

METHODOLOGY FOR TRENDS ANALYSIS

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The Habitat Trends Observatory® is a system for generating and disseminating knowledge relating to habitat trends, which is designed to be an information tool for taking strategic decisions with an impact on several corporate areas and business activities related to strategic planning, design and development of products and services, marketing strategy, communication, and distribution.

This is a multi-sectoral project, since the habitat is taken as a comprehensive concept, where each object is linked to the others and to its surroundings. This global nature aims to offer the company a general overview of the environment in which it is located and the sector where it operates, the key concept being the habitat. This is why the Technology Institutes linked to the habitat, AIDIMA, AITEX, and ITC, are participating in this project.

The results of the research carried out by the Observatory consist of the identification and characterisation of habitat trends, relating these to the profile of the consumer and the appropriate communication of this trend. This information makes it possible for companies to be able to adapt quickly to trends and thus increase their levels of competitiveness, enabling them to anticipate changes in the habitat and participate in generating trends.

The overall nature of the knowledge of habitat trends makes it an effective, useful tool for different user profiles: management, marketing department, and design or product department.

MANAGEMENT	Corporate strategy	Company mission, vision and objectives Company positioning Product strategy
MARKETING	Knowledge of the client / Market	Marketing strategy: service, products, prices, distribution, sales, communication Company communication actions
DESIGN	Product innovation Matching company needs to the end product	New functionalities, concepts, aesthetics Documentation, conceptualisation, design, etc.
R&D	Company capacities and innovation	Research into processes, effects, materials, etc. Product development

Table 1.

Research into trends is characterised by a multidisciplinary approach, through complementary disciplines such as Design and Architecture, Economics and Marketing, Communication and Sociology.

The methodology created by the Habitat Trends Observatory® is based on rigour, and the reliability of the knowledge we generate. The pillars of the research process are the validity of the sources of information and the experts who contribute it, as well as in-depth analysis of the information.

This methodology is based on observing and analysing the evolution of the habitat. It involves studying the main variables generating or driving the trends existing in habitable spaces. The work has a wide scope and is not limited to products, but also takes into consideration factors from the environment and the market that influence the generation and assimilation of trends. Thus, aspects such as the evolution of social values, interpersonal relationships and new concepts in sales points, among others, are also researched. The

Habitat Trends Observatory® monitors a total of 24 variables every year, following up more than 100 primary and secondary sources in detail throughout Europe.

The areas of knowledge studied at the Habitat Trends Observatory® are the habitat itself, the factors that influence it, and their distribution and communication in the markets.

- **HABITAT:** Area or space where a human being lives, the conditions and place where he/she lives and acts, and where the different objects and structures co-exist of which it is comprised.
- **ENVIRONMENT:** Socio-cultural context that influences the way people relate to the habitat.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Communication and distribution actions through which companies interrelate with users in the markets.

The results of the research carried out by the Observatory consist of the identification and characterisation of habitat trends. Each trend is related to market keys, which provide the most recent and innovative communication and commercial distribution strategies that will be making up the scene in the future. In addition, these tie in with the changes occurring in society, termed the socio-cultural keys.

To enable companies to use this information, the results obtained are set out in the Habitat Trends Notebook 08/09, which is provided as a working tool for marketing and design departments.

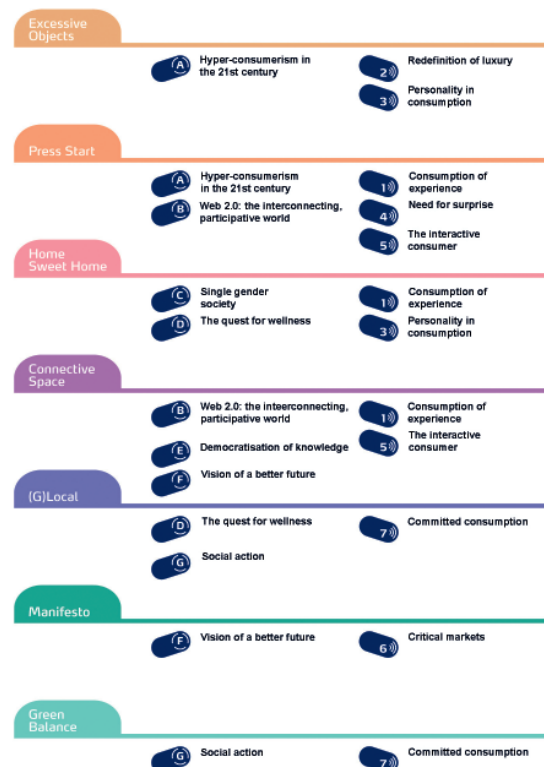


Figure 1.