

future proofing

Just as many were carried away by irrational exuberance during the long boom, how do we ensure we do not disappear into a slough of despond in anticipation of a much heralded age of austerity?

outsights future proofing is a **health check** for your strategic positioning and plans, testing their **robustness to outside-in change** and your future business environment, including the **implications of austerity**.

What is it?

Future proofing offers you a range of benefits to underpin your organisation's longevity and success in challenging times, including:

- Increasing the **agility** of your plans to allow for future uncertainty.
- **Avoiding costly investments** that are ill-matched to tomorrow's business environment.
- Improving your **strategic versatility** in challenging times.

We have offered some thoughts about the **opportunities during the age of austerity** on pages 5 and 6.

Who is it for?

You are likely to be implementing significant changes to prepare for austere market conditions – cutting costs, enhancing resource flexibility and prioritising investments. All are important actions to take, and you will understand how best to do this **in the context of your organisation**.

Outsights Future Proofing enables you to understand the effectiveness of your strategic actions **in a different context: your future business environment**. It is an essential step for organisations seeking wider understanding of the future impact of short-term actions.

It will enable **Boards** to govern and contribute to the strategic direction of their organisations, **strategists** to find creative new income streams, and **functional heads** to flex plans to cater for rapidly changing circumstances.

outsights future proofing provides a creative, focused and rapid assessment of the robustness of your strategic positioning and plans against future complexity.

Creative

...in its use of Scenarios developed specifically for you by world leading futurists, vastly experienced across geographies, industries and sectors.

Focused

...on the driving forces shaping your future business environment, and the strategic implications arising for you.

Rapid

...in getting to clear recommendations for your strategy, drawing on more than a decade's intellectual property, with your input tailored to the level of engagement – as much or as little – as you require.

Why Outsights?

Outsights has extensive experience helping organisations consider future uncertainty and **developing tangible action plans to prepare now to maximise success.**

We are a strategy consultancy dedicated to the Future and its implications for our clients.

Our senior team has extensive experience in large organisations and understands the demands of strategic development and implementation in that environment.

Our proprietary database of futures thinking – 21 Drivers of the 21st Century™ – informs and stimulates thinking about how your business landscape may be changed by external factors.

outsights will assess the future robustness of your strategic positioning and key strategic plans.

We appreciate that there are many demands on your time and getting key people together can be challenging. Outsights will keep its requirements of your time and resources to a minimum, typically:

Project Initiation

1 day to meet your Project Sponsor and conduct one-to-one interviews with up to 10 key stakeholders (Stage 1).

Interim Reporting and Validation

3-hour meeting with Project Sponsor and invitees to present and discuss the Drivers of Change and Scenario analysis, and to be briefed by you on up to 10 key strategic plans to test against the Scenarios (Stage 4).

Project Reporting

2-hour meeting with Project Sponsor and selected invitees to present the project report (Stage 6).

Stage 1. Project Initiation (1 day meeting)

- Kick-off meeting with your Project Sponsor.
- Interviews with up to 10 key stakeholders using Outsights Futures Interviewing to surface trends, uncertainties, unknowns, preferences.

Wk 1

Stage 2. Drivers of Change Analysis

- Interview analysis using Outsights Proprietary Methodology.
- Selection of key Drivers of Change from the 21 Drivers of the 21st Century™ for your future business environment.
- Up to 4 days research to supplement existing knowledge database .

Wk 2

Stage 3. Scenario Development

- Creation of Scenario structure using selected Drivers.
- Development of Scenarios for your business environment.

Wk 3

Stage 4. Interim Reporting and Validation

- 3-hour meeting with Project Sponsor and selected invitees to present analysis and discuss the Scenarios created.
- Client brief: up to 10 strategic plans to test against Scenarios.

Wk 4

Stage 5. Future Proofing Assessment

- Suggestions for current or planned investments to flex to accommodate future uncertainty or terminate.

Wk 5

Stage 6. Project Reporting

- 2-hour meeting with Project Sponsor and selected invitees to present the project report.

Wk 6

opportunities in the age of austerity? some thoughts...

Just as many were carried away by irrational exuberance during the long boom, how do we ensure we do not disappear into a slough of despond in anticipation of a much heralded age of austerity?

The age of austerity, whilst involving risk, will interact with existing drivers to catalyse change and create new opportunities. So where do the opportunities lie?

Drawing on the Outsights 21 Drivers for the 21st Century™ we can see at least seven areas of outside-in change:

- Technologies of opportunity
- The greening challenge
- The people premium
- The data revolution
- Financial innovation
- The health imperative
- The new open world

Technologies of opportunity

The use of genetic information may be on the cusp of making big advances. Neuroscience is bringing us closer to understanding consumer behaviour (see [Outsights Future Brain 2030](#) project). Two big areas of demand will be technologies which cater to ageing populations and those providing clean, secure energy.

The greening challenge

Public consciousness of climate, resource availability and sustainability is not going to subside despite a poor showing in international efforts to combat climate change. The latest Gulf of Mexico spill will remind people of the costs of sustaining the so-called addiction to oil. A rebalancing of the economy towards less consumption may provide the sweet-spot which enables behavioural change.

The people premium

People are the most critical natural resource, driving economies both by their output as well as their demand. The UK's new independent Office for Budget Responsibility has cut GDP growth projections due to lower than expected population forecasts for the UK.

An economy that cannot attract or develop the right skills is going to be uncompetitive. Suddenly overpopulation and excessive immigration headlines are replaced by staff shortages despite higher unemployment. Premia for people doesn't have to be confined to attracting the so-called world's best (as argued for by the banking community) but just to staff the economy at all levels.

data, finance, health...

The data revolution

Making safe sense of zettabytes of data is becoming more critical as we realise the risks and benefits of wide data sharing. Mobility of information is still accelerating in rich and poor countries alike, upsetting old power asymmetries. Insights generated through crunching large amounts of data is set to continue unleashing innovation across sectors.

Financial innovation

Down but not out. Regulation will be trying to prevent the next systemic risk but private players are looking for the new opportunities, staying ahead of the rules – and innovative financial solutions are more not less necessary than in the past. Transparency over risk and responsibility may improve. Easy to say now how things went wrong – how do we anticipate what comes next?

The health imperative

Some sectors are almost recession proof: there will always be a demand for health and each new advance in medicine creates a new demand and extends our perception of what health means, whether it is advanced life-saving or lifestyle/cosmetic surgery, drugs to improve our cognitive powers, or new ways of extending our lifespan. Small wonder that private capital is attracted to the opportunities.

The new open world

Globalisation today may not be so easily accepted as an inevitability, as possible barriers to openness (controls on capital, people and information, not just goods and services) are mooted but it is unlikely that the world will just close in on itself.

Countries are not clamouring to de-globalise (beggar-thy-neighbour trade policies reminiscent of the 1930s have yet to surface, despite fears); but, nor are countries ready to embrace more globalisation e.g. ceding real power to global institutions to enact macroeconomic policy to overcome imbalances. The current EU crisis leaves people unsure which way to turn. Being located in multiple locations - or multilocal - may be even more important to capture those markets that may put up subtle barriers.

contact us

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insights from the outside

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