **Cherice Smith** explores design thinking – a process used to turn a challenge into a feasible solution through creativity and innovation.

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esign thinking is an iterative process that links both *divergent thinking* through research, user interaction and ideation, and *convergent thinking* through prototyping and reflection.”

This is how Richard Perez, City of Cape Town director for World Design Capital 2014, defines this thought process which has taken root in many international organisations.

“I define three core attributes under design thinking. The first is user centricity through empathy, the identification of stakeholders, the recognition of values and needs, and the use of local knowledge. Second is creative thinking through idea generation, experimentation and exploration. And thirdly, there is collaboration through diversity.”



'Design thinking is increasingly being used to enable employees to think from the customer's perspective. It is enabling the paradigm shift from a product-oriented view of business to a client-centred view of business.'

Saberi Marais, business development manager at the Technology Innovation Agency and former business developer at Innovus, the university-industry interaction and innovation company of Stellenbosch University, says the solution-focused process relies on the designers' sensibility, experience and network to match people's needs.

"The process also relies on a viable business strategy to deliver customer value and respond to the market as effectively as possible. The outcomes of the design thinking process could be a combination of tailored products, systems, services and processes."

Marais says an effective design thinking process will minimise the wastage of resources such as time, money and materials, while allowing the individual to focus on delivering the level of quality that is expected.

"It has a direct impact on the bottom line. However, and arguably more importantly, it enables you to deliver relevant solutions to customers or users. This means that there is a greater impact on the sustainability of your value offering, and you're able to build a meaningful brand with your target customer or user."

While creativity is crucial in the design thinking process, it needs to be managed, facilitated and understood, says Perez.

"It is critical that relationships exist between creativity, finance, marketing, resource management and operations. We must have a systems thinking approach to business and fully understand the relationships between these various disciplines.

Within innovation the value is in the diversity. So, the more perspectives around the table when it comes to a challenge, the better. As such, all these disciplines should have a voice when an organisation is confronted with a challenge."

'We have enabled our staff to solve problems through various collaboration platforms, such as using internal brainstorming and social media tools...'

Internationally and locally, Deloitte, the leading global professional services firm, is an example of a company that embraces design thinking. Gert de Beer, lead director of Strategy and Innovation for Africa at Deloitte, says their focus is on solving big problems and creating big opportunities for clients.

"We use many approaches, including design thinking to succeed in this. A key element of design thinking is using diverse technical and creative insight to inform strategy and delivery. Deloitte has aggressively been driving a culture of diverse insight, analytics, collaboration and observation to develop offerings for clients. We have enabled our staff to solve problems through various collaboration platforms, such as using internal brainstorming and social media tools, setting up global communities of practice, and using innovative tools such as ThinkTank™

which enables mass collaboration. Design thinking is increasingly being used to enable employees to think from the customer's perspective. It is enabling the paradigm shift from a product-oriented view of business to a client-centred view of business."

Deloitte's collaboration and problem-solving platforms include the Deloitte innovationZone™ in Johannesburg, which offers employees an interactive technology environment and facilitation that enables structured human collaboration and crowd sourcing of ideas, and even specially researched brain-food, among others.

"We also have a concept called 'Deloitte Greenhouses' that are facilities around the world where staff, clients and project teams connect, collaborate and think in a group context."

Ivan Diaz, a USB MBA student who is passionate about design thinking, says it merges many of the skills he has acquired through his MBA studies with his former career as an architect.

"In both my career and my studies, this approach has allowed me to complement analytical reasoning with intuitive thinking, helping me to come up with better solutions. However, in South Africa, design thinking is not yet perceived as a critical competency for innovation. As I currently pursue a career in management consulting, I trust that progressive companies will certainly appreciate the competitive advantage design thinking can bring to their problem-solving tool kit."

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HOW design thinking is incorporated into projects of the Cape Town World Design Capital 2014

Richard Perez, City of Cape Town director for World Design Capital 2014, says Cape Town wants to raise awareness of design and the value it can bring as a tool for transformation.


"Traditionally, design is associated with the end product or system. However, the process used to get to this end result is as important. Within the City of Cape Town we are exposing the organisation to the key attributes of design thinking as well as undertaking a number of interventions to raise awareness of the value of the thinking process behind good design."

He says Cape Town's vision for its year in the global design spotlight is to transform the city through design into a sustainable, productive African city, bridging historic divides and building social and economic inclusion.

"To achieve this, the World Design Capital 2014 title will need to impact on one of the chief functions of the municipality – area-based service delivery. In addition to the implementation company, Cape Town Design, the City set up an internal department – a first ever for a World Design Capital City – to focus on its own initiatives for World Design Capital, which is aimed at creating internal awareness of the value and use of design as a tool for transformation within public sector administration.

"One of the initiatives is the introduction of co-design workshops at citizen ward level, whereby the administration is developing a method to engage citizens, designers and the public sector in what is termed 'co-creation' to find new and innovative ways to address specific local concerns. The first four workshops represented the 'pilot phase' of this process. They have generated great ideas around resolving the problem statements that each workshop focused on. An example is an eco-park in Hanover Park on a piece of land that has become derelict. Another is a wonderful urban park on a similar piece of land in Bo-Kaap."

Perez says the specific ideas generated speak to the specific challenges raised in the workshops.

What's more, they intend to execute these plans. 



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