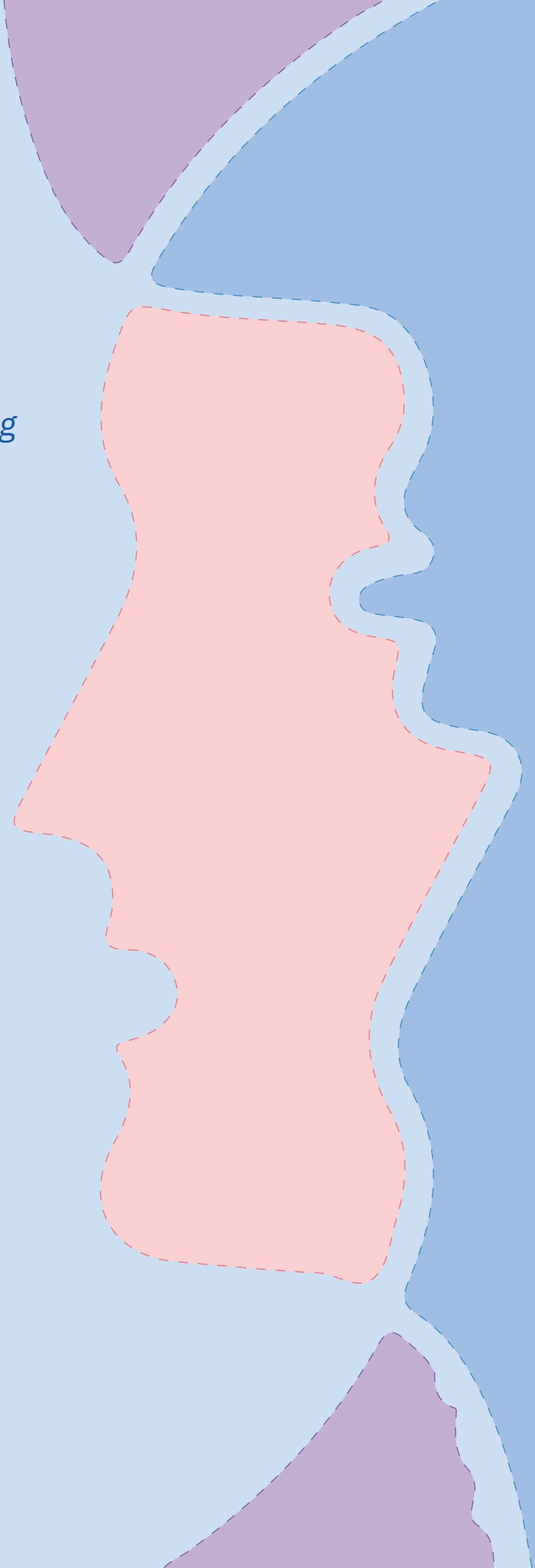


WHO AM iX ?

*Enhancing and communicating
IBM iX BeNeLux identity*

Master Thesis
MSc Strategic Product Design
Anna Filippi



“People often say that this or that person has not yet found himself. But the self is not something one finds, it is something one creates.”

—Thomas Szasz

Enhance and communicate IBM iX BeNeLux identity by engaging employees in the development of a shared vision and clear positioning.

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MASTER THESIS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dear reader,

Here is my graduation report for the MSc Strategic Product Design at Delft University of Technology executed in collaboration with IBM iX. During my time as master student here in The Netherlands, I have been given unique opportunities and experienced many new challenges which contributed to the journey of discovering WHO I AM as strategic designer as well as human. This thesis is the result of an intense learning experience and definitely represents a milestone in my personal and professional development.

Throughout the course of this thesis I had the chance to meet many inspiring people from all over the world and I would like to thank them all for the support they have been giving me.

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisory team who made this possible. Thanks for giving me confidence and motivating me with your criticism.

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Giulia for the inspiring journey during and before graduation and for introducing me to new perspectives of design. You've always made me feel comfortable and confident with your sharp feedback and reliable presence.

Femke, thanks for giving me the freedom to make my own choices, while guiding and challenging me to do my best as strategic designer.

Brian, thanks for being not only a company mentor, but also a life coach. Without your constant support and encouragement, this project would not have materialized.

Thanks Vincent, for your always on point design advices and your down-to-earth attitude.

To conclude I would like to thank Henk for giving me the great opportunity to carry out my graduation project within IBM iX.

I am also particularly grateful for the collaborative approach of many talented people in IBM who inspired my daily work and made this project possible. A very special thanks to all the people that participated in the survey, interviews, workshops, and evaluation test.

Moreover, this thesis would not be possible without the constant support of my beloved ones.

Special thanks to my SPD family for taking the time to listen to my ideas as well as my struggles and giving me valuable feedback.

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Last but not least, I owe my deepest gratitude to my friends and family in Italy. Thank you for constantly believing in me; your encouragement when the times got rough gave me the confidence and determination to keep on going.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Technology is running faster than ever and, to keep up with his speed, businesses have been adopting design practices to turn the wealth of technology into value for customers. Companies are, therefore, renewing their identities and creating new business divisions to offer design capabilities. Likewise, IBM iX is a department within IBM Global Business Services, that uses design techniques to solve complex business challenges.

However, expressing the value of design in a business context doesn't come without challenges. This especially happens in large organizations, such as IBM BNLX, where the IBM iX department encounters difficulties in defining who they are and proving their value to stakeholders. Specifically, the empirical analysis carried out within the organization, demonstrates a lack of a shared vision and clear positioning within the department which suggests an internal intervention.

Therefore, the central aim of this thesis is to help IBM iX enhance their identity internally to create shared understanding within the department, while, at the same time, supporting employees in communicating it to external stakeholder.

The exploration of corporate theory show that identity transfer is a long process which require the involvement of employees in co-creation activities to help them internalize the identity. Next to that, the notions of vision and positioning are explored as important elements that describe the core purpose of a business. In particular, a shared vision appears to be an essential element to express the "what" of a business while having, at

the same time, the power to motivate employees in their daily work. Analogously, positioning is, by nature, an integral part of corporate identity building, due to his capacity to differentiate the organization from the competition.

Based on the above-mentioned observations, and the analysis of theoretical frameworks from the literature, a process for the transfer of the iX identity is outlined and partially executed in the course of this thesis. The process is characterized by 4 main steps: awareness, understanding, internalize, communicate. To implement the process, two workshops are facilitated with employees with the goal to co-create IBM iX BNLX vision and identify their positioning which allowed to initiate the procedure of internal identity enhancement.

To support the department in the external communication of the identity, a series of co-creative iterations are performed in close collaboration with iX employees. The results of these sessions include an iX story pitch and infographic to convey the identity internally and a marketing campaign whose purpose is to spread awareness externally, to other departments in IBM.

A finalevaluation with IBM led to recommendations regarding the continuation of the process for the transfer of the iX identity. This includes a communication roadmap for the iX department that suggest the realizations of workshops, events, and constant renovation of the iX story.

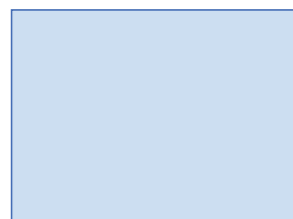
READING GUIDE



The purple layout represents the knowledge gathered from the exploration of corporate literature



The pink layout indicates information related to the process of identity transfer



The light blue layout is used for the general information and conclusions related to the IBM iX case

- **iX:** abbreviation for IBM iX
- **Growth Platforms:** subparts of GBS
- **Service Lines:** sub departments of each Growth Platform, iX is one of them.
- **Practices:** sub communities of each Service Line, iX has got 5 different practices.
- **DS&I:** Digital Strategy & iX (Growth Platform)
- **CPT:** Cognitive Process Transformation (Growth Platform)
- **CAI:** Cloud Application Innovation (Growth Platform)
- **CE&D:** Customer Engagement & Design (Practice)
- **GBS:** abbreviation for Global Business Services
- **Workstreams:** initiatives within iX BeNeLux with three main objectives: improve engagement among BeNeLux (*Engagement*), increase sales (*Go to Market*), share iX story inside and outside IBM (*Eminence*).

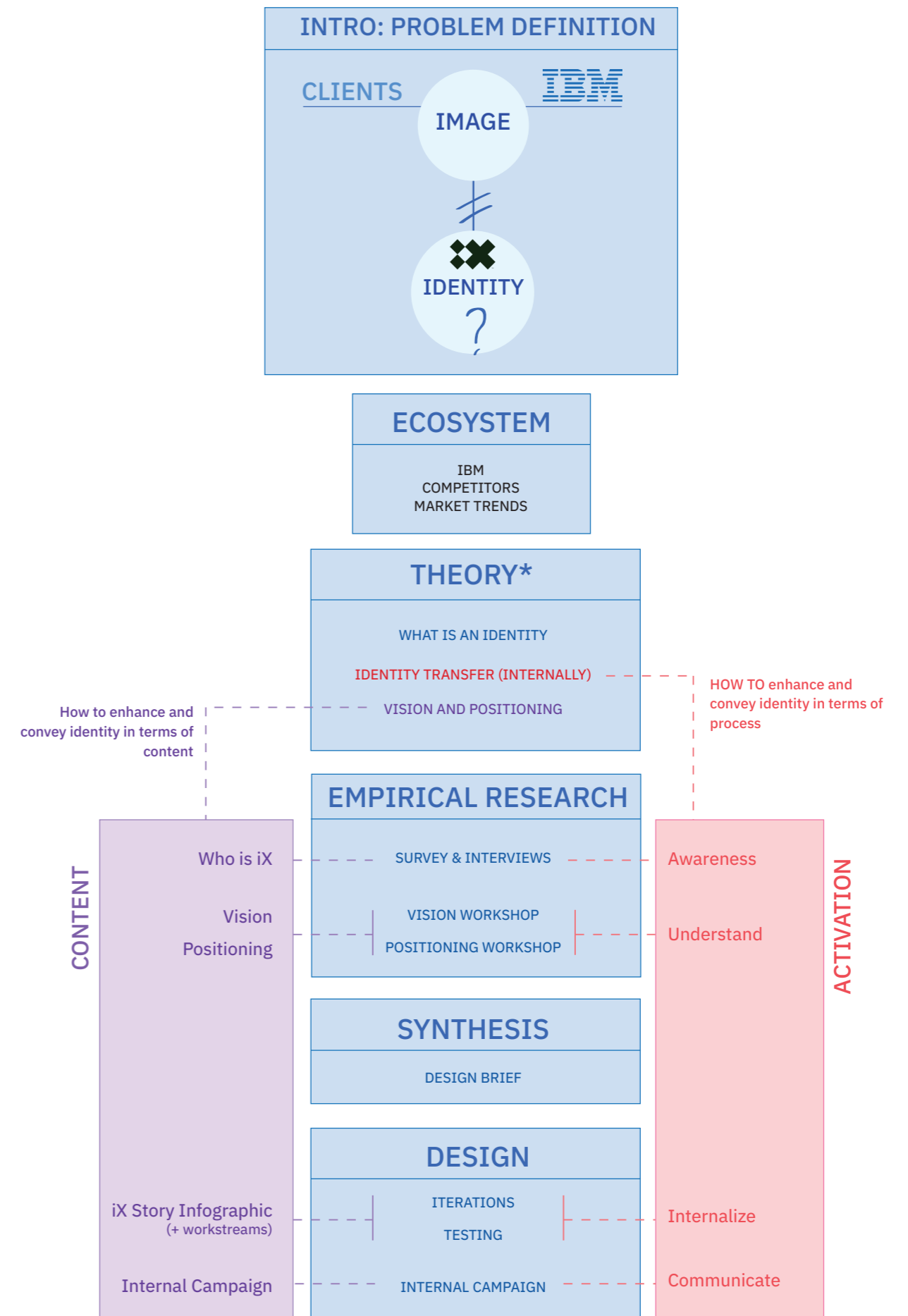


Figure 1. Structure of the report.

PEOPLE* INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH

SURVEY

38 participants took place to the survey anonymously

INTERVIEWS WITH GUIDE

Hugo, CAI Leader
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Alessandro, CPT Consultant
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Lara, Customer Engagement & Design leader (Milan)
1 Client
1 Competitor

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Sophie, Global client architect Heineken
Patrick, Client Manager, IBM Global Market
Regina, Experience Strategist | Associate Partner
Anna, Digital Experience Consultant

INFORMAL INTERVIEW WITHOUT GUIDE

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IDE students

MENTORS

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Vincent, Design Lead
Henk, iX Project manager

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* For privacy reasons, only people first names are specified

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter an introduction is given to present the topic of this thesis by defining problems and assumptions. Based on that, the research questions and design approach will be presented and visualized.

1.1 CONTEXT

Technology is running faster than ever and, to keep up with his speed, businesses find themselves in the position to undertake their own digital revolution (IBM Institute for Business Value, 2014), although it requires a high level of complexity to be managed. We live in “a world awash with technologies and information” says Roberto Verganti (2017) and organizations, like Accenture, Deloitte, KPMG and IBM, have been adopting design practices to turn the wealth of technology into value for customers (Dell’Era, Cautela, Magistretti, Verganti, & Zurlo, 2018). Design thinking, in fact, is considered to be an essential tool for simplifying that has to become a core competence in businesses. (Kolko, 2015)

IBM iX is a department within IBM Global Business Services, whose Manifesto reports: “We work at the intersection of strategy, creativity, and technology to help clients to digitally reinvent businesses (...)” by using design techniques. Unlike other departments, IBM iX focuses on the user to help clients deliver great digital experiences, and leveraging technology (“Top 100 digital agencies 2018”). This is the proof that IBM, the huge information technology company, which shifted its focus from hardware to software and services, actively recognizes the value of design as innovation enabler. The organization currently has

1600 designers operating around the world and commit to incorporating design skills into different roles. With his own innovative Design Thinking framework, called Enterprise design Thinking, is also extending its design philosophy to its clients.

1.2 PROBLEM DEFINITION

However, the path of embedding design thinking in organizations comes with challenges, such as the difficulty of proving his value, clash with existing structures, procedures and mindsets (Carlgrén et al., 2016) this especially happens in large organizations, such as IBM, where culture changes slowly (Kolko, 2015). IBM iX BeNeLux experience this problem as it is difficult for stakeholders to perceive their role in the organization. The fact that clients and other departments are not aware of iX offerings and capabilities implies that stakeholders have a distort image of iX in their minds. The problem has been associated with two main hypotheses:

Internal Perspective

IBM iX BeNeLux struggles with defining who they are.

External Perspective

IBM is widely recognized as a technology company.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

In my thesis I will address the internal perspective by responding to the following research question (see figure 1a):

How to help IBM iX BeNeLux enhance and convey their identity in order to:

- Create understanding within IBM Benelux?
- Deliver a promise of value for the clients?

1.3.1 ASSUMPTIONS

To address the initial problems (internal perspective), this thesis relies on the idea that vision and positioning help enhance and convey an organization identity and, therefore, help improve its image as shown in figure 1b. Based on this concept, some assumptions have been determined to give structure during the analysis phase (see figure 2c).

- *Within IBM iX the vision is not shared, therefore their identity is not clear.*
- *Since the identity is not clear internally, IBM GBS doesn't have a proper understanding of IBM iX activities.*
- *No clear identity implies a non-clear positioning, as consequence clients are not aware of IBM iX.*

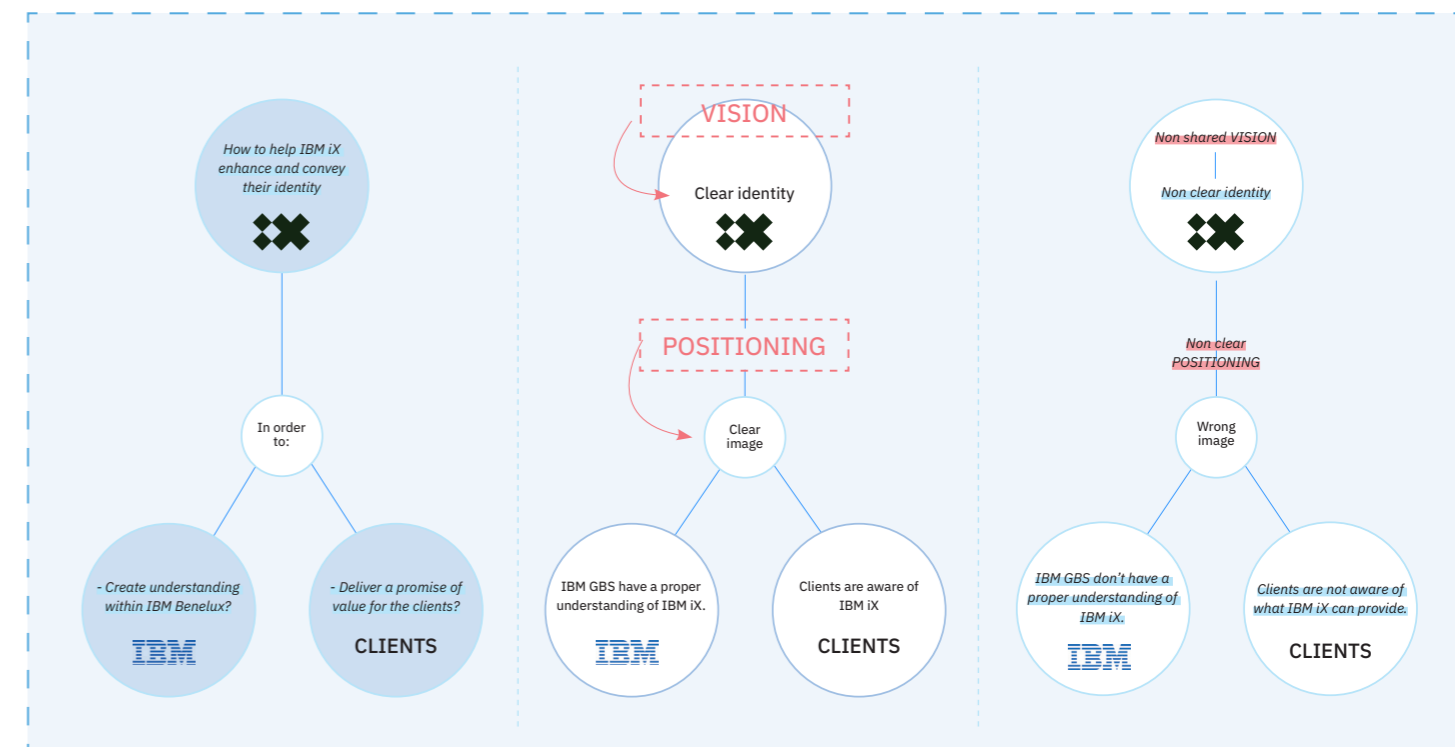


Figure 2a. Thesis research question.








Figure 2b. Ideal situation for IBM iX.

Figure 2c. Current situation IBM iX (thesis assumptions).

1.4 APPROACH

This thesis aims at validating the assumptions through a literature framework and a parallel empirical study. To give an overview of the ecosystem of IBM iX, the analysis of company, clients, relevant competitors and trends has been conducted and presented. Thereafter the theory introduces the notions of corporate identity, vision, and positioning and dives into the topic of identity transfer. These concepts have been elaborated and a process for enhancing iX identity has been identified and used as a reference for the execution of the project. Later on, an empirical study is presented which includes an online survey, 11 semi-structured interviews and several informal conversations to GBS and iX consultants, clients, iX employees from Europe and US. This phase is also characterized by two workshops where employees were asked to collaborate and co-creatively identify their vision and positioning (content). In fact, the main strength of this thesis lays on the constant engagement and involvement of iX employees in the creation, iteration, and validation of their identity.

The project has been carried out by following, in a broad sense, a typical ‘double-diamond’ process with a strong focus on the participation and inclusion of stakeholders in co-creation activities. For each of the four phases, different research methods and design activities were executed based on the problems and gaps identified on the way. The key activities for each phase are visualized *fig. 3*.

- 
 - IBM iX BeNeLux
 - IBM GBS BeNeLux
 - IBM iX Europe/USA
 - Competitor
- 
 - Market trends
 - Competitors
 - IBM
 - IBM iX
- 
 - Who is IBM iX
 - How do IBM iX work
 - What do IBM iX offer
- 
 - Brand and Corporate identity
 - Identity transfer
 - Vision
 - Positioning
- 
 - Vision workshop
 - Positioning workshop
- 
 - Iterations for the elaboration of iX vision and positioning
- 
 - Iterations for the ideation of the communication material

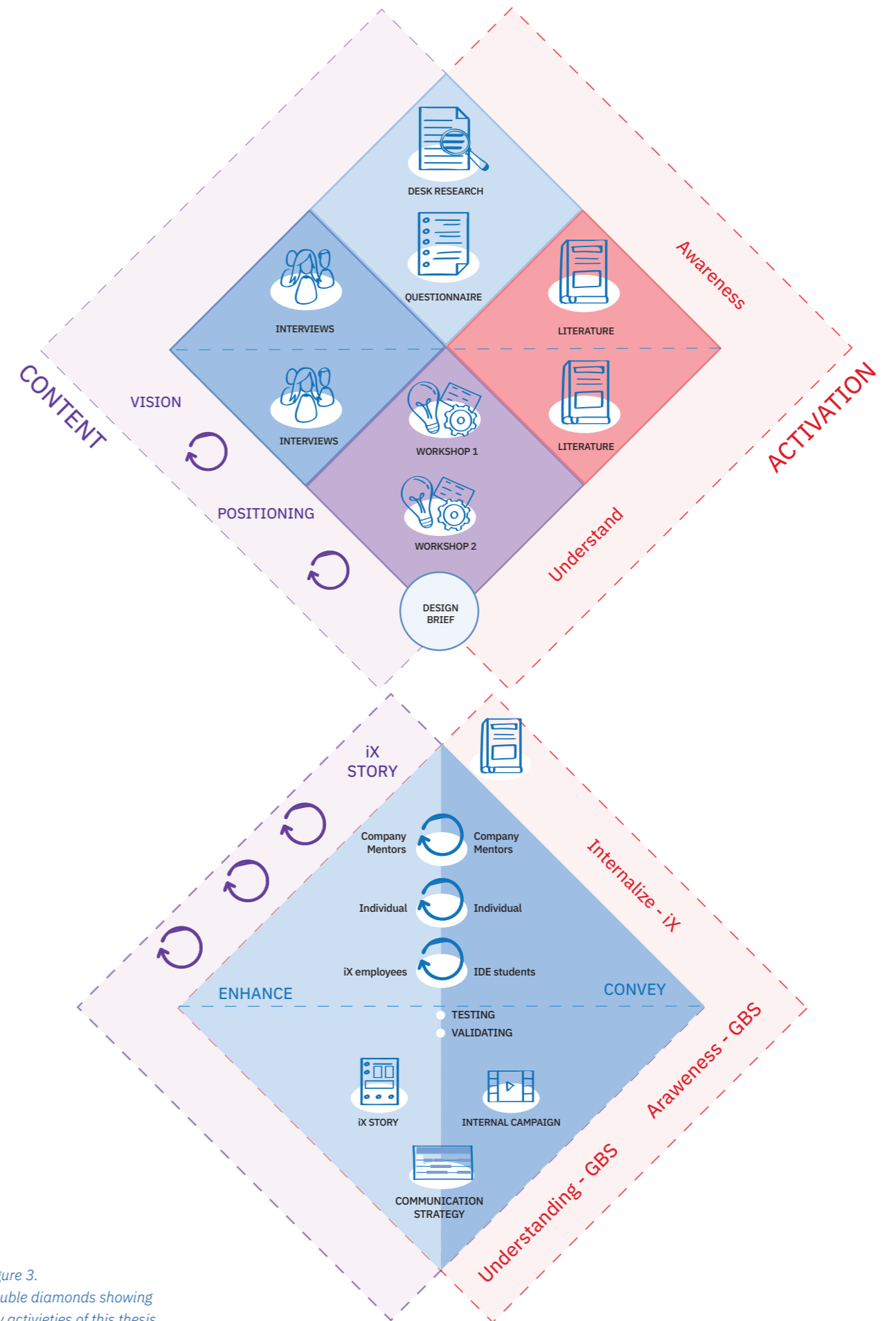



Figure 3. Double diamonds showing key activities of this thesis.

2. *ECOSYSTEM*

The background is a complex abstract composition of geometric shapes and lines. It features a large dark blue circle in the top left, a grid of squares in the middle right, and various smaller circles, triangles, and lines scattered throughout. The overall color palette is dominated by shades of blue, with accents of red, green, and yellow.

2. ECOSYSTEM

To give an overview of the project context, some background information is provided. The company IBM is introduced and, later on, the review dives into IBM iX which is the department where the project is realized.

2.1 IBM

IBM (International Business Machines) is one of the world's largest information technology companies, providing a wide spectrum of hardware, software and services offerings.

Over the years, IBM have shifted his focus from production of hardware to provider of business solutions. These solutions range from consulting, delivery and implementation services to enterprise software, systems and financing (Ahamed, Inohara, & Kamoshida, 2013). IBM believes that data is transforming industries and professions and the world is being reinvented in code, therefore the company is leveraging cognitive and cloud in all aspects of its business, from software to hardware to consulting, (IDC, 2017). Note that in 1960, Hardware and System Management made up 90% of IBM revenue while today it is less than 10% (Ibm, Handbook, & Confidential, 2018).

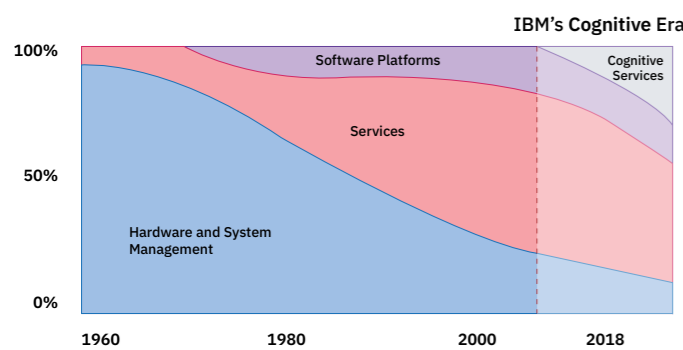


Figure 4. Graph showing IBM business from 1960 up to now.

IBM has got 6 Brands: Watson, Cloud, Services (GBS and GTS), Security, Research, IT Infrastructure. The project focuses on the Services area, in specific IBM GBS (Global Business Services) which IBM iX is part of (see fig. 5)

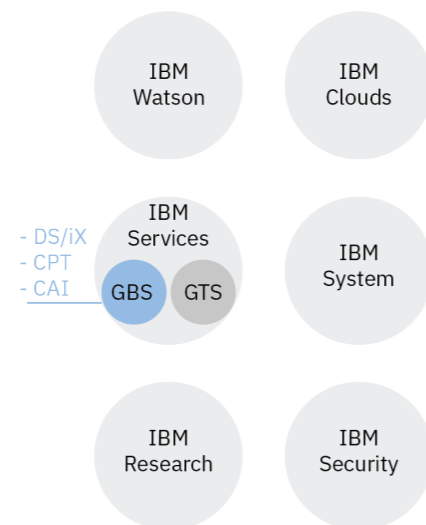


Figure 5. IBM brands.

2.1.1 IBM GBS

IBM provides consulting services across a wide range of topics, functions, and industries through IBM Global Business Services (GBS). IBM GBS is structured in three Growth Platforms which are illustrated in fig. 6. In the next page a brief explanation is provided for each of them.

- Digital Strategy & iX (DS&i)

Include 15,000 employees co-creating with clients and working at the intersection of strategy, creative vision, and transformational technology. Area of focus include business consulting, design, mobility, and customer experience (IBM, 2018).

- Cognitive Process Transformation (CPT)

20,000 data scientists, developers, and consultants focused on redesigning client's business processes to improve efficiency. Including application of AI, automation, advanced analytics, IoT, blockchain. (IBM, 2018).

- Cloud Application Innovation (CAI)

Almost 90,000 Cloud and Enterprise Application Consultants and Agile Developers building and transforming applications that run client's businesses. Leaders in Cloud Migration and Integration, Enterprise Automation, Agile Development [...] (IBM, 2018).

2.1.2 IBM iX

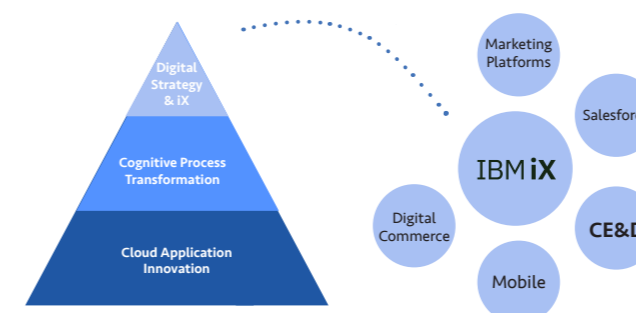


Figure 6. IBM Growth Platform and iX Practices.

In 2012 IBM realized that it was necessary to improve user experience (UX) across all of its products to enhance customer experience and grow its market presence (Burnette, 2016). Improving the UX for a huge corporation such as IBM is not as smooth as it might seem; to make

this work, as illustrated by Burnette (2016), the leadership team committed to take action throughout three areas of focus:

- People: planning to hire 1000 new designers within a five-year period.
- Places: building 30 new studios to encourage creative brainstorming, teamwork, etc.
- Practices: spreading around the new way of thinking and working.

The objective of this big transformation consisted in building a design culture by shifting from an engineering culture toward a more agile, human-centered approach. The organization currently has 1600 designers operating around the world and commit to incorporating design skills into different roles. With his own innovative Design Thinking framework, called Enterprise design Thinking, is also extending its design philosophy to its clients.

IBM's digital practices are underpinned by IBM iX. Several disciplines including Strategy and Design, Cognitive and Analytics, Mobile and IoT, and Customer Platforms are included in their consulting services. IBM iX design transformative experiences for clients, powered by cognitive, to create business results. (IDC, 2017). With the recent acquisitions of creative agencies Resource/Amirati, ecx.io, Aperto, and Bluewolf, IBM reinforced his digital capabilities.

IBM iX is defined as "the business design service within IBM Services" (IBM, 2018), whose Manifesto reports: "We work at the intersection of strategy, creativity, and technology to help clients to digitally reinvent businesses (...)". Unlike other departments, IBM iX focuses on the user to help clients deliver great digital experiences, and leveraging technology.

The IBM iX Brand Strategy include the following

elements as reported in the “IBM CMO Global Study Book”:

Brand Vision: To be the essential, global, business design partner™

Brand Mission: We imagine the businesses that will shape the world for years to come and then we help our clients make them real.

Positioning: With their Positioning: “your global business design partner” IBM iX wants to be the partner that help clients grow and change their business, by design.

Brand Equity: Our renegades and realists (culture) work at the intersection of progressive strategy (industry expertise), human-centered design (ways of working), and transformational technology (AI).

IBM iX BENELUX

As described in the previous section, IBM built a design-driven culture at scale. However, IBM is a global company and operates in very different markets which need diverse market positionings. In fact, while in North America IBM iX is very present, in Europe and, particularly, in BeNeLux,

2.1 CONCLUSIONS

IBM

IBM is one of the world’s largest information technology companies who shifted his focus from hardware to software to services. This might create confusion around the image customers have about the company.

IBM iX

In 2012 IBM went through a big transformation by shifting from an engineering culture towards a more agile, design culture. With it, IBM iX was

new differentiation strategies need to be taken into consideration. In the following paragraphs the ecosystem of IBM BeNeLux is explored and analyzed.

2.1.3 CLIENTS

IBM iX works with large organizations. For instance, in the Netherlands, the crown jewels of the Dutch market are the main target. The clients are ranging in industries from financial to government to consumer and industrial products. To exemplify, some important clients are ING Bank, KLM, Arcadis, Unilever, Heineken, Jumbo, Public sector etc. The strong, long-term relationships with the clients are vital for the business and this is reflected in the IBM statement “clients first” which represents the way IBM employees should approach projects. Clients are often engaged with IBM for very big and expensive projects, however this is often not the case in IBM iX. In fact, with the agile way of working and the increasing number of startups delivering consulting services, it is necessary to “start small” and bring immediate value to customers at a low cost.

born, which is the department in IBM whose aim it to design transformative experiences for clients, powered by cognitive, to create business results. In North America IBM iX is very successful, while in BeNeLux, because of the different market the company operates in, new differentiation strategies need to be undertaken.

Clients

The strong, long-term relationships with the clients are vital for the business as reflected in the IBM statement “clients first”.

2.2 COMPETITORS

In the section below the competitors of IBM iX are analyzed. The goal of this analysis is to identify how the competitive landscape looks like in order for the department to better position in the market. Two main sets of competitors are identified. On one side we have the traditional creative agencies while, on the other side, we see big consultancies whose digital division is rising fast. Only competitors that are considered relevant digital players in the BeNeLux market will be analyzed.

Agencies are consolidating, restructuring and shifting focus while consultancies are acquiring, hiring and expanding capabilities (IBM, Confidential). Since 2004 more than 70 design agencies have been acquired by consultancies and 50% of those have been acquired since 2015. (IBM, Confidential).

Some of the acquisitions keep their brand, while others become more integrated. (Chou & Naylor, 2018). At the same time, the lines between traditional strategic consultancies (like BCG or Bain) and implementation firms (such as IBM and Accenture) have increasingly blurred with the first started to build digital practices and the second strengthening their strategy groups.

Alison Clark, associate partner at iX, says: “We are competing, to a certain degree, shoulder to shoulder with traditional creative agencies, in certain areas. We don’t operate in the same way agencies do.”

2.2.1 CONSULTANCIES

DELOITTE DIGITAL

“Part business, part creative, part technology, one hundred percent digital”.

Deloitte Digital affirm to be able to provide end-to-end solutions starting from building the strategy to deliver the end solution and to follow up on the impact. Deloitte Digital acquired Brandfirst, an interactive marketing agency in Belgium boosting its design, digital and creative capabilities in the Benelux (IBM, Confidential).

Positioning

Current positioning is stated as ‘Creative Digital Consultancy’ as they assert they are transforming the digital journey in a way an agency or traditional consultancy alone cannot. They combine cutting-edge creativity with business and technology experience to define and deliver digital solutions (IBM, Confidential). Deloitte Digital aims to be the undisputed leader in digital consultancy in the Netherlands (Deloitte Digital, 2015). In april 2018 Deloitte Digital opened Deloitte Garage, a space for co-creation with clients. However, according to a Deloitte Digital employee that has been interviewed during the research, the company finds clients not aware of its design capabilities and the same situation seems to happen internally among departments.

ACCENTURE INTERACTIVE

“Part business consultancy, part creative agency and part technology powerhouse.”

Accenture is particularly active in manufacturing, financial services and retail. It is one of only three (others: IBM and KPMG) companies that have

formalized their AI practices (IBM, Confidential). Accenture formed Accenture Interactive in 2009. In the Netherlands, at the end of 2018, Accenture Interactive hired three industry leaders: one strategy director and two creative directors to strengthen its capabilities and to deliver more digital marketing services and brand experiences for clients (Marle et al., 2018). Accenture’s depth of industry knowledge and business strategy skills complement the new digital capabilities, providing clients with a holistic approach for their digital transformation journey (IBM, Confidential). After the agencies Droga 5 and Storm, the company is planning to spend more in acquisition throughout 2019.

Positioning

The current positioning displays the company as a “true digital experience agency” that transforms their clients’ customer experiences and create new ways to win in today’s experience-led economy. Accenture Interactive is a new type of agency, combining creativity with a strong foundation in technology (Gijs de Bruijn, strategy director).

CAPGEMINI INVENT

“Combines strategy, technology, data science and creative design to find solutions for the most complex business and technical challenges.”

Capgemini has merged its consulting, digital and creative businesses, and launched a new “digital innovation, consulting and transformation global business line” (Capgemini, 2018) called Capgemini Invent. The expertise of the new service line will be added to the ones of the recently acquired firms Liquidhub, Adaptive Lab, Idean, Fahrenheit 212 and Backlite. Company expects a lot from this

new line in The Netherlands as a strong digital and services oriented market (IBM, Confidential).

Positioning

A “new digital innovation, consulting” that helps businesses stay relevant and digital. Their aim is to combine the multi-disciplinary strengths of Capgemini Consulting and key expertise in technology and data science with recent acquisitions of customer engagement firm LiquidHub, innovation consultancy Fahrenheit 212, and its creative design agencies Idean, Adaptive Lab and Backelite.

COGNIZANT INTERACTIVE

“Engage Customers to Drive Growth”.

Cognizant recently acquired privately-held Mirabeau BV, a digital marketing and customer experience agency. The acquisition will allow Cognizant’s digital business capabilities to expand in the Netherlands and across Europe. Part of Cognizant Digital Business is Cognizant Interactive, which helps deliver end-to-end digital enterprise transformation, helping to envision and operate tomorrow’s products and services. Cognizant is building a network of physical spaces (Collaboratories) to help execute innovation processes. The first one was launched in New York, while the second recently opened in Amsterdam.

Positioning

“Digital experience agency with global scale” that offers the creative agility of an agency, with the scale and end-to-end capability of a global transformation partner. (Ones & Agencies, 2018)

2.2.2 AGENCIES

MIRABEAU BV

“We are a full-service digital agency. We help our clients provide their customers with the best possible experience. We combine design, technology and insights to create topnotch digital solutions centered around customer needs and behavior.” (About Mirabeau, 2019)

PUBLICIS (Digital Agency)

“We fuse startup thinking and agile methods to help established companies and the public sector increase their customer value, drive operational effectiveness and thrive in an evolving world.” (About PublicisSapient, 2019)

FABRIQUE (Digital Agency)

“We believe in the innovative power of design. Design as a power to change and to improve things, to create an impact. Not only to make things attractive or useful.” (Fabrique, 2019)

Q42 (Digital Production Agency)

“A strategic technology agency’, some say. ‘Nerds’, others say. We ourselves, for one. If we’re honest. We just really love to write good code.” (Q42, 2019)

MediaMonks (Digital Production Agency)

“MediaMonks is a global creative production company. We partner with clients across industries and markets to craft amazing work for leading businesses and brands.” (MediaMonks, 2019)

FRONTEER (Creative Strategy Firm)

“We apply collaborative innovation to accelerate positive impact. We create strategies and concepts. We do it fast and with momentum. Our way of working is efficient and effective. We organize great minds coming together and keep the pace in creation and decision making. This enables teams and companies to move faster” (Fronteer, 2019)

ISAAC (Digital Agency)

“Using proven technologies ISAAC solves complex online issues, amongst others in the field of e-commerce, e-finance, integration, artificial intelligence, deep learning and virtual reality. With a 100% focus on technology, usability, security we create value for our customer as well as the end-user.” (ISAAC, 2019).

CONSULTANCIES	STRATEGISTS
  	  
DIGITAL AGENCIES	TECHNOLOGISTS
    	   

Figure 7. Competitors categorized per type of business.

2.2 CONCLUSIONS

The competitor analysis shows how consultancies and agencies are strengthening their digital capabilities to be able to compete in the new market place.

Agencies are consolidating, restructuring and strengthening their capabilities to shift focus from creative work to a more integrated approach.

Consultancies are expanding their creative and digital capabilities through the acquisition of agencies. Some of the acquisitions keep their brand, while others become more integrated.

Insights

It is clear that many companies are adapting their offerings portfolio in order to meet market expectations. As a consequence, big players end up having very similar value propositions, which requires a clear and strong positioning for IBM iX in order to differentiate.

Next to that, IBM iX is competing with those that never competed with IBM before, therefore it is critical to show a new and fresh identity to differentiate (and show the shift from “old IBM” to “new IBM”) while leveraging, at the same time, the power of the entire IBM (p.o.d.).

STRATEGY HOUSES ex. BCG, Bain (not strong digital capabilities in the BeNeLux)	CONSULTANCIES ex. Deloitte, Accenture, Capgemini	AGENCIES ex. Publicis, Mirabeau
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop state of the art business strategies for the clients (make and deliver) Good sellers. Gaining digital and implementation capabilities through alliances and partnerships to be able to compete in the new market place. <p>IBM iX can win</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy is nowadays “a living and breathing thing”. IBM iX have an agile way of working (idea, testing, making MVP, learning, iterating). Supported by Digital Strategy department. Development capabilities of entire IBM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They all position in the same way and IBM iX, combining technology, creativity and strategy. They spend budget in advertising and promotion. Good sellers Great reputation <p>IBM iX can win</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> End to end capabilities with help of big IBM. Knowledge inhouse (IBM Research, Data scientists). Strong relationship with clients 	<p>IBM iX is not very good in competing with agencies as they come out from creative work, their driver is emotion and the wow effect.</p> <p>IBM iX can win</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect design through technology engineering expertise (IBM). End to end capabilities. Long lasting relationship with clients

2.3 MARKET TRENDS

Considering the big challenges that technology brought in the business world, it is important to describe relevant trends that can potentially influence the creation of an effective identity for IBM iX. Therefore the objective of the following paragraphs is to provide a clear overview of external factors that should be taken into consideration in the execution of this project.

2.3.1 EVOLUTION OF TECHNOLOGY

We live now in a world “where technological opportunities are cascading on society at an unprecedented speed” (Dell’Era et al., 2018). The impact of digital technologies completely changed the way people interact, entertain, communicate, educate, etc. Moreover, as consumers, we are becoming more demanding and our expectations from products, services, and brands are increasing (Hess, Benlian, Matt, & Wiesböck, 2016).

Customer expectations have placed high pressure on business leaders to change the way they set their strategies and run their organizations (IBM Institute for Business Value, 2014) and it is now a top priority for organizations to capture the value of digital technologies (Hess et al., 2016; Dell’Era et al., 2018). However, the new requirements to incorporate information and interactivity quickly implies complexity (IBM Institute for Business Value, 2014) and organization cannot rely on traditional innovation processes alone; a different mindset and process are necessary.

2.3.2 DESIGN THINKING, A NEW APPROACH TO INNOVATION

Organizations need to transform the enormous quantity of data in something that humans can understand (Dell’Era et al., 2018) and Design Thinking, with his capacity to simplify and humanize (Kolko, 2015), is booming in those industries where the digital transformation requires new competences to develop effective customer experiences (Dell’Era et al., 2018).

“Within the world of business, the design perspective is now being applied to a much wider range of challenges beyond the traditional concerns of product aesthetics and ease-of-use, including the search for innovative strategies, business models and organizational structures and processes” (Leavy, 2012).

Design Thinking is defined by Brown (2009) as “a human-centered approach to innovation that draws from the designer’s toolkit to integrate the needs of people, the possibilities of technology, and the requirements for business success”. Many leading companies have already embedded Design Thinking in their culture while others are looking for services providers that can help them use new digital technologies to drive strategic innovation and create measurable business outcomes (Dani, 2018).

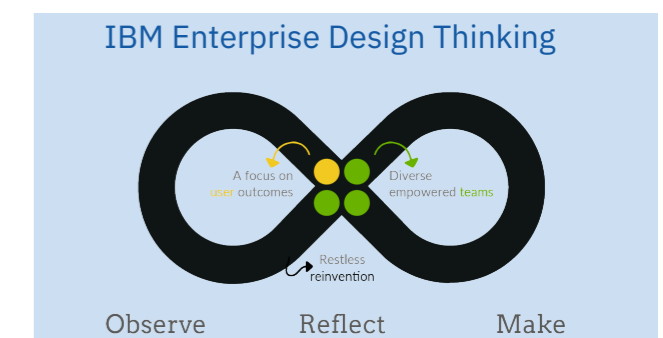


Figure 8. IBM Enterprise Design thinking framework.

2.3.3 RISE OF DIGITAL CONSULTANCIES

To keep up with companies' needs, management consulting firms and IT services like Accenture, Deloitte, KPMG, and IBM, have been launching new digital consulting divisions and acquiring design firms (Desai, 2016). In the last few years, Deloitte acquired Doblin, Accenture picked up design firm Fjord, and McKinsey purchased Lunar (Kolko, 2015). And not to mention, BCG acquired Strategic & Creative, KPMG bought Cynergy while Cognizant got Cadient and Mirabeau and so on.

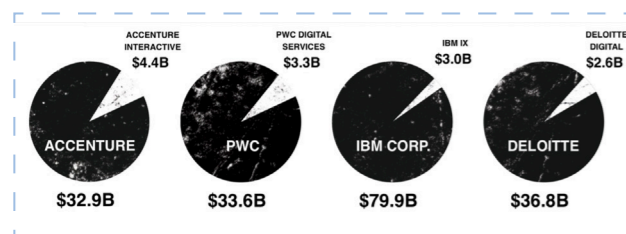


Figure 8. Analysis of 2016 worldwide revenue.

Source: Ad Age Datacenter.

CO-CREATION

Another important step in this transition towards the use of design thinking in business contexts is to empower the user as an active collaborator (Leavy, 2012). This trend can be observed as leading service providers, like IBM, are increasingly opening onshore client innovation centers labeled as “studios” or “labs” to collaborate with clients to design and develop new solutions with a focus on end users (Dani, 2018).

NEW IMAGE FOR CONSULTANCIES

As said previously, consultancies are now competing with digital agencies, therefore they need to change the image clients have about them. However, consultancies often operate in the shadows, in fact, their work occurs either behind

the scenes or as a part of big client engagements. Therefore it is difficult for them to draw the attention of the market. Moreover, consultancies rarely publicize big client wins and they usually get new projects by relying on existing relationships.

2.3.4 SERVITIZATION

THE CASE OF IBM

As mentioned previously IBM have moved from production of hardware to providers of business solutions. In fact in the early 1990s, Gerstner, CEO of the time, realized that the market was shifting and a transformation of the company business was needed. The company kept growing and in the fiscal year 2011 his revenue of \$107 billion came for 90% from software, services and financing (Ahamed, Inohara, & Kamoshida, 2013).

EFFECTS ON COMPANY IMAGE

The transition from product manufacturing to a service-focused total offering involves various organizational changes, new processes, and strategies (Ahamed et al., 2013). Particularly important is the marketing perspective, in fact, the company image becomes extremely important when offering services (Gebauer, Gustafsson, & Witell, 2011). Especially due to the intangible nature of services, a corporate image seems to be an essential factor for the customers to evaluate the service offerings (Stremersch, Wuyts, & Frambach, 2001). Moreover, customers might lack confidence in the product manufacturer's ability to deliver high-quality services (Brown et al., 2011).

According to the study conducted by Nenonen, Ahvenniemi, & Martinsuo (2014) some of the risks experienced by manufacturing firms are in association with “who they are”, i.e. the company

identity, and their customer relationship.

This suggests that product companies, who are transitioning towards service providers, should invest in branding activities to enhance company credibility (Shankar, Berry, and Dotzel, 2009).

2.3 CONCLUSIONS

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

The impact of digital technologies changed the way people interact. To respond to new customer demands, organizations need to transform data in something that humans can understand. Design Thinking is booming in those industries where the digital transformation requires new competences to develop effective customer experiences.

DESIGN APPROACH

As a consequence management consulting firms and IT services like Accenture, Deloitte, KPMG, and IBM, have been launching new digital consulting divisions and acquiring design firms to support companies in their digital transformation path. Service providers, IBM included, are also increasingly opening client innovation centers labeled as “studios”, “labs”, “garage” to collaborate with clients and co-create solutions.

NEW POSITIONING FOR CONSULTANCIES

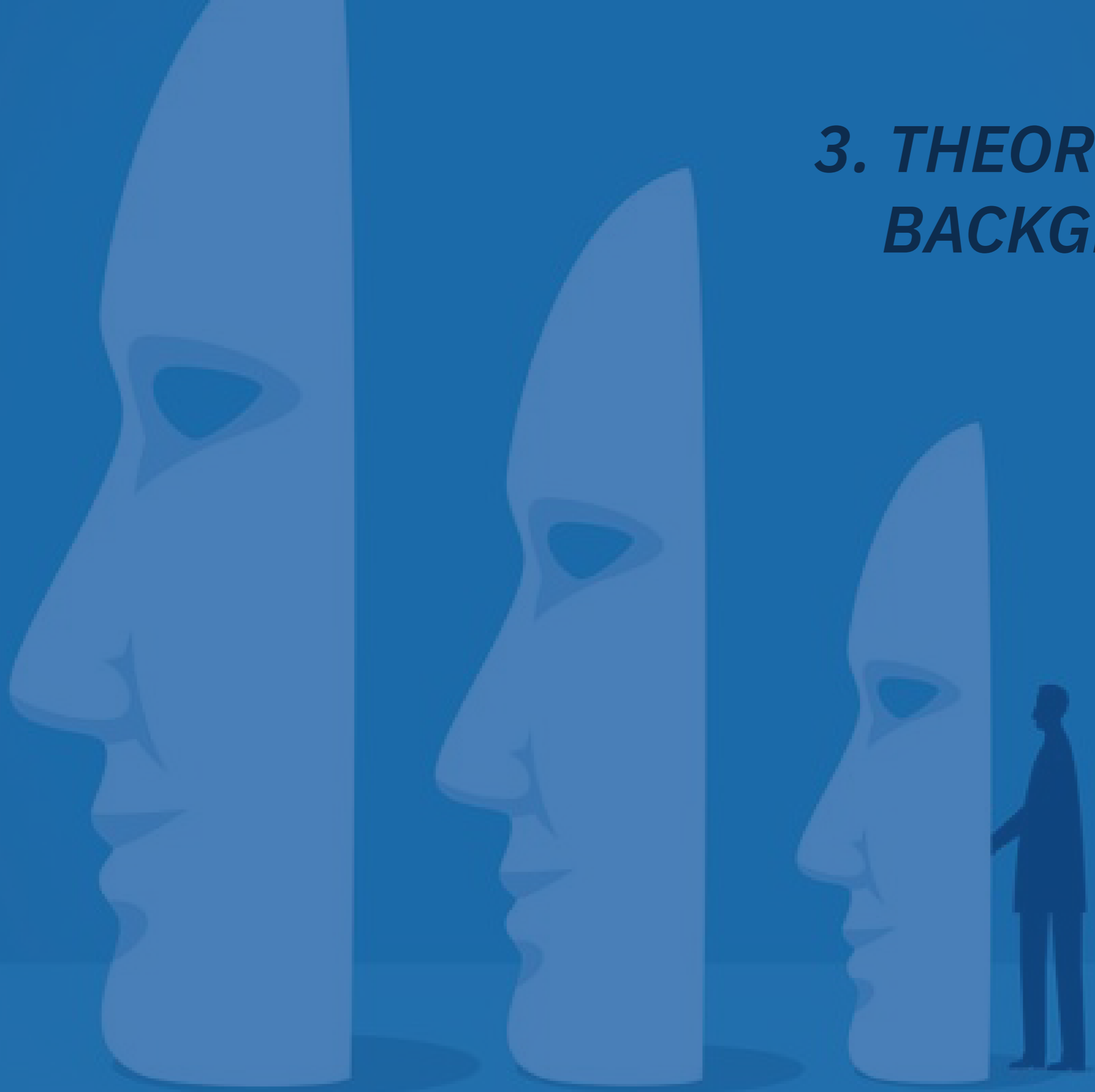
With these new digital and design capabilities, consultancies are now competing with digital agencies, therefore they need to change the image

clients have about them. In fact, corporate image seems to be an essential factor for the customers to evaluate service offerings. This is particularly the case for a company like IBM, which has shifted from product manufacturer to providers of business solutions as customers might lack confidence in their ability to deliver high-quality services.

Insights

Consultancies are incorporating digital capabilities and applying design thinking to turn technology into value for customers. These new type of consultancies (like IBM iX) are directly competing with digital agencies. It is, therefore, necessary for them to have a new positioning that communicates the right image to stakeholders. This is particularly the case for IBM that struggles with shifting from a product manufacturing company to a service provider and from a technology-oriented organization to a digital and strategic consultancy. This stresses the importance of co-creating a new positioning for IBM iX.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND



3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter presents a literature review which highlights the importance of a shared vision in order to enhance the identity of an organization and for it to position and differentiate in the marketplace. The findings will help to validate the assumptions that have been formulated at the beginning of this thesis. Moreover some knowledge on identity transfer have been gathered to help understand how to involve and activate iX employees during the process. In general the purpose of this section is to analyze to the following areas:

- a. Explore the term “identity”.
- b. Gain information about the process of identity transfer within organizations.
- c. Investigate how the vision and positioning can help enhance and convey corporate identity.

3.1 WHAT IS AN IDENTITY

In this paragraph the term “identity” will be defined and explored. The concepts of Brand Identity and Corporate Identity have been analyzed in order to create a shared understanding of the term as used in this thesis.

The term “identity” has been explored across many disciplines, such as in philosophy literature where a lot has been written about its nature (Balmer, 2008). Identities, although they may appear complicated and multidimensional, are considered important to comprehend gender, personality, religion, nationalism as well as corporations, etc. (Balmer, 2008). According to literature reviewed during the development of this thesis, many different terms and definitions of “identity” exist. In particular, some overlaps can be noticed in the marketing and management literature regarding the terms

corporate identity, brand identity, product identity, corporate brand identity and many more. To simplify, only the terms brand identity and corporate identity will be reviewed.

3.1.1 BRAND IDENTITY

“Brand identity refers to the perception of a particular product, service or idea a company or individual business owner provides. In creating a brand identity, the goal is to distinguish your product, service or idea from similar products, services and ideas from other businesses.” (Thibodeaux, 2017)

Several definitions of brand identity can be found in the literature (Manole & Bier, 2018). The term has been defined by Aaker (1991) as the “the sum of brand meanings expressed as a product, organization, symbol and person”, while Perera et al. (2009, pag 208) consider identity as an important tool for communication (internal and external) that specifies forces, values and vision of a brand. Moreover, brand identity is considered a

differentiator factor (Kapferer, 2004) that can help “achieve a certain dominance over competitors” (Roy & Banerjee, 2014). As a consequence, the communication of the brand identity, helps strengthen the relationship between the company and stakeholders (de Chernatony, 2001).

3.1.2 CORPORATE IDENTITY

“Corporate identity is similar to brand identity. However, corporate identity refers to the perception of the entire company, not just one idea, product or service the company provides. One business may have many different brand identities wrapped up in its overall corporate identity.” (Thibodeaux, 2017)

In the last decade has been observed an increase of interest from marketing scholars on the term corporate identity (Balmer & Wilson, 2016). There is a growing consensus among academics that this concept refers to an organization’s attributes and answers to the questions “what an organization is” (Balmer, 1995), what it stands for and what it does (Topalian, 1984). Lambert (1989) defines corporate identity as the projection of “who you are, what you do and how you do it”.

A corporate identity is considered by Gray and Balmer (1998) as “the reality and uniqueness of an organization” and, therefore, it represents the way the company presents itself to its stakeholders (Ingenhoff & Fuhrer, 2010). Recently, the corporate identity landscape has become more active due to the effect of technology in the market place. To mention the rise of mergers, spin-offs and acquisitions that have led companies to renew their identities by name or business focus (Greyser & Balmer, 2002)

3.1.3 IDENTITY MODELS

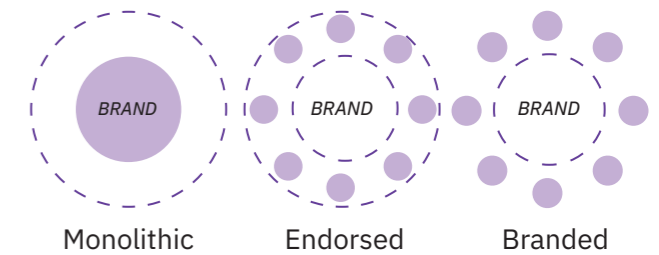


Figure 9. The three identity models suggested by Lambert (1989).

We can consider three models of corporate identity: Monolithic, Endorsed and Branded. Below an explanation and example is given per each identity type according to Lambert (1989).

- Monolithic, which is characterized by a single dominant name, visual style, personality and organizational purpose. A monolithic brand architecture capitalizes on deep, established customer loyalty. A good example is Google and Google Maps or FedEx and FedEx Express.

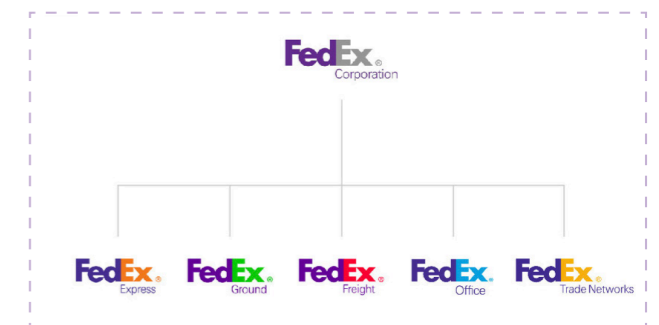


Figure 10. FedEx example of Monolithic identity.

- Endorsed - a grouping of distinctive corporate identities, each of which benefit from their association with or endorsement from the parent brand. The synergy between them is often mutually beneficial, as well. Think of Apple and iPhone.

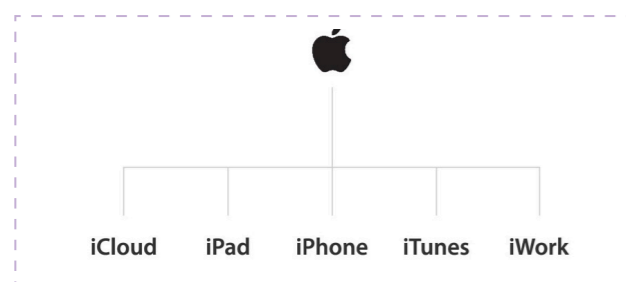


Figure 11. Apple example of Endorsed identity.

• Branded, which is usually applicable in consumer goods industries. Here the visible identities are branded products produced by companies which appear unrelated, but which belong to a single group that customers usually aren't aware of. We see this in Unilever and Dove.

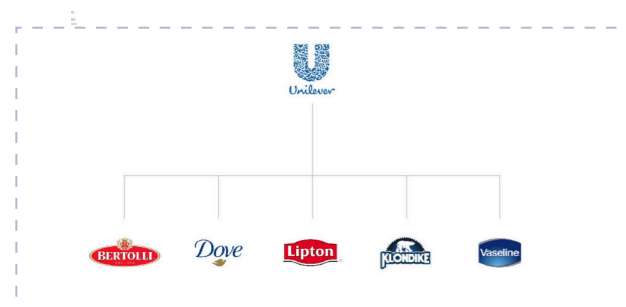


Figure 12. Unilever example of Endorsed identity.

3.1.4 THE CASE OF IBM iX

Lambert (1989) refers to IBM as an example of corporation which communicate a single monolithic identity world-wide. However, based on the above definitions, it is possible to assert that IBM iX falls in between the Monolithic and Endorsed model. In fact, the new branded division of IBM is characterized by its own logo and visual identity, but it is still strictly related to the bigger IBM name. Likewise Matt Candy (Global Leader of IBM iX) stresses the importance for IBM to have a new and fresh identity to differentiate from new competitors (such as agencies) and show the shift from “old IBM” to “new IBM”. At the same time, it

is fundamental to be seen as part of GBS as “the power is in the entire IBM”.

To conclude, it is important, in all these models, that the organization has a clear structure and direction to avoid blurred identities and confusion in employees and stakeholders' minds (Lambert, 1989).

“[...] By effectively managing its corporate identity, an organization can build an understanding and commitment among its diverse stakeholders.” (The international corporate identity group's (ICIG) statement on corporate identity)

3.1.4 CORPORATE AND BRAND IMAGE

Another term that is worth mentioning is ‘corporate image’ which is considered, in this thesis, as the stakeholders “immediate mental perception of the organization” (Balmer 2001, p. 254). A company can improve its reputation by positively influence the transition from identity to image, by considering what is important for its stakeholders (Ingenhoff & Fuhrer, 2010). By doing so it is possible to differentiate from the competition. In facts “an important prerequisite for a corporate reputation to contribute to business survival and success is that it offers a distinct advantage in relation to the organization's external environment” (Balmer, 1997).

Analogously, as for corporate image, a brand image is described as the most efficient way to communicate with stakeholders, “revealing the significance of a brand identity” (Kapferer, 2000). Roy & Banerjee (2014) refer to brand image as the

perception of a brand which is constructed during the process of decoding brand identity elements, therefore it is possible to assert that brand image is a true outcome of brand identity (Janonis et al.,

2007). A well-established brand usually has a well-defined brand image. To give an example IBM 's strong image is linked to characteristics such as traditional, smart, and responsible (Aaker 1997).

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter the term “identity” has been defined from the perspective of branding and corporate literature in order to create a common understanding of the term.

Corporate identity is the projection of “who you are, what you do and how you do it” and it represents the way a company presents itself to its stakeholders.

Brand identity is considered a differentiator factor that can help achieve dominance over competitors.

Corporate and brand image is the stakeholders “immediate mental perception of the organization” and it reveals the significance of a brand identity.

Identity Models

There are three models of corporate identity:

- Monolithic: Google and Google Maps
- Endorsed: Apple and iPhone
- Branded: Unilever and Dove

Insights

• In any type of identity it is important that the organization has a clear structure and direction to avoid blurred identities and confusion in employees and stakeholders' minds

IBM iX falls in between the Monolithic and Endorsed model, in fact, the newly branded division of IBM is characterized by its own logo and visual identity, while it is still strictly related and supported by the bigger IBM reputation.

• The rise of mergers, spin-offs, and acquisitions have led companies to renew their identities by name or business focus

IBM also needs a new identity and, with iX, it can show a new and fresh image to stakeholders to differentiate from new competitors (such as agencies).

Because of the particular case of iX and this thesis assignment, the terms brand identity and corporate identity will be used interchangeably in the following chapters.

3.2 IDENTITY* TRANSFER

** Because of the particular case of iX identity, in the following chapters, the terms “brand” and “identity” will be used interchangeably.*

As the goal of this thesis is to enhance and convey iX identity, it is interesting to explore the mechanisms of identity transfer. Although in literature there is little understanding on the topic (Tarnovskaya & de Chernatony, 2011), some interesting insights and perspectives have been identified. Below a review of the relevant theory is presented.

3.2.1 B2B CONTEXT

BRAND EQUITY

Before presenting the literature about the role of identity within a B2B context, it is important to define the term Brand Equity which “denote an intangible market-based relational asset that reflects bonds between the brand and its customers” (Christodoulides & Chernatony, 2010). According to Leek & Christodoulides (2011) the B2B context is characterized by a continuum of relationships between suppliers and buyers and the focus consists in developing long term relationships. In addition, the purchase process seems to be more rational than in product brands. That is why brand equity is gaining significant importance in a B2B context (Ohnemus, 2009). IBM, together with companies such as Cisco and Intel have managed to build brand equity and they are considered among the most valuable brands (Leek & Christodoulides, 2011). Moreover some of the benefits of brand equity also include the

“willingness to extend the brand’s goodwill to other product lines and willingness to recommend the brand to others” (Bendixen et al., 2004).

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Baumgarth & Schmidt (2010) consider interpersonal communication a critical aspect to build and improve relationships with B2B representatives. Likewise, Lynch and de Chernatony (2004) have specified the relevance of effective personal brand communication both within the organization and externally. Nonetheless, in literature, there is a lack of empirical research that analyzes the nature and impact of personal communication in business-to-business brands. In general, it is possible to argue that in B2B context the image established in the mind of the consumer is formed by the identity that the brand-owner emanates during interpersonal communication rather than external media as in B2C branding strategy. (Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010)

NEED FOR INTERNAL IDENTITY-BUILDING

Since it is not possible to control every interaction between employees and customers/clients, it is necessary that the workforce properly internalize the brand as argued by Baumgarth & Schmidt (2010) argue: “the ‘anchorage’ of the brand in the hearts and minds of the workforce is one important building block for a strong business-to-business brand”. Even though little empirical research has been carried out about ‘internal branding’ in the business-to-business environment., it is evident that internal identity-building is a fundamental driver of organization brand equity (Burmman, Benz, & Riley, 2009).

3.2.2 WHAT IS INTERNAL BRANDING

The literature on internal branding suggests that there are still many diverse and fragmented conceptualizations of the term (Burmman and Zeplin, 2005; Morhart et al., 2009), thus there is a consensus among researchers that, yet, there is no a well-accepted definition and understanding of internal branding (Saleem & Iglesias, 2016). Although many different definitions exist, internal branding is generally considered as a process to facilitate the internalization of brand values by employees (Morhart et al., 2009) that, in turn, are able to deliver value to stakeholders (Manolis et al., 2001). However, there seems to be inconsistencies also regarding aim and processes of internal branding (Saleem & Iglesias, 2016). Relevant definitions of internal branding are listed in the next page (from list in Saleem & Iglesias, 2016).

“The key role of internal branding in organizations is to ensure that employees transform espoused brand messages into brand reality for customers and other stakeholders.” (Asha and Jyothi 2013)

“...A process to align staff’s behaviour with a corporate brand’s identity”. (Vallaster & De Chernatony, 2006)

“...Engagement of employees in the brand, leading to their representation of brand qualities to outside constituents”. (Aurand et al.)

“Internal branding refers to three things: communicating the brand effectively to the employees; convincing them of its relevance; and successfully linking every job in the organisation to delivery of the ‘brand essence’”. (Bergstrom et al., 2002)

INTERNAL BRANDING AND IDENTITY

The process through which stakeholders perceive the company’s identity and image is defined as corporate communication (Balmer & Gray, 2007; Vallaster & De Chernatony, 2006). Besides the communication aspect, it is necessary to align individual behaviors with the espoused brand identity, which is, according to Tosti & Stotz (2001) one of the aims of internal brand building. Brand internalization is described, in the marketing literature, in terms of alignment of employee’s attitudes and behaviors with brand identity (Keller, 1999; Bergstrom et al., 2002; de Chernatony and Cottam, 2006).

However, brand internalization doesn’t come without challenges, since often, especially when a company introduces a new brand (as in the case of IBMand iX), it happens that people in the organization have different perspectives on the brand identity and customer value proposition. Therefore it is necessary to create shared understanding and commitment among employees. Researchers have identified different frameworks and approaches for brand internalization, which is a long process that requires several stages of understanding but also planning, commitment, resources, and time (Tosti & Stotz, 2001).

3.2.3 EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

In all the theory reviewed for this thesis, it is clear how the involvement of managers and employees is a critical step for understanding and acting upon the organization's identity. De Chernatony & Cottam (2006) specify that all employees should work on the brand in an integrated manner to encourage consistency. In particular, services branding seems to be more dependent on employees than product branding and it is essential that all staff understand the brand to facilitate the link between internal and external brand identity.

WORKSHOPS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING

De Chernatony & Cottam (2006) explain how internal workshops with staff could be used to spark understanding of the brand and clarify the desired interpretation. Moreover, it is important to run these workshops with people from different departments as it helps employee take responsibility and ownership towards the brand. Similarly, de Chernatony (2001, p. 90) states that brand often die because staff from diverse departments pull against each other.

"[...] By effectively managing its corporate identity, an organization can build an understanding and commitment among its diverse stakeholders. This can be manifested in an ability to attract and retain customers and employees [...]. (The international corporate identity group's (ICIG) statement on corporate identity)

3.2.4 FRAMEWORKS FOR IDENTITY TRANSFER

A review of corporate and branding literature showed a lack of a widely agreed framework to help define and align corporate brand identity (Urde, 2013). Some have been identified and presented in the next page.

FRAMEWORK 1: ANALYSIS AND TOP-DOWN APPROACH

According to Tosti & Stotz (2001), internal branding starts with the "translation of the brand and its promise into the brand character", which is the way the company wants stakeholders to perceive it. Therefore, the authors think that a first step to be taken in brand internalization consists in the analysis of the brand from an internal perspective. This analysis includes activities such as clarifying the promise of value to the customers, translating the brand character into values and analyzing current practices to determine if they match with the brand promise. Once the brand is analyzed, the author uses a top-down approach to brand internalization. He stresses the importance of involving senior managers at first, by communicating them the results of the analysis and developing ownership of the brand. With the use of workshops and trainings his process aims at reaching all the employee of the organization step by step.

Below the main steps of the framework are listed:

- Brand analysis • Senior management orientation • Mid-management involvement • Enrolling employees
- Tactical planning sessions • Brand camps • Support, assessment, and review

FRAMEWORK 2: TOWARDS BRAND ETHOS

Chernatony and Cottam (2006) present a framework of employees' brand understanding within a services organization in four stages:

- Codified brand • Comprehended brand
- Interpreted brand • Brand ethos

These stages allow for increased understanding and commitment by employees. The author divides the process in two main stages. The first one is driven by corporate control and includes steps in which the brand is either "codified" or "comprehended", depending on the degree of employee understanding. The second happens when the brand is internalized by employees and interpreted in their job roles. This stage ends with brand ethos, that takes place when employee behaviour becomes automatically "on brand".

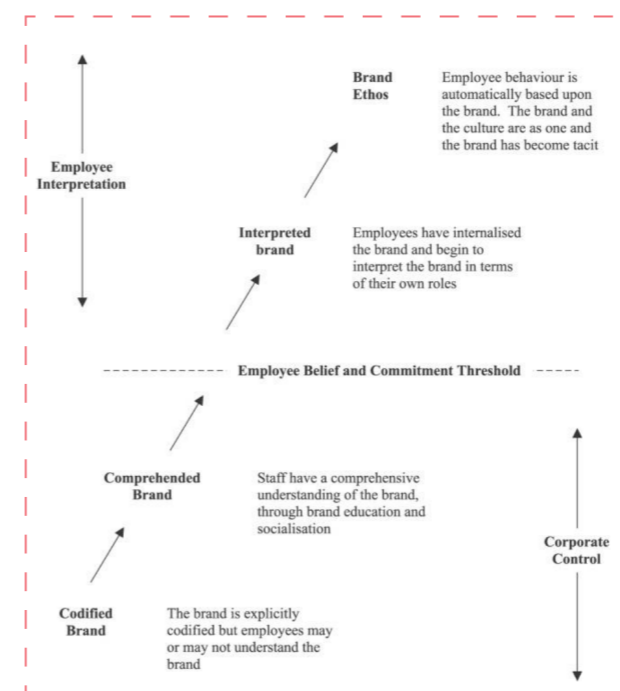


Figure 13. Framework by Chernatony and Cottam (2006)

FRAMEWORK 3: ACROSS CULTURES

Branding is considered a social and interactive process which is influenced by its cultural contexts (Cayla and Arnould, 2008; Glynn, 2000). The belief that culture influences the development of shared brand understanding by employees has been confirmed by managerial practice (Orlando, 2000), however there is a lack of empirical and theoretical research for analysing employee interactions in different cultural contexts (Vallaster, 2004). Tarnovskaya & de Chernatony (2011) performed a qualitative study about the brand internalization of IKEA across different cultures where they illustrate how brand-internalization takes place through sense-making* and sense-giving** processes that occur in different cultural contexts. They argue that these processes affect employees' common understanding of their brand which could lead to clearer identities. By taking Chernatony and Cottam (2006)'s framework as reference, the authors formulated their findings in a framework whose steps are the following:

- Brand conceptualization: interpret the brand through collection of information
- Brand comprehending: consists in understanding the brand, important aspects are culture and values.
- Brand activation I: consisting in enacting the brand through interpretation for local actors
- Brand activation II: when local staff is able to build their own identity to communicate to customers

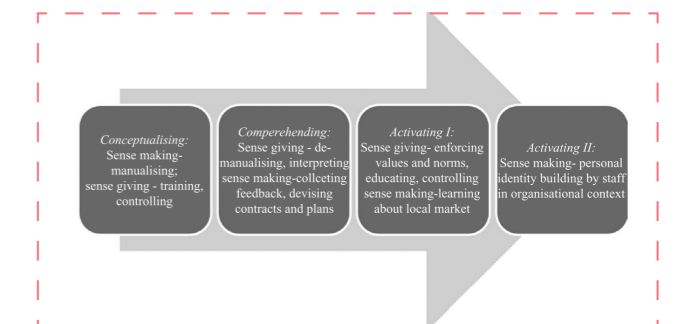


Figure 14. Framework by Tarnovskaya & de Chernatony (2011)

*Sense making: "the way people construct their sense of reality in contrast with discovering what is already there"

**Sense giving: "the process of attempting to influence the meaning construction of other parties towards a preferred redefinition of organisational reality" (Tarnovskaya & de Chernatony, 2011).

FRAMEWORK 4: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

Urde (2013) provides a theoretical and practical framework to the describing, defining and aligning of corporate brand identity. According to the researcher there are nine elements which contribute to the definition of a corporate brand's identity, divided in internal and external components. In particular, the internal components include vision and mission, culture and competences of the organization.

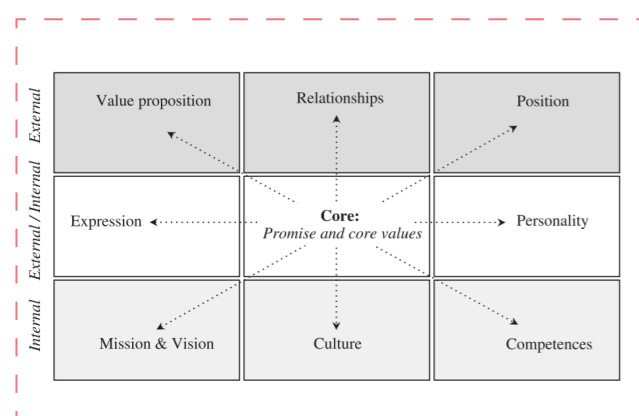


Figure 15. Framework by Urde (2013)

Senge (1990) also considers mission and vision as sources of commitment in the definition of a corporate brand identity. Likewise Halliburton & Bach (2013) indicates corporate values as influencing corporate behavior which, in turn, impacts upon the corporate identity. Moreover the researchers consider corporate values as important in formulating the corporate mission and provides the basis for the corporate vision.

3.2 CONCLUSIONS

Since the purpose of this thesis is to enhance and convey iX identity, this chapter explored the mechanisms of identity transfer within organizations.

B2B

The focus of B2B branding consists in developing long term relationships between suppliers and buyers. Therefore the brand image is formed by the identity that the brand-owner emanates during interpersonal communication with customers, rather than through external media as in B2C brands. Thus, it is necessary that the workforce properly internalize the brand.

Internal branding

Despite the several definition of the term, internal branding seems to be very related to identity transfer, below some definitions:

- it facilitates brand internalizations by employees
- it aligns employees' behaviour with the identity
- it engages employee with the brand
- it helps communicates the brand effectively

Employee involvement is a critical step in identity transfer and everybody in the organization should work on the brand in an integrated manner, especially in services organizations where employee understanding is fundamental in the relationship with clients. Many researchers resort to the use of **workshops** to spark employee engagement and understanding.

Researchers have identified different frameworks and approaches for brand internalizations. Some of them have been identified and described because considered relevant, in whole or in part, for the iX identity case.

For each framework, the main takeaway for iX are described:

F1: BRAND ANALYSIS AND TOP-DOWN APPROACH

In order to help iX, the brand should be analyzed from an internal perspective, through activities such as clarifying the promise of value to the customers, translating the brand into values, analyzing current practices.

F2: TOWARDS BRAND ETHOS

Internalization of a brand is a long process driven by increased understanding and commitment by employees (Brown and Burt, 1992).

F3: ACROSS CULTURES

Brand-internalization across cultures (as in IBM iX BeNeLux) can be interpreted in terms of identity re-creation by employees rather than its transfer.

F4: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

Both external and internal factors are relevant in describing, defining and aligning corporate brand identity. Including vision and mission, culture and competencies of the organization (department in the case of iX).

3.3 VISION

Below the term vision is explored, together with the term mission, since both appear to be very related to the communication of a corporate identity.

The term vision has yet to be defined in a generally agreed-upon manner (Kantabutra & Avery, 2002). Campbell & Yeung (1991) define vision as the “view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization”. A vision is also described as a framework for a company strategy that provides a strategic direction on how a company should move from the current reality to a desired future (Mirvis, Googins, & Kinnicutt, 2010). Collins and Porras (1997) and Quigley (1994) have defined vision as the sum of an organization’s mission, values, goals, and strategy.

3.3.1 VISION AS MOTIVATIONAL DRIVER

Likewise a vision can represent a motivational driver for employees (Mirvis et al., 2010) as it has the potential to jump-start the desirable future by catalyzing people into action (Nanus, 1992) by providing a concrete way to understand the meaning and purpose of a business (Fernandes, 2016). However Levin (2000) suggests that the purpose of an organization’s existence is provided by its mission, while the vision provides a the direction.

3.3.2 IMPORTANCE OF VISION

Despite the multiple definitions of the term, a coherent vision has the power to nourishes the organization’s culture, the dedication and ownership of company employees (Calabretta, Gemser, & Karpen, 2016). According to Finkelstein, Harvey, & Lawton (2008), in order to be effective, a vision should satisfy three essential conditions that consist of being comprehensive, inclusive and dynamic. However, a shared vision is not always part of daily practice in companies and even large organizations often fail to define and embed a meaningful vision across the organization (Calabretta et al., 2016). As mentioned in the previous study, the need for companies to innovate constantly has never been greater, due to the complex and dynamic conditions in which they compete today (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009; Tellis et. al., 2009), therefore, to properly innovate, an organization need to have employees that understand and are engaged with the vision.

3.3.3 VISION and mission

Kantabutra & Avery (2002) points out that much confusion exists between the terms vision and mission. To align understanding we consider mission as a statement that describe who the organization is and what it does. It commonly defines what business the company is in, its beliefs, the markets and customers it serves, and the unique value it contributes to society (Levin, 2000). Vision, mission, and values have been described by Senge (1991) as follow:

1. Vision is the “what” and represents the picture of the future we seek to create.
2. Mission is the “why” and it describes the purpose of the organization.
3. Values are the ‘How’ we act to achieve our vision.

3.3.4 VISION AND IDENTITY

A close relationship between vision and identity has been recognized in the review of the literature. According to Yamauchi, 2001, a company’s identity can be communicated through mission and vision statements as they are considered to be an important channel to communicate organizations’ values and norms (Leuthesser and Kohli, 1997) to consumers, shareholders, and employees (Ingenhoff & Fuhrer, 2010).

As discussed in chapter 2.1, academics consider corporate identity to represent an organization’s attributes and answers to the questions “what an organization is” (Balmer, 1995). Specifically, corporate identity is the projection of “who you are, what you do and how you do it” (Lambert, 1989). In line with these definitions it is possible to argue that vision, mission and values - representing respectively the what, why and how of an organization’s business - are extremely interconnected and correlated with company identity.

During the project an internal vision will be created together with iX employees to help define their identity and boost engagement.

3.4 POSITIONING

3.4.1 WHAT IS IT

Positioning is considered to be the process that aims at distinguishing a company from its competitors to become the preferred company in a market (DiMingo, 1988). Moreover, according to DiMingo (1988), positioning is not only the process of understanding what the market wants and identifying company and competitors’ strengths and weaknesses, but it also involves forging a distinctive corporate identity.

3.4.2 IDENTITY TO DIFFERENTIATE

As we have seen in previous chapters, it is possible to argue that an organization’s corporate identity creates a sense of individuality by differentiating the brand within the marketplace (de Chernatony and Harris, 2000, p. 268; Chun and Davies, 2001; van Riel and Balmer, 1997) and securing competitive advantage for the company (Balmer & Wilson, 2016). Balmer (2001, p. 254) also describes corporate identity as the “mix of elements which gives organizations their distinctiveness” and these elements can represent advantages in selling products and services, if managed more effectively than by competitors (Lambert, 1989). Hence, a clear and unique positioning appears to be an important element for the identity of an organization.

This concept is also emphasized in the branding literature; according to Kapferer (2004) identity is what makes a brand different from others. Therefore a brand with a strong identity ensures

competitive advantage (Roy & Banerjee, 2014). Thus, it is evident that, through the facets of brand identity, marketers can create images for their brand in the mind of customers, and in order to do so, it is necessary to create a distinct position to make them unique and differentiate from the competition (Roy & Banerjee, 2014).

3.4.3 POSITIONING IN SERVICES ORGANIZATION

Important to mention that brand seems to play a more critical role in terms of differentiation in services organizations rather than for products, because of the intangible nature of services (De Chernatony & Cottam, 2006). Berry (2000) argues that the services companies with very strong brands also demonstrate an attentive

effort to be different and unique. According to Baumgarth & Schmidt (2010) the fundamental assumption behind the brand identity concept lays in the fact that a strong identity allows to create a sustainable differentiation and to enhance customer's identification with the brand. Despite the recognized importance of positioning to differentiate, there are many corporate brands that don't have value proposition; this happens for stable and large firms that can be trusted to deliver adequate services Aaker (2004, p. 14).

This is the case of a company like IBM, which portrays a very clear strong image in the mind of customers. However, in the current market change, this strong reputation appears to be an obstacle for iX which struggles to position its new and fresh personality.

3.3 - 3.4 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter highlights how the terms vision, mission and positioning are correlated with an organization identity.

Vision is considered to be relevant in identity enhancement because:

- It helps understand the "what" of a business
- It has the power to motivate employees
- It provides a strategic direction for the future
- It is directly connected with "mission" and "values"

Positioning is, by nature, integral part of corporate identity building, in fact identity is described as "mix of elements which gives organizations their distinctiveness". To be able to differentiate, an identity need to create a distinct position for the organization.

It is recommended to build a positioning to help the iX department to enhance and convey their identity both within IBM and in the market place.

3.5 ELABORATION OF THE THEORY

Based on the insights from the previous research chapters, a process to enhance and convey iX identity is proposed and discussed below.

From the knowledge gathered from the theoretical framework in the previous chapters, it has been possible to draft a process for identity transfer which has been applied to the case of iX. In the following paragraph the process is analyzed per step.

AWARENESS

This phase consists of the analysis of the brand from an internal perspective, both from corporate manuals and from the analyzing of current practices (Tosti & Stotz, 2001). Likewise, Tarnovskaya & de Chernatony (2011), in the brand conceptualization phase of their framework, highlight the importance of interpreting the brand through the collection of information (corporate culture, values, etc.). Thus, it is possible to argue that, in order to help iX to discover their identity, the brand should be analyzed from an internal perspective, through activities such as translating the brand into values, analyzing current practices and so on. Since a corporate identity is the projection of "who you are, what you do and how you do it" (Lambert, 1989), an in-depth analysis of iX needs to be carried out in this phase of the process. Next to the internal analysis, external factors are also relevant in describing, defining and aligning corporate brand identity (Urde, 2013), therefore interviews with clients and IBM consultants are conducted, together with an internal survey.

UNDERSTAND

Both the frameworks of Chernatony and Cottam (2006) and Tarnovskaya & de Chernatony (2011)

put high importance on the understanding phase by naming it, respectively, codified/comprehended brand and brand comprehending. This is the moment where employees actually make sense of the brand. In this case, workshops can help involve employees to collectively comprehend and acting upon the organization's identity. De Chernatony & Cottam (2006) specify that all employees should work on the brand in an integrated manner to encourage consistency. Moreover, services branding, as in the case of iX, seems to be more dependent on employees than product branding, therefore, it is essential that all staff understand the brand to facilitate the link between internal and external brand identity. Two workshops on the vision and positioning of iX are facilitated with the consultants. In fact, a vision has the ability to provide a concrete way to understand the meaning of a business (Fernandes, 2016) while positioning helps differentiate the identity either within and outside the organization. Both these workshops focus on using the global brand guideline as a reference with the objective to create a BeNeLux identity, likewise, Tarnovskaya & de Chernatony (2011) argue that when brand internalization happens across culture (as in iX case), we talk about identity recreation instead of identity transfer.

INTERNALIZE

This step consists in the interpretation of the brand which means internalize it into everyday activities (Chernatony and Cottam, 2006). This process appears to be the one that requires

more effort and commitment from the entire organization. It takes a lot of time and effort from the entire organization (iX department in this case). Due to time constraints, lack of resources and appropriate knowledge from my side, this step is not covered. However, the process can be taken over by leadership and, in specific, the Eminence Workstream. To facilitate a smooth hand over to the workstream, an iX story in form of pitch and a communication material is delivered.

COMMUNICATE

This phase can happen when employees in the organization have internalized the identity in their daily activity and the brand is automatically embedded in their external communication, both with other departments and external stakeholders. To encourage and foster corporate communication, an internal campaign will be run in the company with the objective to create awareness among GBS employees and make them be more inclined towards iX.

The process is presented in the next page.

3.5.1 IDENTITY TRANSFER PROCESS, iX case

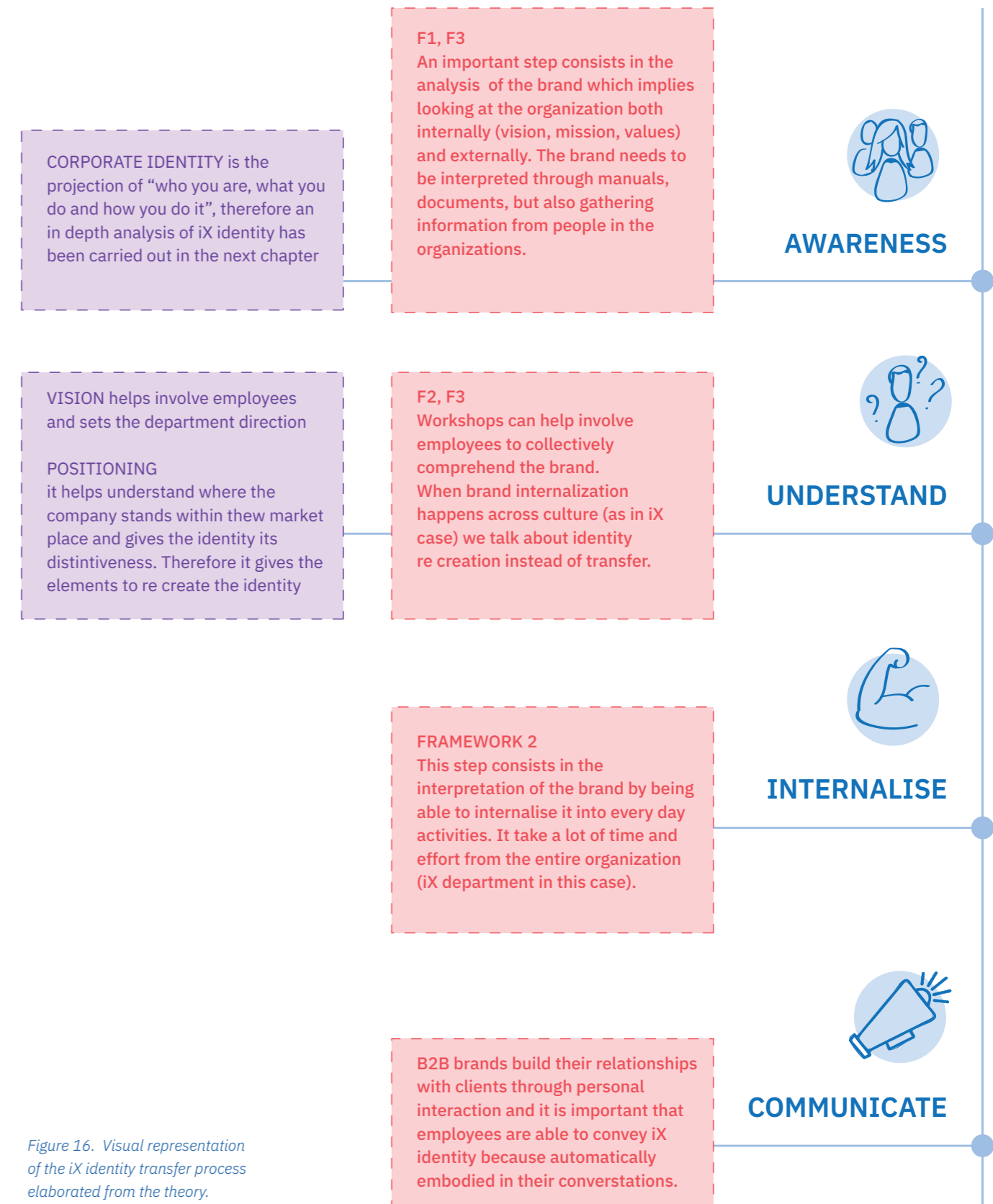


Figure 16. Visual representation of the iX identity transfer process elaborated from the theory.

4. EMPIRICAL STUDY



4. EMPIRICAL STUDY*

The literature review and the ecosystem analysis in the previous chapters provided useful insights about corporate identity and its transfer as well as an overview of the context of this project. An explorative empirical study has been conducted in order to verify and, if necessary, refine problem assumptions that have been formulated at the beginning of the project:

- Within IBM iX the vision is not shared, therefore their identity is not clear.
- Since the identity is not clear internally, IBM GBS don't have a proper understanding of IBM iX activities.
- No clear identity implies a non clear positioning, as a consequence clients are not aware of IBM iX.

Next to that, the following empirical study aims at exploring iX identity and involving employees in the creation of IBM iX vision and positioning. In particular the empirical research include:

- A survey to IBM iX BeNeLux employees
- Interviews to IBM GBS consultants (in Amsterdam and other offices in EU and US)
- Interviews to clients
- Co-creative sessions with IBM iX employees

4.1 SURVEY

A web-based survey, written in English and including open-ended questions, was used to collect qualitative data about IBM iX BeNeLux. The main goal of the questionnaire was to understand the context from the perspective of iX employees, in particular:

a. Explore iX identity

- a1. Who is IBM iX
- a2. How do IBM iX work
- a3. What do IBM iX offer

b. Understand to what extent IBM iX employees share a common vision.

4.1.1 METHOD

Below the information requirements of the questionnaire are presented:

WHO	What is iX What skills do people have in iX What is iX vision and mission
HOW	How do iX work internally How do iX work with other departments How do iX work with clients
WHAT	What are the offerings iX provide to clients What projects work best for iX What input do iX give to other departments

* It is to note that the insights got from the empirical research have been used throughout the entire report, however this chapter aims at diving into the specific components of iX identity.

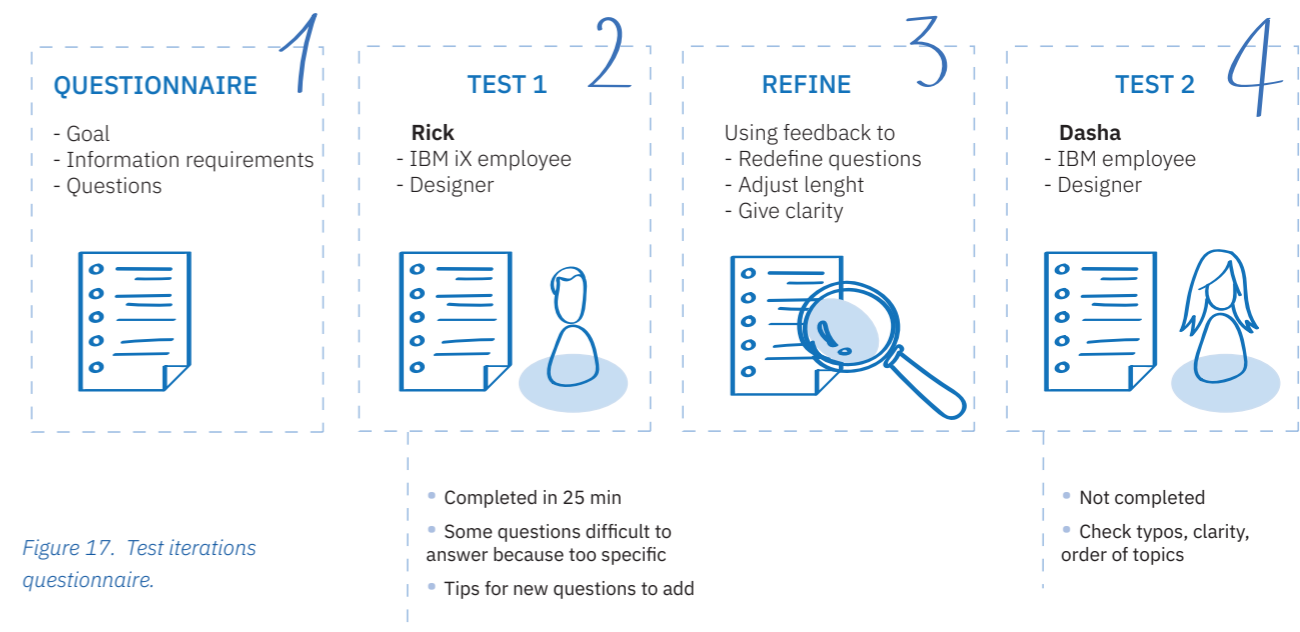


Figure 17. Test iterations questionnaire.

The survey (see Appendix B) consisted of 11 main open-ended questions related to the topic, and 2 additional questions to help understand the sample better (ex. Education background, position/role in the company etc.). To give more structure, the questionnaire has been divided in four main areas, as follow:

- IBM iX in general
- IBM iX in relation to other departments
- IBM iX in relation to clients
- Other information.

The survey was structured in a way that respondents were immediately invited to think of a good way to sell IBM iX to a potential client or colleague. That was planned in order to have an unbiased representation of the level of understanding that employees have about iX. Moreover, making participants think of a good pitch, would help them “warm up” for the following questions, whose aim was to go deeper into the topic. In fact, later on, specific questions related to the iX service line were introduced, to help participants create a holistic view of the department in their mind. This allowed them to be able to compare iX with other departments as well as the competition.

The survey was iterated with feedback and criticism from discussions with company mentors and peers from TU Delft. A first draft of the survey was piloted with one employee of iX and it was crucial in order to identify inconsistencies and improve the accuracy of questions that could be misinterpreted by the respondents (fig. 17)

A second version of the survey was checked by an SPD student graduating at IBM CAS to avoid typos and allow clarity.

PARTICIPANTS RECRUITMENT AND SAMPLE PROFILE

Participants were recruited via email and slack group messages. The invitation to participate in the survey was also confirmed verbally during two meetings where iX employees were participating. After several reminder emails, 38 participants out of 85 - all IBM iX employees from both Amsterdam and Brussels IBM offices - answered the questionnaire. The total number of responses contemplated as complete was 30, while 8 were considered to be incomplete. Both managers and entry-level employees participated in the survey.

In specific the questionnaire was responded by 14 employees from CE&D practice, 9 consultants from Mobile practice, 10 from Salesforce practice and 4 from Digital Commerce, 1 Marketing Platforms.

DATA ANALYSIS

For the analysis of the qualitative data collected, a cycle of initial coding was performed. Afterwards, some categories were created from the most common terms that were induced from each of the questions. Answers from each participant were labeled according to said themes. Each questions had different categories based on its specific topic.

4.1.2 FINDINGS

In the following section results of the questions are presented and discussed by following the subquestions that have been presented in the information requirements. To facilitate the reading of this report those questions are restated below:

- Who is IBM iX?
- How do IBM iX work?
- What do IBM iX offer to clients?

From the responses to this answer, it was easy to understand whether or not iX employees shared a common vision or not.

WHO IS IBM iX

IBM iX vision

By analyzing the questionnaire it has been difficult to identify one unambiguous formulation of iX vision or identity as a statement. Most of the respondents currently don't have an explicit and coherent idea of what iX vision and

strategy entails. The majority of the respondents described the iX service line with the use of high-level definitions which could indicate a lack of a clear understanding of it. At the same time, the questionnaire indicates that different practices within IBM iX service line have slightly different ways to describe the focus of the department. This can be particularly noticed with respondents from Salesforce practice which answers resulted to be more concrete and specific.

However, some characteristics/components resulted to be recurring throughout the entire survey. This suggests that IBM iX BeNeLux consultants share common "iX ingredients" (fig. 18) in their mind even though they are not yet put together to form the right recipe. Below those ingredients are shown:

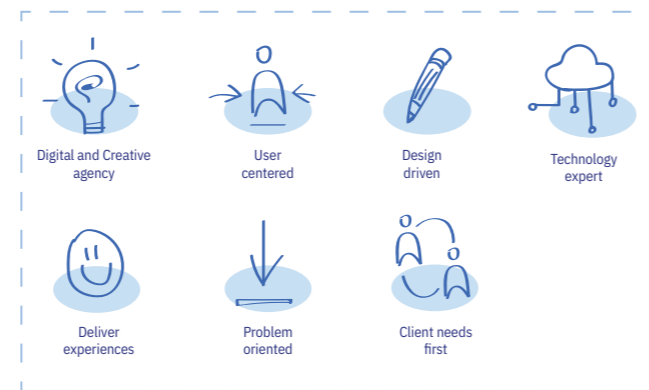


Figure 18. iX ingredients.

What skills do people have in iX?

Some of the common and recurring iX skills include being the department that brings a new, fresh and creative perspective within IBM with a distinct capability of understanding clients and user needs by diving into the real problem.

- "We start with getting to know our user"*
- "We put the user at the heart of our solutions!"*

IBM iX's focus is also about delivering great experiences for the customer or employee.

"IBM iX is the part of our company that focuses on

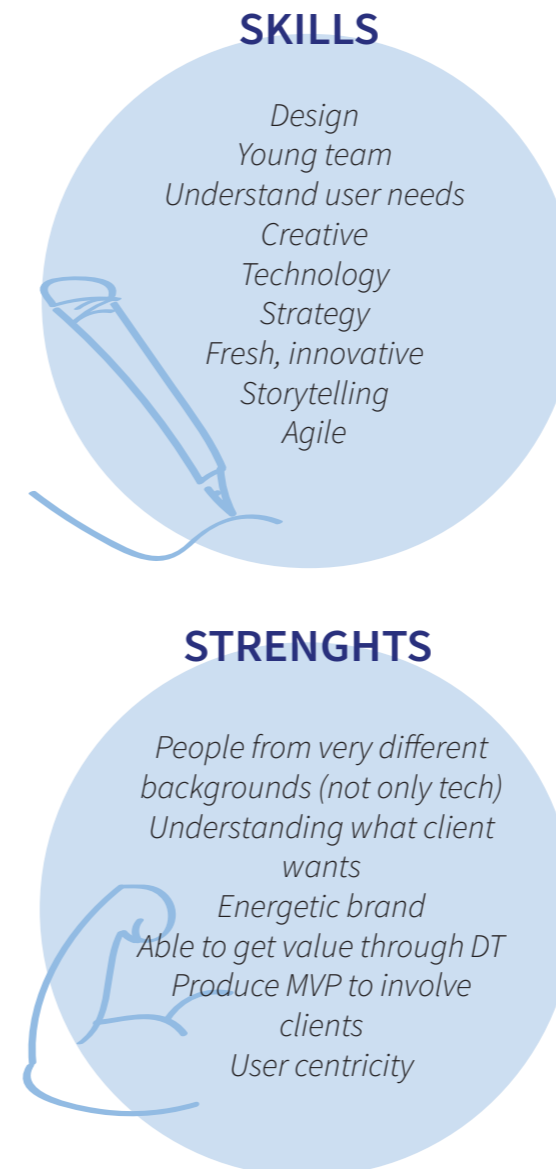
creating compelling experiences".

Important to mention is the fact that iX have a design driven mindset but also own the technologies to put the solution into practice.

"We are technology agnostic and we connect to our clients questions through end user centricity"

"We bring the full power of IBM with us"

The most common skills and strengths pointed out by the respondents are summarized in the figures:



HOW DO IBM iX WORK

How do iX work with other departments?

When participants describe the relationship between iX and other departments, some frustration can be noticed. In fact the entire sample would like to get involved more by other departments and would prefer that to happen early in the process and for entire projects. The current situation, however, seems to be far from optimal since the help of iX is mainly required to make slides pretty or to facilitate Design Thinking workshops, as answered by 30 participants.

"Right now, it seems they're only interested in workshops and making great presentations."

"Sometimes only for "opleuken" of powerpoints, but that is not what we are."

Some other occasions in which the help of iX is required by other departments include the demand for a scrum master, understanding users or when is needed to create value and *"bring a fresh face to the client"*.



Participants showed many different views when asking what would be their ideal situation regarding the collaboration with other departments. Below the most relevant aspects are summarized:



The outline below (fig. 19a) shows the main capabilities and differences between iX and the service line Digital Strategy, which, together with iX, form the growth platform DS&I.

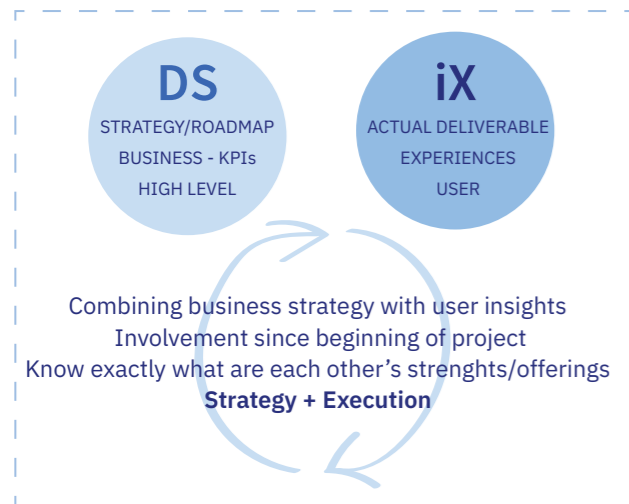


Figure 19a. Findings on differences between DS and iX

How do iX work with clients?

First and fundamental thing to say regarding the relationship between iX and client is the fact that many respondents actually confirmed that they present themselves to the clients as IBM and not with the name IBM iX.

“Do clients know that they are working with iX? I think clients only know they are working with IBM”
“Im not aware o a collaboration between clients and IBM ix but between clients and IBM GBS”.

Another relevant thing to mention is the type of clients that IBM iX is serving, in fact it looks like most of the projects are within the IT organization *“because IBM has the image of an IT provider it can be hard to reach the right stakeholders”.*

The ideal way in which clients and iX (mainly with the name of IBM) should interact consist in working “with the client” instead of “for the client”. In such manner iX people are part of client team and provide capabilities that the client currently doesn't have by collaborating in a long-

lasting partnerships. Unfortunately this is not always the case, in fact many times iX get involved in small engagements either *“very early on, like for a workshop, or at the end, for a great pitch/presentation”.*

Even though iX is good at showing value to the client with an agile way of working and diving into the problem, it seems to be difficult to get new projects and to convince new clients of IBM's design capabilities. *“We have to change our image of a tech monolith”.*

How is iX in comparison with competitors

When referring to the differences between IBM iX and competitors, the survey participants showed a very diverse range of opinions. Generally these opinions tend to be negative aspects such as being expensive and inexperienced. In fact, due to the identity problem of iX, it is difficult for the department to excel in the market.

“We're not making it easy for our clients to 'buy us'. It is not clear what we have to offer and how we are different”.

At the same time the experience of IBM can provide the resources to *“solve a problem from A-Z”.*

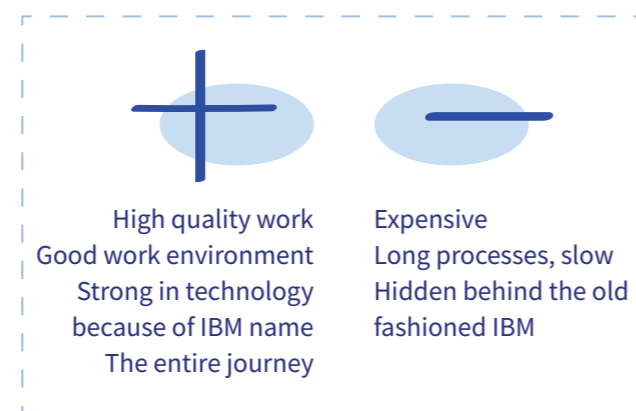


Figure 19b. Findings of positive and negative aspects of IBM compared to competitors

WHAT DO iX OFFER

Regarding the offerings, particular attention should be paid to the differences and similarities observed among participants from different practices of iX.

Respondents from CE&D showed the most varied range of offering including mobile, Salesforce, design thinking, digital platforms, experience design. Mobile employees mainly focused their answers on mobile offerings and marketing platforms while Salesforce people also mentioned chatbox and, obviously, Salesforce solutions.

In general the offerings mentioned by the respondents are high level and don't show any

particular differentiation with other companies. The participants were also asked to estimate how well they know iX offerings. The related findings are expressed in the scheme below (fig. 19c).

HOW WELL	N°	TYPE OF RESPONDENTS
Extremely well	2/33	Manager and Partner
Very well	10/33	Mixed Sample
Somewhat well	12/33	Mixed Sample
Not so well	9/33	Mixed Sample
Not well at all	0/33	/

Figure 19c. Findings on how well survey participants know iX offering.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

Assumption 1 → FUZZY AND NOT CLEAR iX IDENTITY

“iX helps to improve business processes using Design Thinking”

“iX is the team doing the cool projects that stand out”

Employees have a confused idea of what iX really is and what it does, only 36% of respondents confirm to know the offerings well or very well. The elements to build and communicate IBM iX identity are there, but they need to be properly structured since they are scattered and fuzzy. This can be particularly noticed among answers from different practices within iX.



Assumption 2 → iX IS NOT CONSIDERED IN THE RIGHT WAY FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

“it seems they're only interested in workshops and making great presentations”

Assumption 3 → CLIENTS DON'T REALLY KNOW iX

“A lot of times iX relate to clients by name of IBM or different IBM agencies”

“IBM has the image of an IT provider it can be hard to reach the right stakeholders”.

4.2 INTERVIEWS

More data was collected through **11 semi-structured interviews** and **several informal sessions** with IBM consultants and clients. The purpose of the presented explorative study was to:

- Explore iX identity (in BeNeLux and in other countries)
- Discover whether IBM GBS have the right understanding of IBM iX
- Investigate how clients perceive IBM iX

4.2.1 METHOD

An interview guide, that build up on the survey, was used to conduct the interviews. This has been reviewed by company and university mentors to verify that questions were easily understood and straight to the point. The interviews were carried out in person, and via Webex calls with participants in Central Europe and USA and they were conducted in English.

Whenever possible, audio recordings were made in parallel to written notes in order to allow verification. The interview questions covered the following three sections:

- Current project and personal view on IBM iX
- IBM iX and other departments
- IBM iX and competitors

INTERVIEWEES

Participants were recruited via e-mail contact, Slack private message or mobile calls. The interviewees are all related to IBM iX or involved in IBM iX activities.

The *semi-structured interviews* were conducted with the following participants:

- 5 IBM iX employees from offices in Geneva, New York, Milan, London, Berlin.
- 4 IBM GBS employees from Amsterdam.
- 1 Client of IBM iX Amsterdam (Product owner).
- 1 Competitor of IBM iX

Based on the interviewee profile, time constraints and availability, the *informal sessions* were carried out either by partially following the interview guide or with no use of a written guidance. The people involved in these informal talks belong to the categories below:

- IBM iX employees from Amsterdam (including leader, partners, senior managers, consultants).
- IBM GBS employees from Amsterdam and Milan
- IBM iX Studio employee from Groningen
- IBM GBS employee from Berlin (Europe Chief Creative Officer)

4.2.2 FINDINGS

The interviewees were asked to describe a recent iX project they were working on, therefore providing a better understanding of the typical activities and practices of the department.

In most cases similar patterns were found also outside the BeNeLux area except from North America, region of IBM headquarters and UK, where Matt Candy, global leader of IBM iX, operates.

EXPLORE IX IDENTITY

First, the interviewees were asked to provide their personal idea of what iX does and provide. Most of the answers confirmed and added on what have been found in the questionnaire. Below the most general answers are described.

iX Digital agency

During the interviews it was clear that iX employees consider iX as the digital agency, startup, innovation lab within the big IBM, although this view is not reported in the new iX brand guidelines (version 2019). Regarding this, an iX partner argued that we iX is better than digital agency because *“we are not good in the wow, we are good at enterprise”*.

iX, users and experiences

IBM employees referred to iX as the department who look at the experience from the consumers point of view. Often, employees explained the role of iX by mentioning questions such as: *“How do we help companies to better serve their customers?”*. *“Being customer centric doesn’t mean smiling at the client, it means looking at the customers and see what they need, what they experience and how to make it smooth”*. Likewise the client interviewed, when asked to list the skills provided by IBM iX, indicated user research skills to be very important together with design and development capabilities.

THE RELATION WITH IBM GBS

During interviews with GBS and iX employees, some problems related to the communication of iX identity within IBM have been identified. Interviewees found difficulties in expressing the skills and activities of the iX department and, in particular, they encounter problems in finding information about offerings, success stories, etc. Even though it seems to be known to the majority of interviewees that the one of iX is not only a role of facilitator of Design Thinking workshops, it is still not clear what the other core competencies are.

“I don’t know their portfolio to be honest”

Two interviewees referred to iX consultants as generalists: *“iX has a lot of Barbapapas, but this is not good because Barbapapas can do a lot of things and they are not specialized”*. That is because people see iX as the high level department which doesn’t have a clear focus.

“iX has a lot of Barbapapas”

On the other side one GBS interviewee talked about iX as the *“change agent”* within IBM which put Design Thinking at the center of everything and drive the transformation from “old IBM” to “new IBM” (The Cognitive Enterprise).

“iX is the change agent of IBM”

It is also relevant to specify the difference between managerial interviewees and non-managerial employees. The first category could give an explanation of iX which can be considered, overall, acceptable while the employees of the second group were often not even able to relate iX to any department in IBM.

“IBM iX? what is iX?”

CLIENTS PERSPECTIVE

IBM not IBM iX

"I don't know any difference between IBM iX and IBM" (IBM client)

Many iX consultants also explicitly stated that they go to the client with the name of IBM because most of the time clients are not aware of IBM iX. That is why, very often, clients start working with IBM because of its comprehensive capabilities and not for the fast and agile skills of iX. *"We sell more global IBM than IBM iX"*. In this case the opinion of IBMers and client was universal; they all consider IBM expertise as a point of different towards competitors: *"we are not different as iX but we are different as IBM"*. IBM, in fact, by

working on big and successful project, part of long-lasting relationship with clients, obtained such a reputation *IBM is very good people and best practices*. This image, although, can create a mismatch with market expectations that demand fast and quick results at a low price.

Work with clients, not for

"IBM delivers smart people who collaborate with us". The relationship between IBM and IBM iX appears to be a very collaborative one, in fact consultants at IBM are full time involved in the clients projects

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

Assumption 1 → FUZZY AND NOT CLEAR iX IDENTITY

"We look at the customer and see what they need"

Insights: People are aligned about the fact that IBM iX is not only design thinking workshops. IBM iX has been defined as the *change agent* of IBM

Assumption 2 → iX IS NOT CONSIDERED IN THE RIGHT WAY FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

"iX has a lot of Barbapapas"

"I find it difficult to find offerings in iX"

New insights: Some employees don't about the existence of iX

Assumption 3 → CLIENTS DON'T REALLY KNOW iX

"I don't know any difference between IBM iX and IBM"

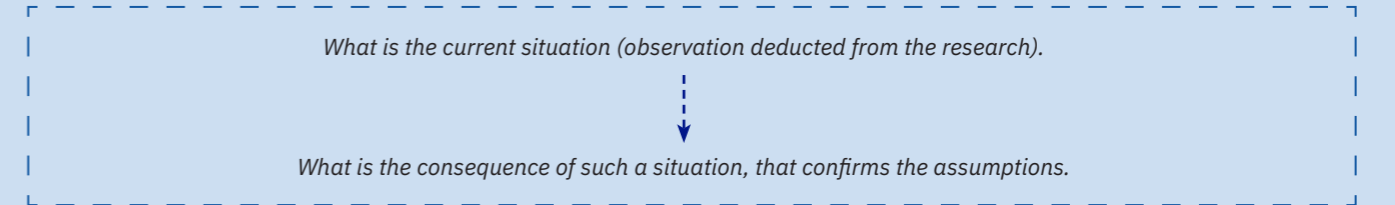
Insights: Clients recognize IBM design and agile capabilities during hands-on experience

"At the time I still had an image of IBM as what they used to be good at, like develop complex technology etc. and then I worked with people that are very expert in developing state of the arts platforms"

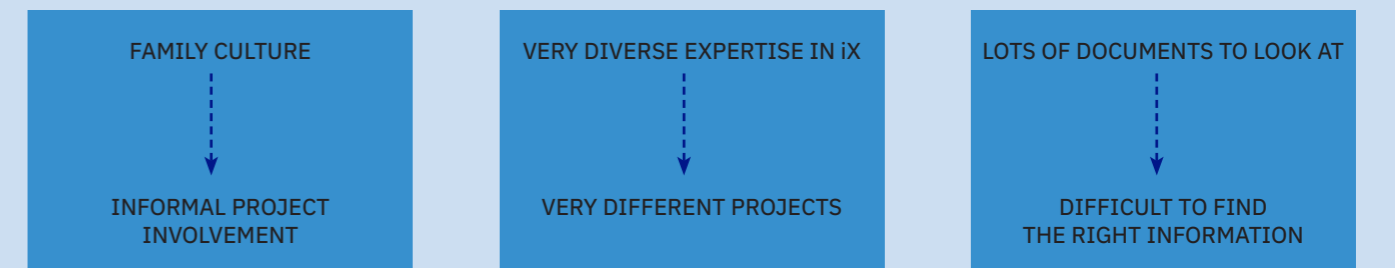
VALIDATION ASSUMPTIONS

Next to the exploration of the iX department, the goal of the analysis was to validate the three problem assumptions that have been identified at the beginning of the project. The main observations and insights are outlined below. For each assumption

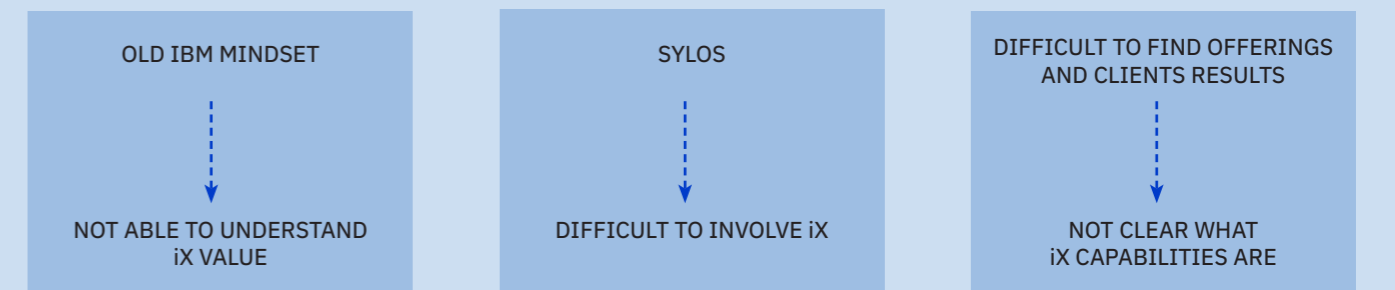
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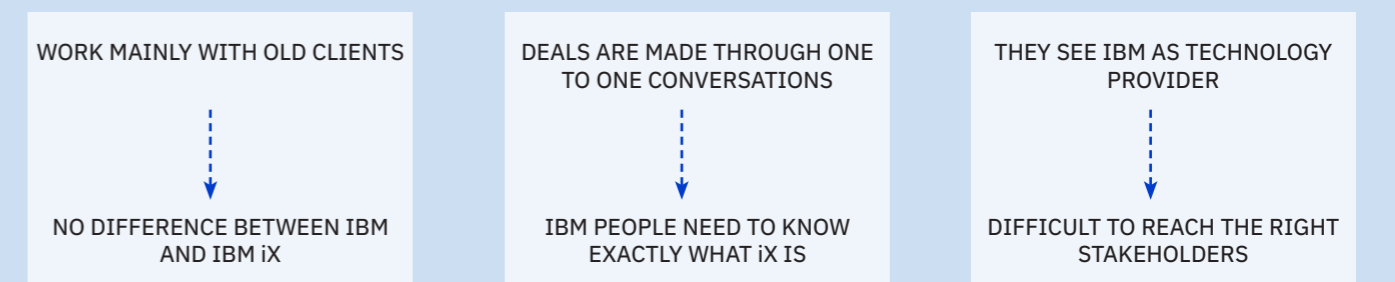
IBM iX - No clear identity



IBM GBS - No proper understanding of IBM iX



IBM CLIENTS - Clients not aware of IBM iX



4.1 - 4.2 CONCLUSIONS ON iX IDENTITY

As mentioned at the introduction of the chapter, one of the aim of the survey and the interviews was to explore iX BeNeLux identity. Below the main insights are summarised:

Who is iX

Based on the survey, characteristics of IBM iX are summarized below:

- They offer IBM services in a new and fresh way. “The change agent of IBM”
- Able to really dive into the clients problems and deliver a solution that fits the overall system, which means that consultants in iX have the capabilities to connect all the dots in the entire user journey to provide excellent experiences. *“We look at how the chatbot relate to the overal system, how does it fit with the brand, with the communication strategy ecc.”*
- iX is the strategic innovation partner for companies who want to transform their businesses
- iX is considered a team of generalists, mainly because the diverse expertise that are in the department

How does iX work

- Agile way of working
- Connect with developers in Groningen to implement digital solution
- Use Enterprise Design Thinking as way of working
- Use of MVP to create fast value and engage clients
- Combine strategy and delivery

What does iX offer

- Enterprise Design Thinking
- Design adoption framework
- Agile design expertise
- Coaching in the process and innovation
- Mobile apps
- Salesforce – service automation

ACTIVATION: Awareness

The analysis of the iX brand, together with the findings from the survey and the interviews, represent the ‘awareness’ phase in the identity transfer process (chapter 3.6). Indeed, through the collection of internal and external information, it has been possible to describe and define the elements of the identity. At the same time, by involving employees in the research, it has been possible to spread awareness about iX both within the department, as well as outside.

4.3 VISION WORKSHOP

In order to involve and engage iX employees in the creation of the new identity, a creative session has been designed and facilitated. The workshop represents the passage from ‘awareness’ to ‘understanding’ (see identity transfer process in chapter 3.6) where employees actually start making sense of the brand. The main objectives of the workshop were as follow:

- a. Co-create IBM iX BeNeLux values and vision
- b. Get people on board and make them feel committed and motivated

The session started with

- 4 participants

- 2 supervisors/participants

(My company mentors participated at the session, while, at the same time, they checked whether people were going on the right direction)

- 1 buddy

(Helping out with practical stuff, and giving support to groups)

- 1 facilitator

(I was leading the session and presenting every exercise, deciding whether or not we should follow the time schedule, giving guidance to the group when they were struggling, improvising new exercises etc.)

Due to meetings and other constraints few people joined the session later on. We concluded with:

- 1 group of 5 participants
- 1 group of 6 participants

4.3.1 STRUCTURE

Introduction

Explaining purpose of the session.

Dystopian/Utopian Future

Participants were provided with some trend cards (fig. 21), whose trends have been carefully selected based on relevance to the session, in order to provide the group with input in thinking about the future. They were asked to choose 3 trends and discuss what could be the dystopic results of those trends and invited to create a dystopic worldview. Afterwards, the participants transformed the dystopic future scenario in an utopic one.

Goal: spark discussion and help participants to get into the mood and create a clear future image in their mind.

iX in the future inspiration

“The benefit of envisioning a distant future is that it enables managers to consider what role the brand needs to play to bring about this future.” (de Chernatony, 2001)

Participants were provided with 16 cards (fig. 20), with quotes taken from the questionnaire about the opinion that iX employees have on their department. People were then invited to read the quotes and cluster them by main topics. To help them create categories, people were invited to think of the core elements that characterized iX.

Goal: make them curious about what others said and spark discussion about iX identity.

iX ingredients

In this exercise participants were asked to look at the “iX ingredients” that had been previously identified from the questionnaire analysis. Hence,

they were encouraged to discuss and decide whether or not they should modify or combine their set of iX core elements. Ingredients examples: *user and client centered; design driven; technology focused; deliver customer experiences*

Goal: give them guidance and make them structure their thoughts

Values and vision

“Brands are considered organic social processes whose values are interactively co-created with several stakeholders.” (Saleem & Iglesias, 2016)

At this point participants were asked to choose 4 of the core elements they identified and transform them in values to be included in the vision. A big newspaper template sheet (fig. 22) was provided and the employee could draw and write down their story about iX vision. The following elements were included in the template:

- Headline about iX
- List of values they have chosen
- Drawing that represent the vision
- A concise vision statement

Goal: to help them be creative and really involved in the vision creation. Moreover this exercise helped them structure all the things they have been discussing till then.

Figure 20. Quote cards

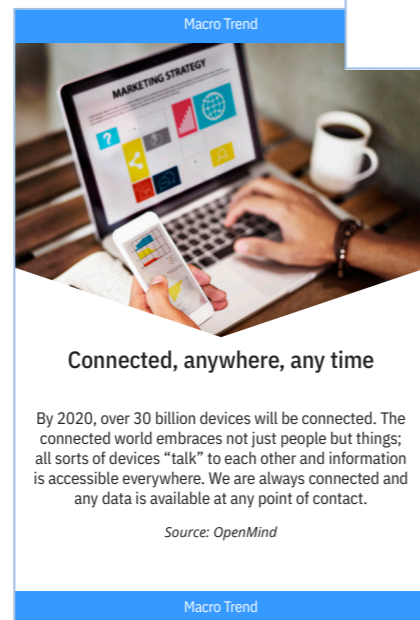
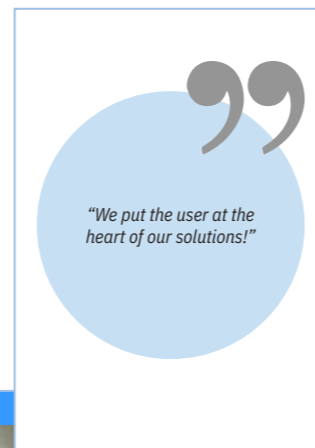


Figure 21. Trends cards

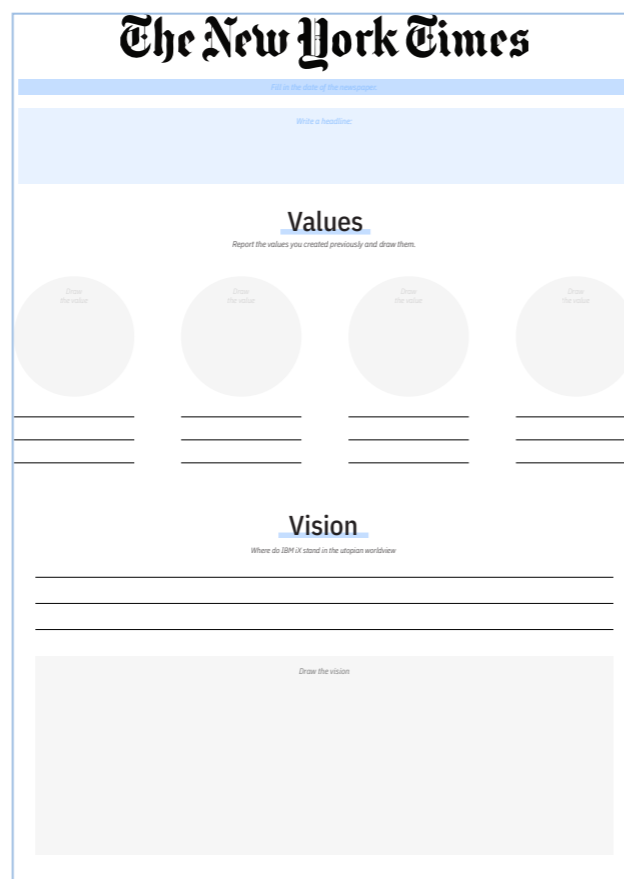


Figure 22. Newspaper template. (Inspired by graduation report of Pervin Celik, SPD)

4.3.2 RESULTS

Group 1

IBM has been rebranded in iXBM.

We are now interactive experience business machines.

We combine user, data and technology.

We draft the all experience end to end and strive to embed UX into the DNA of our clients.

So it's not just about delivering one experience but we want to change our clients as well towards that point. We start small often, with a start problem and then we loop to something bigger because only IBM can do this globally and huge complex system where anybody else can.

Group 2

IBM iX again innovation partner of the year.

Can you believe it?

So what we value is that we drive reinvention of ourselves and our world. In a world where everything is possible and every technology is there, where do you start? We will help you, and we are the coach to make sure you get most out of your partners, and never mind the what and the how we go from why to wow.

As iX we are the humans of technology, we unlock your potential by design.



Figure 23. Pictures of employees during the vision workshop

4.3.3 POSITIVE ASPECTS

Many iX employees participated to the workshop, although the session took place on a Friday from 4pm to 6pm and with short notice. This demonstrates what I have been experiencing in these last few months, that the culture of the iX department is very strong; people help each other out whenever possible and they are serious about building up their identity. People were very enthusiastic and all of them actively participated. One of the groups was able to go through the session quite smoothly and, by following step by step the exercises, they came up with iX values and vision statement. My role for this team was mainly related to give instruction and provide concrete examples to explain the activities.

4.3.4 ASPECTS TO REFLECT ON

The second group encountered some struggles in agreeing with each other. There were a lot of different opinions about values and strengths of iX. It has been difficult to put them on the same page as people were not agreeing with each other. In this case my function was to stimulate them with new exercises or give them direction and guidance without steering the results. In general both groups stayed on a superficial level, however the content, at this stage of the project, was not so relevant.

4.3 CONCLUSIONS ON VISION

The workshop confirmed the fact that vision in iX is not shared, as people had difficulty in agreeing with each other.

Vision

The two groups both stressed the role of iX as a partner/coach for organizations (as stated in the global brand guidelines). This highlights an important characteristic of iX that consists of collaborating side by side with the clients instead of focusing only on delivery. Participants also mentioned the capacity of iX to scale projects thanks to the support of the entire IBM. Moreover, employees stressed again the fact that iX is not only about Design Thinking and creating amazing experiences, but it is about implementing projects and complex systems in order to make these experiences real for the user. IBMiX is very linked to technology and is today's

environment technology is vital for businesses. Based on this insights the following vision has been formulated:

WE ARE THE HUMANS OF TECHNOLOGY

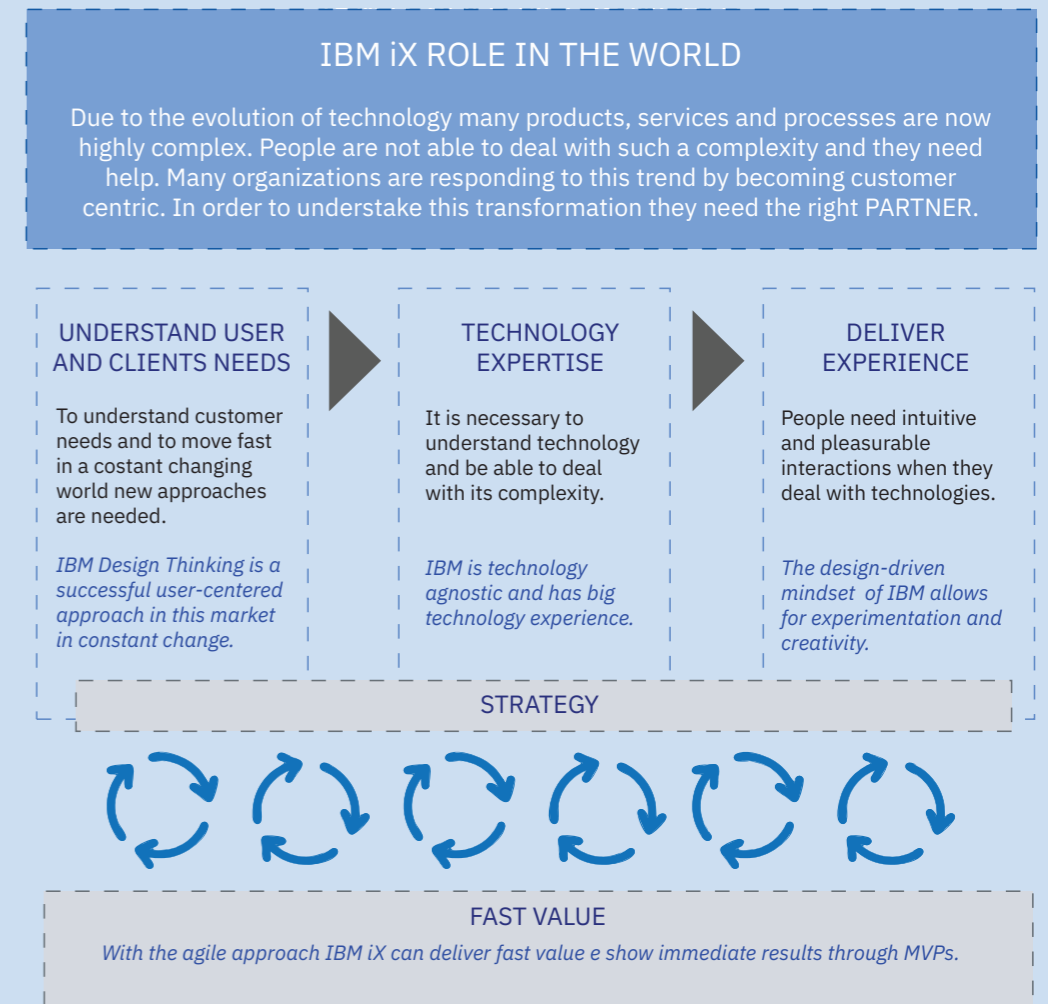
IBM iX BeNeLux is the coach of businesses transformation in the new digital era.

ACTIVATION: (Awareness) + Understand

The session helped iX employees to start thinking about the identity and role of iX both in the present and in the future of the organization. Many different perspectives showed that the vision is not shared within the department. This situation expresses the need for engaging and aligning employees internally. The workshop represents the bridge from 'awareness' to 'understanding' as participants started "putting the pieces together".

POSITIONING

First iteration



After the first round of interviews, the survey, and the vision workshop, it has been possible to draft a version of iX positioning which has been tested with iX employees in the second workshop. The positioning presents a context area: "IBM iX ROLE IN THE WORLD" which is built on the trend analysis carried out in chapter 1.2. Later on, three main pillars have been identified. The first one represents, as largely mentioned in the survey, the capability of iX to deeply understand clients and users needs by making use of Enterprise Design Thinking. The second one relies on the technological expertise that characterized IBM as a whole; aspect that has been acknowledged in every part of the analysis, from consulting reports to research papers and from survey to interviews.

The last column is a consequence of the previously mentioned components, and it is based on the idea that combining technology expertise and human insights it is possible to deliver the best experience for the customer/employee.

IBM iX can offer a 360 degree support along with an agile way of working to those organizations that strive to become leaders in the digital era. IBM iX can help with:

- Understanding user's needs
- Managing complex technology
- Delivering great experiences for the users

All this supported by a tailored strategy to win in the market place.

4.4 POSITIONING WORKSHOP

After the vision creation session, a new workshop has been designed and run with iX employees (both managers and non-managerial employees). The main objectives of the session were as follow:

- a. Make participants understand the external context of iX (trends, competitors etc.)
- b. Share my research findings (showing how stakeholders perceive the department)
- c. Test and co-create iX positioning - An organization's corporate identity creates a sense of individuality by differentiating the brand within the marketplace (de Chernatony and Harris, 2000, p. 268; Chun and Davies, 2001; van Riel and Balmer, 1997)

- Duration: 4,5 h
 - 11 participants in 2 groups (who joined in different time spans throughout the afternoon)
 - 1 facilitator (me)
- My role consisted of:
- Lead the session
 - Introduce and explain each exercise
 - Presenting the findings
 - Keep track of the time schedule
 - Give guidance to 2 groups

4.4.1 STRUCTURE

Introduction and Ice Breaker

The session started with a brief introduction about the activities of the workshop. Later on participants were asked to fill in some papers and then discuss about it (See Appendix F, fig. 9)

What clients want

a. Presentation:

Introducing a trends analysis relevant to the iX context.

b. Exercise 1

(See Appendix F, fig.11)

Employees were asked to fill in a canvas which has been prepared beforehand. The goal was to understand needs and desires of clients and the market in general. Participants used an iX project (for example KLM) as a reference to fill in the canvas.

c. Playback

Goal: What is the context in which iX operates in? What are companies need and desires that iX can solve?

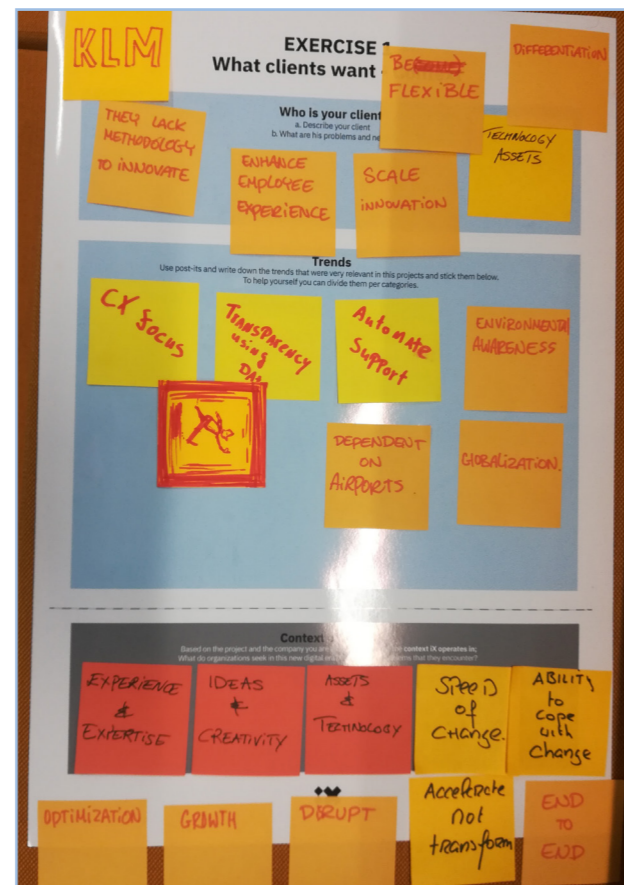


Figure 24. Pictures of exercise 1 filled in by participants

What is iX best at

a. Presentation:

Giving a short presentation on the thesis research findings about what people think of iX.

b. Exercise 2:

(See Appendix F, fig.12)

Participants read the iX capabilities summarized from the findings and explained during the presentation. Afterwards people are asked, if necessary, to add more capabilities that fit the project they are assigned to.

c. Playback

Goal: To help people understand and internalize what they are good at and what value they provide to clients.

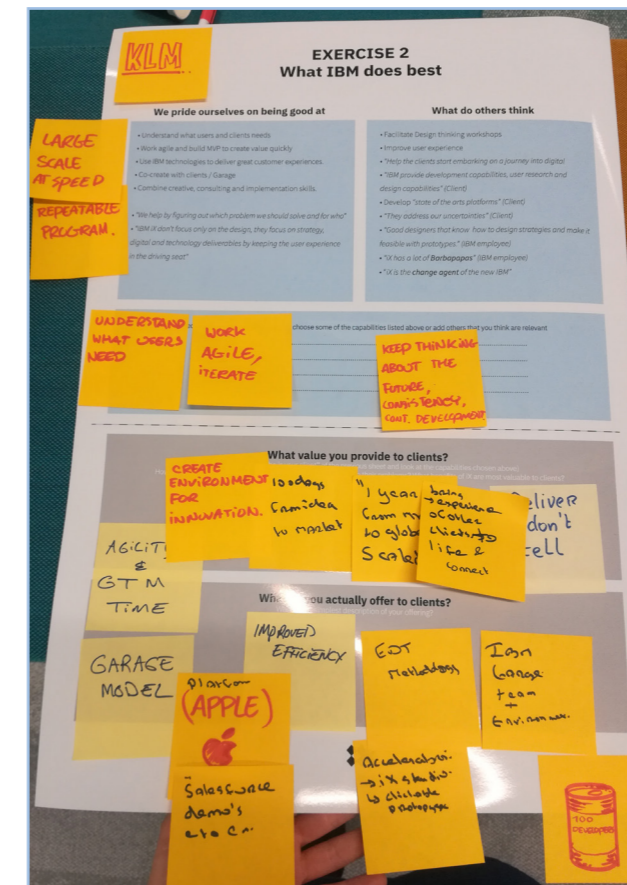


Figure 25. Pictures of exercise 2 filled in by participants

Competitors

a. Presentation:

Presenting a competitor analysis and showing similarities in competitors positioning.

b. Exercise 3:

(See Appendix F, fig.12)

Participants need to think about other competitors that could potentially be better in working on the chosen project. Later on they are asked to explain how iX is better than agencies, consultancies and other departments in GBS.

c. Playback

Goal: To make people think about iX positioning and how the department can differentiate in the market/IBM.

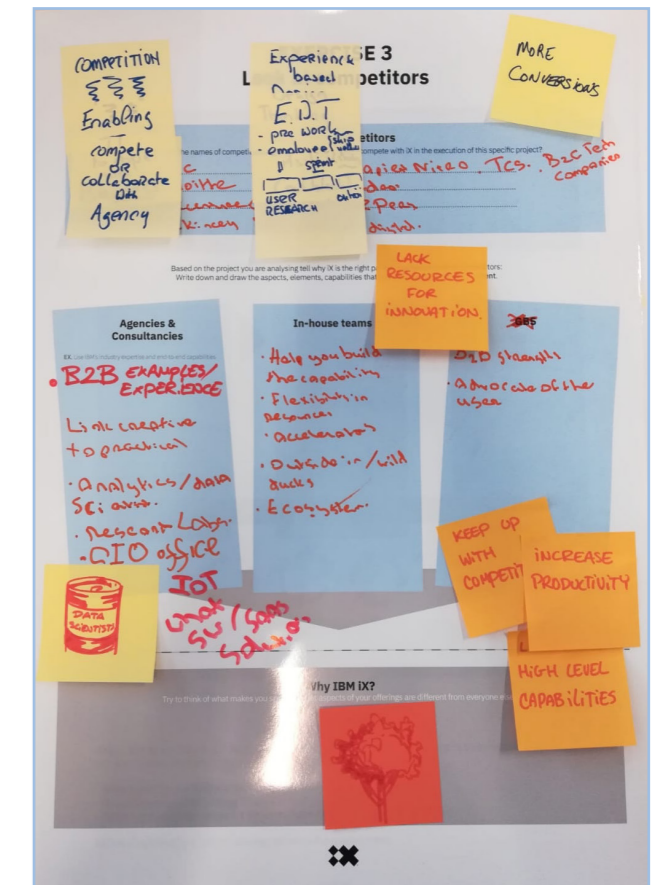


Figure 26. Pictures of exercise 3 filled in by participants

Create the iX story

In this phase, employees are required to put together all the parts they have been exploring in the previous exercises. The layout of the session material has been designed in order to facilitate this phase (See Appendix F, fig. 15). Moreover, the participants were provided with the first draft of the positioning, which was outlined with the information gathered from the survey, interviews and first session (See chapter 4.1). This helped and inspired them in the creation of their iX story.

Discussion:

At the end of the day, the two groups pitched their positioning, after which a discussion took place. Due to time constraints and the intensity of the workshop the discussion didn't give as many insights as expected, however, the playbacks at the end of each exercise gave enough input to work on.

4.4.2 EMPLOYEES REACTION

Participants actively participated both during the presentations by asking questions and giving their opinion and during the activities. When communicating the findings of the empirical analysis, the employees expressed their surprise regarding the perception that other departments have (don't have) about them.

“If the other departments don't know us I can understand, but if we don't know ourselves that's very bad”

“We should just go and talk to our colleagues”

Next to that, iX consultants expressed their interest, especially during the competitor analysis. They engaged very much with the topic and showed their curiosity when referring to competitors that they have never heard before.

“Actually since I started working here, I have never heard about competitors”

During the discussion about the competition, interesting questions arised, which have been asked, the week after, directly to Matt Candy, iX Global Leader, visiting the Amsterdam office:

IBM iX partner says:

“Last Friday we had a workshop where some competitors have been presented and I was wondering what is your opinion about them and how should we differentiate?”

IBM Design leader asks: *“Should we present ourselves as iX or as IBM?”*

In addition to this, in the next days, participants showed their interest on the session results of by asking questions and expressing their appreciation. The workshop has been also mentioned few times during internal meetings.

“From what Anna presented we realized that nobody knows what we do and who we are”

“Anna presented the competitors in a very provocative way, and it shows well that we need to differentiate”



Figure 27. Pictures of canvas 4 filled in by participants



Figure 28. Pictures of employees during the positioning workshop

4.4.3 RESULTS

The results of the workshops have been analyzed and summarized below:

CONTEXT OF IBM iX: WHO IS YOUR CLIENT

- More focused on services than products
- Automation of interaction
- Change their way of working
- Customer and employee centric
- Look for ways to use their data
- Need for transparency
- Need the capabilities to cope with change
- Look for optimization
- Need for assets and technology

VALUE iX PROVIDE TO CLIENTS

- Scalability
- Design focus thinking
- Empower them to become customer centric
- Deliver successful solutions at speed/accelerate
- Provide an environment (garage) to co-create

WHY IBM iX?

- Credibility: IBM is a company that reinvented themselves many times
- Good, smart people
- The best data science and IBM research
- Ai to really understand the user more
- End to end process
- Make innovation real and tangible:

“We actually make things, we don’t just tell you”

4.4 CONCLUSIONS ON POSITIONING

The workshop gave a lot of insights regarding IBM iX, although still very fuzzy and confused. Moreover, the session showed, again, that employees are not well prepared about iX and his ecosystem.

Positioning

From the workshop, it is clear what the p.o.d. from competitors are, which lay on the support of the entire IBM (provide end to end solutions, put them to work by using IBM technologies, use their ability to scale up at speed). However, it seems to be still a bit difficult to actually differentiate from other IBM departments. The challenge has been taken over by the Eminence workstreams.

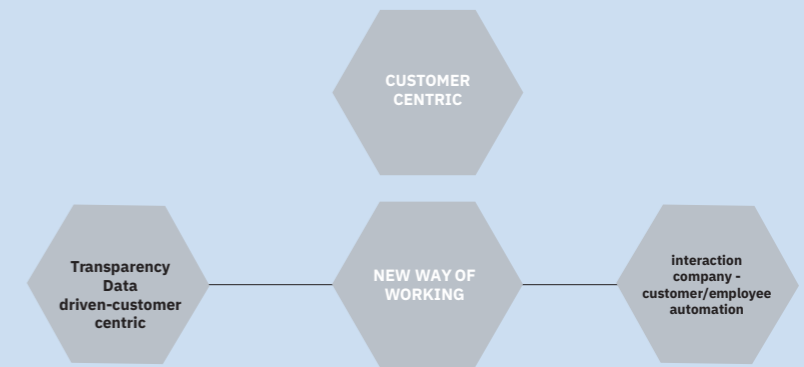
ACTIVATION: Understand

The session allowed employees to ‘visualize’ iX within the market place, and this gave them the opportunity to better understand their identity. The workshop generated high engagement that was reflected during the following days in individuals sharing their experience with others. This allows setting the ball running with other employees as well. The process presented at the end of chapter 3 can be considered iterative when spreading it out throughout the organization. It creates a sort of chain reaction.

POSITIONING Second iteration

IBM iX ROLE IN THE WORLD

Due to the evolution of technology many products, services and processes are now highly complex. Users are more demanding and companies are responding to this trend by becoming customer centric. Organizations need help and the right PARTNER to undertake this transformation,



WHAT VALUE YOU PROVIDE TO THE CLIENT



Why IBM iX?

WE MAKE IT REAL	WE HAVE KNOWLEDGE IN HOUSE	WE PROVIDE END TO END	B2B EXPERIENCE
We make innovation real and deliver actual solutions. We actually make things, we don't just tell you. Creative + Practical	IBM Research Data Scientists	Thanks to the power of the entire IBM, we are able to deliver large scale successful solutions at speed.	We have broad experience in the B2B market
IBM GARAGE We do it with you			

4. CONCLUSIONS

The vision and positioning workshops helped gain new insights on iX BeNeLux identity. Based on the analysis of theory, survey, interviews and workshops, the elements of iX identity have been identified and summarized below.

Who is iX

The department is characterized by a multidisciplinary team that allows them to work at the intersection of different domains to solve complex challenges. This element is seen as a negative aspect from the other departments who consider iX a group of generalists (ex. “Barbapapas”, see chapter 4.2).

Vision: to be the client’s coach during their business transformation towards a digital future (Insight gathered from the vision workshop, chapter 4.3)

Goal: to help the client “reinvent themselves” which indicates the strategic role of the department (Global brand guidelines)

How do iX work

As expressed in both workshops (chapter 4.3 and 4.4) and during the interviews (chapter 4.2), the strength of iX lays in their agile way of working which allows them to transform insights into solutions at speed. Moreover, the ability to realize MVPs to test solutions seems to be one of the winning points of iX against competitors, thanks to the implementation capabilities of IBM.

What does iX offer

During the research three main areas of expertise have been identified both from the empirical analysis and the global brand guidelines.

- iX empowers organizations to become more customer-centric (see positioning page 67)
- iX helps create user experiences (see page 61)
- iX delivers successful and scalable solutions (see positioning page 67)

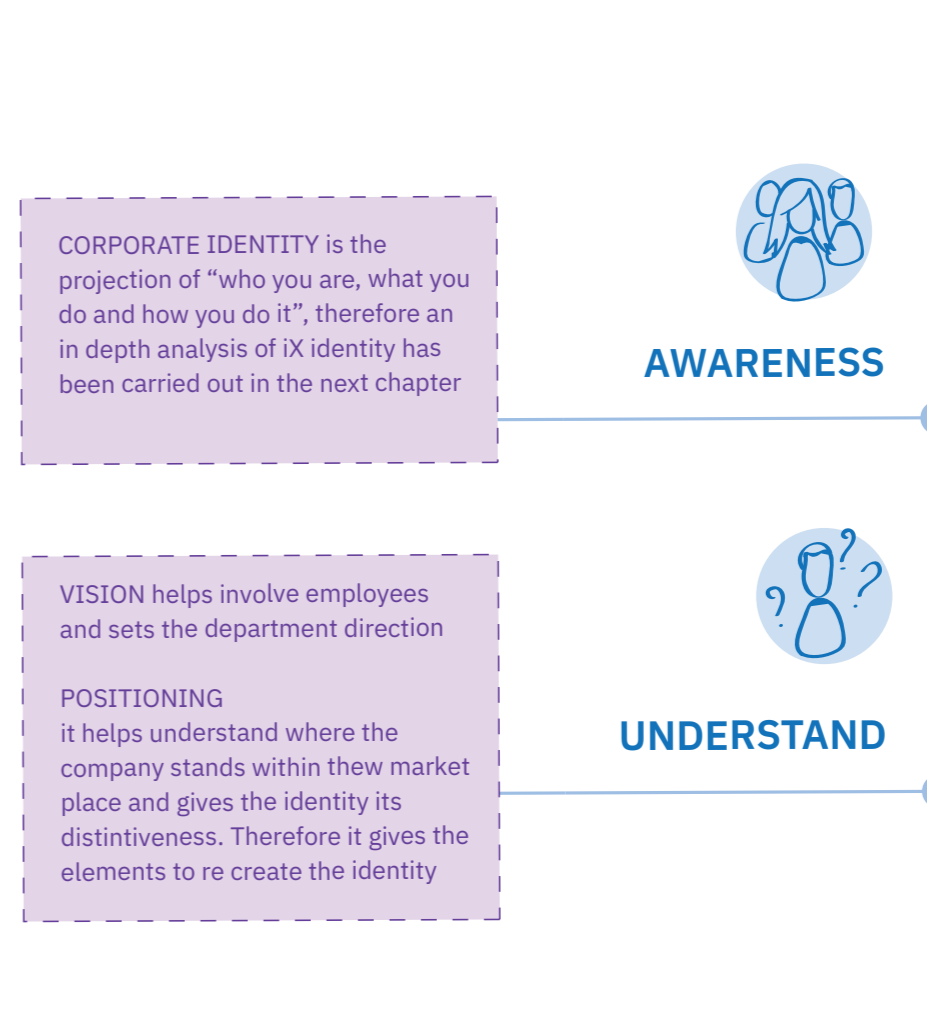
ACTIVATION: Awareness + Understand

• Awareness: Analysis

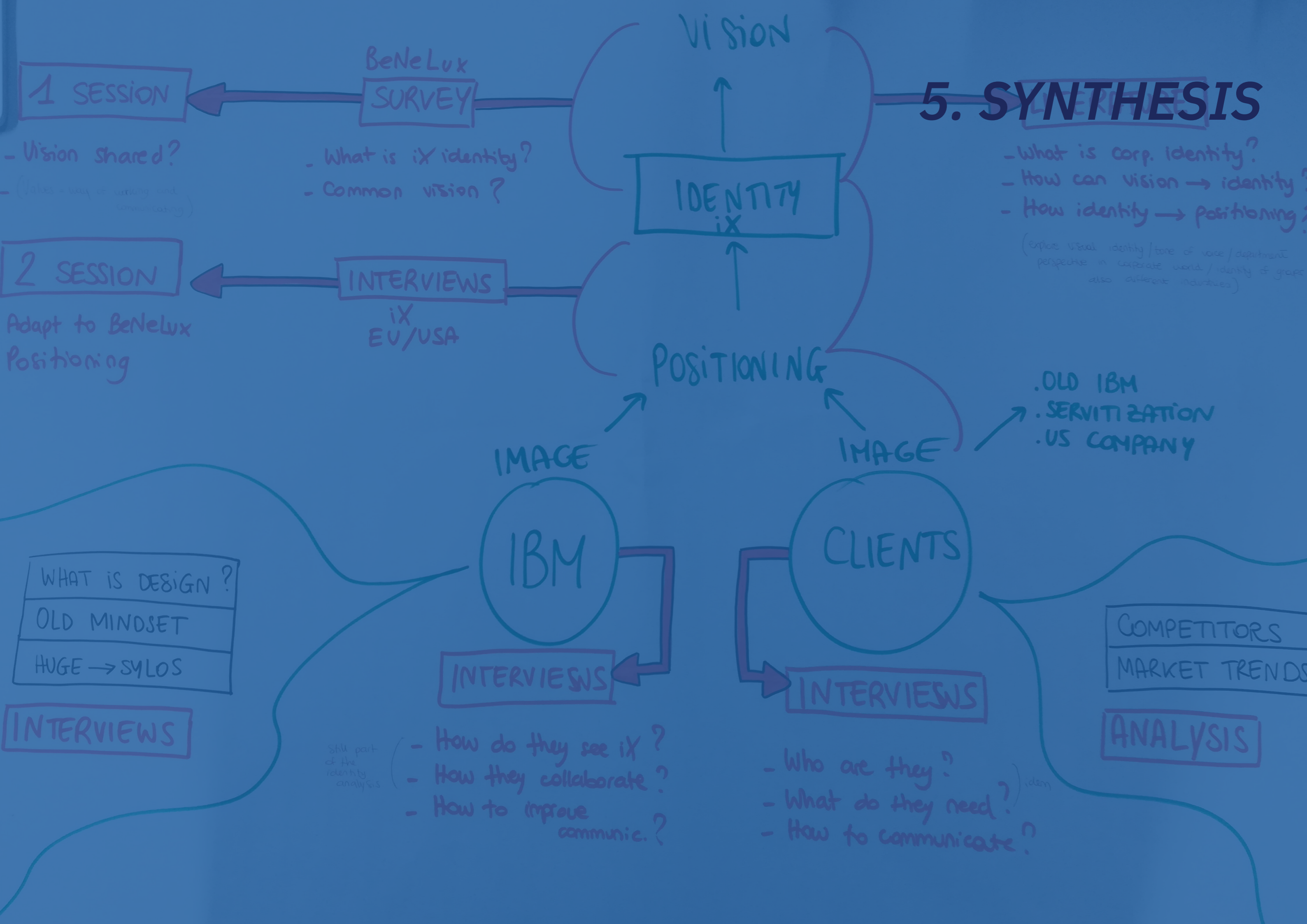
Include the analysis of iX identity through survey and interviews, which allowed stakeholders to start thinking about it and trigger them to know more.

• Understand: Co-create iX identity

During the empirical study two workshops are run with the objective to co-create vision and positioning of iX, in fact according to the literature review, when brand internalization happens across culture (as in iX case), it is not about identity transfer, but we talk about identity re creation. The two workshops function as understanding phase.



5. SYNTHESIS



1 SESSION

- Vision shared?
- (Notes = way of writing and communicating)

BeNeLux SURVEY

- What is iX identity?
- Common vision?



2 SESSION

Adapt to BeNeLux Positioning

INTERVIEWS

iX
EU/USA



- What is corp. identity?
 - How can vision → identity?
 - How identity → positioning?
- (explore visual identity / tone of voice / department perspective in corporate world / identity of groups also different industries)

- .OLD IBM
- .SERVITIZATION
- .US COMPANY

IMAGE



INTERVIEWS

- still part of the identity analysis
- How do they see iX?
 - How they collaborate?
 - How to improve communic.

IMAGE



INTERVIEWS

- Who are they?
- What do they need?
- How to communicate?

WHAT IS DESIGN?
OLD MINDSET
HUGE → SYLOS

INTERVIEWS

COMPETITORS
MARKET TRENDS

ANALYSIS

5. SYNTHESIS

This chapter aims at bringing together all the insights that have been gathered from the previous analysis (ecosystem, theory and empirical study) in order to draft conclusions and formulate a design brief. The chapter will also provide the design guideline for the end deliverable.

5.1 VALIDATION OF ASSUMPTIONS

The analysis carried out in *chapter 4* clearly validated the problem assumptions. Below the main insights for each assumption have been articulated.

- Within IBM iX the vision is not shared, therefore their identity is not clear.

The survey (*chapter 4.1*) and the vision workshop (*chapter 4.3*) clearly showed that iX employees don't share a common vision. The reason behind it is linked to the family culture, the diversity of the iX Practices within the department, and the presence of a high number of documents, platforms, and sources where information is not aligned (brand guidelines from HQ change every couple of months).

The theory also demonstrated that a clear vision is very important to understand the meaning and purpose of a business, therefore it is fundamental for iX to co-create it together in order to better understand who they are.

- Since the identity is not clear internally, IBM GBS don't have a proper understanding of IBM iX activities.

The interviews also demonstrated that IBM consultants outside iX are generally not aware of iX activities. They rather look at them in a superficial

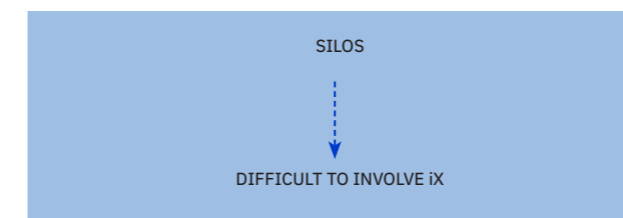
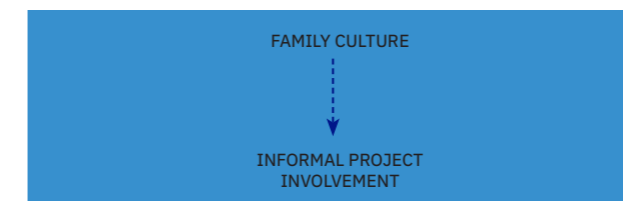
manner. Next to the fact that IBM stakeholders don't have a clear image of iX and that the latter provides little information about their work, there are other factors which influence this situation. First of all the silo mentality within IBM which is linked to the old mindset that characterize some departments (consider that there are employees working in the company for more than 30 years). All this situation is also caused, partly, due to the constant change of IBM business focus - from hardware to software, to services - and its high reputation of a technology giant. All this affects the image of iX which, instead, wants to be seen as a smart and creative group of people that are able to assess the complexity of the client's entire project by approaching it from the perspective of business, design, and technology.

- No clear identity implies a non clear positioning, as a consequence clients are not aware of IBM iX.

This assumption has also been validated. In the theory reviewed (*chapter 3*), it is clear that an identity creates a sense of individuality and differentiate the brand within the marketplace. To add on that, the competitor analysis showed that the main competitors of iX also position themselves in the same market space and present a similar value proposition and positioning, which makes it hard for iX to stand out. Having said that, the main reasons for the department to not be visible externally relate to the fact that they often

don't introduce themselves to the clients as iX but as IBM. This creates an image in client's mind that is linked to the technology strengths of the company. Another relevant aspect to mention is that, in IBM and more in general in B2B context, deals are made through one to one conversation which requires sales people to know about iX offerings and capabilities.

Based on all these insights and a discussion with the company mentors, it has been decided to focus on some relevant problems which are highlighted below. Through an analysis of the problems and a discussion with the company mentors it has been decided to focus on the challenges that appeared to be more urgent for the department. The time limitations of the graduation project were also taken into account.



Based on these problems a design brief is outlined as follow:

5.2 DESIGN BRIEF

5.2.1 DESIGN CHALLENGE

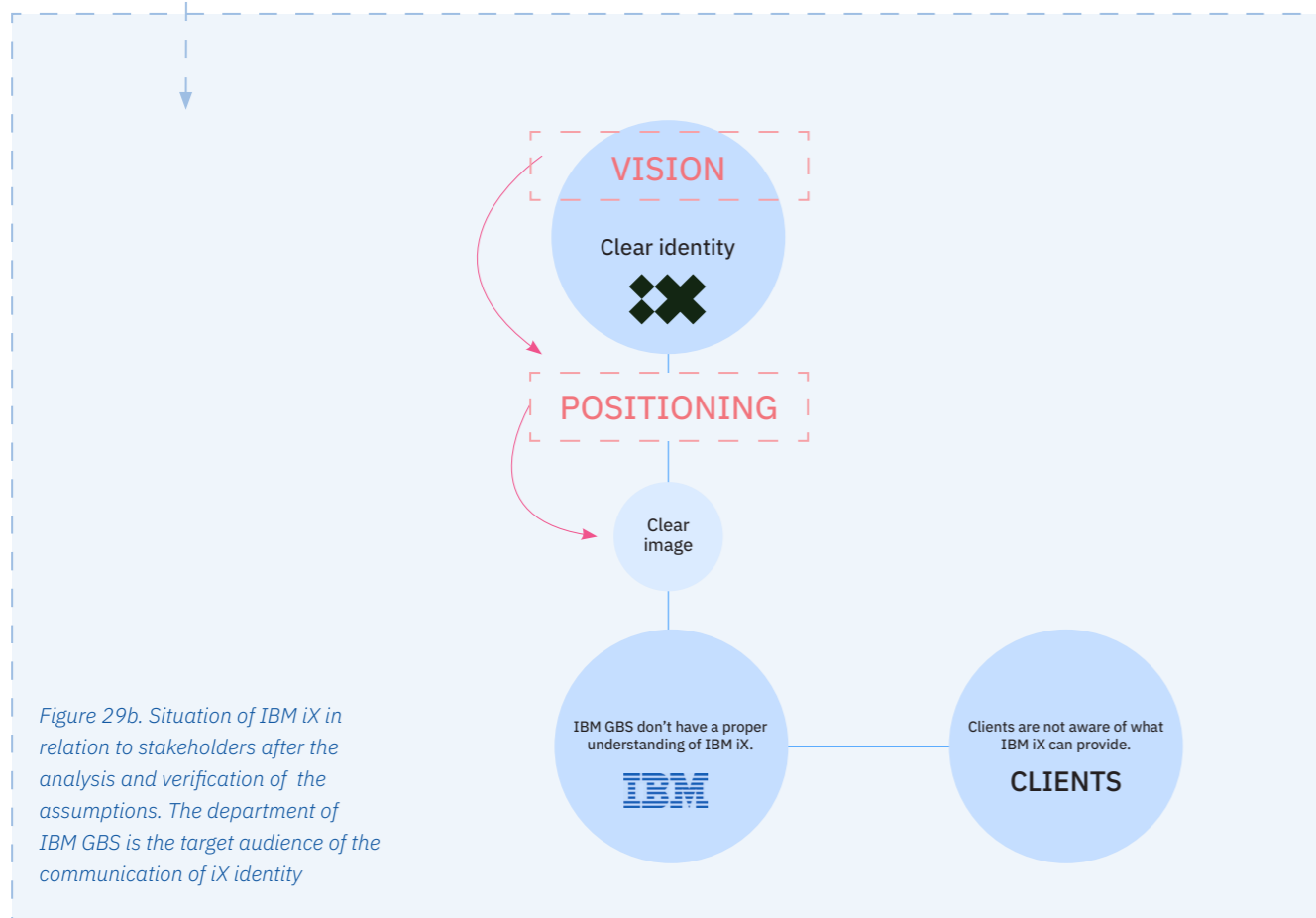
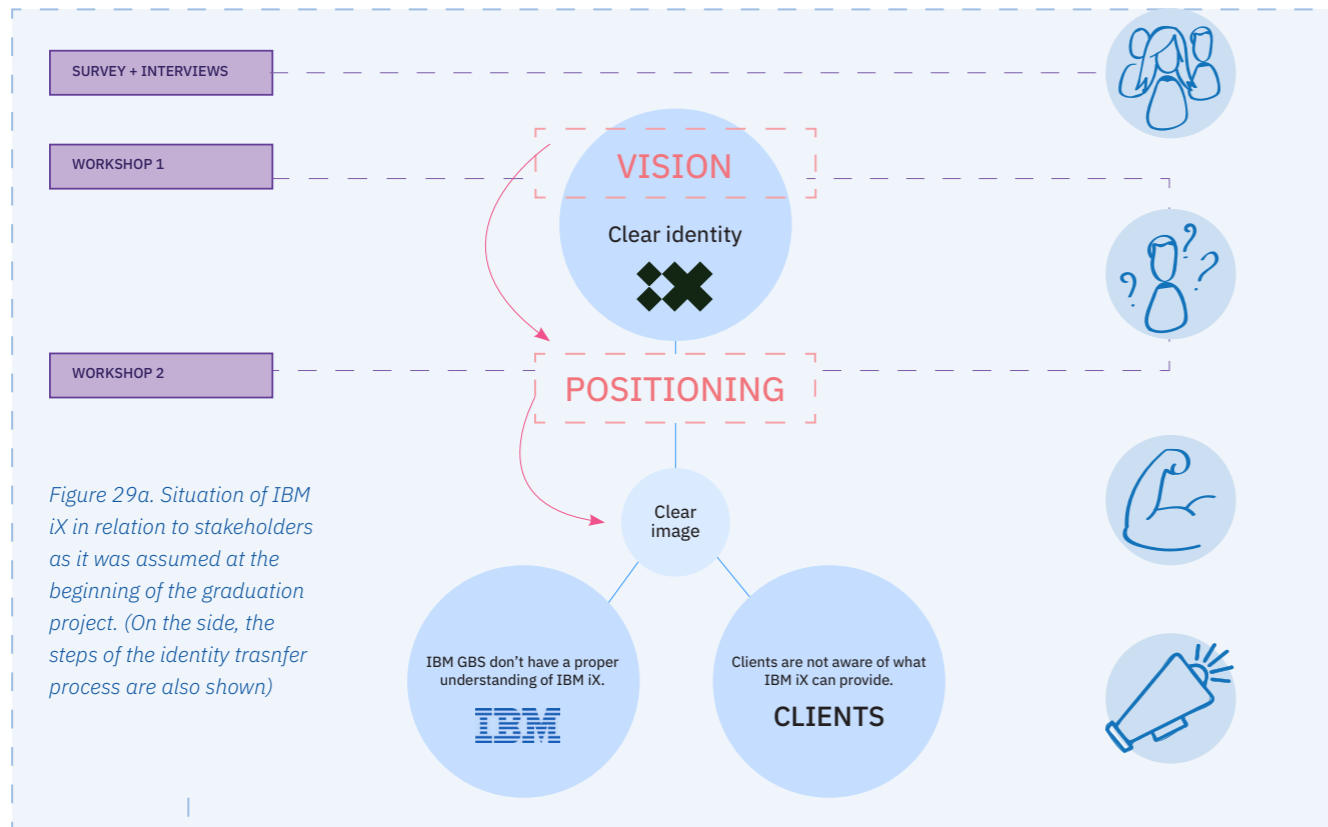
The lack of a shared view on iX identity (capabilities and role) within GBS results in a loss of new project opportunities (with clients).

The findings in *chapter 4.2* clearly show that employees in IBM tend to get involved in projects through informal conversations with colleagues, which means that a manager may ask people to join a client project based on the view he has about the department they are in. If the image around the department is distorted and fuzzy, the project manager might avoid to take that unit into consideration - which is the case of iX with a high rate of consultants "on the bench" (= not involved in any client project). This situation points out that, **to get in touch with clients and get involved in projects, iX needs to first collaborate with other departments (IBM GBS), which entails communicating them its identity.** An explanatory scheme is shown in *fig. 29*.

5.2.2 PROJECT VISION

Relevant stakeholders in GBS comprehend and internalize iX role and capabilities [identity].

The project vision drafted above takes a long term view, in fact, as demonstrated in the literature review in *chapter 3*, the process of identity transfer is long and complex and it demands a lot of attention from the entire organization. In *chapter 3* a process for iX identity transfer has been outlined, likewise the process can be used as



a reference to achieve the desired project vision. However, due to time constraints and the big amount of resources required for such a complex and long process, the aim of this thesis will focus on few steps and elements of the entire procedure (fig. 29). Moreover, from the design challenge, it is clear that the process should involve two different audiences: iX and GBS. In fact, although the new branded division of IBM (iX) is characterized by its own logo and visual identity, it strictly collaborates with the rest of IBM by acting as a standard department. Therefore, we assume, in this thesis, that part of the process of identity transfer should also involve GBS (IBM Services), with regards to the awareness and understanding phases (fig. 30).

ROLE OF WORKSTREAMS

Before explaining the design goal of this thesis, it is necessary to explain the role of the iX workstreams; they are initiatives within iX BeNeLux which took off around the beginning of March with three main objectives: improve engagement among Groningen, Amsterdam and Brussels (Engagement workstream), increase sales (Go to market workstream), share iX story inside and outside IBM (Eminence workstream). The last mentioned workstream will make sure that iX employees understand and internalize iX role within IBM. Moreover it will be responsible for the organization of events, communication and creation of additional material to allow the identity to stay alive.

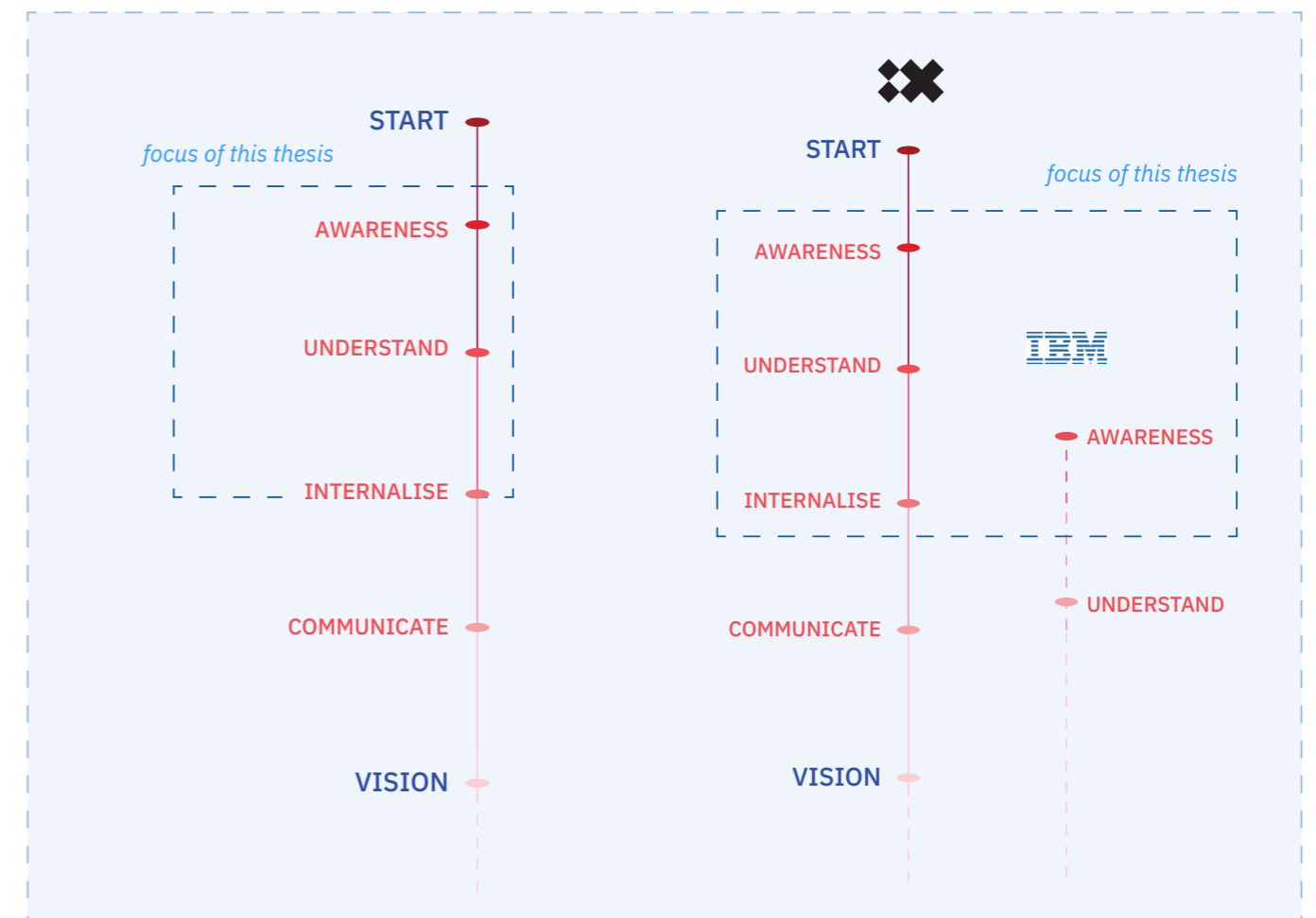


Figure 30a. The iX identity transfer process with focus of this thesis

Figure 30b. The iX identity transfer process applied to iX and GBS with focus of this thesis

5.2.3 DESIGN GOALS

A design goal is formulated in two parts (based on the two different target audience).

A. ENHANCE iX identity internally

Design a communication material to build the basis for a shared understanding of IBM iX BeNeLux identity across offices that works as a reference for employees.

Target group

iX consultants of Eminence Workstream

B. CONVEY iX identity externally

Deliver a “tool” that triggers GBS consultants to get to know iX and stimulate cross departmental interactions.

Target group

GBS consultants from Amsterdam (Groningen and Brussels).

5.2.4 DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

A.

- It should set the stage for the Eminence workstream

The visual material should allow employees to understand iX identity and function as a bridge to the internalization phase.

- It should communicate vision and positioning of IBM iX BeNeLux in a visual and compelling way

As illustrated in the theoretical review, vision and positioning are important elements to communicate as they facilitate understanding of an identity. Moreover using elements that have been co-created with employees will create ownership

and spark the desire to take responsibility for contributing to the successful transformation of the department.

- It should be adaptable and adjustable over time

As IBM is a company that often adjust their brand guidelines, it is useful to create a design which is easily adjustable by employees over time

- It should stimulate shared understanding

The visual should give the opportunity to iX employees to align their perspective towards iX so that everybody will be able to have common background to refer to when thinking of iX

B.

- It should require minimum effort from GBS consultant

Employees in IBM are generally very busy people and, often, not in the office, therefore it is necessary to create something which requires no effort/time.

- It should capture the attention of GBS employees

While it needs to require minimum effort, the concept should be effective and catch the attention of constantly busy people.

- It should stimulate two-ways communication

“These largely one-way vehicles don’t provide the interaction needed to move beyond talk to focused action.” Tosti & Stotz (2001).

- It should stimulate interaction with iX consultants

Since the involvement in clients projects happens informally, it is very important to stimulate conversation among colleagues from different departments, which would lead to more multidisciplinary collaboration.

- It should communicate elements of iX identity in a clear and concrete way

As the main goal of the design is to stimulate interaction with iX employees, it is very important that it communicates, either directly or indirectly, aspects that characterized iX.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the synthesis of the findings from previous chapters and presents the design brief of this thesis.

Validation assumptions

1. The analysis of chapter 4 confirms that iX employees don’t share a common vision due to the family culture, the diversity of the iX Practices, the high number of documents where information is not aligned

2. From the findings, it is clear that IBM employees are not aware of iX activities. This is caused by a silo mentality and IBM reputation of technology giant.

3. Clients might have the wrong perception of iX because they make deals through conversations with IBM sales people who are not aware of what iX does.

DESIGN CHALLENGE

The fact that in IBM there is no understanding about iX capabilities creates a lack of project opportunities for the department as its consultants don’t get involved in GBS projects.

PROJECT VISION

To allow iX to get involved in more projects, it is necessary that everybody in IBM GBS comprehend and internalize iX role and capabilities.

DESIGN GOAL

Based on the two target audience: iX and GBS, the design goal is formulated in two parts.

1. Create a communication material to build the basis for a shared understanding of iX identity within iX. This would help align employees opinions.

2. Deliver a tool to create awareness about iX and trigger GBS consultants to talk to iX people. By stimulating interaction, it is possible to recreate the informal atmosphere that would allow IBM colleagues to involve each other in new projects.

Based on all the insights got to this point of the thesis, an explanatory visual is outlined on page 78.

ACTIVATION: Including IBM GBS

From the design challenge, it is clear that the process of identity transfer involve both iX and GBS. Since IBM iX needs to strictly collaborates with the rest of IBM, it is evident that part of the process of identity transfer should also involve GBS (IBM Services), with regards to the awareness and understanding phases.

6. DESIGN



6. DESIGN

This section will elaborate on the iterative ideation sessions that were performed in a co-creative manner together with employees of iX. Later on the final design outcomes based on the two design goals will be presented.

6.1 CONVEY iX identity internally

After enhancing iX identity through the vision and positioning workshops, employees are still involved in the creation and iteration of the iX story whose purpose is to effectively communicate the iX identity. This continuous process of understanding and elaboration of the identity will allow them, on a later stage, to make sense of it and internalize it in their daily activities.

6.1.1 STORYTELLING

Storytelling has always been a way to convey knowledge, beliefs and values across generations (Kallergi & Verbeek, 2012). This method has been used increasingly in organizations; externally to convey the organization’s brand to consumers, and internally to understand and create a corporate culture (Mendonca, 2015). Corporate storytelling is the process of developing a message that reinforces employee behavior by using narration about people, the organization, the past, the future and work itself (Witherspoon, 1997). Storytelling is increasingly being applied in organizations. However, the standard ways of communicating e.g. via emails, presentations and newsletters, are still often used, even though these ways of

communication fail in engaging employees. In these situations, storytelling appears to be an attractive communication approach for leaders to use because of its ability to stimulate imagination, easy communication and verbalization of implicit ideas or knowledge (Kallergi & Verbeek, 2012): a story can construct the strategic change in words as it is constructed in reality (Lloyd, 2000).

6.1.2 iX STORY

ITERATIONS

The idea behind the deliverable is to communicate the iX in a compelling way. The first action consisted in gathering and synthesizing all the insights about iX in a concise and compelling story. Many iterations took place, followed by testing moments with few employees. By constantly re framing and re visualizing the story, the aim was to find an appealing proposition which would allow the iX identity to come across both through the use of the right terminology and an appropriate visualization.

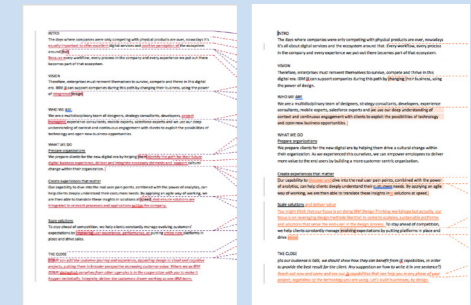
The Eminence workstream had a critical role in the creation and iteration of the iX story as visualized in fig 32 (see appendix G for a larger picture). **The interactions with the work stream were important in order for them to take ownership of the story and keep it alive after this project** as in design requirements).

ITERATIONS iX STORY PITCH



INDIVIDUAL+mentors

By combining all the insights gathered during the research phase a one pager draft to represent the iX story pitch has been outlined.



WORKSTREAM

The draft has been iterated with the Eminence workstream whose members gave feedback and suggestions on how to improve the story and how to change the structure of the pitch. This process helped create an ownership mentality.



INDIVIDUAL+mentors

From the various feedback of the eminence workstream, a new version of the iX story pitch has been written and reviewed with the company mentors

Figure 32. iX story iterations with Eminence workstream

STRUCTURE

Based on the research, both empirical and theoretical, carried out in this thesis, a structure for the iX story has been developed accordingly. Based on these definitions the iX story delivered in this thesis include the following elements:

- **Hook**
It allows the audience to understand the context framework. [External analysis]
- **Need+Vision:**
It gives the audience a sense of “need” which allows them to keep the focus on the narration. Immediately after, a solution is offered by the role of IBM iX. [Workshop 1]
- **“Who we are” + “How we work”** [Workshop 1-2]

As presented in the literature in chapter 2.1 a **corporate identity** is the projection of “who you are, what you do and how you do it”, therefore introducing the iX team and their way of working is a fundamental aspect of their story

- **“What we do”** [Workshop 2 + Offerings]
This is the “selling moment”, when iX give concrete way on how the solve the ‘need’. As mentioned in chapter 2.3 th “what” of a business also helps understand the vision of the company and has the power to motivate employees.

- **“Why IBM”** [Workshop 2 + External analysis]
To better understand IBM iX it is necessary to show the elements that give the department their distinctiveness. To do so the positioning is represented indirectly in the pitch.

IX STORY PITCH

Hook
The days where companies were only competing with physical products are over, nowadays it's all about digital services and the ecosystem around that. Every work flow, every process in the company and every experience becomes part of that ecosystem.

Need+Vision
Enterprises must reinvent themselves to survive, compete and thrive in this digital era. IBM iX can support companies during this path by changing their business, using the power of design.

Who + How
WE ARE THE HUMANS OF TECHNOLOGY
We are a multidisciplinary team of business designers, strategy and experience consultants, developers, mobile and salesforce experts. Through deep understanding of industry context and continuous engagement with clients we exploit the possibilities of technology and open new business opportunities.

Why IBM
WE TRANSFORM organizations
We prepare clients for the new digital era by helping them transform their organization. We can empower employees to deliver more value to end users by building a more customer centric organization.

Why IBM
WE CREATE experiences
Our capability to discover and dive into the real user pain points, combined with the power of analytics, can help clients deeply understand their customers needs. By applying an agile way of working, we are then able to translate these insights into solutions at speed.

What we do +
WE MAKE it work
We leverage design methods like Enterprise Design Thinking to come to scalable, sustainable solutions that serve the end-user. To stay ahead of competition, we help clients manage evolving expectations by improving user experience, performance, or putting platforms in place.

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The iX story pitch presented above is the results of a series of iterations with iX employees and it will be used by the Eminence workstream as a starting point to build all the communication material necessary to spread the iX identity internally. The visual communication in the next page facilitates the understanding of the story and it represents a first step towards internalization.

ACTIVATION: Understanding + Internalise
After the workshops iX employees are still involved in the creation and iteration of the identity communication material (iX story, infographic), which stimulates the continuous process of understanding and allows them, on a later stage, to make sense of the identity and internalize it.

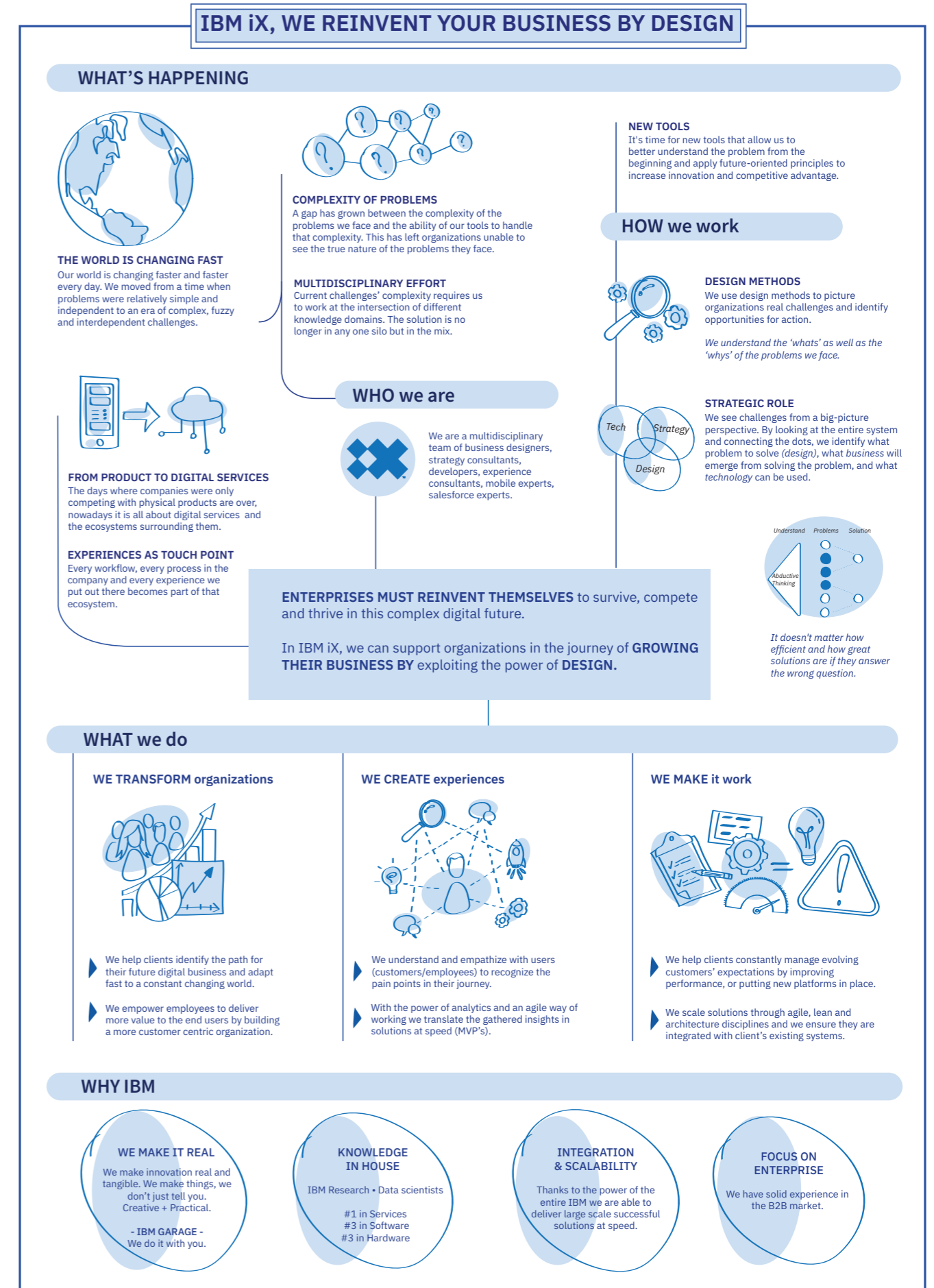


Figure 33. Infographic that visualize the iX story

6.2 CONVEY iX identity externally

6.2.1 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

According to Grunig et al. (2002, p. 487) the goals of internal corporate communication includes the following aspects:

- It contributes to internal relationships characterized by employee commitment;
- It promotes sense of belonging in employees;
- It creates awareness of the company changing environment
- It develops understanding of the organization's aims

This shows how the concept of internal corporate communication appears to be very useful because it affect employees behavior, however it may be criticized because, generally, the direction of the messages is predominately one-way, from strategic management to all employees. Thus symmetrical two-way communication seems to be important to successful internal communication (Grunig and Hunt, 1984, p. 245). In particular, one-way communication is considered appropriate in situations where the consistency of the message is important and, in this case, mediated means of communication (such as internal newsletters, websites) become a necessary strategic choice (Welch & Jackson, 2007). This type of communication can be considered symmetrical "if its content meets the employees' need to know rather than the management's need to tell" (Grunig et al., 2002, p. 487).

6.2.2 INTERNAL MARKETING

To believe that simply 'telling people' will get them on our side is likely to be as naive inside the company as it is outside' (Piercy & Morgan, 1991).

Internal Marketing (IM) mix can be defined as "the controllable elements inside the organization that can be used to influence and motivate employees" (Ahmed, Rafiq, & Saad, 2003). Even though there is a lack of an implementation framework in the IM literature, some key elements (IM mix) to influence and motivate employees can be identified from the IM literature. These elements include communication, training, education and information (Gummesson, 1991). Additionally, researchers Foreman and Money (1995) found that the three components of IM consist in rewards (rewarding and motivating employees), development and providing a vision. It is possible to assert that internal marketing put the focus on different facets of employee development (Ahmed, Rafiq, & Saad, 2003). In the marketing literature Narver and Slater (1990) argue that interdepartmental interactions facilitate the exchange of information, as well as leading to a joint effort to act on the information.

6.2.3 DESIGN ITERATIONS

a) IDEATE WITH COMPANY MENTORS

The first ideation moment took place together with the company mentors in order to align the organization with the possible solution to the problem. The discussion allowed to narrow down the solution space according to company needs and possibility of implementation.

b) INDIVIDUAL ITERATIONS

Several ideation moments happened during the last weeks of the project. Ideas and concepts were often proposed to company mentors and employees of iX in order to check the fit with their expectations. As explored in chapters 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 an internal campaign resulted to be a good opportunity for both communicating the information to employees and motivating them. Several concepts for internal campaign have been created. To make sure that the campaign would actually satisfy all the design requirements, an additional creative session has been facilitated with IDE students as described in the next paragraph.

c) IDEATE WITH IDE STUDENTS

The goal of this session was to gather more ideas from different perspectives outside of the company environment. This would allow to stimulate creative ideas and solutions. The session consisted in a series of "HOW 2" questions that would add up to the personal ideation phases previously mentioned. The workshop was divided in two phases; in the first one the participants were asked to brainstorm on more general "HOW 2" questions, in order to challenge the concept created during the personal iterations. See below:

- "How to trigger IBM employees to talk to iX employees?"
- "How to stimulate a "two-ways" communication between iX and IBM?"
- "How to spark interest and curiosity about iX?"

After a discussion a second round has been completed, which allowed to go more in depth on the characteristics of the campaign:

- "How to make sure the campaign stays active in the long term?"
- "How to stimulate iX employees to pursue the campaign?"
- "How to make sure the campaign is not a stand alone activity?"

The new insights and ideas has been analyzed and a new version of the campaign has been developed.



Figure 34. Pictures of participants during the ideation session

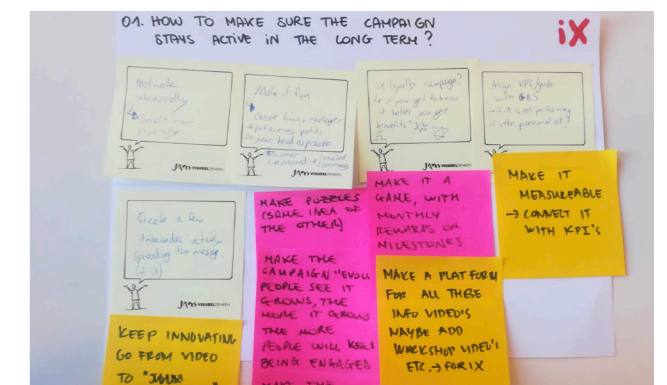


Figure 35. Picture of brainwriting material

d) **ITERATE WITH iX EMPLOYEES**

The final iteration has been carried by discussing and brainstorming together with the Customer Engagement & Design practice leader in Amsterdam and the iX Studio Leader in Groningen. This allowed to understand what

aspects are considered relevant and important to communicate from the perspective of the leaders. Because of the obvious limitations of a graduation project with regard to time and implementation of the solution, not all the features identified could be taken into account.

ITERATIONS INTERNAL CAMPAIGN



COMPANY MENTORS

Firstly, a brainstorm session took place with the company mentors to understand the needs of the company



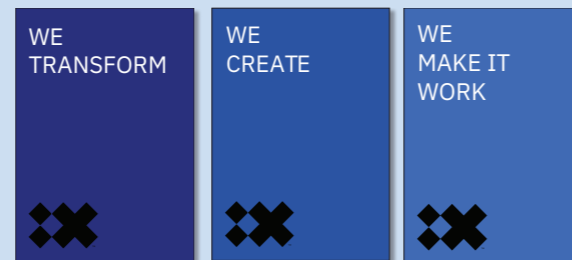
INDIVIDUAL

Through a series of individual iterations I came up with the first tangible version of the campaign. "What you didn't know about iX" (See Appendix H)



IDE STUDENTS+INDIVIDUAL

By iterating with IDE students I discovered opportunities, but also identified pain points regarding the first campaign concept. New versions are developed (See Appendix H).



iX EMPLOYEES

Some brainstorms have been done together with some iX leaders. This allowed to understand their needs concerning the importance of showing tangible examples to communicate iX identity (See Appendix H).



INDIVIDUAL

Final iteration has been done individually with the objective to put together all the insights of the previous ideation sessions and combine them with the design requirements.



6.2.4 INTERNAL CAMPAIGN IN ACTION

a) WHY: COMMUNICATION GOALS

A proposition for an internal marketing campaign is presented to IBM. The aim of the campaign is to create *awareness* among GBS employees on the role and capabilities of iX, as explained in the first phase of the identity transfer process (see chapter 4). The main purpose is to trigger people to know more about iX and encourage interaction across departments. Stimulating interaction will allow to build relationships that can open possibilities for iX to join new projects.

b) WHO: TARGET AUDIENCE

The reference audience for the campaign is represented by GBS consultants, as they represent a source of potential project opportunities for iX.

c) WHAT: MESSAGE

The message is a very important element in the design of the campaign. In fact, during the survey and interviews (see chapter 2.1), it was clear that employees in GBS have a very strong and distorted opinion about iX, which makes it difficult for the department to effectively communicate who they are. The presence of many preconceptions such as "In iX they make nice presentations", "They do Design thinking workshops", "They do user experience", make it extremely difficult to change people minds, especially in a company like IBM. Therefore, the campaign uses the power of concrete examples to show how iX capabilities can add value to other departments within GBS. Moreover it invites people to know more about iX and start interacting with its employees to know more about their work.

d) SOLUTION:

"WHAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IBM iX"

The slogan "What you didn't know about iX" aims at creating curiosity and trigger GBS employees to discover more about iX. The idea is to *capture the attention of GBS employees*, as mentioned in the design requirements. The title would be associated with a series of videos in which different capabilities of iX are shown through concrete examples. Because iX is characterized by many different practices and works on very diverse projects, it is important to show all the relevant capabilities in different movies, so that people can understand iX step by step. Moreover, the fact that IBM employees are very concrete people, suggests the use of real projects examples to stimulate understanding among them. Together with the release of the videos one or more, an event will take place where iX can talk about their department and to facilitate the interaction with the other GBS departments.

e) HOW: MATERIAL & CHANNELS

VIDEOS

Below 5 video topics, which are taken from the iX story in chapter 5.1, are proposed:

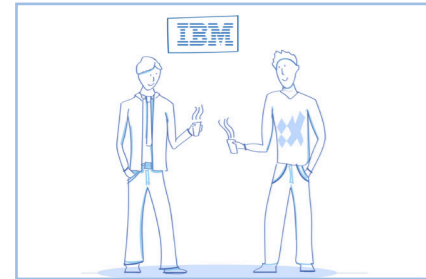
- *Discover and dive into the real user pain points* (specific to Customer Engagement and Design practice within iX).
- *Agile way of working* (it is the common iX way of working).
- *Embed Design Thinking in organizations* (one of the main and unique capabilities of iX).
- *iX & Salesforce* (one of the iX practices is completely dedicated to Salesforce partner).
- *Putting marketing platform in place* (to show that iX can also do implementation work).
- *Chatbots and Mobile* (iX is the only department which has a dedicated practice for mobile applications).

Figure 36. Iterations internal campaign

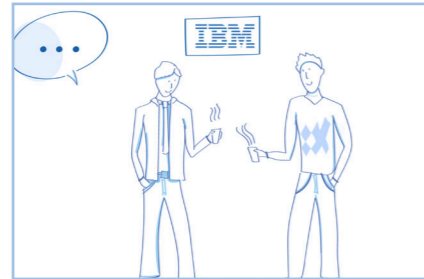
For this thesis, only topic one is elaborated and further developed. Below the storyboard and script of the video is proposed.

In the storyline the GBS character Hugo doesn't

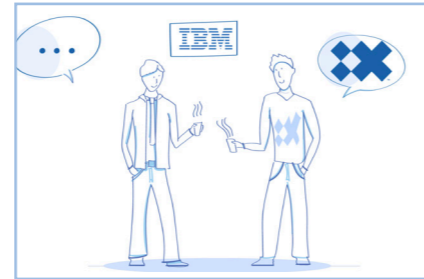
know a lot about iX, therefore the alter ego of iX (Matt) tells him about a previous project where they help other departments to solve the client problem.



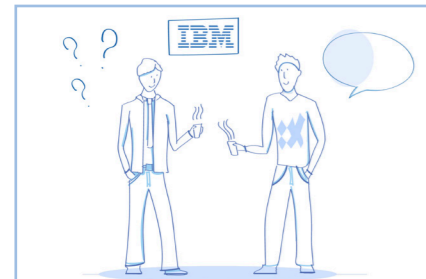
Hugo and Matt are enjoying a break at the coffee corner of IBM



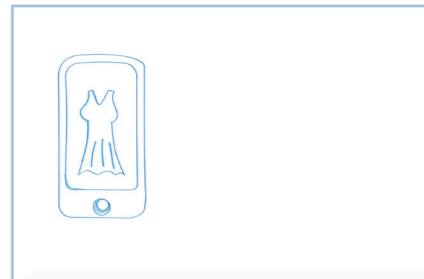
Hugo is curious about Matt's role within IBM.



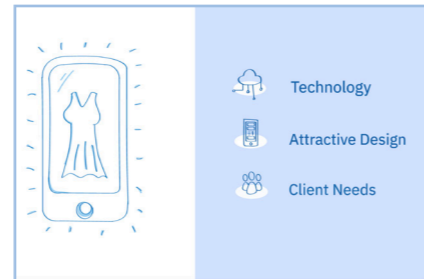
Matt is from iX, a service line within IBM services.



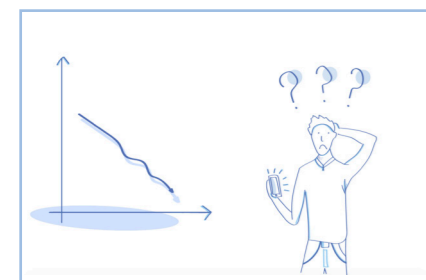
Really Hugo, you don't know about iX?



Let me tell you this... As you might remember, 6 months ago you were working on a new e-commerce application for a famous clothes brand.



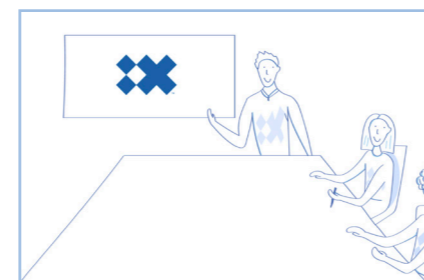
You were able to deliver an excellent app with the latest technology and a great design that effectively met the client's expectations



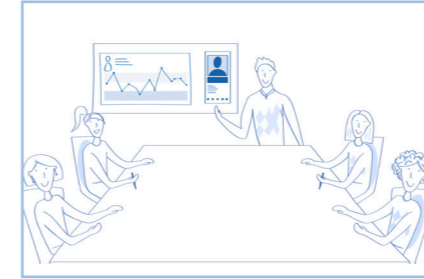
However, the app didn't turn out to be as successful as envisioned since the customers seemed to opt out during the purchasing process.



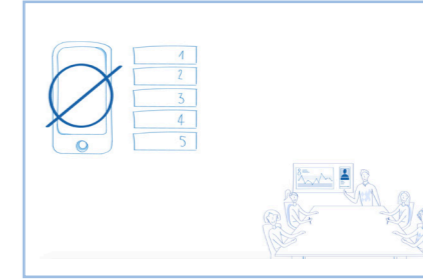
As a consequence the revenue generated through this channel didn't add value to the client's business.



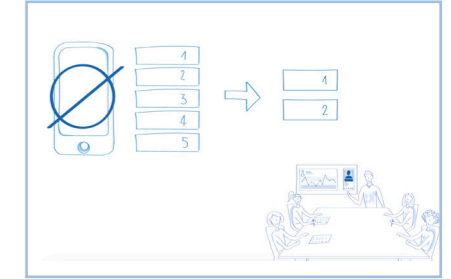
That's when iX was asked to step in. To analyze the problem we conducted in depth user research by using our design methods.



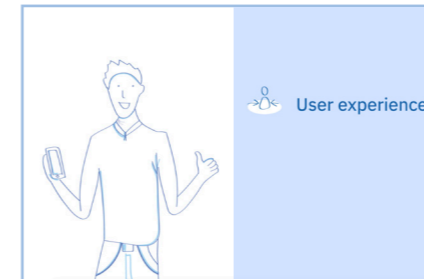
In close collaboration with the clients we created a customer journey map and a user persona that helped identify pain points.



We realized that the customers would stop using the app because of the too many steps involved in the purchasing process.



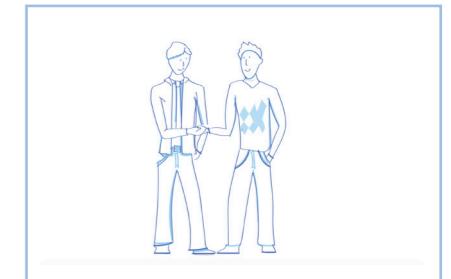
By translating insights in solution directions and conducting usability tests we managed to deliver an improved version of the app.



Our involvement in the project helped creating a better user experience



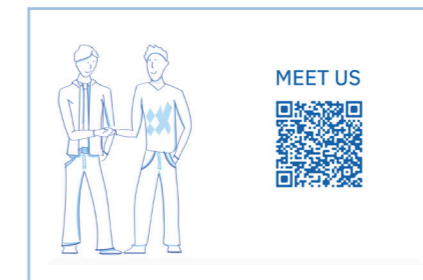
Resulting in a profitable initiative for the client business.



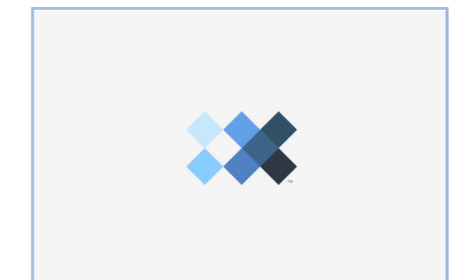
You see Hugo? iX is not that different from what you do, in fact our capabilities can actually complement to yours.



So, next time you might want to involve Xavier in your projects so that you can work together and deliver the best solutions for IBM clients



Meet us and discover what you didn't know about IBM iX.



Next to the videos, some digital and offline material has been created in order to launch the campaign and facilitate the spreading of the video.

LANDING PAGE

The landing page represents the first interaction that the audience would have with the campaign. As shown in *fig 37*, its simple and clear layout allows GBS consultants to *easily access the video with no effort*, as stated in the design requirements.

The landing page would be incorporated in the iX internal mini website that the three workstreams are developing.

NEWSLETTER & POSTER

Once all the videos are released, a newsletter and a poster would announce the “iX coffee event” where GBS consultants will have the opportunity to network with iX employees and hear more about their projects. The event would *stimulate cross-departmental interaction and two-ways communication*.

EVENT & POSTER

The idea of the coffee event comes from the video script. In the same way as Hugo meets Matt at the coffee corner of IBM, the event will allow GBS employees to meet iX consultants and listen to their success stories. A poster will be used to promote the event as shown in *fig 39*.

HASHTAG

The hashtag *#meetme* is used to stimulate interaction after watching the movie. Since each video would have a different iX character, the audience is actually invited to meet the character in person or join a slack channel to ask for questions.

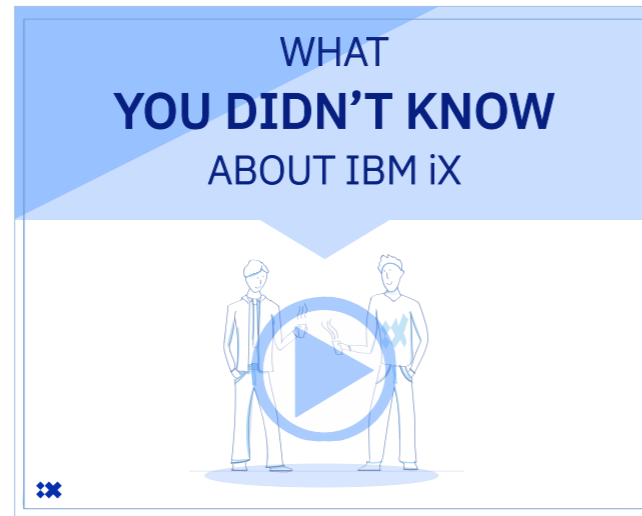


Figure 37. Internal campaign landing page.

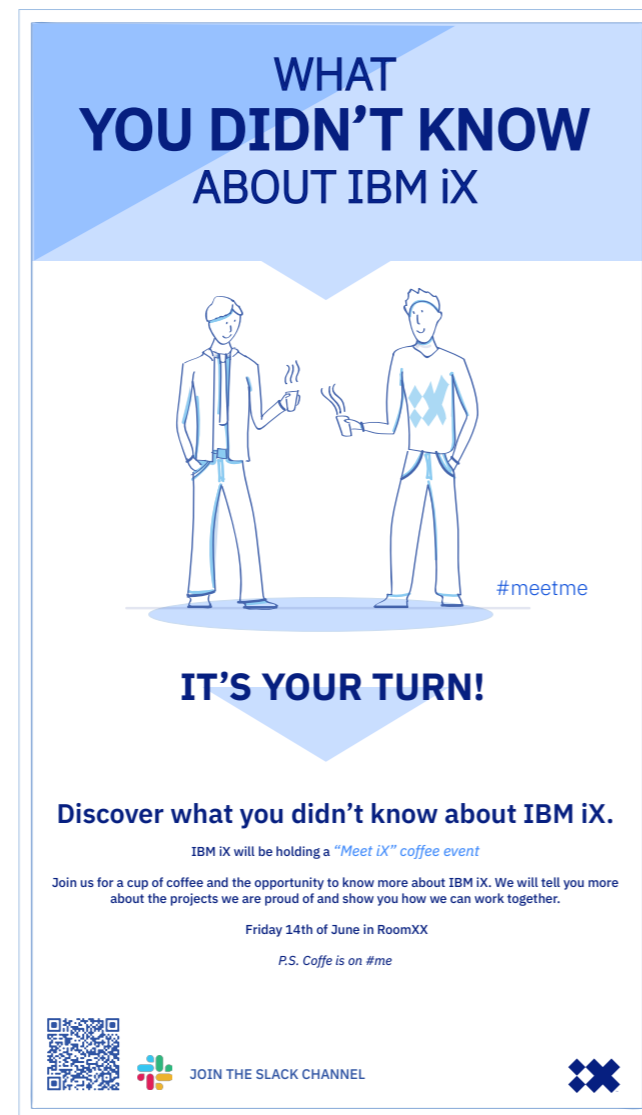


Figure 38. Internal campaign newsletter



Figure 39. Internal campaign posters

SLACK CHANNEL

At the end of each video, a QR code would redirect people to a slack channel where an iX ambassador (in specific the one talking in the video) would be willing to answer to any questions or curiosity about the specific topic of the video. The name of the channel would be *#meetme/name of iX ambassador*

f) IMPLEMENTATION AND DURATION

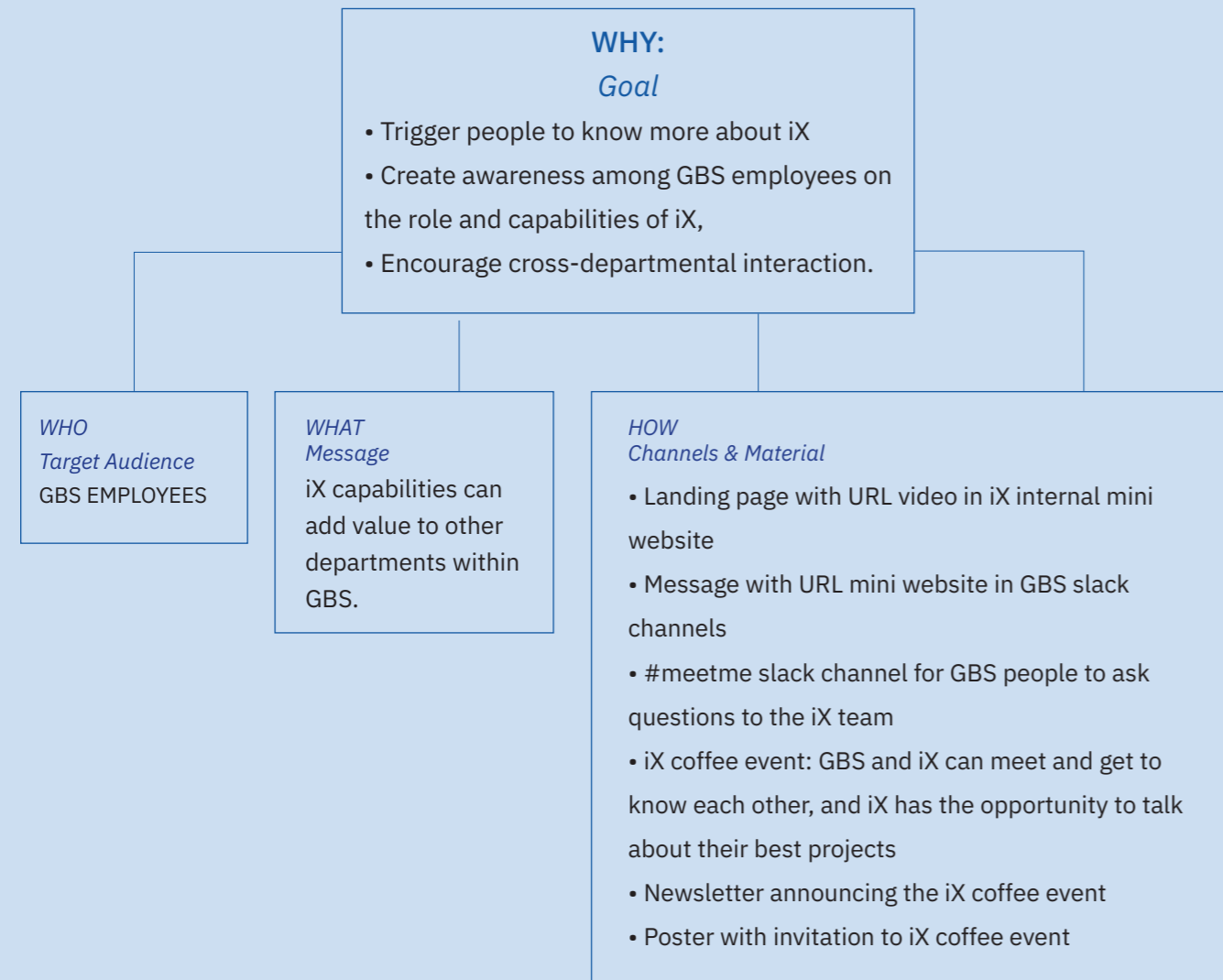
The implementation of the campaign would take place by collaborating with the Marketing and Communication department in order to reach as many channels as possible. Moreover, conversation with the other growth platform leaders would allow to promote the campaign

within their departments and to get them on board. With regards to the material, the Groningen iX Studio (team of developers and visual designers) has been contacted for the editing of professional videos and the realization of appealing posters and newsletters.

g) ROLE OF THE WORKSTREAMS

The idea is that the Eminence workstream would take the lead in the development of the campaign and would make it happen by contacting the relevant stakeholders and making sure that all the video are implemented and released.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS



ACTIVATION: Internalize+Communicate (iX)

The campaign would allow iX employees to comprehend more and more the role of their department by watching and creating the videos. Moreover, giving them the responsibility to answer specific questions and talk about their projects would help them embed the iX identity in their communication and activities .

ACTIVATION: Awareness+Understand (GBS)

At the same time it would help create *awareness* among GBS employees on the role and capabilities of iX and would stimulate cross departmental interaction, with no particular effort. After spreading awareness through the series of videos, the #meetme Slack channel and the *iX coffee events* would give the opportunity to GBS employees to ask questions and better *understand* the role of iX.

6. CONCLUSIONS

iX STORY

- *It should set the stage for the Eminence workstream*

The iX story has been iterated together with the workstream and it gives them a good first version of the identity to develop further

- *It should communicate vision and positioning of IBM iX BeNeLux in a visual and compelling way*

As illustrated in the theoretical review, vision and positioning are important elements to communicate as they facilitate understanding of an identity. The story includes all the elements that have been co-created during the workshops with employees and Moreover using elements that have been co-created with employees.

- *It should be adaptable and adjustable over time*

Co-creating the iX story with the Eminence workstream allowed them to feel ownership towards it, this will allow them to adjust it with confidence, whenever required

- *It should stimulate shared understanding*

The infographic allows for an easy and quick understanding of the identity and it helps align points of view within the department.

INTERNAL CAMPAIGN

- *It should require minimum effort from GBS consultant*

Employees in IBM are generally very busy people; the campaign allows them to have access to information (videos) with minimum effort and time
- *It should capture the attention of GBS employees*
By using real iX people for video characters and playing with the storyline (as in the concept delivered), the campaign will create curiosity among GBS employees

- *It should stimulate two-ways communication*

In this case the campaign might not satisfy the design requirement at the fullest, in fact, although it requires GBS employees to interact through Slack, it doesn't provide a real and strong incentive on doing so.

- *It should stimulate interaction with iX consultants*

The *iX coffee event* should allow colleagues from different department to get in touch with each other and start networking

- *It should communicate elements of iX identity in a clear and concrete way*

By taking advance from storytelling and using concrete examples the campaign effectively satisfies this requirement.



7. DESIGN EVALUATION



7. DESIGN EVALUATION

This chapter describes the evaluation of the communication material (iX story and internal campaign). Based on the collaboration with the company and the Eminence workstream, some recommendations will be given regarding the iX story, the campaign and the continuation of the identity transfer process which has been initiated with this thesis.

7.1. EVALUATION iX STORY

The evaluation of the iX story was conducted through:

- Group iterations with the Eminence Workstream
- Individual conversations with iX employees from Amsterdam and Groningen
- Discussion with company mentors (iX)
- IDE students session

The objective of the evaluation consisted of assessing whether the iX story fulfills the design requirements formulated in chapter 4 and of verifying if iX members would feel represented by it. In the next sections, the results of evaluation sessions are provided.

7.1.1 SATISFY DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

- *It should set the stage for the eminence workstream*

It is important to mention that the iterations of the story in collaboration with the workstream, as described in chapter 5, allowed to continuously test and evaluate different versions of the story.

This helped to create a draft which satisfies employees' needs and opinions. This process helped the workstream members to take ownership of the iX story which they will use as a reference version for new revisions.

Some quotes expressed during the iteration meetings are reported below:

"Sometimes I miss the connection to technical parts. It's not just design, it is "integrated" design and it includes cloud, applications etc."

"IBM is really focusing on 'the cognitive enterprise' and AI of course, so I am just thinking whether there is a good way to include that in the pitch as well?"

"I think we should remove 'customer' because I think it's both customers and employees"

"For a catchy elevator pitch, I'd say, leave the introduction out and start directly from what we do"

- *It should communicate vision and positioning of IBM iX BeNeLux in a visual and compelling way*

The iX story has been visualized in an infographic which was tested with the following people:

- One iX employee, to check whether the visual would communicate iX vision and positioning co-created together.

"I really like the visuals, they look nice and make everything much more clear."

"The structure is straight to the point and it is easy to follow the vision and positioning through the titles "who, how, what and why."

"It might seem a bit simplistic, but it's a good high level perspective."

- One GBS employee. Even though GBS is not the audience of reference, it was interesting to check whether the visual is actually clear and straightforward.

"A few times I'm getting confused on where and what to read."

"It would be good to use some data and numbers in the bottom part, to show the real IBM potential."

"I think that the use of different colours might help me to see what are the most important elements to look at."

7.1 CONCLUSIONS

Overall, it is possible to assert that the iX story was positively evaluated by iX employees, and will be used as the official first version by the department. It is important to notice that the evaluation performed by the leaders showed more criticism regarding the usage of the right wording and tone of voice, while non-managerial employees seem to focus on a more high-level view of the story.

- *It should stimulate shared understanding*

To check whether the story and the visual would actually be comprehensible and understandable by the audience, the iX story has been tested with:

- DS&I Leader and iX Studio Leader in Groningen.

"I think it misses some tangibility, some sentences are too vague. We need to clearly explain who we are and what we do, so that other departments (more concrete) can actually understand."

"I like the general flow of it, but we should make it more punchy and concrete!"

"The focus should be in enterprise experience and business design."

- One IDE student. Testing the infographic with someone who has nothing to do with IBM helped to verify its clarity and efficacy.

"I feel like after deeply reading the visual, I know clearly what iX is about"

"I think it is very straight to the point and extremely clear to grasp the high level view on the department. I would definitely use it as a reference visual for my daily work."

Moreover, quite diverse feedback was given by employees in different roles/department within iX, which stress the problematic situation of the service line in terms of sharing a clear and common identity. The evaluation with the IDE student gave good input on the efficacy of the communication means (infographic) which resulted to be easy to follow and straight to the point.

7.2. EVALUATION INTERNAL CAMPAIGN

Next to evaluate the efficacy of the iX story, an additional validation moment has been executed with regards to the internal campaign. It is to note that the campaign represents only a concept demo and it has not been launched within IBM yet. Thus, not all the channels have been tested.

Particular importance has been given to the video, which represents the main communication material. In addition, a simulation of the landing page was tested and sent in pdf format through personal Slack messages.

The validation was carried out by means of an online survey (specifically referred to the video) and through informal discussions with the following group of people:

- 3 iX employees (Amsterdam and Groningen)
- 2 GBS consultants (Amsterdam)
- 3 IBM interns (Amsterdam)
- 3 IDE students in terms of clarity of the message conveyed

In the following paragraphs, the evaluation of the internal campaign is presented.

7.2.1 EVALUATION OF VIDEO

As introduced before, the video was evaluated via an online survey with regards to iX and GBS employees and IBM interns. Hereafter the results of the questionnaire are highlighted by providing some of the participants' answers.

Open ended questions:

a) *What do you think is the core message of the video?*

"The core message of the video was to provide awareness about the capabilities that IBM iX can offer."

"How iX can help different departments inside IBM to produce more value."

"iX is not about good design, but about understanding the user so that what is delivered actually adds value."

"iX has a lot to offer and can and should be involved in almost every project to assure a user-centric approach, and with that a successful project"

The message of the video resulted to be very clear and easy to follow. This aspect emerged also during the validation with IDE students which reinforce the idea that the video is extremely clear, even for people that don't have familiarity with the IBM environment.

f) *What does the visual style of the video tell you about iX? Briefly explain below.*

"The work that iX does is really reflected by the style of the video."

"iX uses visuals and storytelling to bring across a story, which is exactly what sticks with people. Design and iterate fast, don't over-engineer. That is what it tells me."

"iX is about simplicity. Content over visuals. Does come across somewhat childish."

Closed ended questions:

- It should communicate in a clear and tangible way

b) *How clear is the message conveyed in the video?*

c) *How easy is to follow the story that iX is telling?*

- It should capture the attention of GBS employees

d) *How easy is to understand all the information in the video?*

e) *How visually appealing is the video?*

g) *Does the video trigger you to know more about iX?*

- It should stimulate two-ways communication

h) *How likely is that you would talk to an iX employee to know more?*

i) *How did your perception about iX changed after watching the video?*

- It should communicate elements of iX identity

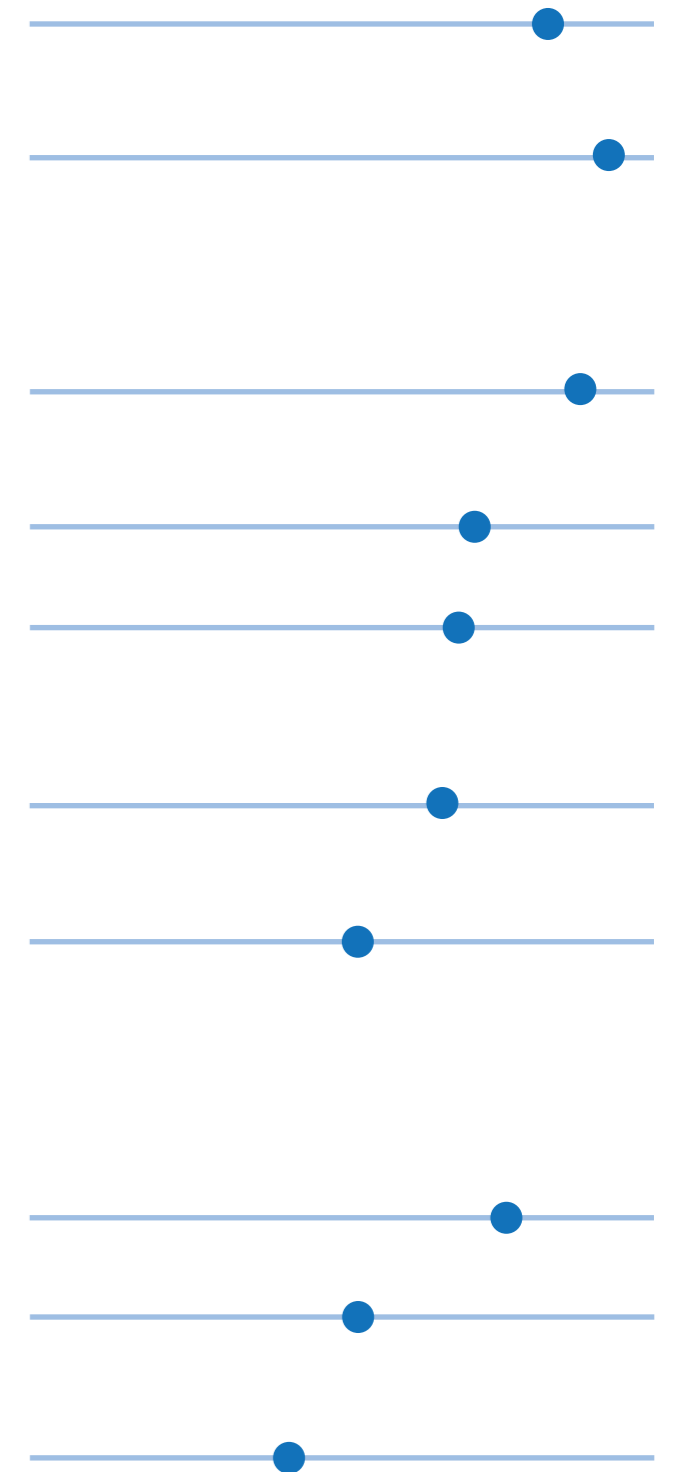
l) *Does the video give you a general idea on the role of iX within IBM?*

m) *Does the video describe well some of the capabilities of iX?*

n) *Does the video communicate, to some extent, the identity of iX?*

Not at all

Extremely



7.2.2 EVALUATION OF THE OVERALL CAMPAIGN

Due to time limitations and difficulties in replicating the entire campaign, the validation was performed through informal conversations with employees. During the discussions, people showed enthusiasm regarding the idea of building the iX identity step by step to trigger GBS, likewise participants gave positive feedback regarding the

presence of iX ambassadors, which would help iX itself to internalize the identity and to build a network with new colleagues from GBS.

Another positive feedback was given with regard to showing the iX value through real examples which fits very much the needs of the target audience. While being enthusiastic about such a campaign, some people were skeptical regarding its effectiveness in the long term as people might get tired of receiving videos about iX.

7.2 CONCLUSIONS

VIDEO

As a whole, the video appears to satisfy the design requirements in terms of clarity of the message communicated. In addition, a positive response was received regarding the efficacy of the campaign to trigger employees to know more about iX.

At the same time, some criticism can be noticed with regards to the actual communication of iX identity. In fact, some participants were skeptical regarding the completeness of the message:

“The video explains one aspect of what iX can do, but it’s only during a seemingly brief window.”

This aspect, however, was predictable as the video is only one of a series of videos whose aim is to give information about different elements of the iX identity. Moreover, the purpose of the video is not to provide a detailed and in-depth explanation about the role of the department, yet to trigger people to know more and stimulate cross-departmental interaction.

INTERNAL CAMPAIGN

In general terms, the internal campaign was evaluated in a positive way by the participants of the test. It is interesting to notice that people outside the IBM environment showed more enthusiasm regarding the overall campaign, while IBM employees manifested skepticism in terms of probability of actual implementation and efficacy. Another aspect that has been pointed out is the visual design of the campaign; while for some it is representative of the iX personality, for others it is considered a bit “risky” in terms of reliability towards iX work: *“iX is about simplicity. Content over visuals. Does come across somewhat childish.”* However this feedback needs to be taken in consideration only to a certain extent since the layout of the concept is intended to be only a representative illustration of the real campaign. Indeed its graphic is voluntarily exacerbated to highlight the intent to communicate the “cool and fresh” personality of iX.

ACTIVATION: Awareness (GBS)

Overall the campaign was positively evaluated with regard to the process of awareness. As a matter of fact, the message conveyed by the video and the landing page seems to be clear and concise, thus allowing GBS employees to get a general understanding of iX in a pleasant way. Moreover, the campaign seems to trigger people to get in touch with their iX colleagues, driven by the curiosity to know more about their capabilities. To conclude, the concept proposed is estimated to be a good way to spark awareness across departments.

ACTIVATION: Understanding (GBS)

Fewer confirmations come from the process of understanding which would actually happen as a result of the campaign. Since the campaign has not been launched yet, it is difficult to confirm whether or not GBS employees will have a proper understanding of iX identity once the videos are all released. Moreover, some employees, during the test, were skeptical about whether or not the campaign would actually provide the right channels to effectively stimulate shared understanding about the department.

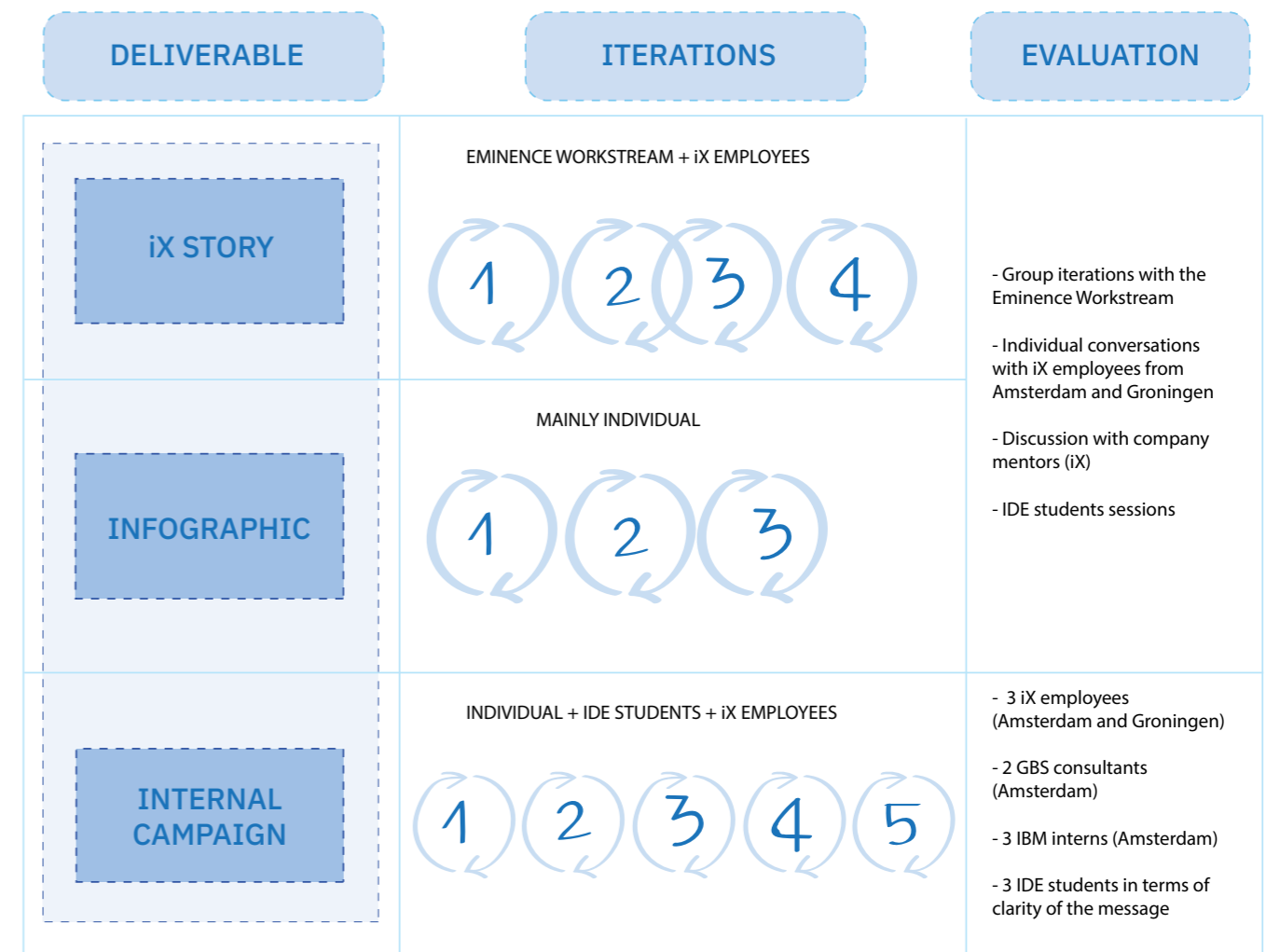


Figure 40. Visualization showing iterations and evaluations of the design concepts delivered for this thesis.

7. CONCLUSIONS

According to the evaluation, it is possible to assert that the concepts delivered in this thesis represents a good input for the Eminence workstream and provide the iX department with some good guidance on how to continue the process of identity transfer.

iX STORY

In specific the iX story resulted to be a valid first version overview of the iX identity. Based on the

feedback given by the leaders, new iterations will need to take place.

INTERNAL CAMPAIGN

Based in the evaluation, the concept of the campaign seems to be an effective way to trigger people and spread awareness about iX. However no evidence could be gathered regarding the effectiveness of the campaign to create common understanding on iX capabilities.

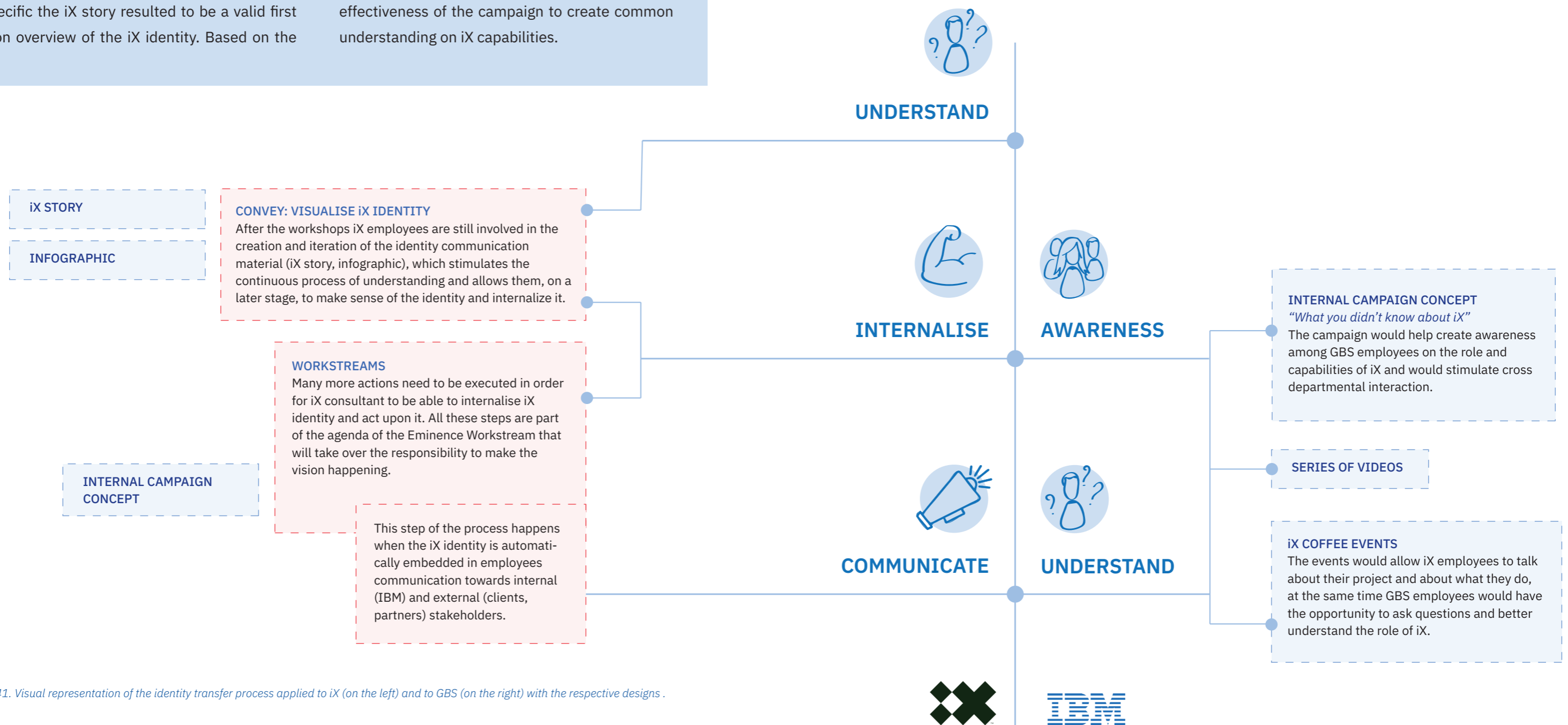


Figure 41. Visual representation of the identity transfer process applied to iX (on the left) and to GBS (on the right) with the respective designs.

8. *DISCUSSION*



8. DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a discussion on the designer role within this project and shares limitations as well as recommendation with regard to the continuation of the identity transfer process within the department. Some suggestions have been given concerning the development and implementation of the communication material delivered in this thesis.

8.1 A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON DESIGN

“The scope and influence of design is expanding rapidly these days. Organizations are increasingly adopting a design approach to define and implement their innovation strategies, using design to leverage organizational transformations, and even embracing design principles as the overarching philosophy that guides their entire organization.” (Calabretta et al., 2016)

This report is the result of a transformation design intervention that aims at encouraging the IBM iX department in IBM BeNeLux to use its creative and organizational capabilities to internalize and communicate its identity.

8.1.1 THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNER

In the thesis, the designer assumes the role of a design coach by using design tools and methods to facilitate workshops and translating insights in tangible outcomes. At the same time, by taking on the role of a “trusted advisor” (Calabretta et al., 2016), the designer guides the organization in the development of vision and positioning.

Likewise, two main layers can be recognized in the execution of this project; employee activation and content creation.

EMPLOYEES ACTIVATION

The employee activation layer is characterized by the execution of the identity transfer process, obtained from the literature study and the internal analysis. In practical terms, the designer was involved in the facilitation of workshops to stimulate excitement and commitment within the department and to build the basis for a shared understanding of the iX identity. Moreover, employees could benefit from the ability of the designer to inspire and guide them in the development of a shared vision and clear positioning.

“I think you had the right attitude and approach during the workshops and you were able to challenge us in the right way”

(Project Manager IBM iX)

CONTENT CREATION

The content creation part refers to the development of the iX identity, which took place by synthesizing the information obtained through the survey, interviews, and workshops and translating them in tangible and visual outcomes to “enable knowledge sharing and knowledge creation” (Calabretta et al., 2016). To make this happen in the most human-centered way, the designer involved employees in both ideation sessions and validation moments by using tools and techniques to spark creativity and commitment.

“By asking the right questions and preparing customized workshops you were able to prove that we need to work on our identity”

(Consultant, IBM iX)

8.1.2 INTERSECTION OF DIFFERENT DOMAINS

Based on the discussion points mentioned previously, it is possible to argue that the process executed during the course of this graduation brings into play three different domains, specifically branding literature, corporate literature, and design. While branding literature influenced the decision to develop a framework for identity transfer, the corporate literature gave relevant insights on the notions of ‘vision’ and ‘positioning’ which were used as a vehicle to accomplish some steps of the process. The design discipline played, instead, an important role in the execution of the process by exploiting design methods and approaches to spark creativity and

create commitment and engagement among employees throughout the process.

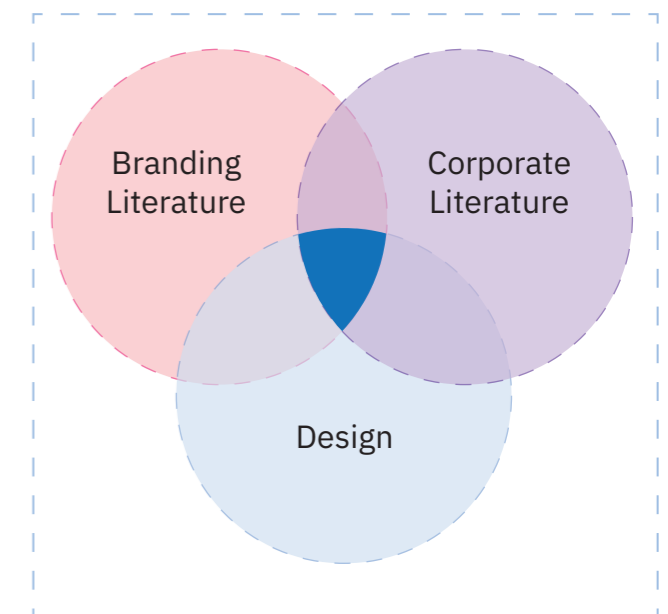


Figure 42. Intersection of three different domains

8.2 LIMITATIONS

A number of important limitations in regard to this thesis need to be taken into consideration.

8.2.1 ENHANCE IX IDENTITY INTERNALLY

First, it is important to mention that the vision and positioning workshops have been facilitated with a limited number of people from the Amsterdam office and no employees from Brussels and Groningen, due to difficulties in arranging the sessions. This might cause problems in engaging people with the first version of the iX story. Secondly, workshop 2 (positioning), has been facilitated by only one designer, despite the presence of 2 groups. This might have limited the effectiveness of the session outcome.

Another relevant aspect to consider regards the co-creation of the iX story, in fact, initially, the Eminence workstream resulted to be quite disengaged. This certainly caused complications in the development of the story which might lead to lack of commitment from employees.

8.2.2 CONVEY IX IDENTITY EXTERNALLY

Another considerable limitation of this graduation regards the validation of the internal campaign, in fact, the evaluation has been carried out by testing only a few channels and materials. Moreover, the test has been performed through the validation of a concept demo, which implies limitations in terms of content, design, message, etc. Therefore, the evaluation can't give enough input regarding the real effectiveness of the campaign.

Lastly, it is of fundamental importance to mention that the iX department is characterized by several smaller departments that work in many different projects (Practices) which implies the presence of very diverse capabilities and roles. This heterogeneity definitely represented an obstacle in the creation of a shared understanding of the iX identity, which might lead to a lack of ownership among employees.

8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The project carried out for this thesis strives to achieve lasting impact by leaving behind “designerly attitudes, values, skills and tools that

the department can embrace once the designer’s job is done” (Calabretta et al., 2016). To this purpose, several courses of action are suggested to the iX department as explained below.

8.3.1 ENHANCE IX IDENTITY INTERNALLY

With regard to the enhancement of the iX identity internally, it is recommended to organize additional workshops to encourage iX consultants to take ownership of their department’s role within IBM. In fact, employees are likely to be more engaged when they have been involved in the process and when their ideas and suggestions are respected and heard. To ensure the identity transfer process to be continued, the Eminence Workstream should take the role of identity ambassador by taking the lead of all the activities and actions that need to be undertaken (fig 43).

8.3.2 CONVEY IX IDENTITY EXTERNALLY

Concerning the communication of the iX identity externally, namely the implementation of the internal campaign, it is advised to set up a team across the three workstreams (Eminence, Engagement and Go to Market) to execute it. Moreover, a strict collaboration with the iX Studio in Groningen is highly recommended for ensuring the design of good quality campaign material and the realization of rigorous video content.

To help the Eminence Workstream in the realization of the above-mentioned activities, a communication roadmap in visualized in fig. 42.

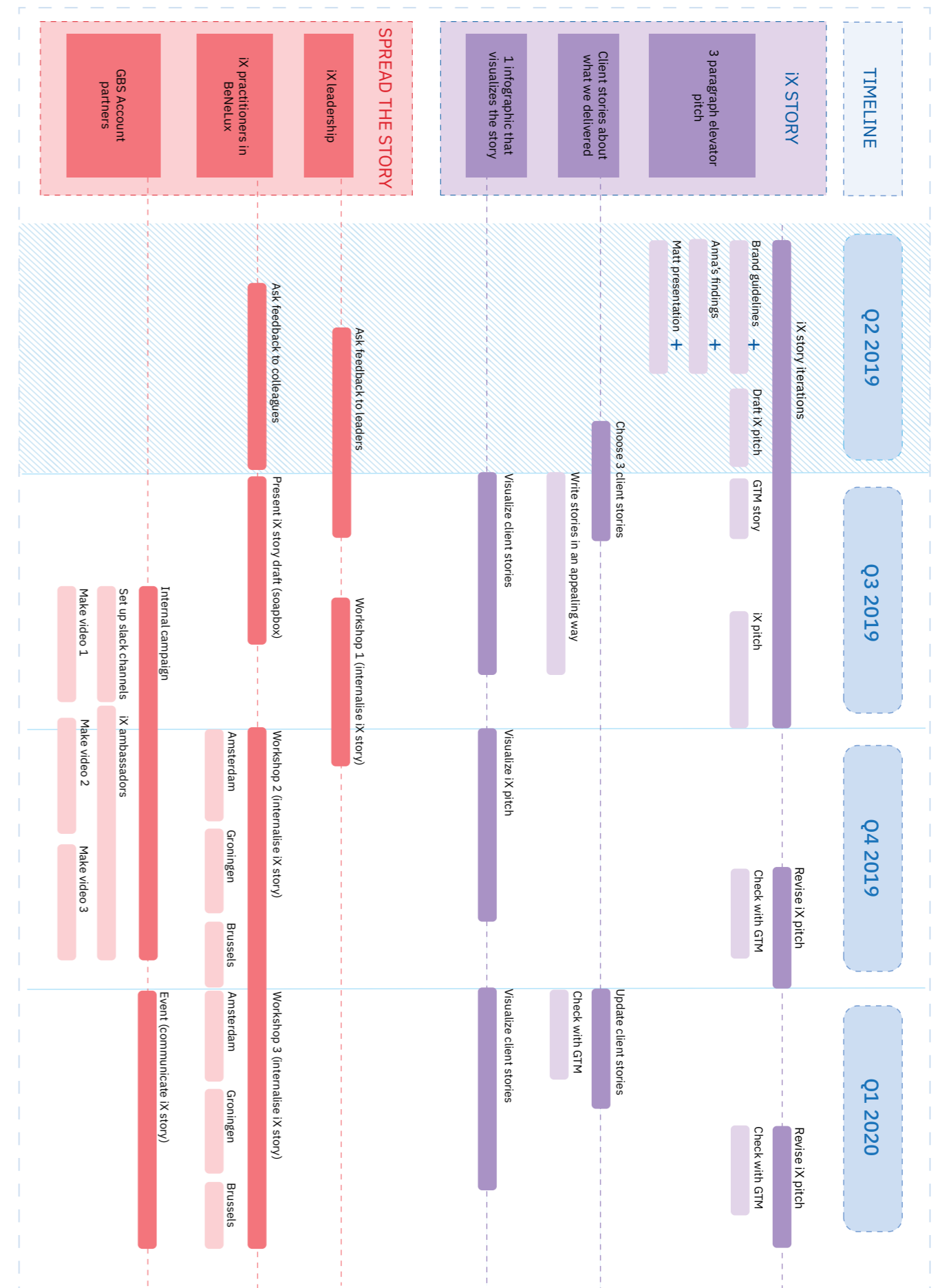
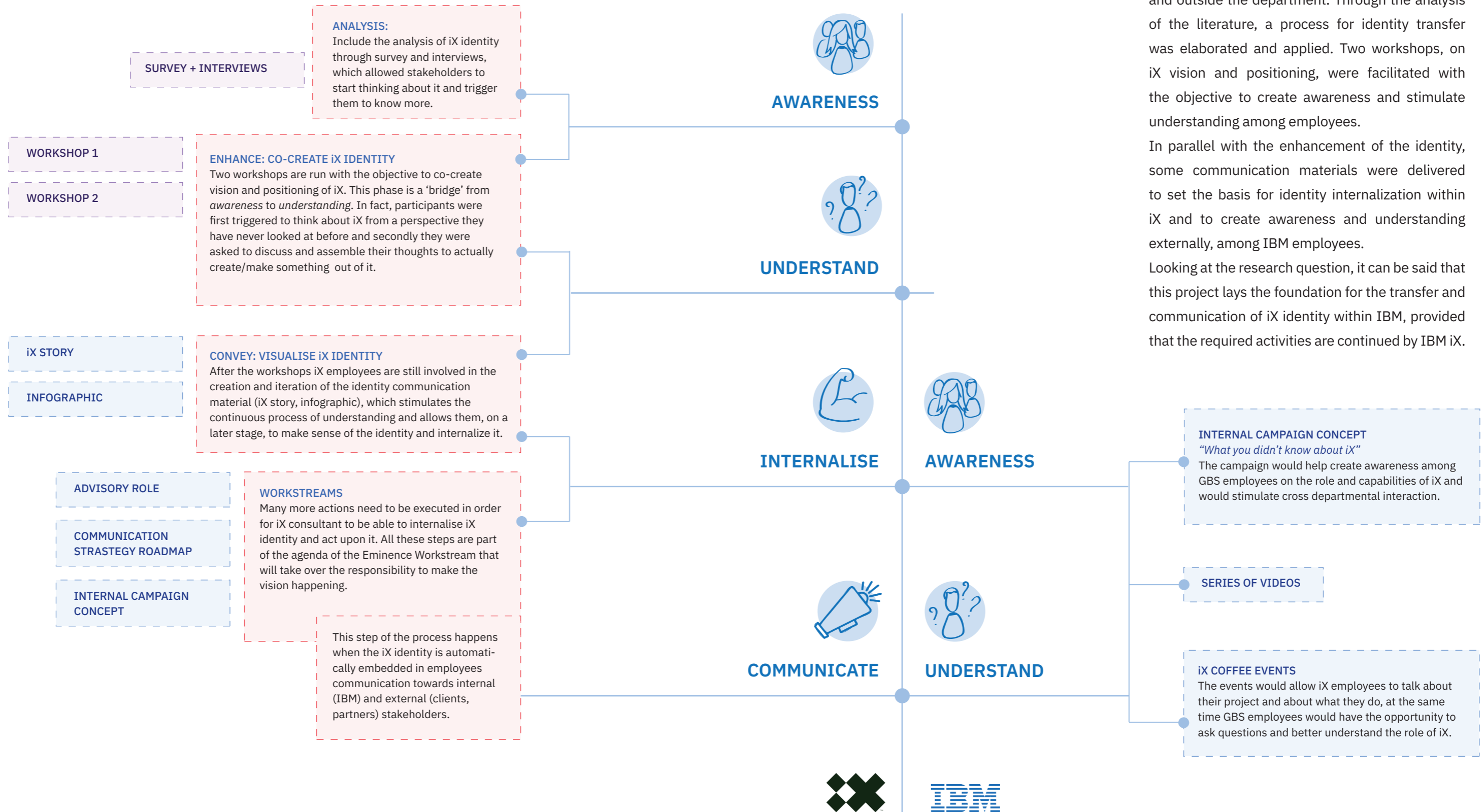


Figure 43. Communication roadmap that includes actions and activities to be undertaken by the Eminence Workstream, to continue the iX identity process

9. CONCLUSIONS



The central aim of this thesis was to help IBM iX enhance and communicate their identity. During the empirical analysis, a lack of shared understanding of the role of IBM iX has been identified both within and outside the department. Through the analysis of the literature, a process for identity transfer was elaborated and applied. Two workshops, on iX vision and positioning, were facilitated with the objective to create awareness and stimulate understanding among employees. In parallel with the enhancement of the identity, some communication materials were delivered to set the basis for identity internalization within iX and to create awareness and understanding externally, among IBM employees. Looking at the research question, it can be said that this project lays the foundation for the transfer and communication of iX identity within IBM, provided that the required activities are continued by IBM iX.

Figure 44. Visual representation of the identity transfer process applied to iX (on the left) and to GBS (on the right).

10. REFLECTION

The final chapter will provide a reflection on the learning goals defined at the beginning of this project and will share some impressions about the overall experience.

Today, I can definitely assert that this project gave me the opportunity to apply my creative and strategic skills to prove the value of design in a business environment (activity that resulted to be more difficult than expected). As mentioned in the discussions of chapter 8, this project required me to be both a design coach, by using tools and methods to facilitate workshops and stimulate creativity, as well as an advisor, by recognizing issues and challenging employees to actively face them. This entire journey didn't come without challenges, in fact, my role implied a high level of responsibility and a large number of stakeholders to be managed.

Apply new tools to involve and manage stakeholders

Dealing with the diversity of the people working in IBM iX required flexibility and the use of different approaches along with various communication means. This process entailed a continuous translation of the information in different formats (during workshops, interviews, validation sessions) to guarantee employees commitment to the identity.

Manage IBM iX BeNeLux expectations and visions by respecting users' needs.

One of the biggest challenges of this graduation consisted of aligning expectations and finding common ground among many different opinions. Due to the presence of many diverse people with different professional roles within iX, I experienced difficulties in keeping people on board while trying

to implement their suggestions to make them feel heard. This made me reflect on the added value of strategic designers, having to handle many different perspectives on the challenge. I also realized how important is the ability to filter information and influence decisions by taking into account desirability, viability and feasibility. I definitely struggled with making choices and assessing what was the right direction to take, due to the many opinions I was confronted with.

Improve my knowledge on the notion of brand positioning.

Regarding the last learning objective, I'm very glad to assert that the knowledge gained during the project extends far beyond the notion of brand positioning, but it encompasses different domains from corporate theory, to branding literature. Learning and combining the theory with design practice made me discover new perspectives on the value of design in organizations.

To conclude, this graduation made me discover an important characteristic of myself consisting of being able to deeply understand people, their feelings, their needs. While being an empathetic person, I also have the enthusiasm to involve and motivate people and I get excited when new ideas are put on the table. I'm grateful I had the opportunity to apply these skills in a real company setting, by allowing me to develop further as a strategic designer and contributing to the development of my personal IDENTITY.

“A brand's strength is built upon its determination to promote its own distinctive values [...]”

— Jean-Noel Kapferer

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