







# Product / Service Development DESIGN & EXPORT GUIDELINES

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Export guidelines Gateway & Partners

Design and export guidelines are created within the project "Innovation and export of wood and furniture in Võru County and Vidzeme Planning Region", to help to understand product or service development processes to increase the value of your company. Design maturity guidelines are based on cognition of practices and theories of divergent design contexts (e.g., designing for older users vs. for younger users, product longevity and used resources, user experience and inclusiveness). Export guidelines will help you to ensure your company grows within your capability.

#### WHY the company? WHERE do you and your company want to go? HOW to get there?

**Design strategy** is an action plan (guidelines) to use design in all processes to create benefits and value for the company, its employees, product or service users and partners, and the planet.

**Export strategy**: when the first export deals are done, it might feel that the hardest is already done, but it is important to remember that it takes years to build presence in a market and credibility to the product, as well as, it can take only few days to lose it all. Results can be achieved if company works with the vision and long-term goals in mind for the particular market or region.



### **DESIGN GUIDELINES - design process**

**Design** makes things better for people as target-oriented and systematic activity that results in tangible and intangible values in physical, service, and digital settings.

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**Develop phase** involves product or service development methods to improve, finalize and deliver WHAT, HOW and FOR WHOM. It is iteration of product and services development as a method to grow and become more mature or advanced. Develop phase deals with product or service implementation, elaboration and delivery.

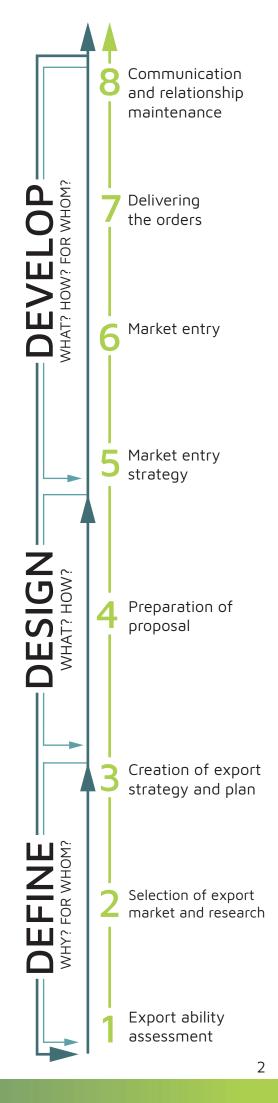
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**Design phase** is an active, hands-on phase to iterate WHAT and HOW by working out possible solutions, combining ideas with information obtained from the research and selecting a preferred solution through drawing, construction, prototyping and testing phases.

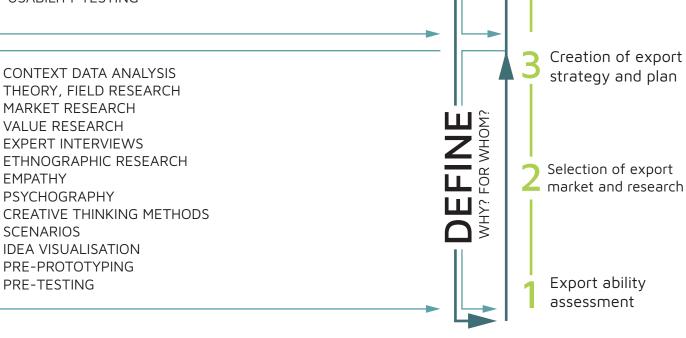
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**Define phase** is design pre-research of local - global situation as context and data, user behaviour and needs analysis is performed, to define the niche of the product or service. The process addresses WHY and FOR WHOM to design and answers what problem or challenge is faced.

Write a brief, a short statement that gives the general outline of the problem to be solved or a challenge to be addressed by product or service development. A brief includes a detailed description of what the design must achieve and what limitations will affect the final solution.



### **DESIGN GUIDELINES - design process Design Methods** Communication **FOCUS GROUPS** and relationship **PRODUCING** maintenance **ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT CALCULATION** Delivering PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE ANALYSIS the orders USER EXPERIENCE IMPLEMENTING CREATIVE THINKING METHODS Market entry **PROTOTYPING USABILITY TESTING EXPERT INTERVIEWS** Market entry strategy CO-DESIGNING / CO-CREATION PARTICIPATORY DESIGN CREATIVE THINKING METHODS SII FNCF USER EXPERIENCE PLANNING / PROTOTYPING EMOTIONAL MEANING MODELLING **SCENARIOS SKETCHING ERGONOMIC PROTOTYPING** Preparation of **AESTHETIC AND FORM ANALYSIS** proposal SEMIOTIC AND CULTURAL ANALYSIS DATA VALIDATION **EXPERT INTERVIEWS FOCUS GROUPS** ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH **ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT CALCULATION** PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE ANALYSIS TACTILE, SENSUAL, BLINDNESS TEST **USABILITY TESTING** Creation of export CONTEXT DATA ANALYSIS strategy and plan THEORY, FIELD RESEARCH MARKET RESEARCH VALUE RESEARCH



**JEVELOP**:

### Communication and relationship maintenance

Market monitoring and risk management - If company wants to achieve good results and have long-term cooperation in export market, they must have regular conversations with the partner about ongoing work and future projects. Communication and relationship maintenance is one of the key drivers of successful cross-border partnership.

### Delivering the orders

Logistics, legal and financial aspects – When client is interested in cooperation, orders have to be made and delivered. Company needs to take in to account that choosing logistics partner is an important factor to deliver products on time and agreed quality.

### Market entry

**6** Exhibitions, trade missions, B2B match making events or individual meetings – One of the most important things for a new exporter is to visit exhibitions in target market, participate in trade missions or B2B match-making events and organize individual meetings with potential partners, which were defined in the previous steps.

### Market entry strategy

Selection and communication with potential partners - To keep to the market entry strategy successfully, it is important to find a partner who already knows the business culture, who is doing active sales within the country of interest and is willing to cooperate for achieving the fixed goals.

### Preparation of proposal

Before starting market entry, company has to decide what kind of proposal they will offer to their potential partners. Company has to think about the price policy – very often it plays crucial role for starting the export activity.

### Creation of export strategy and plan

Export strategy helps companies to keep on the track and to reach their defined goals. Export plan defines all the steps which will help to start exporting successfully.

### Selection of export market and research

Market research is a crucial part of evaluating export readiness because companies have to decide to which countries they want to export and where they could have the biggest potential. By making research they can save resources by not making mistakes, for example, not to start to export to countries where they have the least or even no potential at all.

### Export ability assessment

First of all, companies have to do their own homework and find out more about themselves. Companies need to be aware of their strengths, which will bring results, as well as, their weaknesses, which need to be improved or eliminated.

### **DESIGN MATURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT**

Product or service development		<b>Yes</b> points	-	rocess points)	No (0 points)
Have you analysed local / global statistics, data and trends?	[		[		
Have you analysed user behaviour as ethnographic research?					
Have you performed market research and export ability analysis?			[		
Have you addressed socio – cultural analysis of end-user / partner?					
Have you analysed if the selected solution leads to the best experience for end-user / partner?					
Does the solution address the unarticulated need of the end-user / partner?					
Have you addressed universal design principles in product – service design process?	[		[		
Have you considered task success and errors of the product – service?					
Have you considered the best production process for the problem / solution?					
Have you minimised the consumption of resources in the design process?					
Have you addressed product longevity?					
Have you involved user testing and customer feedback methods in the design and development process?	٦ [				
Have you measured product – service ecological footprint?					
Have you calculated the product price and value as impact of sustainable consumption and production ?	[		[		
Do you address customer satisfaction as a quality management system?			[		
Design maturity				<b>Yes</b> points)	No (0 points)
Design functionality and aesthetics in product – service development are performed by anyone in the company			[		
Design as styling, form-giving and graphic design in product – service development is performed by a professional designer or any other profession			[		
Design redesign or adaptation of existing product – service is performed by a professional designer or any other profession	ı		[		
Design solution is driven by the problem and the users and requires the involvement of a wide variety of skills and capacities: process and materials technicians, marketing experts and administrative staff			[		
The design is represented in company's owners/management daily activities on a strategic level to develop the business concept			[		
	-	Гotal	:		

## **EXPORT READINESS CHECKLIST**

The offer	Yes In process No (2 points) (1 points) (0 points)				
Product is suitable for export					
The product is suitable for the target market					
Price for a product in export market is calculated					
Sufficient production capacity gained					
Export strategy and plan					
Export goals are set					
Planned certain activities for entering the new market					
Defined strategic export markets					
Available financial resources for entering a new market					
Export brand and marketing					
Website in English					
Company presentation					
Brief digital information material about the company					
Product catalogue					
Business cards					
Exhibition stand, marketing materials					
Export resources and financing					
Experience in export client attraction					
Good foreign language skills					
Experience in sales					
Goal oriented sales staff					
Export driven sales staff					
Active interest by sales staff in new markets					
	 Total:				

### **DESIGN MATURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

Please choose the right recommendations corresponding to the checklist score.

I DESIGN AWARE	
Description	You are conscious of divergent design contexts; practice design either as a method, strategy or innovation to address end-user needs and global challenges as a company's growth.
Characteristics	-Use of diverse design research methodsGlobal context and challenges are analysedProducts are user -centred and testedInclusiveness is addressed in product / service developmentSustainability and responsibility of used resources are addressedDesign is addressed in the company's owners/management level.
Recommendations	-Continuous use of design research and practice methodsMonitor design pre-researchContinue to explore design as define, design, develop process.
II DESIGN RELEVANT	
Description	Design is relevant in the company however applied narrowly as a style or form giving. Design development is performed by a professional designer or any other profession.
Characteristics	-Design as style and formEnd-user needs should be presented in product – service developmentUser satisfaction and global challenges need to be analysedProducts have weak user-centred approachWeak user testsAwareness of sustainability and responsibility of used resources should be raised.
Recommendations	-Explore design research and practice methods -Raise competences and awareness of product – service user aspects in design process -Aware the impact of the global context -Design competences should be presented in management, company's owner level
III NO DESIGN	
Description	Design is an invisible in product / service development. Company's product – service does not differ from competitors. Product – service development does not include user-centred approach and responsibility of used resources.
Characteristics	<ul> <li>-Weak design in the company.</li> <li>-Human – user centred approach plays no role in the company.</li> <li>-Product – service does not differ from competitors.</li> <li>-Design process is not addressed.</li> </ul>
Recommendations	-To discover design as a method for developing your company -General education on design and design professional skills are needed.

## **EXPORT CHEKLIST RESULTS**

Please choose the right recommendations corresponding to the checklist score.

I EXPORT READY				
Description	The company has everything to be successful, but additional sales channels are needed to access foreign markets.			
Characteristics	-Proven export record – already exports -Products in line with international standards – has international certificates -Developed corporate marketing – developed brand -Website in English -Existing export manager -Clear Export Plan			
Recommendations	-Support export promotion activities -Training for sales and export managers -Market overviews & information gathering and analysis -Education about market expectations, industry innovations, product development, taste, packaging and shelf life peculiarities			
II ONE STEP TO EXP	ORT - EXPORT CLOSE			
Description	This company has developed its offering and already works in export; however, it does not have developed corporate marketing tools and do not have export manager.			
Characteristics	-Website is not in English -Corporate image in not developed to standards -No Export Manager with foreign languages -Some exports/low value added export -Product ready for export			
Recommendations	-Export manager must be hired -Corporate marketing strategy developed -Education about export processes, standards, industry insights, quality standards and expectations in the priority markets gainedMarket overviews & industry information -Study visits abroad, B2B missions			
III NOT READY FOR	EXPORT			
Description	The company's product or offer is not ready for export. Firstly, there is a need to develop product so that it fits to international standards, and then support the development of other business elements like corporate marketing, skill development and export promotion.			
Characteristics	<ul><li>-No export record</li><li>-Product not up to standards to be sold internationally</li><li>-No website/ marketing developed</li><li>-No export manager</li></ul>			
Recommendations	-General education on business management and professional skills are needed.			

### **DESIGN MATURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

#### 24-32 points - Design aware

You are conscious of design and practice design either as a method, strategy or innovation to address enduser needs and global challenges. You recognize the importance of design pre-research and understand the impact of local or global context and user behaviour to deliver the best solution. You are aware of user/human-centred approach and sustainability – resource usage in product or service development. But still, there is room to improve the use of design process!

#### 12-23 points - Design relevant

Design is relevant and applied narrowly as style or form, giving method in the operation of your company. Global challenges and end-user needs are weakly analysed and understood. You should explore design pre-research and understand the impact of local/global context and user behaviour to deliver the best solution as a product or service. It is a challenge to discover design for the benefit of your company.

#### 11 or less points - No design

Design is an invisible process in product or service development of your company. The solution is perceived by design as function and aesthetic. A human – user centred approach plays little or no role in the company. It is recommended to discover design as a method for developing your company.

#### **EXPORT CHECKLIST RESULTS**

#### 35-40 points – Export ready

Congratulations! You have done all the possible preparation tasks needed for export. Now it is time to focus on sales and showing the company to the potential partners and clients abroad.

#### 25-35 points - Export close

Part of the preparation work is done; thus, you are in good process. Concentrate on some of the most important points, while do not leave the focus on export sales for later as it will get the preparation process moving much faster.

#### 24 or less points – Not ready for export

Your company has set some business development goals, but still has some preparation tasks to achieve to get to the desired results. Continue working on preparing your company and your employees for export minded work and you will see the improvements sooner than later!

### "Innovation and export of wood and furniture in Võru County and Vidzeme Planning Region"

The "Design and Export guidelines" are created within the framework of Interreg Estonia - Latvia cross-border cooperation programme 2014-2020 project "Innovation and export of wood and furniture in Võru County and Vidzeme Planning Region" (Wood & Furniture) to help and understand the product or service development processes. Its aim is to enhance cross-border cooperation in Võru County and Vidzeme Planning Region between wood and furniture sector companies to innovate industry and add value to wood and furniture products, introduce design-thinking and increase export capacity.

This informative material reflects the views of the author. The managing authority of the programme is not liable for how this information may be used.

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