Companies are facing an increasing amount of turbulence in the marketplace. Perry (2017) shows that only 60 companies were present in the Fortune 500 in 1955 as well as in 2017, meaning that 88% of the companies from 1955 either went bankrupt, merged with (or were overtaken by) other firms or were not able to meet the Fortune 500 revenue threshold anymore. Anthony et al. (2016) and Zook (2014) state that many companies have not been able to adapt or to take advantage of changing market situations as they fail to scout and invest in new areas of growth or keep applying existing business models to new market segments.

Design has received increased attention from companies that want to anticipate on present or future market turbulence: it is seen as a way to overcome creative destruction, helping companies to maintain their competitiveness in the marketplace. Both business scholars and design (management) scholars have described the added value of design and design thinking to businesses, organisations, (innovation) processes, products and services. It is therefore that this research project is executed with the aim of exploring the implications when design is embedded in the innovation process of a fast moving consumer goods company and an aviation company.

Findings

Initial brief
A non-design initiation of the innovation process

Fuzzy Front End
Design is present within the FFE of the innovation process

Disconnection
Design output disconnects with current innovation process

Conclusions

It is concluded that design should become an ‘implemented reality’ and it should be incorporated into the ‘thought processes of a company’s organisational structure’ when companies want to successfully make use of design with the aim of arriving at outcomes other than their current innovation processes are producing. Therefore, companies should adapt, revise and/or redesign each aspect of their innovation process that is either preceding or coming after the embedded design element in order to fully facilitate an innovation cycle.