
CREATIVE CITY

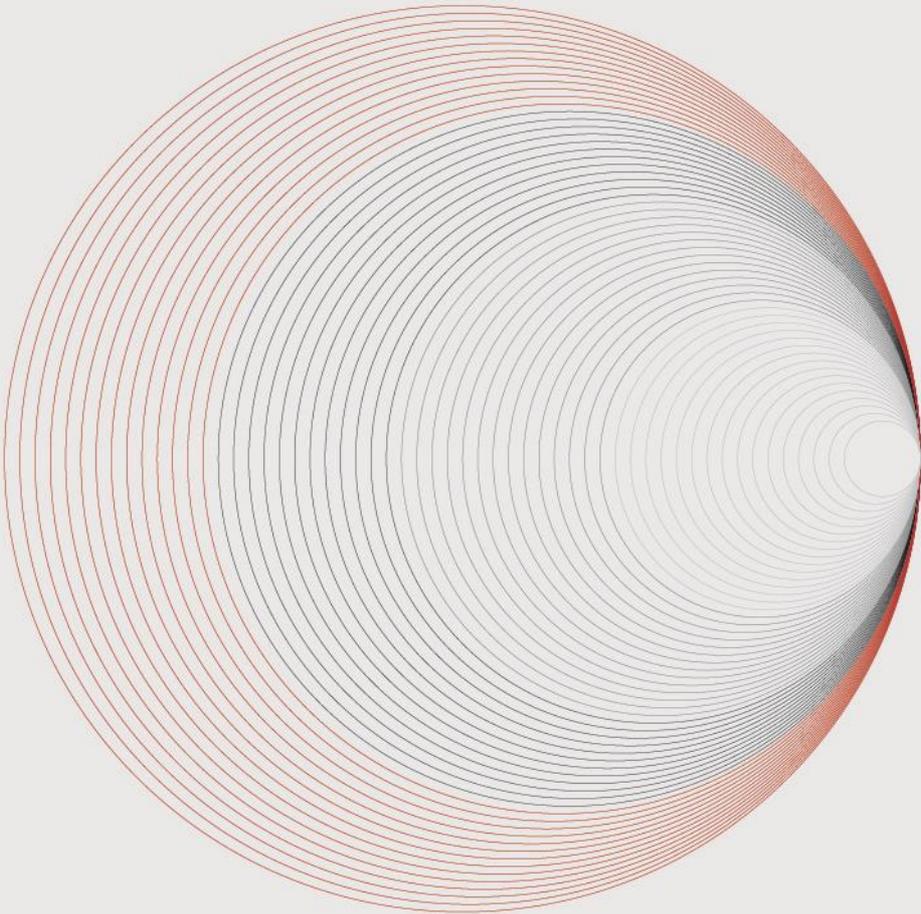
RESEARCH

CONCEPTING

PROTOTYPING

DELIVERING

Connecting the Creative Scene in Amsterdam



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Connecting the Creative Scene in Amsterdam

Mission Statement:

We as net-makers want to foster an elastic thinking movement, choosing Amsterdam as our creative playground.

21/10/2013

Abstract

With the emergence of an increasing cohort of creative professionals, it's becoming clearer that one must look beyond job creation to assess the contribution of creative industries. The high growth rate of the creative sector can be attributed primarily due to the extensive crosslinking with other sectors and branch industries. This crosslinking not only occurs through customer and supplier relations, but also through staff migration from one branch to another, resulting in knowledge transfer beyond specific branch boundaries. It is precisely the knowledge and specific skills of these creatively active professionals fanning out from creative industries companies which is of particular interest here. This research showcases findings from various digital networks and also does a random comparison of creative industries across continents in order to gain more insights about the connections in the creative industries. In order to understand whether or not the emerging creative professionals need a more effective networking platform, a group of emerging creative professionals were interviewed and it became very evident that digitalization of networks makes it easier to identify professionals with their work, but people still crave for physical interaction to convert an idea into a scalable product. The research within its limited outreach shows that the in future we will see a lot of disruptive ideas taking shape and as a solution one must provide quality tool kits for people to discover each other and pursue their dreams with full freedom.

Keywords: Creative industries, merging creative professionals, digital and physical networks.

1. INTRODUCTION

The knowledge society has two driving forces acting in this field: creativity and innovation, where economic, technological, social and cultural trends meet and interact.

Cities are changing as globalization trends interact with the intensifying use of media in social, economic and cultural life. The challenge for cities is to effectively use their resources in order to organize environments that host creativity. Moreover, attract and enable the talent of a city to be globally competitive and socially inclusive.

"This is becoming a more and more open process where citizens act as both users and producers, creating their own goods, services and environment" (Creative Capital Conference, 2005). The issue is to make sure this creative power is distributed throughout society.

For this matter, the creative industries is a subject becoming very frequent between city policies, industries and professionals. In Amsterdam, this is an important sector. The municipality has a policy especially for the creative industries. Both the municipality and the creative industries themselves try to stimulate the growth of the sector and try to find solutions.

According to the DesignThinkers Group (DT Group, 2013) "People and organizations in the creative industries are missing a comprehensive overview of the city's rich infrastructure and knowledge, skills and tools that will help them build new relationships and share values. Trying to find their way into the creative industries, people encounter a vast network of established organizations, gatherings and funding infrastructures that is hard to navigate".

To tackle this problem, the DT Group is collaborating with MediaLAB Amsterdam and the Amsterdam Creative Industries Centre of Expertise. An international multidisciplinary team of students from the MediaLAB will collaborate on this project together with professionals of the DT

group and Natalia Sanchez, an embedded researcher¹ of the University of Amsterdam to build this project.

2. Related work

In this section we consider a more in-depth reading of the creative industries, networks (both digital and physical) and lastly about the emerging creative professional.

2.1 Creative industries

A fast growing global market for unique experiences has made the creative industries a large and growing sector. Governments and creative sectors across the world are increasingly recognizing the importance of creative economy as a generator of jobs, wealth and cultural engagement.

Creative economy refers to the socio-economic potential of activities that trade with creativity, knowledge and information. UNCTAD's Report (2008) suggested a definition for creative economy as "the interface between creativity, culture, economics and technology as expressed in the ability to create and circulate intellectual capital, with the potential to generate income, jobs and export earnings while at the same time promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development".

According to DCMS (2010), "at the heart of the creative economy are the cultural and creative industries that lie at the crossroads of arts, culture, business and technology". The term creative industries emerged in Australia in 1994 with the launching of the report Creative Nation. It gained wider exposure in 1997, when policymakers at the United Kingdom's Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) set up the Creative Industries Task Force. The UK government has assumed a lead role in developing the creative economy by mapping as well as establishing further policy strategies and interventions in subsequent years.

The UK's definition of the creative industries is "those industries that are based on individual creativity, skill and talent with the potential to create wealth and jobs through developing intellectual property" (DCMS, 2010). Because it was the first definition offered by a government, this original UK definition has been widely adopted by other countries, with sectors adapted based on local commercial and cultural importance.

On the other hand, Richard Florida has a definition for the creative class, which approach focuses on the occupation and characteristics of people (workers). This one will be discussed in the section "Emerging creative professionals" (see chapter 2.2).

Although the 13 sectors are from 2001, all references still use this classification for the participants in the creative industries. According to the DCMS's Mapping (2001), the following industries are part of the creative industries:

¹<http://www.nwo.nl/en/funding/our-funding-instruments/gw/creative-industry/creative-industry---embedded-research/creative-industry---embedded-research.html>.

Part of Creative Industries

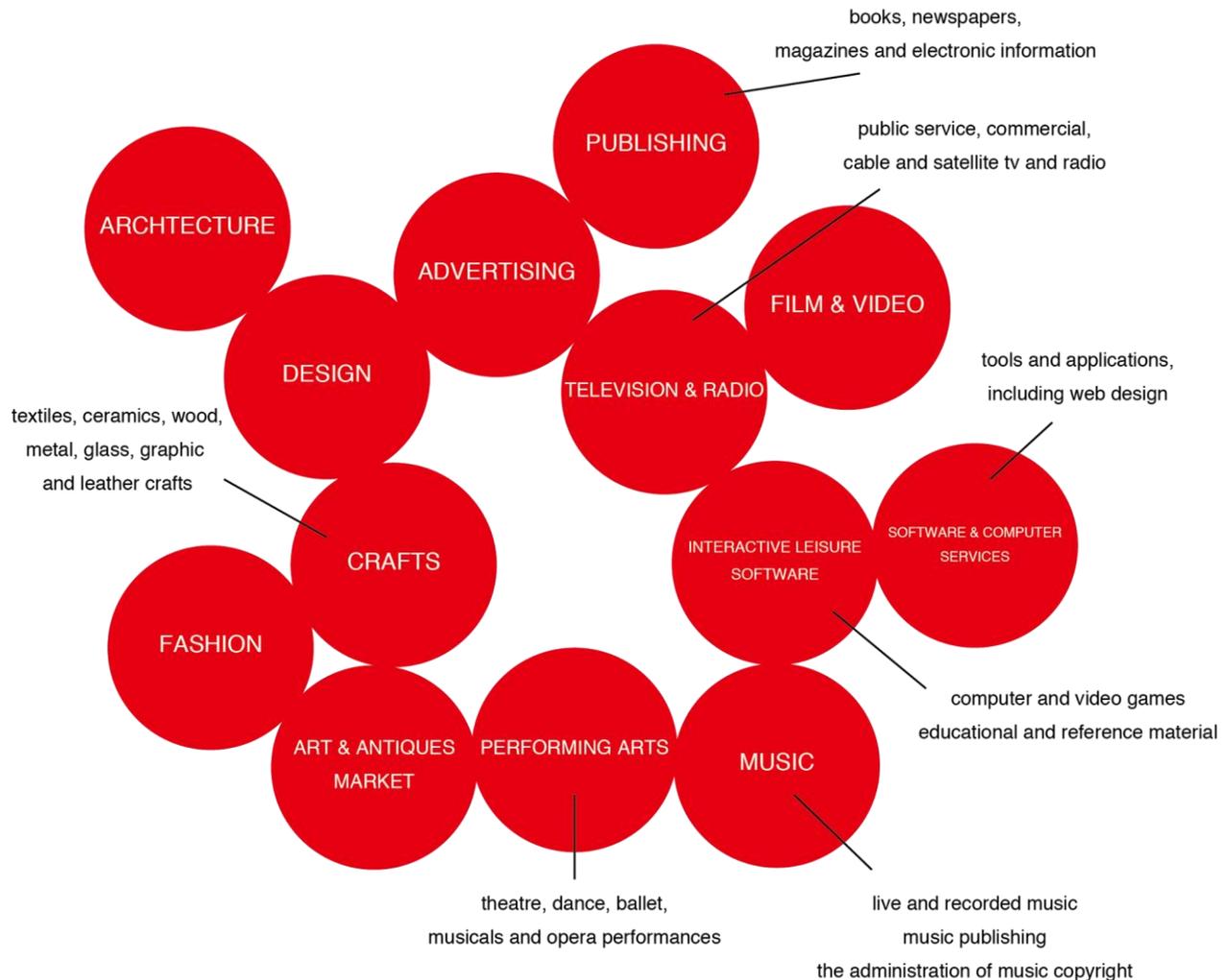


Figure 1: Part of the Creative Industries, Creative City (2013).

Even today, the creative industries are still expressions of cultural as much as of economic value.

2.1.1 Comparison creative industries in other countries

In order to understand the scale of creative industries in Amsterdam, Netherlands, it is good to compare with the other cities and countries through some figures. Four countries - Netherlands (Amsterdam), UK (London), Japan (Tokyo) and China (Beijing), were selected and a comparison was done using the data available online. Figure 2 shows that the scale of creative industries in Amsterdam (Netherlands) is quite small compared to the other countries researched.

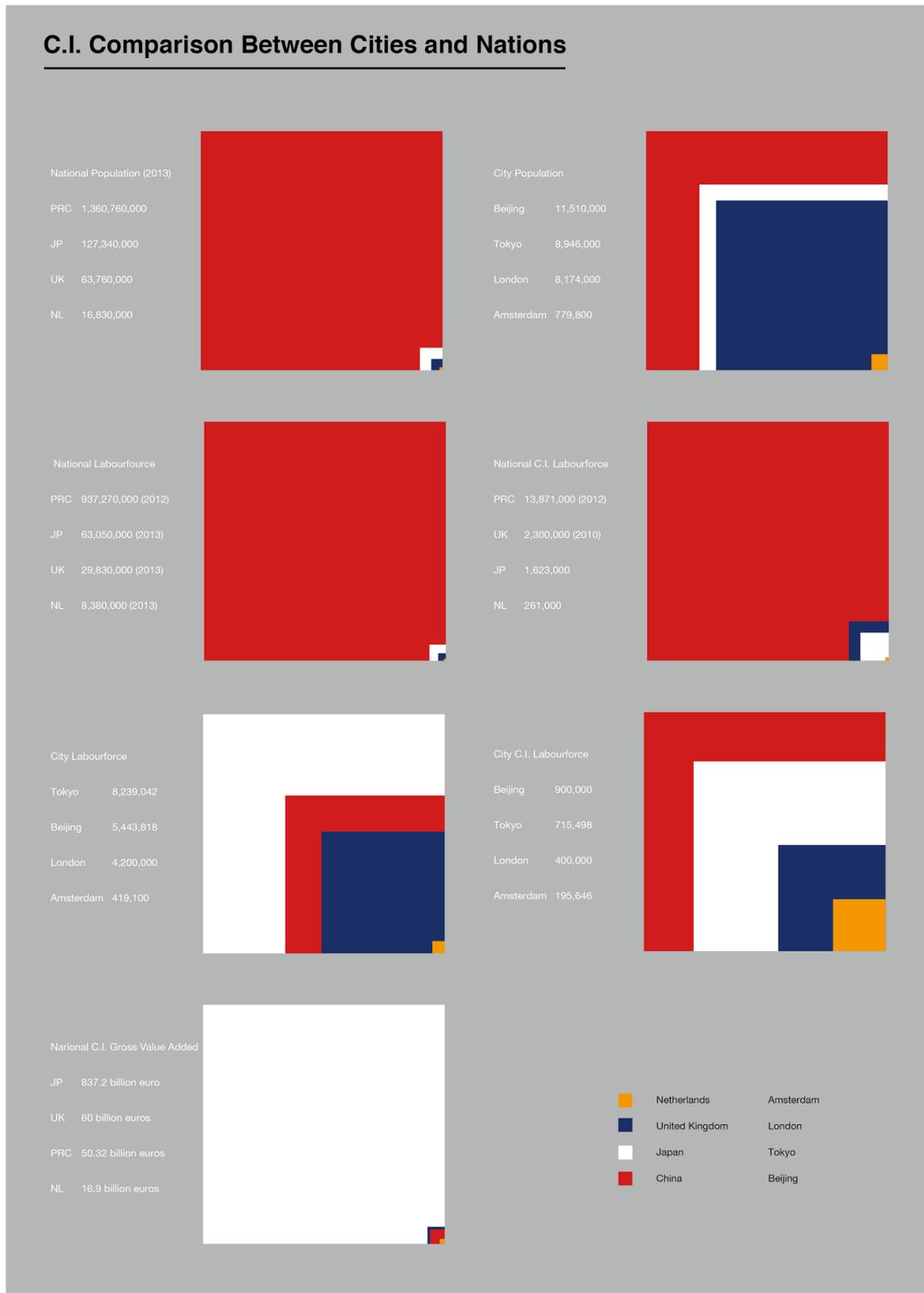


Figure 2: Comparison between cities and nations, Creative City (2013).

With regard to population and labour force, China (Beijing) is outstanding now and more and more its scale gets bigger with their development in the 21th century. On the other hand, in terms of city labour force and GVA (Gross Value Added) Japan (Tokyo) is much bigger than the other countries. This is because the Japan’s definition of creative industries includes food service and tourism (Figure 3). Japan, as people know, has cultivated an unique culture and “sushi” or “ninja” is known worldwide. So, Japan decided to integrate them into their definition of creative industry as their competitiveness. Thus, Japan’s GVA is overwhelming, inspite of their population and labour force as compared to China.

Part of Creative Industries in Japan

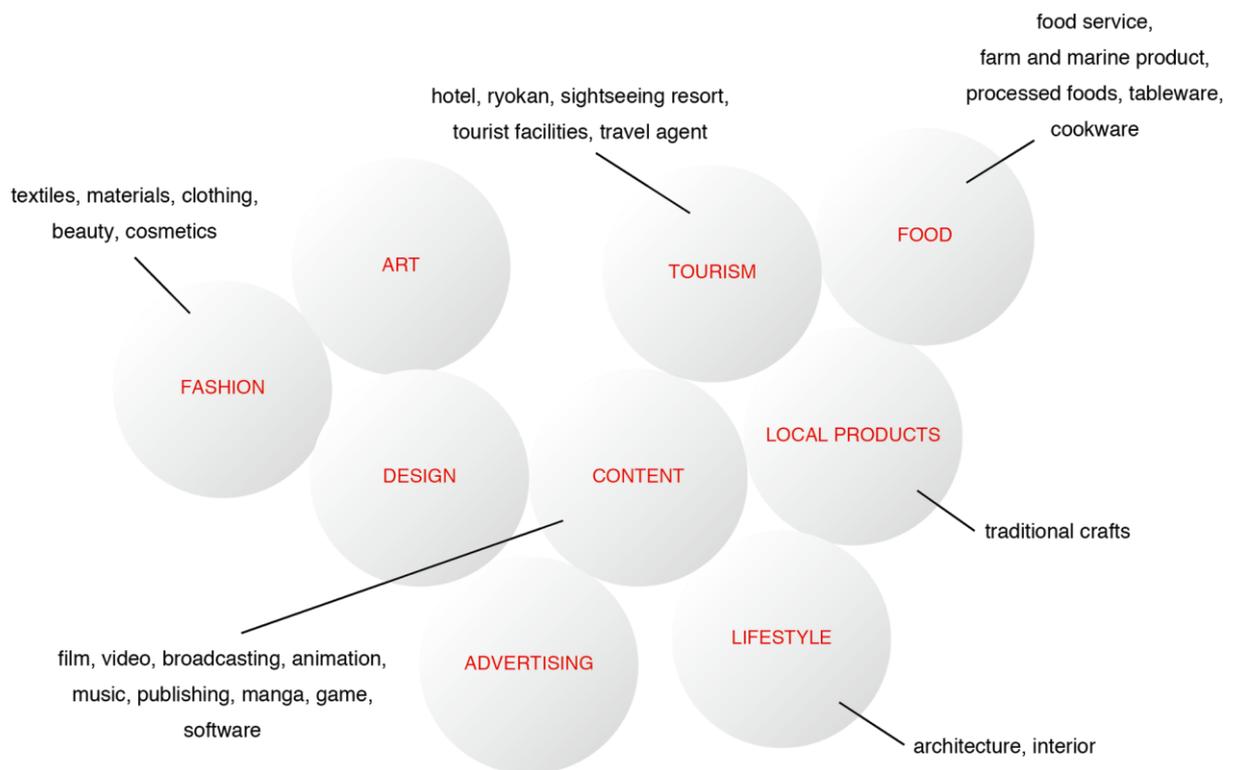
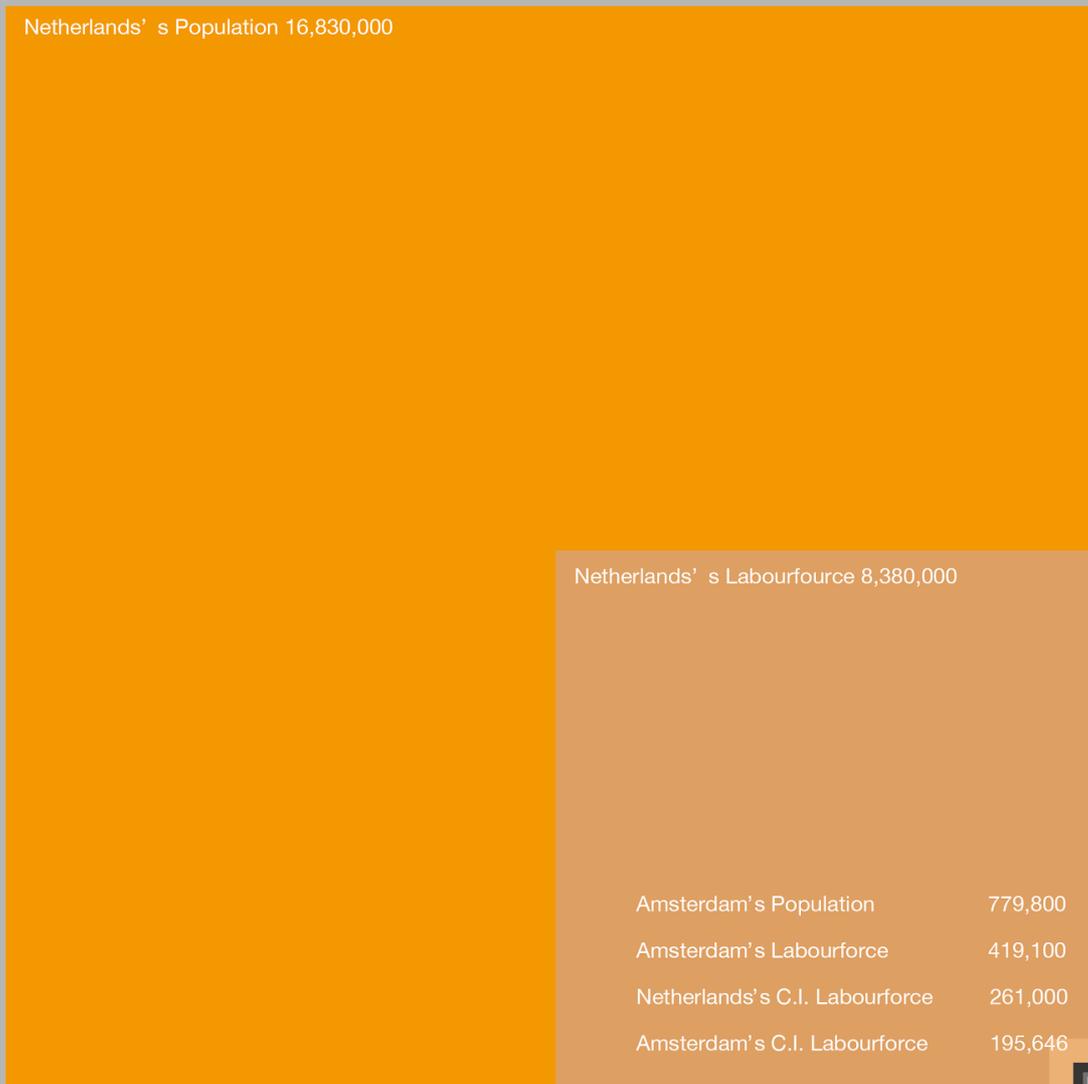


Figure 3: Part of Creative Industries in Japan.

Seeing the figure of “Comparison Between Netherlands and Amsterdam” (Figure 4), it shows how the workers in the creative industries are small. It points out that 3.1% of total workers in Netherlands are in the creative industry. The word “creative” is everywhere in this era, though the people who are engaging in the creative industries are minority. But it is true that these minorities generate lots of economic effectiveness. As Richard Florida says, “The world becomes flat thanks to networking technology, though people are still willing to go to these “megalopolises”.

The research addresses the question ‘what attracts the people heading to this country’? The world’s biggest advertising agency, Publicis Omnicom Group which was merged on last July, is located in Amsterdam. This incident proves that Amsterdam is one of the important cities in the world.

Comparison Between Netherlands and Amsterdam



- Netherlands' s Population
- Netherlands' s Labourforce
- Amsterdam's Population
- Amsterdam's Labourforce
- Netherlands' s C.I. Labourforce
- Amsterdam's C.I. Labourforce

Figure 4: Comparison between the Netherlands and Amsterdam, Creative City (2013).

2.1.2 Creative industries in the Netherlands

According to the Dutch Creative Value Report (2009), “the creative industries are a wide-ranging aggregation of sectors in which creativity occupies centre stage”. Having production and distribution as crucial links in the value chain, the government is concerned with not only the initial creation, but also with the production and distribution – and up scaling by these means. The Creative Value Report (2009) classifies the following creative industries in the Netherlands:

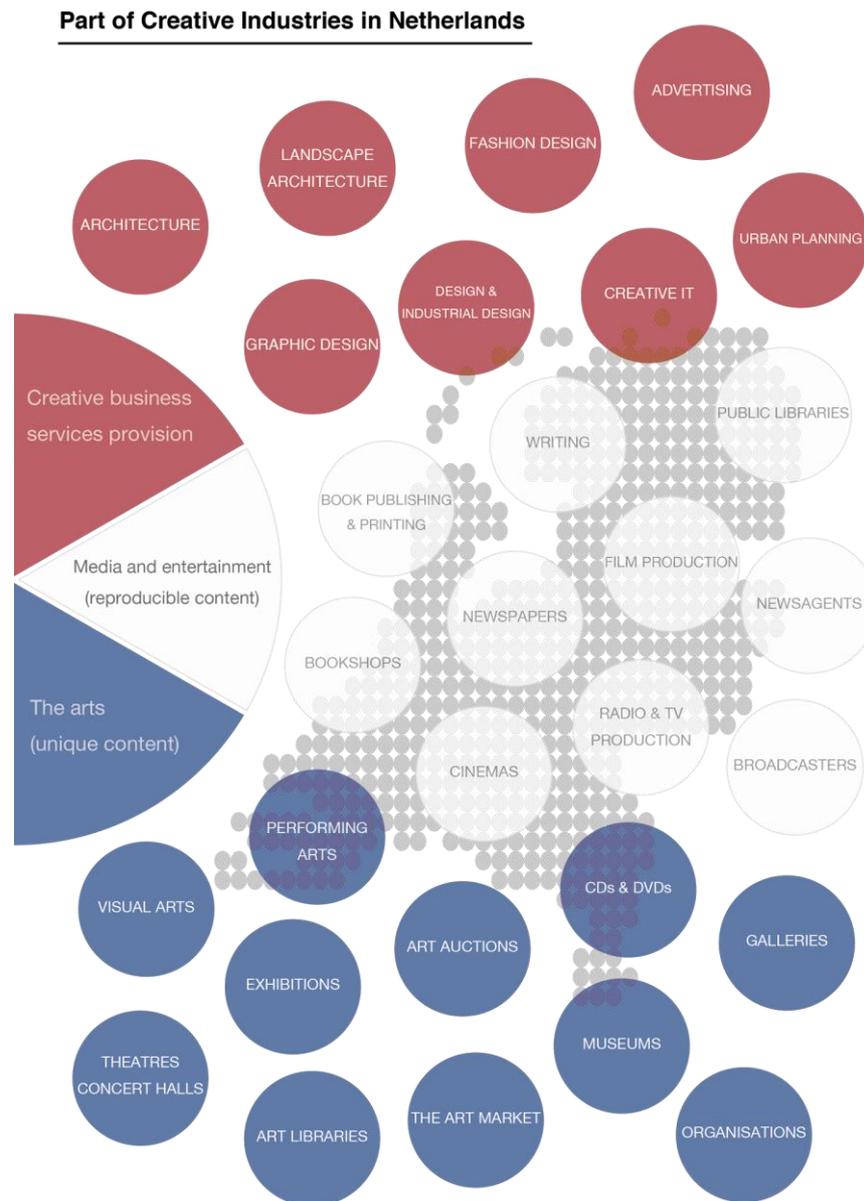


Figure 5: Part of Creative Industries in the Netherlands, Creative City (2013).

In the knowledge economy, cities are competing on the international level to provide the best climate for innovation and creativity. The creative industries in the Netherlands is mainly

concentrated around Amsterdam, Arnhem, Delft, Utrecht, Rotterdam and Eindhoven. Amsterdam is the most internationally orientated city to work in, frequently work for international clients.

Increased globalization has meant that many businesses in the Netherlands need to bet on design and branding to distinguish their product. “Internationally speaking, the Dutch creative industries are in the vanguard, although they are not the leader in any field” Create Value Report (2009). Therefore, the creative industries play an important role in the Dutch economy.

“The creative industries’ conceptualisation and imagination skills drive innovation” Create Value Report (2009). In this way, the creative industries contribute value to both production and service chains, and furthermore to an attractive environment for businesses and their employees. The qualities that make a city or country attractive for these groups are, after all, often closely connected with that location’s creative and cultural climate.

Cultural and social value arises primarily from the creative sectors’ provision of cultural content – in the languages of art, image, narrative, sound and form. “The Netherlands has a strong reputation when it comes to design, architecture, fashion, games, advertising and TV production, and it also has a number of influential publishers” (Creative Value, 2009).

2.2 Emerging creative professional

The emerging creative professionals as a cluster is really diverse. According to a study commissioned by the Creative Industries as a Flywheel (2011), the creative industries is not merely another sector but is also a driving force behind various economic and social processes. For the purpose of this research, one concentrates on graduating or recently graduated students. Though, on many instances, you will find reference towards the emerging startup culture in Amsterdam (Creative Industries as a Flywheel, 2011).

Richard Florida, has a definition for the creative class: “The creative class consists of people who add economic value through their creativity” (Florida *apud* Creative Metropolises, 2002).

The author defines the creative class as consisting of two components. Firstly, the super creative core which includes scientists and engineers (including software programmers), university professors, poets and novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, filmmakers, designers and architects as well as (the thought leadership of modern society): nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts and other opinion-makers. Secondly, creative professionals who work in a wide range of knowledge-intensive industries such as high-tech sectors, financial services, the legal and healthcare professions, and business management (people such as physicians, lawyers, managers, also technicians and others who apply complex bodies of knowledge). (Florida *apud* Creative Metropolises, 2002)

In the Netherlands, Gerard Marlet (2009) offers a wealth of information for anyone interested in the fortunes of the Dutch municipalities. He has developed a local variation of this for municipalities, who also worked on this study (Marlet, 2009). Florida’s research shows that the portion of the creative class in the labour force of the United States is thirty percent which is twice what it was twenty years ago. Twelve percent belong to the super creative core (fifteen million people), eighteen percent (25 million) to the creative professionals. The creative core is most active in the production of new ideas, technologies or content in science (and technique), architecture and design, education, art, music and entertainment. The creative professionals solve problems that require

independent thinking and a high education level. Both groups share a creative ethos whereby value is attributed to creativity, individuality, distinctiveness and performance. In Europe, the Netherlands has the highest proportion of creative class in the labour force (47 percent). If technicians are excluded Ireland has the greatest proportion. (Creative Industries as a Flywheel, 2011)

Their main focus is in the production of significance or symbolic content, which manifests itself as information. They are much more likely to define themselves as individual creators, entrepreneurs, artists, or even social activists rather than as industrial workers. Vital part of this economy, they play an increasingly important role in driving innovation and growth in other parts of the economy.

A report by the UK's National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA, 2008), concluded that more creative people work outside the creative industries than inside them. Moreover, a recent survey in the UK (NESTA, 2008) found that 30% of all young people want to work in the creative sector, even though, at that moment, only 11% achieved that ambition.

From a number of case studies conducted by the ICT (ICT is an 'across the board' sector which functions as a motor for development and innovation in all sorts of domains and sectors, from financial services to life sciences) it can be seen that more than just the presence of a creative agglomeration is needed to benefit from emerging clustering. The key element in the system is the connectivity between:

- 1) Companies within the cluster, with cooperation partners, business partners;
- 2) Innovation sources from outside the cluster but within its sector elsewhere in the country and abroad; and
- 3) With companies in other sectors, who can function as customer and source of new ideas and knowledge thereby triggering innovation.

Aforementioned three layers of connectivity should ideally be supported by a fine web of informal interactions and networks.

A comprehensive study of recent literature, carried out in the context of the broad significance of the creative industries, shows that creative talent plays a key role in the creation, maintenance and extension of innovation and competitiveness within the current creative economy. An important consideration here is that this only involves those employed in companies in the creative industries, but also those active in creative occupation groups from the creative industries who have fanned out into the broader economy. To comprehend the broad significance of the creative industries for innovation, competitiveness and growth, it is essential to broaden ones outlook. Those involved in creative occupation groups outside the creative industries sector, form, together with their colleagues within the sector, a highly productive potential labour pool for companies. Furthermore, because of their mobility in the labour market, they bring about a knowledge climate of great importance to innovativeness and competitiveness in the regional economy.

In order to foster emerging talent, the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) organizes the NEU/NOW festival². The ELIA represents all disciplines in the arts amongst architecture, dance, design, fine art, media art, music and theatre. By the network of its member institutions ELIA enables and supports the dialog, the mobility and all forms of artistic projects for artists, instructors, managing employees, administration and students. The NEU/NOW festival clearly enumerates the

² <http://www.elia-artschools.org/activities/neunow>

salient features which would allow emerging creative professionals to gain recognition in the industry. The salient features are:

- 1) An online festival and a live event that promotes artistic excellence through cutting edge presentations and activities;
- 2) An opportunity for selected emerging artists to show their work, meet each other and create new international partnerships;
- 3) A space where audiences, producers and curators can see the most excellent artists and innovative projects coming from art schools and universities across Europe and beyond;
- 4) A forum where artists, producers, curators, cultural operators and policy makers can discuss future developments for the arts and share views on the cultural role of higher arts education institutions;
- 5) A means of presenting new international generation of professional artists to the attention of a wide audience.

2.3 Networks, both digital and physical

As this sub question covers a large part of the research it has been divided into multiple parts. Some of the parts namely the ones that have to do with mapping will be researched for the full period of time and be answered at the end of the project. For this research phase, the focus will be on networks in general and digital and physical networks in particular.

What is a network? A network can be either digital or physical. It can be anything ranging from a biological network to an electronic network or a mathematical network. Here the term network will be specified as a social network. "A social network is a social structure made up of a set of social actors (such as individuals or organizations) and a set of the dyadic ties between these actors" (Stanley Wasserman, 1994).

The above stated definition is still broad and covers too much of the social network spectrum to be able to do concise research. For this reason the focus of the research will lay with the following kind of network: professional networks. A professional network service (or, in an Internet context, simply professional network) is a type of social network service that is focused solely on interactions and relationships of a business nature rather than including personal, non-business interactions. (J. Vascellaro, 2007). A notable example is for instance the network site LinkedIn³. A professional network service is a way to find work or get ahead in your career as well as gain resources and opportunities for networking.

As stated before there is also a distinction between professional and social networks. For instance there are websites such as LinkedIn and Open Science Lab⁴ that focus more on the professional part of a network. But the biggest digital networks are places such as Facebook⁵, Twitter⁶ and Google+⁷. These digital network sites are more commonly used

³ <http://www.linkedin.com/>

⁴ <https://www.opensciencelab.com/>

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/>

for social reason instead of professional reasons. To get some insights in how digital networks work, the biggest professional and social network are reviewed underneath.

LinkedIn (Figure 6) is a professional network site that stands for three things.

- Connect. Find. Be found: Build your professional identity online and stay in touch with colleagues and classmates.
- Power your career: Discover professional opportunities, business deals, and new ventures.
- Learn and share: Get the latest news, inspiration, and insights you need to be great at what you do.

Facebook's mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. Connect with friends and the world around you on Facebook (Figure 7)

- See photos and updates from friends in news feed
- Share what is new in your life on your timeline



Figure 6: Facebook, CreativeCity (2013).

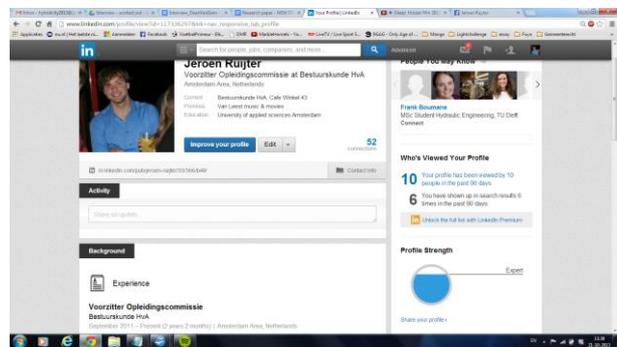


Figure 7: LinkedIn, CreativeCity (2013).

In the statements as well as in the overview of the websites one can see the differences between the two network sites. Although both websites name 'sharing' in their general statement there is also a clear difference between both statements. The social Facebook talks about friends, photos and life whereas LinkedIn names professional, colleagues and inspiration. The statements also reflect in the layout of the personal pages on both websites. On the personal page of Facebook one sees pictures and posts of friends and his or her own pictures and posts they like to share. The overall feel of the page feels playful and fun one notices that sharing your life with your friends is central. The personal page of LinkedIn stands in big contrast with the Facebook page. There is no frame for pictures or messages from friends or yourself. Instead the page show's straight away what your work experiences are and who your contacts are. The layout has a professional look as work is central on this networking site.

So overall one may conclude that there is a big difference in both the networking sites. Both in the statements and in the layout of the websites one can see and feel the difference between having fun connecting and sharing with friends and be a professional that shows what he is able to do.

⁶ <https://twitter.com/>

⁷ <https://plus.google.com/up/search>

Next to the digital networks, the physical one is still a big part of this. With physical networks there is a less clear distinction between professional and social networking than there is in digital networks. For a big part this has to do with human nature and emotions play a big role in physical networking. People are able to see each other reactions on statements and conversations go more in depth then via email. Physical networking often boils down to: If one likes another they are more likely to connect and work together in the future. That said if people respect each other work well enough they tend to work together even though they may not really like each other on a personal level.

Everywhere in the world companies, professionals and people in general try to find new ways of connecting. Some interesting initiative that have to do with networking and connecting in the creative industries in Amsterdam are; Pluk de Dag⁸, Pecha Kucha Amsterdam⁹, Narrative Environments¹⁰ and 1band1brand¹¹.

A network needs to be able to provide four main characteristics to be successful. These points are: sharing, caring, recommending and supporting. Underneath there is a short description of every point followed by a more detailed explanation how that particular characteristic is related to the formulated problem statement. The four points in context with this project shall be existentially researched during the whole period of the project.

Sharing: Sharing is the joint use of a resource or space. In its narrow sense, it refers to joint or alternating use of an inherently finite good, such as a common pasture or a shared residence. It is also the process of dividing and distributing. (English Dictionary, 2013) Within a network people should be able to share their views, opinions and work with each other.

We want to show what skills and values do emerging professionals (just graduates), companies and educational institutions have and if they share them. For example, do the emerging creatives share the same values with the most established industries?

Recommending: Recommending is to praise or commend (one) to another as being worthy or desirable or to make (the possessor, as of an attribute) attractive or acceptable. (American dictionary). In a network people should be able to recommend people, projects or inspiration to each other. Nobody knows everything but together you get very far at least.

So how are the creative professionals expanding the network: where are ideas circulating? Who talks about the creative industries and in which ways? Who are the authority figures?

Caring: Caring, feeling or showing care and compassion. A network is a means to show like-minded people, or people in your network, that you personally care about what they're doing. This works both ways, the creatives get a push because they see that people are tracking what they're doing and liking it.

What is keeping this larger network together? Mapping documenting/memories shared objects. What are the emotional connections, what are people documenting. What is the heart?

⁸ <http://www.plugdedag.com/>

⁹ <http://pechakuchaamsterdam.nl/>

¹⁰ <http://www.narrative-environments.com/successes/holding-public-office>

¹¹ <http://www.1band1brand.com/>

Supporting: Support, To provide for or maintain, by supplying with money or necessities. To aid the cause, policy, or interests. People should be able to give support to projects and people they like. This can either be with money, mentally or direct help.

To conclude this section the term network is a really broad term that covers various different areas. For this research project the following definition is used: 'A social network is a social structure made up of a set of social actors (such as individuals or organizations) and a set of the dyadic ties between these actors.' This definition is still broad that's why in this research networks have been specified to social networks. These social networks are divided in both physical and digital networks and professional and social networks. All these kind of networks have different characteristics that together with the four main points and the interviews results with the creative professionals have to be taken into account when developing new concepts for connecting the creative industries in Amsterdam.

3. Problem statement and Research question

The DesignThinkers Group who is an expert on the Creative Industries, identified a problem: the information about the creative industries is out there, but it is too much disaggregated and therefore not accessible to the industries itself and therefore not very useful. This makes it harder for creative professionals to enter the workforce and connect with others.

The proposed research is based on the before-mentioned literature and investigates whether people and organizations in the creative industries are missing a comprehensive overview of the city's rich infrastructure and knowledge, skills and tools that will help them build new relationships and share values.

3.1 Problem statement

First there is a need to identify this information about the creative industries, and then combine it, make it open and useful for creative professionals. From disperse, close and not very useful information ---- to ---- combined and aggregated, open and useful information.

By information about the creative industries one can include: government studies, websites, social media, personal blogs, company websites, news articles that talk about the creative industries, the agendas of the venues that organize events around creative work and the knowledge of people. All of that information are documents of how people work, live and belong to the creative industries.

By putting them together, mashing them up and mixing these different types of information, the following can be obtained; the macro picture, the collective, the group behavior and the networks, the patterns and the trends. This information can then in turn be used to help developing an innovative way to connect the emerging creative professionals with creative industries.

3.2 Research question

Based on this problem the following research question has been formulated:

“How can we uncover the digital and physical network of creative industries in Amsterdam and develop innovative means to make them available to emerging creative professionals in a sustainable way?”

From this main question, the following sub-questions have been derived:

- 1) “What and who are the creative industries?” - What and who are the creative industries in Amsterdam? What are the challenges that they are facing at the moment?
- 2) “Who are the emerging creative professionals in Amsterdam?” - Who are they? What are the challenges that they are facing at the moment?
- 3) “How are creative professionals and the creative industries connected?” - What is a network? How is it structured?

The following section will elaborate on how this study has been performed.

4. Method

A thorough research has been conducted; to be sure this project covers the current state of the creative industries. This research brought insights in the ‘creative scene’ and the current problems they are facing. It was divided mainly in two parts, both desk research as well as field research.

4.1 Design

A range of techniques have been designed to visualize the problem, the needs of the end user, such as accessibility, collaboration, and networking. For example Digital Methods Initiative tools (see section 4.1.2), and many other visualizations.

4.1.1 Literature study

Researching articles and documents to get insights in the current state of the creative industries and the problems that this particular industry is facing, as well as the emerging creative professional and lastly various networks have been compared.

4.1.2 Digital Methods Initiative (DMI) Research

Tools that form the infrastructure of the Digital Methods Initiative (University of Amsterdam) have been used, which specializes in repurposing online devices (and 'methods of the medium') for research that goes beyond the study of online culture only. A word cloud has been made using the Google scraper which is an online crawler that tracks the searched word or sentence and publishes the frequency of occurrence that allowed us to generate statistical data and do a visualization of the available word cloud (Refer the Appendix for more details).

4.1.3 Interviews

In order to gain a more comprehensive overview of how the creative professionals function, it was decided to conduct interviews with people who are now part of the creative industries in Amsterdam. Firstly on a micro level young emerging professional have been analysed. A list of people from the HOT100 was created and partly interviewed (HOT100 is an annual talent program with the most talented and promising new graduates in e-culture disciplines: interaction design,

game design, media and electronic arts, and social media communication in parallel with digitally informed processes and artifacts from older cultural disciplines such as architecture, film and performing arts. They were selected via universities throughout the Netherlands. It is an initiative from Virtueel Platform).

The interview was framed so as to gain insights into their transition from emerging professionals to well established professions. As part of the interview questions, every interviewee was asked to recommend other 'influential' people and that is how the interview process was iterated. While doing research, it became clear that the emerging creative professionals are the ones who do not have an existing network or agency to complement their efforts. Therefore, a group of students who were in the final year of their entrepreneurship program were chosen and interviewed. The questions (Refer the Appendix to see all questions) for the emerging professionals were the same as the established professionals so as to see whether there is a point of contact or point of conflict. These questions were broadly classified into 3 categories: a) Personal b) Network c) Future.

In the end the data has been analysed across all of the interviews in order to identify similarities and differences in the degree of formalization of the ordering process and the effects of formalization. By identifying similarities and differences, one seeks to provide further insight into issues concerning the formalization of the ordering process by (analytically) generalizing the case study results.

4.1.4 Observations

Some of the key places we visited during our field trips were

- 1) Amsterdam Urban Innovation Week¹² - the Amsterdam Urban Innovation Week is a gathering of creative professionals who try to reflect upon the principles of growth of the city of Amsterdam. This year it was organized at the Pakhuis de Zwijger.
- 2) TEDxAmsterdam¹³ - is an independently organized event which encompasses Technology, Entertainment and Design ideas. TEDx provides a platform for an idea to go viral and help collaborate professionals.
- 3) Discovery festival¹⁴ - is a festival which brings artists, designers and technology stalwarts all under one umbrella. These places allowed us a first-hand glimpse into the functioning of the creative professionals and how they all came together to execute a show or event. It also provided a platform for people to network and interact with exciting talent.

4.2 Participants

The research originated with the HOT100 (as explained above) and gradually spread to other established creative professionals. Till date, 15 creative professionals in the age group of 20-50 years have been interviewed and transcribed, of which most of them are in their 20s which was done deliberately so as to focus on the emerging creative professionals.

¹² <http://www.dezwijger.nl/78319/nl/aiuw>

¹³ <http://www.tedxamsterdam.com/about-tedx/>

¹⁴ <http://www.discoveryfestival.nl>

4.3 Materials

The research was kick started with an interview with Geert Lovink, research professor of Institute of Network Cultures¹⁵ (initiator of the MyCreativity program) at the Hogeschool van Amsterdam and Richard Florida's video "Rise of the Creative Class". Brainstorming sessions with the DesignThinkers Group allowed provided glimpses of scalability and how creative professionals network. The interviews with all the people can be found in Appendix. One of the most important sources was the workshop on 'mapping' with Natalia Sanchez. For example: cross referencing and cross analysis of words from the webpages of established creative agencies with the blogs/websites of emerging professionals. This allowed an in depth, comprehensive idea of the networks and connections that exist within the system. The research question was therefore tackled in a quantitative and qualitative approach.

4.4 Procedure

Participants were communicated via e-mail after being chosen arbitrarily from the HOT100. Based on the participants recommendations, further interviews were planned and that is how the whole interview was an iterative process. The interviews were analyzed in an unbiased manner and common points, areas of interest, shared values were grouped together and clustered this is known as cross-case analysis. These clusters enable us to gain deeper insights about the creative industries.

5. Results

The desk and field research that were divided in domains of research according to the research questions that were posed. These questions helped to get a general view of the creative industries and the problems that are being faced.

In section 2.1 more general definitions of the creative industries have been posed.

Also a comparison between United Kingdom, China, Japan and The Netherlands was presented on section 2.1.1. 46% of the labour-force in Amsterdam are already part of the creative industries labour-force. This means that compared with London, Beijing and Tokyo, Amsterdam has an advantage labour-force because the city has highly rate of creative professionals, nevertheless their population. Moreover, Amsterdam also has a good density of creative labour force compared with other cities in the Netherlands.

In the context of Amsterdam, from the interview with Geert Lovink¹⁶, it appears a different point of view and contextualization about the cultural and creative industries. First, there were the cultural industries with the 'old media'- broadcasting, television, radio, theater, contemporary arts, "these are cultural industries because they are regulated and are a fixed group of industries". So the creative industries starts with the idea that there should be more to in it than just production of pop culture or fashion style and should be done in a more entrepreneurial basis. He explained that in the 1960-70s people moved out of the cities and industries shut down. Creative industries are deeply connected to the revitalization of inner cities. "This concept of revitalization can be seen at the

¹⁵ <http://networkcultures.org>

¹⁶ <http://medialab.hva.nl/creativeindustries/2013/09/23/interview-with-geert-lovink>

Amsterdam harbor too”. Asked about who is part of the creative industries, Geert answered with “you can make the industry as big as you want”. He commented that some people will include all hairdressers as a part of the creative industries. For example in Amsterdam they said the hairdressers are not part but in Rotterdam they said that include them. “It sounds like an absurd discussion but in fact it is quite the same with IT. I would never include computer programmers in the creative industries, they got no creative potential. But other people say they are the heart of the creative industries. They say the engineers are leading the way for creative industries”. According to him, it is essential to define this industry first: “Once you’ve done that, you can define the direction”.

A different input and definition for the creative industries based on skillset appeared from the field research, working with data from the HOT100 in the DMI workshop. The HOT100 summarised and labelled the main e-cultural disciplines and skills in 17 tags (Figure 8). Each of these creatives has chosen one primary tag to represent their main specialty, and 1 to 6 secondary tags for their next most relevant abilities.

HOT100 Skillset

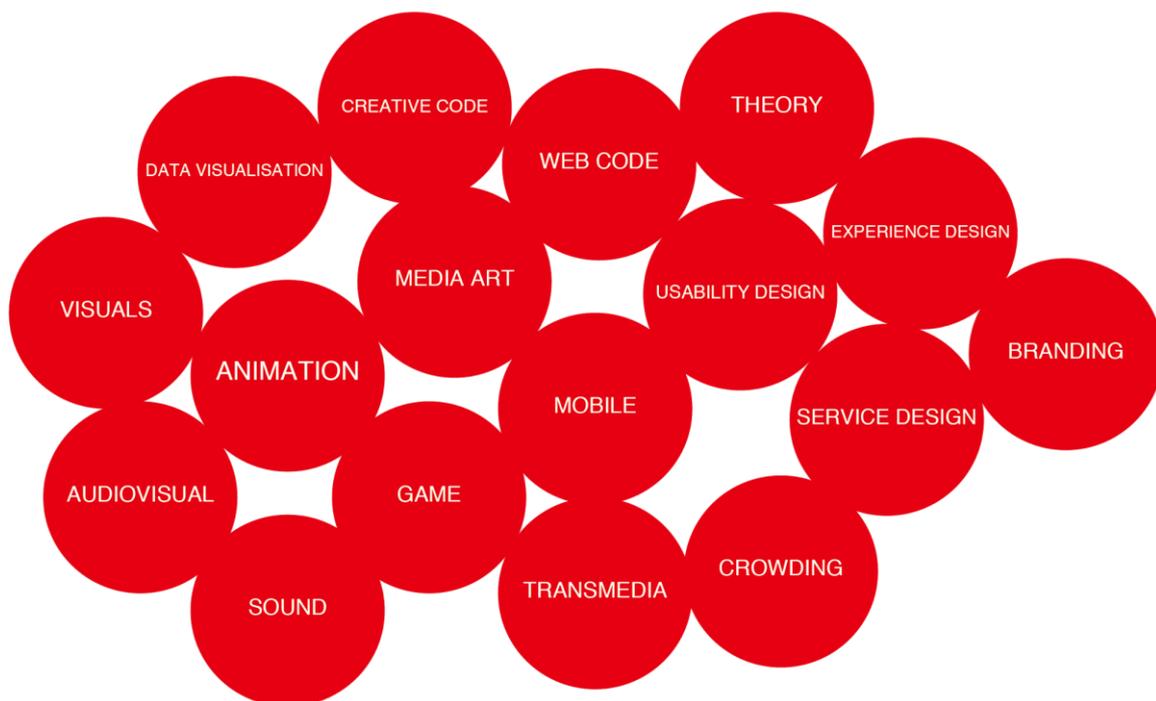


Figure 8: HOT100 Skillset, CreativeCity (2013).

Lastly, for this project, the definition of the creative industries in Amsterdam leans more towards the skillset of creative professionals. The definition for this research does not remain localized to the industry per se but to all those with a creative mindset.

It has been observed that not only does the emerging creative professional foster creativity, festivals like NEU/NOW and the Discovery Festival provide a platform for people to showcase it too. New sectors are evolving in the combination, creative industries and information and communication technology. For example gaming and cross media which can in principle draw upon existing knowledge and skills but are not in a position to autonomously establish new connections.

Emerging creative professionals (both recent graduates as well as labour force which spillover from existing industries) require creative workspaces to be operational. The rise of creative labour force attracts other creative companies, thereby increasing employment and making the city more attractive for skilled people. It has been proved beyond doubt that the most significant factor in economic growth of cities is based on the presence of creatively active professionals there.

Although the definition about social networks as stated in chapter 2.3 covers the network that this research will uncover and gives the background for the actual concept in the later stages, it's not complete. The research subject is the creative industry in Amsterdam, for the professionals in this scene creativity is an important thing. That's why they pointed out in interviews that inspiration for them is an imported aspect of their daily lives and work. For instance *Daan van Dam* says: "I try to go everyday to different websites for lifestyle for music for advertising. So it's useful to see what's happening in the industry. It's good to know what other people are doing. For instance music is always good, cause maybe you have a project and you think those guys were great and would like to work with them for a commercial." So in the continuation of this project ways of getting inspiration will be taken into account in context with uncovering and concepting new ways of networking.

Next the research focused on the way professionals build and keep on building their network. In short there were no constants with the professional profile and how people viewed they belong to the creative industries. Even though some useful insights came out of the interviews. These insights suggested that physically meeting people is still considered more important than any digital connection. Seventeen out of the twenty interviewed creative professionals made their network by connecting directly with other professionals. Six of the professionals used both; i.e. a digital and physical platforms and two of them only used digital platforms.

The interviews with creative professionals tell us that with the digitalization of networks it became easier to find the people you need but without a physical connection mostly it doesn't lead to anything useful for the professional. Creative professional *Boris de Ruijter* states: "the core of a network lays in the change to physically know people. This way you are able to read each others reactions and perceive the (eventual) creative chemistry". *René Bosch* a professional photographer gives another example: "Nowadays you don't really need the agencies anymore, assignors and professionals can easily find each other through the digital media. But that's only the finding part without some physical meeting most of the time you won't get an assignment. So it's a combination, yes digital networks make it easier but they are not everything"

Concluding one can say that digital connections hold a significantly lower value compared to the physical connections. Therefore it is important to keep in mind that for the concepts one must pay attention to connecting in both the physical and digital way.

Next to the importance of both the physical and digital way of connecting there are the four main points that a network should have: sharing, caring, recommending and supporting as stated in chapter 2.3. The interviews with creative professionals gave more specific insights in what they want and need in a network. The following query was about the requirements for a network to be successful. Firstly, an opinion shared by six out of the twenty people is: "A network needs diversity in its members both in terms of skill-set and experience". From this statement it's possible to start connecting the other collected requirements that came out of the interviews. The backgrounds of creative people need to be different to create an useful network. This applies to both the skillset and experience. This will give the network a high-quality level but next to this according to the creative professionals a network also needs efficiency, sustainability and value increase. A high quality network does not only exist by the diversity of the people but the quality also needs to reflect in the organization of the network. A network can't only be digital this is stated before but most of the

interviewees stress this point here again. A network need the option to physical meetings and events must be organized on a regular basis. The scale of the network needs to be big but it also needs boundaries, it does not need to connect with everyone just with the 'right' people, this makes sure the network maintains a certain quality level. Another important thing that came out of the interviews was that both the organization and the people in a network need to be open. Other requirements that were given by the creative professionals belong to the sphere of values. Therefore they can be placed everywhere and nowhere in particular. These values are: passion, ambition, pride and honesty. Finally, some of the creative professionals had suggestions how a future network should look like: i.e. the network needs to be different and futuristic.

These results from both the desk research and field research together give useful insights in the requirements for a successful network.

Interviews results

A total of 20 creative professionals (as explained earlier) have been interviewed. Of those, 8 were freelance, 4 were company co-creators, 3 were students, 2 were hired-freelance and 2 were company dependents. The interviews were compared in order to find relevant similarities or constants or glaring differences; if any.

At the end a very miscellaneous landscape emerged making it hard to find any guideline.

About the question "do you feel part of the creative industries" 13 of them answered positively, 5 of them were partially positive and the last 2 answered negatively. The reasons and explanations why they may feel or not feel part of the creative industries were quite diverse. Regarding the positive answers, 10 of them feel to be part of it because they're doing a creative job, in which 2 felt part of it as conceptual-creatives and 1 both for being creative and for living out of it. The last 3 don't think to be creative but 2 of them feel part of this industry just for working and investing on it and 1 because of sharing the same mindset.

It's interesting to notice that between the half-positive answers the doubt is not about being creative or not (they all feel creative), but mostly about the belonging to the industry. 3 out of 5 don't think to fit the industrial market-space. 2 of them don't even want to and the other one wishes to in the future. 1 out of 5 don't want to be part of the industry and the last one feels part of the creative industry but not of the dutch one.

Concerning the negative answers, both the professionals don't feel any belonging to the term "industry". 1 of them is clearly against it.

What's interesting to notice is:

- 1) There's no clear correspondence between profession and belonging;
- 2) Most of the interviewed people think that "being creative" is sufficient to be considered part of the creative industry;
- 3) 7 people out of 20 have a clear issue with the term "industry", 4 of them in an oppositional way.

Next the research focused on the way professionals build and keep on building their network. In short there were no constants with the professional profile and how people viewed they belong to the creative industries. Even though the evidence that came out of the interviews suggested that physically meeting people is still considered more important than any digital connection. Seventeen out of the twenty interviewed creative professionals made their network by connecting directly with other professionals. Six of the professionals used both; i.e. a digital and physical platform and two of them only used digital platforms.

The following query was about the requirements for a network to be successful. Also in this part many different opinion have been collected, but some relevant highlights are possible.

Firstly, an opinion shared by 6 people out of 20 is that “A network needs diversity in its members both in terms of skill-set and experience”. From this statement it’s possible to start connecting all the other collected requirements. Skillset and experience need to hold diversity on a background base and to own an high-quality level, in terms of efficiency, sustainability and value increase. Quality needs also to be reflected into the organization of the network. Physical meeting chances and events must be organized and they need to hold quality. The organization is connected to the set and the size matters both through the members and the open theme. The scale of the network needs to be big but it also needs boundaries, in order to maintain a certain quality level. Both organization and set need to be open but controlled.

Other requirements that were given belong to the sphere of values. For these reason they can’t be placed everywhere but nowhere in particular. Those are: Passion, ambition, pride and honesty.

Finally, some hints were given; i.e. the network needs to be different and futuristic.

The key components of an “ideal network” can in essence, be visualized like some sort of an ‘organism’ having membranes. These membranes filter the incoming and outgoing energies, thereby maintaining an open yet protective outlook of the network. The network dynamics need to be fostered such that it allows all the individual elements to interact and collaborate so as to be self-sustained and thus maintain a proactive synergistic outlook. Being different and futuristic is the trend to achieve without compromising the quality. This matrix like structure should lead to a holistic approach during the concept phase.

Going on with the research the main values they consider important have been asked to the interviewed professionals. A long list came out of it so it was necessary to find similarities and belongings to schematize. One first visualization has been produced and on a second phase a more complex and articulated discourse has been developed in order to intake this values as keypoint the network has to facilitate.

The output shows an enriched network, facing several substantial problem. On the following part the key-values obtained during the interview will figure in italic style.

The first effort was to seek a connection between the two main shared values: *freedom* and *independence* with *collaboration*. Those are not much related to the ethic sense of the words but are referred to a professional sphere.

What does it mean to be *free* and *independent*? *Freedom* is “the state of being totally free” while *independence* is “the state of being free of the control of some other person, country or entity”. In terms of work this means being free to decide what to work on and who to work with. Looking at it from another perspective, in order to be free and independent one needs to earn enough money to be self-sustained. *Self-sustaining* strongly affects the chance of being independent and to keep on

doing the job one likes. If a professional is not able to *self-sustain* this will lead to frustration, dissatisfaction and disease, which are the contrary of four important values for the creative professionals as appeared from the interviews namely: *wellness, satisfaction, enjoyment* and *passion*.

Enjoyment and *passion* are complex emotions that positively affects the individual but it is hard to define how to achieve them. For sure one key-role is played by the relation with other people. *Meeting interesting people* it is important for many reasons. It brings both *collaboration* with other individuals and *challenge* to every single professional. *Collaboration* is the second main value according to the results. It is strictly related to elements such as *sharing* and *skills*. This may be phrased as “interesting people sharing skills”. *Skills-sharing* requires to be *open*. Moreover, to increase the proficiency of the *skills-sharing*, *diversity* needs to be promoted. In order to do so, a *common language* must be built to assure that everyone understand each other.

Collaboration is not just useful to the *quality* of the result, but it is a good way to *be challenged* and healthy to the *self-development* of each component. The improvement of one’s skills adds value to the *quality* of the network and improves ones *self-confidence*. A skilled and self-confident professional is also a more satisfied individual. Also, relying on the network and on its potential each professional allows himself to *think bigger*. The idea of *being influent* and to be able to *make the difference* gives the strength to *dream*, to *go over the rules*, *being disruptive* if necessary. Finally those elements are strictly necessary to seek and protect one’s *independence*.

Also from the research it appeared some challenges that the creative industries currently are facing and some trends that can exert a powerful influence on the development of this industry in the Netherlands.

“Innovation has become an open process where new combinations are constantly in development” (Creative Capital Conference, 2005). Crossovers become the key to innovate and new connections are the foundation of the knowledge society. It is becoming important for people working together: the ability to collaborate is relevant to achieve innovation and increasing numbers of crossovers and co-creation.

“We need to create open environments where crossovers between different people, organisations and networks can emerge” Creative Capital Conference (2005). These environments are relevant to attract talent since they offer opportunities for talented individuals to realize their ambitions. New players and ideas are becoming welcomed and interaction between different domains in economy and society is therefore stimulated.

Production is essentially becoming less industrial and more creative. This means more people need creative skills. Young creative students need to be trained for operating in the market, as more and more businesses understand the value of cultural meanings in products and services. “They are no longer the only creatives in society but also still function as pioneers” (Creative Capital Conference, 2005).

Edoardo Costa, interaction designer, said that the biggest challenge has been knowing each other: “When you start from scratch, it’s hard. Even if you’re doing digital and physical networking, there is always something that you are missing out on”.

“The potential of the creative industries is not yet sufficiently recognized” Creative Capital Conference (2005). The idea of a new business mode for the creative industries was also shared by interviewees: “We need to find places for new-cross definition about professions and products”.

Connecting creative industries with other sectors in the economy may help creative entrepreneurs turn innovative ideas into profitable businesses. Here is a chance of new business models on “how to make the creative scene livable with more and more people in the field”. These are challenges supported by our interviewees.

Moreover, another input from the interviews is to facilitate groups of people sharing the same values rather than feeding big platforms for the audience, being more humanity oriented instead of “promoting fake values”. Also decreasing individualism in favor of collaborative behaviors and being less defined and more adaptable.

The last question for the interviewees was “*How do you think the creative industries will look like in 10 years?*” Although some professionals think that it will be pretty much the same, the majority described a scenario with an industry established with more short-breath-projects as well as web based. Moreover, more freelancing and less companies.

Geert Lovink says that overtime the art is playing less and less in this roll because the creative industries become an environment that is more and more entrepreneur. “The role of artist is very unclear. It is my estimation that they will start to build up their own companies, they will start to be bigger and bigger but they will not employ any artists or even designers. So what is the creative element of this is very questionable. There is any space to do something”. This last quote is also shared by more others interviewees.

Asking Jody Bagua, a Dutch multimedia artist, about the future in the creative environment in Amsterdam, he answered that he would like to have a place that they could have a better communication and see people starting to do things by themselves, without someone to sell your work for you or contact for you. “I think that in the future will be more common to see more Public Relations agencies or people from different backgrounds that will entry more and more in this environment”.

Edoardo Costa, interaction designer, sees the future of the creative industries very interconnected, with different cultures: “I wish to see more connection with India, China, Japan”. He also sees this industry connected to new ways of studies – “I think education is going to change”.

In his words, Michel Le Roux, concept developer, believes that these creative professionals will form a “constellation of small structures willing to cooperate and being flexible”. The interviewees believe in a lot “more blended and co-creative” and “interdisciplinary ideas” to build up a more harmonic world. Besides a healthy combination with technology.

6. Conclusion

Emerging creative professionals (both recent graduates as well as labour force which spillovers from existing industries) require creative workspaces to be operational. The rise of creative labour force attracts other creative companies, thereby increasing employment and making the city more attractive for skilled people. It has been proved beyond doubt that the most significant factor in economic growth of cities is based on the presence of creatively active professionals there.

Compared with United Kingdom, China, Japan, the Netherlands is a small creative industry in this scene. However, with a good number of creative professionals as labour force. This is a chance for

Amsterdam being a representative city as it is easier and more efficient build a network in a small environment.

Pointed out by the interviewees, the creative industries needs to be less defined and more adaptable. A new business model is required to gather places for new cross-definition and collaborative behavior between these creative professionals. This should also facilitate the meeting of creative groups that share the same values, instead of feeding big platforms for the big audience.

The results from both the desk research and field research together give useful insights in the requirements for a successful network. First of all a network should be able to share, care, recommend and support. It became clear that a network needs to be both digital and physical. A digital network is not enough to get a definite and useful connection but searching and finding people in a physical way is hard to do, that's why a successful network should combine both the digital and the physical. Next to this the research showed a lot of other requirements that a successful network should have. For instance a network should be big but only reach the 'right' people, so there need to be certain boundaries. This is not all a network should have other important requirements are: inspiration, quality, openness and efficiency. All these things need to be taken into account when developing concepts for new ways of connecting the creative industries.

7. Discussion

Ideally, a significant number of interviews should have been conducted, but because of the time restrictions for this research only 20 interviews have been conducted. The research conclusions are still subjected to certain assumptions. Nevertheless, these results are significant, and might well be the subject of further research once an initial research is complete. Even though it is very evident that the current networking landscape lacks a physical-digital continuum, integrating all the values in the network will be a "happy" challenge.

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