



Integration Framework

Collaborative Innovation for Business Growth

ISIS is a two-year innovation project supported by the Australian Government's Department of Industry, Innovation Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE) and the Victorian Government's Department of Business and Innovation (DBI). The ISIS project aimed to research, model and showcase strategies for integrating interactive media expertise across 'non-games' industry sectors through a series of customised business, education and workforce interventions.

The ISIS Integration Framework was written by Justin Brow – Email: justin@60Sox.org

Acknowledgments:

This document would not have been possible without the contributions of the following individuals:

ISIS Team Members: Justin Brow (ISIS Project Director), Anna Rooke, Adam Blake, Professor Greg Hearn, Emeritus Professor Sue Rowley, Dan Swan

Victorian Pilot Integration: ISIS Business Mentor – Simon Curry. Australian Turntable Company – Ben Chapman, Paul Chapman, Todd Chapman. Media Saints – Per Bredenberg, Michael Woods

New South Wales Pilot Integration: ISIS Business Mentor – Hamish Hawthorn. SiMERR (UNE) – Professor John Pegg, Associate Professor Lorraine Graham. Toggle Media – David Bartolo, Margaret Cameron, Beale van der Veer

Queensland Pilot Integration: ISIS Business Mentor – Sonya Henderson-Edbrooke. GBI – Graham Lumley, Trevor Trott, Laura Seviour. Zone4 – Thom Saunders, Natalie Saunders

Associated specialists: Rodin Genoff, Tyrone Pitsis, Eyal Chipkiewicz

ISIS is led by Australia's leading centres for creative industries research and business development: the Creative Industries Innovation Centre (CIIC), the ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation (CCI) and QUT Creative Enterprise Australia (CEA).



Preface

The level playing field

The Interactive Skills Integration Scheme (ISIS) was designed to help Australian businesses explore increased commercial opportunity through interactive media capabilities. The project recognises the transformative effect games design mechanics and interactive media capabilities will increasingly have on all aspects of our lives. Added to this, the roll-out of the National Broadband Network will see more individuals and businesses across Australia obtain high speed internet and, with it, the ability to engage more directly in the global digital economy.

A significant aspect of the ISIS project is the notion that it was an exploration of 'partnerships', rather than relying on the traditional 'fee-for-service' approach often used by 'non-games' industry Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to engage the services of interactive media companies, or more frequently these days, games development companies.

It is therefore a 'level playing field' or a 'meeting of minds' which must be nurtured, where both parties bring high degrees of expertise in their own right to the proverbial table and, through an on-going process, work together to create something unique. The ability to create a digitally-based user experience which is inherently engaging, intuitive and compelling presents a very strong case for would-be partners to sit up and listen. More often than not they do not possess these skills internally.

The benefit an interactive media team might have to a 'non-games' SME may have nothing to do with the design of an engaging user interface. It is the technical smarts and a possible better understanding of digital technology engagement which might prove the real key to helping these organisations unlock the potential of engaging with the digital economy.

The key thing to understand is that ISIS is not about 'I pay you, you do this', it is about 'I have these skills and areas of knowledge, let us partner and explore how we can work together to help both our businesses benefit'.

Table of Contents

Part One

Overview of ISIS	1
<i>Part One, Chapter 2 – How do I use this document?</i>	5
<i>Part One, Chapter 3 – Business Transformation Capabilities of Interactive Media</i>	7
<i>Part One, Chapter 4 – Is your business ready?</i>	12
<i>Special section – Business Mentorship</i>	20

Part Two

The ISIS Integration Framework	23
<i>Part Two, Chapter 1 – Initial Meetings</i>	25
<i>Part Two, Chapter 2 – Company Familiarisation</i>	29
<i>Part Two, Chapter 3 – Draft Relationship Agreements</i>	32
<i>Part Two, Chapter 4 – Project Identification</i>	35
<i>Part Two, Chapter 5 – Planning and Contracting</i>	42
<i>Part Two, Chapter 6 – Green Light/Production</i>	44
<i>Part Two, Chapter 7 – Recollection/Reflection</i>	45
<i>Case Study – ISIS VIC Pilot Integration (ATC/Media Saints)</i>	46
<i>Case Study – ISIS NSW Pilot Integration (SiMERR-UNE/Toggle Media)</i>	47
<i>Case Study – ISIS QLD Pilot Integration (GBI & Zone4)</i>	48

Part One, Chapter 1

Overview of ISIS

What is ISIS?

The Interactive Skills Integration Scheme (ISIS) was an industry development project researching, modelling and showcasing strategies for integrating interactive media expertise across ‘non-games’ industry sectors. The program recognises the transformative effect games design mechanics and interactive media capabilities will increasingly have on all aspects of our lives. Added to this, the roll-out of the National Broadband Network will see more individuals and businesses across Australia obtain high speed internet and, with it, the ability to engage more directly in the global digital economy.

Amid an ever rising level of engagement with online products and services by an increasingly tech savvy international populace, consumers’ demand for engaging, intuitive and compelling user experience will only continue to heighten. To support this binary migration, sophisticated end-user interface design in tandem with robust and intelligent backend systems is required to assist Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in every industry sector looking to expand their offerings and take advantage of new markets and commercial opportunities.

ISIS identified that key enablers in the Australian digital economy are those that have been working within a high tech environment for many years, possess an acute understanding of digitally-facilitated end-user engagement and represent a sector of the economy which currently lacks sufficient employment opportunities. ISIS was therefore created with the view of exploring opportunities for highly-skilled games designers and interactive media practitioners to consider re-deploying their talents into ‘non-games’ industry sectors and

*He who makes
superannuation
sexy, wins.*

ISIS is about the bringing together of expertise from different industry sectors to explore new opportunities.

in doing so, helping SMEs to better situate their organisations in the context of a global digital economy.

ISIS is about establishing innovation through co-creation. It is not a traditional ‘fee-for-service’ business model. It is about facilitating a ‘meeting of the minds’ and the bringing together of expertise from different industry sectors on a level playing field to explore new opportunities, business models and strengthened commercial competitiveness.

What has been achieved?

ISIS established a series of Pilot Integrations where appropriately suited games design/interactive media teams were partnered with SMEs looking to transform their operations by engaging with digital technologies. Working with PhD researchers from Australia’s leading Creative Industries institutes, the ISIS Team undertook a detailed assessment of Business Transformation and Design Thinking frameworks from around the world. Working with these findings in the context of ISIS, the ISIS Toolkit was created which was to form the underlying structure of how the Pilot Integrations were undertaken.

To facilitate a partnership between interactive media teams and ‘non-games’ SMEs, ISIS elected to allocate specially chosen business mentors. Each ISIS Business Mentor possessed strong, working knowledge of digital technology capabilities (including backgrounds in games design, telecommunications and technology start-up incubation) as well as business development skills and management expertise. ISIS Business Mentor guidelines were created to ensure consistency of approach within each Pilot Integration and define clear expectations for all stakeholders.

The ISIS project responded proactively to industry and government concerns that educational courses were not

adequately equipping graduates for future employment opportunities and industry needs. Accordingly, ISIS undertook a comprehensive national curriculum review, to develop and research approaches to promote: improved career outcomes for graduates; better equipped graduates to meet the needs of industry; and take-up of interactive media services by firms in other sectors. The report containing observations and recommendations to policy advisors as well as training and education providers is available to interested parties through any of the ISIS Team Members listed at the beginning of this document.

ISIS identified and selected participating companies through an EOI process and then matching the skills and needs of the pilot and IM businesses. The project has demonstrated that this brokerage of ISIS pilot partnerships was a key element in their success.

One Pilot Integration was created in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. Over a 6 month period, each partnership progressed through a series of steps to help them initially share information effectively between the teams, moving on to identify a specific area of business to explore technological innovation, and create a prototype and/or proof of concept. Of the three partnerships brought together through ISIS, two have formed Joint Ventures and all three have plans in place to take their new product/service to market.

Commercially-oriented technological innovation has been created through the ISIS project. **This document has been developed to help other Australian companies learn from what we have discovered and to encourage further innovation creation and increased international competitiveness.**

Case studies for each ISIS Pilot Integration can be found on pages 47-49.

Commercially-oriented technological innovation has been created through the ISIS project.

This program has allowed us to explore interactive media solutions to enhance what we had already developed through the implementation of the QuickSmart program in Australian schools over the last eleven years. Without ISIS we would have taken considerably longer to develop the connections and to benefit from the expertise of IT professionals who are currently taking our ideas and bringing them to life on-line. ISIS has brought together the project management expertise, mentoring opportunities and IT knowledge that we needed to progress our project. After this, there are no limits!

Associate Professor Lorraine Graham

Co-developer of QuickSmart

SiMERR, School of Education, University of New England

Part One, Chapter 2

How do I use this document?

If you're a games or interactive media development company interested in exploring new ways to use your skills this document might be of some help. The ISIS Integration Framework will help you:

- 1 Consider the skills you've got and how these skills might provide valuable assistance to those companies who perhaps know little of digital technologies or how to effectively engage with their customers.**
- 2 Consider industry-sectors outside that of 'games'. These might include agriculture, health, education, natural resources, business services – you name it, there's plenty.**
- 3 Consider partnering with a small business within that industry sector, bringing your respective skills and knowledge together to explore business models and technological solutions that may not yet have been considered anywhere in the world.**
- 4 Consider the extraordinary professional development process this would deliver to yourself, your staff and your partner.**

The ISIS Integration Framework provides an overview of what we have discovered through the ISIS project and presents some guidelines about possible steps you might consider to help you along your own innovation creation journey. Every company is, of course, very different to the next and in that light, not all of the material contained herein may resonate with your own situation. Use elements as you will and let them challenge your mode of thinking and encourage you to ask questions of yourself.

Challenge your mode of thinking and encourage you to ask questions of yourself.

*Sharpen your skills
in commercially-
oriented
technological
innovation now and
who knows where
the future lies.*

The opportunities for commercially-oriented technological innovation are immense. Australia will soon have one of the highest speed internet connections of any OECD nation on the planet. **Sharpen your skills in this area now and who knows where the future lies.**

Part One, Chapter 3

Business Transformation Capabilities of Interactive Media

What is meant by Business Transformation?

Business transformation is fundamental change to the way a business operates, whether that be moving into a new market, operating in a new way or implementing a new process. Business transformation aims to position a company in an enhanced competitive position via product diversification and/ or technology improvements to target new market opportunities. Business transformation is achieved by aligning the areas of resources, process and technology to undertake a change of strategic direction to operate in a new environment and, importantly, to achieve a significant bottom-line impact.

Business transformation should be a continuous process because strategy and vision will always need adapting and refining to changing key macro issues such as global economic and technology developments. Business agility, or the ability to achieve business transformation, is therefore essential to navigate towards ongoing business success.

With the rapid rate of technological change and ‘disruptive’ businesses opportunities, the relationships between business and ‘client’ are shifting to be closer, more connected and authentic and companies are having to adapt otherwise risk being left behind. Games and interactive media skills present valuable capabilities to assist companies make the transformation.

The ability to achieve business transformation, is therefore essential to navigate towards ongoing business success.

“By 2014, more than 70 percent of Global 2000 organizations will have at least one ‘gamified’ application”

Gartner Inc.

Under the ISIS Project, Business Transformation has been successfully achieved through the ‘integration’ of interactive media capabilities into the ‘non-games’ businesses within Education, Manufacturing and Mining sectors. The principles which have been developed for ISIS, however, can be applied to any industry sector looking to engage with the digital economy.

Why would my company explore this?

Given the advent of higher broadband speeds available to Australians through the roll-out of the National Broadband Network (NBN), customer interactivity is increasingly underpinning the way businesses, institutions and public-service sectors deliver their products and services. The convergence of content and media platforms, provides a unique opportunity for games and interactive media developers to access new market opportunities by targeting ‘non-games’ industry sector clients and tap into growing emerging markets.

According to Technology Industry Analysts, Gartner Inc., by 2014, more than 70 percent of Global 2000 organizations will have at least one ‘gamified’ application and that while the current success of gamification is largely driven by novelty and hype, gamification is positioned to become a highly significant business driver over the next five years. While the ISIS Project has not focused on gamification pilots, this research does provide an immediate understanding of the scale of the opportunity for games design mechanics and/or interactive media capabilities being applied in ‘non-games’ industry sectors.

What does it mean in practice?

It requires interactive media teams to understand their core business value proposition in a way that can be packaged differently to meet new market opportunities and business needs. A useful tool to help you understand your value proposition and business model and the business model of your partner company is the Business Model Canvas developed

by Alexander Osterwalder and Professor Yves Pigneur (see www.businessmodelgeneration.com/canvas).

Business diversification, if tackled effectively, can enhance core brand value and contribute to new revenue streams across broader markets. Taking the first steps can be a daunting prospect but building partnerships, relationships and market knowledge will help you re-package your interactive skills and expertise to meet new customer needs while expanding the opportunities for your company.

What do your skills offer business transformation?

Taking the first steps into this greenfield market requires first developing business and, market insights. This will enable you to present empathy for the client's business mission, niche and customers. When you have developed this it enables you to position as a business partner rather than simply a fee for service contractor.

What are the core games development and interactive media skills that are of high value in the non entertainment business setting? Production and project management, programming, data visualisation, game mechanics, digital design, user experience and customer engagement.

Your company can partner with client companies to assist them to:

- Create new digital capabilities.
- User experience.
- Break into new markets.
- Increase sales.
- Diversify, broaden and engage customer base.
- Create new products and services.
- Collaborate in research and development projects.
- Improve internal project and production processes.

Business diversification, if tackled effectively, can enhance core brand value and contribute to new revenue streams across broader markets.

New technology can really become an external shock which forces us to step up and transform, or risk being left behind in the market place.

Whilst your target is to be positioned as partner at the business strategy level it is most likely that your initial engagement will come through either the marketing or IT divisions. They will be seeking your assistance to either a) reach more customers or b) to instigate new technology capacity. They may not immediately be seeking to engage you as a partner, in which case you can use the project as a 'partnership prototyping' exercise in which you will lead them through an 'Interactive Media' process that demonstrates real value for the business beyond just the brief. It is always useful if you can also garner a senior executive(s) as a champion for project and more broadly for interactive transformation. You may need to invest in this persons' understanding of interactive thinking and practices, showing them examples of interactive transformation, educating them on how games mechanics and qualities or data visualisation can be used to grow the business. However, when they are on board they will take your value proposition into the executive strategy level for you, effectively selling you in at the strategy partnership level.

Transforming yourself and your business as you transform others around you

Business transformation can happen in so many different ways. And as a company you're most probably doing this on a day to day basis, from improving your management, information or financial systems, to breaking into or diversifying into new markets which requires your company to invest in new systems and even modes of operation.

Sometimes these transformations happen incrementally in a planned manner. At other times they can be hoist upon us through a sudden spurt of growth as you win larger and more demanding contracts. At other times it may be through downsizing and losing large key account clients which force us to re-group, re-direct and re-shape the company's strategic business priorities. Or as is increasingly happening, new technology can really become an external shock which forces us to step up and transform, or risk being left behind in the market place.

But company's themselves are often transformed by those they work closely or collaborate with.

Think about those companies you have worked closely with. They may have introduced you to new ways of thinking, involved you in projects that challenged you and even resulted in your company making an investment in new skills, systems or equipment or they may have helped you get into new markets by simply being involved in a project you were collectively working on. Not surprisingly the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) based in Paris has concluded that that innovation happens through networks of companies and, it most likely that you rely on the capacities of those companies you work with; just as much as your own internal capacities and capabilities.

So your journey of transformation is just as much what you do inside your company as it is with those you do business.

Scenario:

Imagine you're small animation company. And you've now developed a strategic partnership with a software engineering company specialising in animation. Now imagine developing a project together to find new solutions for your customer, whether in 3D design or an advanced data visualisation and stimulation project. And because you are breaking new ground together, you may even find yourself applying for research funding, which then connects you to the university your customer is collaborating with.

Clearly, this is not only profitable, it is transformational. The end result is that this animation company can expand the services it offers in the market place and its key account customers. It also means greater control of enabling inputs, like software programming and engineering that are normally fee-for-service – rather than, as in this case – a profitable collaboration that can lead to bidding for larger and more technically challenging and, ultimately profitable projects – with new customers.

Your journey of transformation is just as much what you do inside your company as it is with those you do business.

Part One, Chapter 4

Is your business ready?

What skills are required?

Entering into a partnership arrangement with another company is a significant step. It is essential that an audit of internal skills is undertaken and that you are clear about what it is you can offer another company and how these skills can help them solve problems that they may not be able to themselves. By looking at your internal capabilities, perhaps developed through internal projects or product development activities (or even through some initial external projects), you may then be able to identify those skills that are going to be compelling and attractive to third parties.

It is your role to present a compelling value proposition which demonstrates how interactive media capabilities can help take their company forward into the digital economy.

It is typical that a company which you might choose to approach for a possible partnership may not know what they want, or even what is possible. It is your role to present a compelling value proposition which demonstrates how interactive media capabilities can help them take their company forward into the digital economy and how digital technologies can be successfully applied to their operations.

Some of the core skills your company should have and/or develop to engage in strategic interactive business partnership include:

Core IT skills. As an interactive media company, it is anticipated you will possess strong technical skills and the ability to create media that is readily consumed by its intended target audience and supported by solid backend coding skills. The skill to deliver a professional user experience (not simply a technical solution) is another key to project success. No matter how great the technology if the user is not able to get

value from their interaction they will not continue to pay for the service or recommend it to others.

Communication skills. You need to be able to sell yourself in as a company with whom your target company can see benefit in partnering with. This will be a true test of your communication skills, being able to clearly articulate the skills your company possess and why these skills would help your partner company. A common language between the partners is essential to develop from early on.

Listening skills. A key aspect of any relationship is the ability to listen to your partners needs and act accordingly. As you begin to forge a new partnership it is important to understand and capture your partners' requirements, to listen to needs and work together to identify a solution based on realistic expectations. Be mindful that to move too far from your partner's existing core business (and customer base) with a first release of a new product may present significant challenges.

Creativity/Innovation. The ability to arrive at unique solutions to a problem is a clear benefit your company should offer to a potential partner. The ability to work collaboratively with your partners, encourage a diverse range of opinions and ideas and work with these to deliver a creative and innovative solution is a challenging, but ultimately very rewarding process.

Business 101. In addition to the above list of skills, your business would possess the basic business capabilities to deliver complex projects. These might include aspects such as contacts/agreements (see p. 32), production and finance. Scope, document and agree deliverables early on and remember, there are always things you'll find that you're not an expert on – so don't be afraid to seek advice as soon something arises that you don't understand.

The ability to arrive at unique solutions to a problem is a clear benefit your company should offer to a potential partner.

The model of getting something out into the market as soon as possible and gathering feedback has been proven to work.

“Creativity is thinking new things. Innovation is doing new things.”

Ted Levitt, 1963

Broad vision. Thinking and planning long term is exceptionally difficult at the best of times but working in a ‘lean’ model it is critical when developing solutions that have never been tried before. The model of getting something out into the market as soon as possible and gathering feedback and then continuing to evolve the product has been proven to work.

Remember that if a Business Mentor is engaged with the project, some of the skills above can be supplemented with the Business Mentor’s knowledge and expertise.

Finding the right partner

Seeking to partner is a fundamental shift in approach from fee-for-service. You are essentially pitching co-creation, co-investment to the client rather than pitching for a brief. This puts the emphasis on your company to have done your homework and developed some sound innovation proposals, or a presentation which outlines the potential that could be achieved by combining skill sets and markets.

All businesses need to innovate or they simply won’t survive. Fact. The key for any new innovation to flourish in any organisation is about the people. Identify if the partners or clients you are targeting have the capability and capacity to not just think through new ideas, but the culture to implement new ideas. The management team have to ‘own’ your new business idea or solution as an integral part of their forward strategy, otherwise it is not going to happen. A culture of open innovation where the capacity to augment internal improvements through external technologies or processes is the type of capability you are looking for in a prospective partner. Building on these identified skills and capabilities, the business can then go out to the market – following a customer discovery process, to identify possible partners that have problems that the business can solve.

Basic requirements. The right partner for this type of project is an established business with a real understanding of their customers' needs. "New media" has the ability to both support and enhance existing business models by offering these existing clients extended services. The project partner also needs to be flexible and that they do not have the answer to exactly what "new media" can offer. It's an evolution as there is so much opportunity all of which cannot be captured in the first version of the 'project'.

Research. It is suggested that careful research is undertaken initially to help quantify the qualities and capabilities of the target partner. Have they been in the media? Do they display the capacity for innovation? What professional organisations can be reviewed? Are they a pro-active organisation in their industry? If so, they may be more likely to respond to a vision of collaborative co-creation.

Play to your strengths. Consider your organisation's internal knowledge and how it relates to other industry sectors. Your company might possess some incidental knowledge of a particular industry sector which can be leveraged to help narrow the initial target group. For instance, maybe your Account Director had a previous life managing an automotive parts manufacturing company or as the manager of a retail outlet. Conduct an audit of industry knowledge amongst your staff. You might be surprised what you uncover.

Low hanging fruit or the more aspiring? While on the surface possibly not a huge motivational notion, it is recommended to consider which companies within your broader network might be an 'easier' win than others. Once you have made one partnership, your learnings and expertise will strengthen dramatically. Targeting the right business partner will be a skill that will build up over time – it is critical that each engagement is viewed as a learning process so skills and competencies in

Conduct an audit of industry knowledge amongst your staff. You might be surprised what you uncover.

Once you have made one partnership, your learnings and expertise will strengthen dramatically. The selling of the skills of your interactive media business will develop over time.

the customer validation process are progressively developed. The selling of the skills of your interactive media business will develop over time. Also consider which companies in that industry sector might be hungrier than their competitors. Perhaps consider not the market leader, but the second or third in line – perhaps they have aspirations to be number one and more open to investigating new opportunities.

Do not over commit. Focus on selling the skills and competencies that you know are the most relevant to solving the problem identified in the prospective partner company. This will achieve a couple of things – it will ensure that you do not over promise (ie. commit to do things outside your core skill set) and will also provide validation that the customer they think they are targeting is a real customer with problems they can solve.

Prepare well. Once you have identified one or a short-list of target companies, prepare your approach well. Understand there's a chance your proposal may be met with initial trepidation. Have a strategy prepared to cater to this.

Deal with the owner. The ISIS project was targeted always at helping to strengthen the innovative capacities of SMEs. Engaging with the owner of the business was a key element of eligibility requirements of companies to be involved. If real business transformation/innovation creation is to occur, it will require the active participation of the ultimate decision maker in the prospective partner company. Besides, no-one will know more about the 'non-games' industry sector than the owner of a business in that space – their input and knowledge are crucial ingredients when exploring innovative solutions.

Acknowledge fiscal realities. SMEs are not especially known for their vast amounts of discretionary spending dollars. Acknowledge this and have a proposal in mind which addresses it. Awareness of this aspect of your

prospective partner will partly come from your research. Consider that if you are entering into a partnership relationship to both derive professional development and explore new environments together (including possibly creating co-owned IP), this may have an impact on how you structure your financial agreements. Remember, this is not a standard ‘fee-for-service’ model.

In the chart on page 19 we outline some of the most common reasons partnerships or collaborations succeed or fail. As you review the chart, spend a moment and think about those projects where you have collaborated with others, and the reasons why some of those projects have been outstanding successes, while others have languished or even failed financially.

Sometimes if the failure has been a significant one – it is etched in our company’s memory and, particularly, our own. It is one of the reasons many companies prefer to ‘go it alone’, and acquire other companies or buy in the capabilities they need to grow. Having control means the buck literally stops with you! You’re then certain you can deliver what has been asked of you and your company by your customers.

In targeting a potential business partner, make sure you have built a good understanding of their niche, products and team strengths so that you can reflect back how your skills and expertise can add value to building their positioning or market reach. It’s essential to understand your core business value proposition and orientate your pitch accordingly.

Make sure you focus on selling the benefits, the value to the client i.e. saving time, money, reach new customers etc. which places you in collaborative or support position rather than ‘selling’. Take the time to learn their ‘language’ so that you are speaking their business. Demonstrate how your Interactive Media solution is the most pressing to address their needs, that way you are not talking about a vague concept but you are sharing a valuable tool that it is going to enhance their business productivity.

Make sure you have built a good understanding of their niche, products and team strengths, so that you can reflect back on how your skills and expertise can add value.

To achieve a collaborative framework, you should have a series of work sessions rather than presentations to really cement the relationship and your understanding of their issues and needs.

In working with a potential new business partner or customer, it is important to really make sure that you establish a collaborative framework, build confidence and trust. Collaboration builds buy-in from potential customers, which is crucial to the ideation phase rather than the 'sales process'. One technique to achieve this is to have a series of work sessions rather than presentations, to really cement the relationship – and your understanding of their issues and needs. Make sure that you involve the decision-maker(s) in the process so that you feel you have their buy-in from the process and can respond to prospect budget constraints or other 'road blocks' along the way.

Define the key objectives so that you both agree and can keep work on track – and can assist in refocusing ideas or concepts. Build the collaboration up from these objectives into a workplan that you can both agree on roles, responsibilities and priorities.

Making Collaborations Work

Critical Success Factor	All members need to have a genuine commitment to the network’s strategic intent, based upon enlightened self-interest.
	Member companies must be prepared to commit time and resources to the network’s development.
	Outcomes beneficial to all network members are identified and achieved early on.
	Development process is well understood and planned.
	Development of strategic intent and choice.
	Agreement about the opportunity.
	Identifying and selecting compatible partners.
	Effective implementation of joint marketing plans.
Reasons for Failure	Lack of trust between members.
	No clear communication processes.
	Members’ self-interest placed above networks interest.
	Lack of planning, and/or use of an independent adviser.
	Lack of time and/or financial resources to commit to the project.
	Inability to see projected benefits and not prepared to wait for a return.
	Network dominated by one or two members alienating others.
	No clear decision making processes.
	Product has no market.
	Inadequate management capabilities.
	Risk becomes too high for some.
	Inadequate capabilities to meet demand.

Source: Rodin Genoff & Graeme Sheather, Engineering the Future, 2010

Special section

Business Mentorship

How can a Business Mentor help?

Within the ISIS project, a strong enabling factor was the involvement and contribution of appropriately skilled Business Mentors. The ISIS Business Mentors worked with our collaborative partners to provide independent expert business and technical advice throughout the Pilot Integration process. Given that the ISIS project was exploring technological innovation and new business models, Business Mentorship was regarded as a key instrument to facilitate and drive the success of our program and help our teams navigate largely unknown territory.

Generally, a Business Mentor will provide context and to help interpret issues as they arise. The best mentors are those who have the right mixture of empathy and credibility in the eyes of all parties and have the skills to develop trust and respect, and be able to deliver advice and guidance at the appropriate times.

Some key roles a Business Mentor might play include:

- Confidentiality** Someone with whom you feel safe to ask the ‘dumb’ questions. (Though of course, there really are no dumb questions).
- Expertise** Reflecting the business-led, technology-driven design of ISIS, our Business Mentors possessed a high level of technological and business expertise. This has proven essential for the positive outcomes of our Pilot Integrations.
- Perspective** At the coal face, all of us can get distracted by the minutiae. It is helpful to be encouraged periodically to step back, review the broader vision and possibly identify unforeseen issues.
- Accountability** In a business transformation context, making preliminary strategies can be the easy part. It is beneficial to have someone keeping an independent eye on deliverables being successfully met and real transformation being achieved.
- Motivation** Being involved in a process which is inherently challenging and demanding can bring with it times of frustration and doubt. Having an involved party outside of the day to day operations to motivate and encourage you can be a strong addition to your team.

The Mentor will patiently take you through a structured process with those companies you are planning to collaborate with to ensure that you all share the same values, are committed to the process, and have the trust in each other to achieve your project goals.

Key factors for engaging a Business Mentor

There is much available evidence to suggest that engaging a Business Mentor brings with it a great deal of benefit for those involved (including the Business Mentor themselves). Having access to the types of assistance as suggested on the previous page presents obvious advantages – particularly when a company is partnering with another to explore opportunities for collaborative co-creation and most likely a process that neither party has attempted before.

If it is decided to attempt to engage a Business Mentor to assist with your business venture, there are few pointers which should be kept in mind.

Trust/Respect

Strong and effective mentor relationships evolve over time and it is important to facilitate this in an environment of trust and respect.

Referral/Reputation

It is easy for someone to list themselves online as a Business Mentor. Their credibility may or may not be so clear. It is therefore suggested that possible Business Mentors are instead identified through referrals and industry reputation.

Guidelines/MOUs

When engaging a Business Mentor, it is important to ensure expectation management is undertaken early on. With ISIS, reasonably detailed Mentor Guidelines were developed and this provided the ground work for our Mentors to engage with the partnership. It is recommended that an MOU between the parties is agreed on the outset so all stakeholders are 100% clear on the 'rules of engagement'.

Collaborative Agreement

In a process as with ISIS, it is essential that the Business Mentor is fully supported by both businesses entering into the venture. A collaborative agreement must be made on the Business Mentor selected.

Allocate the time

Probably the most significant commitment is time. You need to be able to make the time to meet with your mentor. You will also need time to think and reflect on the comments and input your mentor offers to you. Generally, you should think in terms of setting aside at least 2-3 hours per month for mentoring sessions.

Networks

In order to locate and approach a Business Mentor, it is recommended to use existing available networks. For example, Enterprise Connect has Business Advisors across the country. Commercialisation Australia offers a service for 'Volunteer Business Mentors' who are positioned to assist business at all stages of their development. Don't forget to consider your own business and social networks.

Australian Turntable Company's quest to have our brand recognised as an innovative, creative, global, and willing adopter of new technologies in the manufacturing world, is excitingly complimented in the form of the interactive online extranet program developed in conjunction with the brilliant Media Saints and under the direction of the Vic Government's ISIS team. Congratulations to everyone involved.

Paul Chapman
Executive Chairman
Australian Turntable Company

Part Two

The ISIS Integration Framework

Interactive media companies that have been involved with ISIS have discovered new ways of applying their creative and technological talents and companies from ‘non-games’ industry sectors have realised completely new business models – both by engaging with the other in collaborative co-creation. Following the guides listed previously in this document, you may have found one or more prospective partners. Feel free to use the following proven tips to help you create a successful innovation partnership.

Initial Meetings	First impressions last, so it is important to be well prepared. Again, the more research you can do before these initial meetings the more effective the outcome will be.	p. 25
Company Familiarisation	It is important for the partner organisations to familiarise themselves with each others’ business operations and processes.	p. 29
Draft Relationship Agreements	It is essential to document agreements between the partners so that all commitments, contributions, financials and legal matters are 100% clear from the outset.	p. 32
Project Identification	The opportunities that the combination of your expertise could create are immense. Work together closely to determine the most appropriate unification of your combined skill sets.	p. 35
Planning/Contracting	Contracts, Milestones, Deliverables, Reporting Mechanisms, Conflict Resolution, Legal Agreements, Financial Agreements, Scope.	p. 42
Green Light/ Production	Now it is time to keep the project on time, on budget and to quality. This is partnership, work strongly together and break new ground.	p. 44
Recollection/ Reflection	Take the time now, to reflect back on your time since you first approached your new partner. Take these learnings with you into your next venture.	p. 45

GBI's objectives of de-risking mining projects as well as ensuring achievable targets are set and efficiencies are achieved, have been reinforced through the innovative merging of our unique (and extremely large) data resource and Zone 4's interactive media capabilities. ISIS linked the right people in the right companies with the right business model to produce an outstanding result.

Graham Lumley

Chief Executive Officer
GBI Mining Intelligence

Part Two, Chapter 1

Initial Meetings

Once one or more possible business partners have been identified then begins the 'getting to know you' phase. Obviously if there is to be any chance of a strong relationship developing (and a successful business relationship forming) there will need to be a certain chemistry between the partner companies and good fit of skills, aspirations and possibly most importantly, values.

Just like in Scouts, the most important thing is to be prepared. First impressions last and your company may have already invested time and energy in identifying which companies could prove to be business partners. It is important to back-up your hard work to date with some extra effort to ensure your initial meetings with these companies are as effective as possible. The amount of 'initial meetings' you undertake will vary and is completely up to whatever you feel works best. This stage of the project will essentially allow you to obtain further information about your prospective partner(s) and to gauge for yourself whether you could realistically enter into a long-term relationship with them. This may take one meeting, two or three. The biggest question you need to answer through this stage is: does this company's values complement our own?

Be ready to articulate the skills your company are 'bringing to the table'. In the section above, we suggest you look strongly at your own business and be clear about what key skills you can offer another company. As well as being ready to articulate these, you should also consider (and check!) what skills the other company can offer. It is important these skills sets complement each other effectively.

The biggest question you need to answer through this stage is: does this company's values complement our own?

It is essential that the prospective partnership has the clear and committed involvement of the owner/boss/final decision maker.

Know as much as you can about the company. An enormous advantage you have these days is the access to so much information through the internet. Siphon this well and your clarity and forethought will be evident in these meetings. Use other information channels you have as well such as industry colleagues, friends and family. Some things you may care to investigate:

Internal structure and organisational reporting lines.

Admittedly a challenge, but knowing about who you might be talking to in the meetings will help. Ideally, get in front of the boss. You are not proposing a standard 'fee-for-service' arrangement; you are proposing a business partnership which will call for somewhat unusual negotiations. Get the boss (or final decision maker) involved as early as possible. Recommendation: It is essential that this prospective partnership has the clear and committed involvement of the owner/boss/final decision maker.

Company growth and financial capacity. Depending on the size of the company (and their success in attracting media to date) there may be some very helpful insights you can capture through various research channels. How has the company been performing over the past couple of years? Do they possess a good credit rating? Is there any evidence available to illustrate staff numbers? All this information will help as you make decisions concerning which companies you should approach.

Other business partnerships they may have. It would be very helpful if it were possible to identify if the prospective company has entered into similar business partnership arrangements in the past. If so, they might be willing into entering into discussions about a new partnership venture. Remember, there is an equal chance that they may have bad experiences with previous partnerships, so note this and respond accordingly.

Have a clear set of questions you want to ask. Know what you know and know what you don't. These meetings are just as much about you gathering information about the prospective partner as it is about them learning about you and your skills. You may have a number of preconceptions about the prospective partner businesses you are approaching. Use these as the basis of your questions when you meet and be prepared for your assumptions to be challenged.

Set an agenda and keep to it. There is a lot to consider which would be helpful to discuss at these initial meetings. Have a think about what works best for you. Agenda items may include: expectations, goals, timeframes, outcomes, potential costs/budgets, in-kind contributions, commitment from the company in the development, who decides what, will a mentor be involved, what contracts will be in place, how long the team anticipates they will spend on bluesky, how is this compensated to the interactive media team, etc. Make a draft agenda before the meeting and ask the prospective company to respond with any suggestions.

Be clear with how you see a partnership forming. Be prepared to take the lead in these meetings. You are approaching the prospective company with a partnership proposition. In this context, it would almost be expected that you would present a possible process for how such a partnership may form. You might care to use this document (and the steps detailed within it) to help you formulate the best approach for your situation. Be ready to open this up for discussion and investigate methods which suit both companies. Nothing concrete needs to be determined at this early stage, but it is beneficial to start getting the topic into stakeholder's heads.

Have suggestions for financial arrangements. Business partnerships are about making money. Your companies will only partner if it is genuinely felt on both sides that it will result in a positive bottom line. Therefore discussions about potential financial arrangements should certainly be broached at these initial meetings. Still early days,

Business partnerships are about making money.

*Take your time
to arrive at a final
decision about who
to partner with.*

so again, nothing needs to be set in stone, but better to start the ball rolling on this topic and investigate what is best for all parties. Recommendation: Keep the financial agreements as simple and clear. Remember to consider external sources of financial assistance. Examples may be NSW Trade and Investment Collaborative Solutions grants or the Commonwealth's Commercialisation Australia grants. Is there a possibility for a Joint Venture to come out of this? Would Angel Investment or Venture Capital benefit you?

Discuss the anticipated project contribution from both teams. Having discussed the various skill sets each team is bringing to the partnership, the possible way the partnership will form and some examples of financial arrangements, it is advised that key staff should be nominated from each team and their anticipated contribution forecasted. Once again, the commitment of key decisions makers from both companies is vitally important. You could sketch out a staged structure for the partnership process and map across each step the anticipated key skills inputs, thereby loosely defining who may need to contribute and when. Leading on from the financial agreement discussion, you may care to consider how each team could contribute in-kind support to the project and possibly reduced hourly rates since you are investing in the future together.

Values. As mentioned earlier, values are an extremely important aspect of a partnership. Where there are aligning values there can be very real benefits in collaboration. If the values are not aligned it is far better to identify this early on and act accordingly. Values of every company differ. ISIS has worked on honesty, respect, trust, adaptability, passion, openness and commitment – and these values have served our partners very well. Use these meetings to run through some or everything above, but all the while weighing up your gut feel for whether you think the people you meet with are truly complementary to your own core values. ISIS took a long time to arrive at final decisions about who to bring together. So too should you.

Part Two, Chapter 2

Company Familiarisation

*Now that you have identified potential partner businesses, undertaken some initial meetings and have concluded that you are prepared to further explore the opportunity of partnering together, the project moves into its next exciting stage: **company familiarisation**. This next step in the process will see the partner businesses really start to open up and share information and exchange knowledge between the project teams. This is where the teams begin to see how each other really ticks. There are a number of ways the new partners could go about achieving an insight into each others' companies. As an example, we provide the steps we took with ISIS as a possible guide. Each step explained below describes separate sessions.*

Initial Business Mentor meetings. If you have chosen to involve a Business Mentor with your business partnership, it is advisable for representatives from each business partner to initially meet with the Business Mentor in order to have a frank and open discussion about the prospective partnership, the company's aspirations, KPIs, assumptions, hesitations, questions, etc. The aim of these meetings is to help the Mentor ascertain information about each company, including: vision (blue sky methodologies); aims and aspirations; company and corporate values; industry trends; other companies it is currently working closely with or collaborating/JV with; and existing and future business opportunities. The more open these discussions, the more knowledgeable the Business Mentor will be and better placed to help the partnership find a common vision.

Company familiarisation is where the teams begin to see how each other really ticks.

SWOT:
*Strengths,
Weaknesses,
Opportunities
and Threats.*

PESTLE:
*Political,
Economic,
Sociological,
Technological,
Legal,
Environmental*

Introductory presentation by business partner teams. You've determined who you want to partner with and now it is time to provide further details about your company. With ISIS we undertook a half day workshop which saw each of our partner teams present a detailed account of their company, their background, their aspirations, the goals they anticipated achieving through a business partnership as well as core information about their product/service, their clientele, their competition, their company organisational structure, etc. Positive and negative experiences partnering with other companies was also discussed. The purpose of this workshop was to really 'lift the lid' on each company so the respective partners could obtain a deeper understanding of how their new partner operated. This is also very much a trust building exercise as well as an opportunity for possible areas for mutual collaboration to come to light. Under the ISIS project, this workshop was facilitated by the Business Mentor.

Market Analysis. There are several ways Market Analysis can be undertaken. SWOT and PESTLE analysis are two extremely well known and beneficial processes which are strongly recommended for the partnership teams to undertake collaboratively. Having a trusted outsider's fresh perspective can possibly help identify hitherto unseen commercial opportunities, but remember, too, this process may well prove confronting for the company being 'analysed', so tread with caution. Perhaps start off with undertaking a Market Analysis of the 'non-interactive media' team, followed by the interactive media team. This is a useful step for a number of reasons – most particularly it allows the parties to start working together and sharing information – contributing to the relationship building process. The expected size of the market and the dynamics of the partner's expected customer base can influence the technology that may be used by the Interactive Media business to implement the project. This needs to be identified early-on.

Workplace visits. An enormously beneficial method employed by the ISIS project was for key representatives of each partner company to undertake an extended visit at the new partner's workplace. Again, this can take many forms and the most suitable approach for your partnership will probably make itself apparent. While a good mixture of key personnel across the workplaces is recommended, the most impactful is ensuring that the key business-focussed visionary from the interactive media team is granted some effective insight into the other partner's day to day operations. You may consider 'ghosting' the CEO, MD or GM for a day.

Ensure that the key visionary from the interactive media team is granted some effective insight into the other partner's day to day operations.

Ensure that all involved parties are 100% clear on the pertinent variables.

Part Two, Chapter 3

Draft Relationship Agreements

Possibly the single most important aspect of establishing a business partnership is ensuring that all involved parties are 100% clear on the pertinent variables. These include a broad number of factors including (but not limited to) the ones outlined below. It is good to note, however, that a comprehensive partnership is unlikely to be established on the first engagement (or contract), unless the business is specifically looking for a Joint Venture partner. It is likely that you will build to this sort of relationship and agreement once both companies have tested the relationship and developed a level of trust.

When establishing a partnership, an appropriate form of agreement is required, which will be different to a usual sub-contract. Key elements of such a partnership agreement may include:

MOU. The establishment of the partnership intent – many non-legally binding partnerships utilise a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to set out what the aims and outcomes of the partnership are. Similarly within a legally binding partnership agreement the intent, aims and outcomes of the partnership should be documented. These may provide a critical point to return to in evaluating the success of the partnership. It may also be relevant at this point to document the different skills and capabilities the partners are bringing to the relationship.

Code of Conduct. It is advisable to work collaboratively on this document to spell out quasi-formally how your companies will work together during the partnership. A Code of Conduct describes ‘principles, values,

standards, or rules of behaviour that guide the decisions, procedures and systems of an organisation in a way that (a) contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders, and (b) respects the rights of all constituents affected by its operations'. (Source: *International Federation of Accountants, 2007 International Good Practice Guidance*).

Partner contributions. Some level of agreement should be made with respect to the management and resourcing of the partnership by both companies – it should identify the personnel and processes that will be put in place to manage and support the partnership. A key partnership manager on both sides will be required and regular partner meetings, briefings and agreed productivity review milestones should be established.

Intellectual Property agreement. In a partnership model it is envisaged that both partners will share in the development and exploitation of benefits of co-created Intellectual Property (IP). Within the ISIS project, specialist legal services were drawn upon to assist the companies to set up appropriate IP agreements.

The Relationships Agreements you make will become the blueprint for how your partnership will work, so a high degree of care should be taken by all involved parties when developing them. It is recommended that external business and/or legal advice is obtained before your final agreements are signed. Conduct open, honest and truthful discussions with your prospective partner and try to arrive at common ground quickly. Ensure you are very clear with what the agreements mean for your company and that you are 100% happy with them before you sign. Depending on the position each of the partner companies are at, the list of Relationship Agreements can be long or short. At this relatively early stage of the partnership, it is advisable to not let the momentum slide in lieu of creating a mountain of paper work.

Conduct open, honest and truthful discussions with your prospective partner and try to arrive at common ground quickly.

At this stage, create draft agreements and distribute them between the teams for review and feedback.

Some other elements you may care to discuss and agree include:

- Agreed locations of work activity.
- Risk Management Analysis.
- Agreed costing structures/financing model.
- Possibility of Joint Venture.
- Agreed points of dispute resolution over milestone sign-off.
- Agreed change management.
- Agreed point of first payment for interactive media team (especially if concept is bluesky).
- Agreement on what defines a finished deliverable of Stage 1.
- Agreement on who takes over Stage 2 and when.
- Agreed involvement or not of interactive media team in the development/supply of assets for any marketing materials.
- Agreement on the ability or not of interactive media team to use project in their portfolio.
- Promotion of the partnership.

It is important to start thinking about these very seriously at this stage of the project, including possibly creating draft documentation which can be distributed between the teams for review and feedback. The next stage of the process (as Project Identification is clarified), will also make it clearer how the teams will possibly work together, which will in turn help to determine how the agreements should be made.

Part Two, Chapter 4

Project Identification

Your teams have come together from what could possibly be two very different professional cultures, backgrounds, experiences and knowledge sets. The opportunities that the combination of your expertise could create are immense. The challenge now is to work together to define where the partnership can most productively place their efforts. The Project Identification phase of the partnership is an extremely significant step and suitable time should be assigned by both parties to give the process appropriate justice. While time scales and staff availability will greatly vary, it is suggested that a single day collaborative workshop be devoted to each part of the Project Identification process. A weekend retreat for the partnership teams might be a good option. This process is ideally suited to the involvement of a Business Mentor if you choose to have one.

Part A: Imagineering

This is the first stage of the Project Identification process. Imagineering – the imagination engineering. This is where limits are forgotten. The sky is literally the limit. Both teams come together to explore a process of ‘*what if...?*’. Taking the ‘non-interactive media’ company as the focus, the partnership will work together to break apart the existing processes and activities undertaken by the company and then, having created a shortlist, focus on each one separately and imagineer how digital technologies could be applied to each to result in innovative business practices, improved efficiencies and improved profitability. Facilitated properly, this is blue-sky brainstorming at its best.

*Imagineering:
the sky is literally
the limit.*

Consider every aspect of the company. The list will be broader than you possibly imagine.

Disassemble the company. Work with your partners to break down the ‘non-interactive media’ company into discrete areas of operation. Consider every aspect of the company. What activities do the employees involve themselves with? This list will be broader than you possibly imagine.

Think externally:

- How is the advertising and marketing currently done?
- How are clients attracted/converted/retained?
- How are customer’s comments and/or feedback obtained/recorded/acted upon?
- What is the communication strategy?
- Who are their competitors?
- What are they doing well?
- What does their work place look like?

Think internally:

- What is the key market differentiator?
- What is the corporate vision/mission statement?
- What are the existing personnel roles?
- How does the staff communicate between each other?
- What are the recruitment strategies?
- How are company directions/aspirations/achievements communicated to the staff?
- What are the product / service design processes?
- How are suppliers involved?
- What is the manufacturing process like?
- How are logistics fulfilled?

Possibly get everyone to contribute their own ideas of different company aspects and add them to a white board or wall under specific headings (eg. clients, suppliers, internal, external, marketing). Then rationalise them and remove any that are repeated.

Explore all angles. Nothing is off the table at this point. If it impacts the company even slightly, there's a chance that a better way of doing it could be uncovered, leading to increased efficiency. Even if there is no immediate relevant technological application that springs to mind do not dismiss it now (that comes later). Explore everything, lift the couch and check there, too – who knows what you could uncover. Even though not all ideas will end up being explored through this particular exercise, the mere process itself of relooking at the company with a new perspective may well bring some interesting opportunities to light for the key staff and business owners.

First Sweep. Now you have an extended list of possible areas of the company to focus on for this imagineering exercise, you'll need to collectively work to whittle these down to a more manageable selection. What remains in and what is taken out will largely be dictated by your own partnership direction. Beware not to be too judgemental, it is often from the unlikeliest of areas that innovation can pounce. Considering how much time you have allocated to the Imagineering and Project Identification phase, work together to review the list and end up with between 10 and 20 possible areas for further exploration. This is where it may be a good idea to start taking into account foreseen technological application (ie. can interactive media assist with this area?)

Systematic exploration of technological possibilities. Now that you have collectively determined a short list of the company's operations to be examined, the team works

Explore everything, lift the couch and check there, too – who knows what you could uncover.

*Explore all possibilities.
Extinguish nothing.*

together to delve more deeply into each and consider the many and varied ways digital technologies could possibly be applied to result in organisational change – explore all possibilities, extinguish nothing. Depending on time frame available, try to devote 45 minutes to each area. Try to elicit equal contribution from each participant – innovative ideas can come from anywhere. Maybe set-up a timer. Once it goes off, compile the notes and have a 5-10 break, then immediately launch into the next area. You’ll review and compare all of these notes during the Project Definition phase (possibly the next day).

Assign a Creative Lead (but share the role!). It may be helpful to appoint a creative lead to facilitate this process. You need someone with passion and energy to get participants enthused and involved. This is most likely going to fall onto the ‘creative lead’ from the interactive media company, but you should also be ready to encourage others to jump-up and get involved. The higher you can raise the energy, the better.

Bounce off each other. Throughout this entire process do not *ever* say ‘no!’. Everything is allowed to be explored. This is within a trusting environment which is exploring possibilities for business transformation and innovation. No matter how seemingly banal, leave it in – look at Liquid Paper! Instead of using the word ‘no!’, use ‘yes, and ...’. This may seem trivial, but in order for everyone to feel motivated and empowered to venture new ideas to the discussion, it is important to create a positive and uplifting environment for this Imagineering to occur. Have fun with it. But remember, some members of your team may be the ‘quiet types’. So give them the opportunity to digest the ideas and contribute in their own way. You’d be surprised what that they come up with!

White Boards/Butchers' paper/A4 sheets/Post It Notes.

Record everything and write it down – on anything! Don't be afraid to emblazon the room with ideas stuck onto windows, walls, machines, people! The further out from your usual comfort zone you can get, the better. Really let your mind go and take your partners with you. This is a VIP invitation for you all to go nuts!

Now stew on it. At the end of the day, don't rush into analysing what has been achieved over the Imagineering process. It will have been a big day and (if done properly) your team will be mentally exhausted. Put all pens down and preferably enjoy a team dinner or social activity. This unfamiliar work-related activity will be a buzz for all involved. To allow the partnership to socialise after this experience will be a strong team building exercise. Stew on the day's proceeding. Tomorrow will be the day where you put back on your analytical hat.

Don't be afraid to emblazon the room with ideas stuck onto windows, walls, machines, people! This is a VIP invitation for you all to go nuts!

Part B: Project Definition

Stage 2 of the Project Identification process is a rationalisation of the Imagineering work undertaken previously. Now you've had some time to let the ideas swirl about in your subconscious, this is where you don your business-analysis hat and consider the commercial potential of each idea generated. Consider now, the real scope of what has been proposed. Your goal is to find something that is genuinely innovative and, importantly, achievable with the resources at hand.

Second Sweep. Having explored the blue-sky possibilities of the shortlisted business processes, the team should now revisit each and assess them against an agreed evaluation criteria. The criterion you use will vary based on the make-up of your partnerships, but could include such aspects as Achievability, Genuine Innovation, Perceived Market Interest etc. Try to create a further shortlist of 3 or 4 the stand-out commercial opportunities you have collectively envisaged.

Your goal is to determine a single project which your teams will work on for the foreseeable future.

Back to the books. Now you have a final shortlist at hand. Your goal by the end of the day is to determine a single project which your teams will work together on for the foreseeable future. It is obviously important that you choose the best option. This step involves revisiting each possible idea and reviewing it against a series of filters and exploring its possibility for technological innovation and commercial potential. Consider splitting into workshop teams which comprise of a broad spread of the collective expertise (ideally each workshop team should have tech, creative and business skills represented). Encourage each workshop team to work through the final ideas independently and then present their findings, recommendations and conclusions to the whole team. This will provide a very clear indication of which idea(s) are leading the pack by consensus. Roving expertise (independent of workshop teams – eg. Business Mentor or CEOs of each partner company) should sit progressively with each group to challenge, ask questions, provide rationalisation, etc.

Project Identification. By this time you should have identified the one or two projects ideas which have attracted the most popular appeal. (If a single idea has yet to be identified, on-going assessment and evaluation is necessary until consensus prevails). Once a final project idea has been collectively agreed, it is time to consider the broader implications of development and delivery. What stages will be required to realise this project? What are the skills sets required at each stage? Which side of the partnership possesses the required skill sets? Which elements require collaborative work? Which are more effectively associated with one company or the other? From this point you are leading up to making final planning and contracting between the teams, so work together to map out a draft production schedule, with allocated works tasks, responsibilities, reporting and financial milestones.

Optimum Outcome. In the context of this collaborative workshop, challenge the team to consider the optimum outcome this project idea might achieve. If everything succeeded beyond expectation, where could this project idea go? Try to distil a single bluesky aspiration and use this as a motto for the team to keep in the back of their minds throughout the project development.

Distil a single bluesky aspiration, write it on a post-it note and stick it on the wall in the boardroom or communal office space.

While these documents are extremely important, don't let them hamper the project's momentum.

Part Two, Chapter 5

Planning and Contracting

The nitty gritty. Teams are formed. Contributions sorted. Project idea agreed. Now it is necessary to get settled into the first phase of 'traditional' Business 101. Contracts, Milestones, Deliverables, Reporting Mechanisms, Conflict Resolution, Legal Agreements, Financial Agreements, Scope. All this and more needs to be agreed, documented and signed. Important to note, that while these documents are extremely important to get right (and to be fair and equitable), try not to let them drag on and hamper the project's momentum. As a partnership, your companies should work collaboratively and openly on these documents in order to reach agreement as soon as possible.

As existing companies coming together under this framework to form a partnership, it is considered that much of the know-how for this section should be reasonably well identified. As a few key guides, some of the findings from ISIS are included below:

Creating Development Plan. Be clear about what work is to be undertaken in order to achieve the agreed outcomes. Make sure the agreed expectations are consistent between the companies. Remember, success criteria are extremely subjective. Be sure you have a consistent vision. Set clear Key Performance Indicators. The most important thing to ensure that you have the same expectations.

Establishing Production Schedule. Identify a suitable and acceptable end point. Clearly scope what it is the partnership is working together to achieve in the first instance (it may well be expanded downtrack). Keep your deliverables attainable. Do not bite off more than

you can chew. It is vitally important that you achieve and deliver what you agree to. Avoid scope creep. Create a Production Schedule together than you feel comfortable with and stick to it.

Stakeholder Expertise Contribution. As mentioned previously, understand what the full complement of skills are between your partnership. Be sure to leverage these skills as necessary. Try to determine when and how these skills sets will be required and obtain agreements from both parties that they can commit to them. Remember, much stakeholder contribution must involve asking a lot of questions.

IP Agreements. Make them fair based on pre-existing work and anticipated and actual project contribution. Don't sign anything unless you're happy, but also beware not to let the lawyers bog this process down. Your lawyer will fight resolutely for your rights, and your partner's lawyer, theirs. Be firm with what you expect and what you are willing to negotiate on. If at all possible, it is beneficial to involve a neutral third party (such as a Business Mentor) to work with both lawyers to facilitate this process.

Payment Agreements. Always based on agreed milestones and associated deliverables for each stage of development. Reasonably detailed Activity Reports demonstrating how each agreed deliverable has been met (or what agreements were made for amendments) should be delivered at each Milestone as an attachment to the Invoice.

Draft Contracts prepared and distributed. Draft contracts should be distributed for review and comment by all parties. Any areas of divergence should be discussed and ironed-out as a matter of high priority.

Final Contracts Signed. Once full agreements have been met, contracts are signed and the production commences.

Be firm with what you expect and what you are willing to negotiate on.

Remain honest and open, trust in each other and work hard for a great outcome.

Part Two, Chapter 6

Green Light/Production

The second phase of ‘traditional’ Business 101 – delivery. You will have determined which agreements you consider necessary for this partnership. As a professional alliance, it is now vitally important that you deliver what you have promised. Everything is signed, the teams are ready to go. Each partner team has assigned a project lead and the project has been given the green light. Remain honest and open, trust in each other and work hard for a great outcome. Since this is a partnership, your companies need to work strongly together and break new ground.

The focus of the ISIS Project was not to monitor business process. It was about facilitating innovation. We leave the business implementation up to our partner teams. From this point on, while working on an innovative (and potentially challenging) project, the processes should be no different to how you’ve delivered other projects in the past. Now comes the challenge of keeping the project on time, on budget and to agreed quality.

Part Two, Chapter 7

Recollection/Reflection

The project is delivered. Take the time now, to reflect back on your time since you first approached your new partner. Do this internally as well as with your partner team. Identify how your business has changed – your values, goals, work practices and your perception of your place in the market space. Take these learnings with you into your next venture.

Acknowledge your change. It is important at this stage of the project to look back and really assess the process your company has gone through since you first embarked on this journey. It is one thing to experience it, but to subsequently reflect on what your company might have learned, what challenges you may have experienced etc is a key method of ensuring you are able to apply this knowledge as professional development.

Assess how this might shift your future prospects. Also compare where your strategic priorities were before your company undertook this process. There is a good chance they have widened or even been transformed altogether (this is certainly true of the ISIS Pilot Integrations we oversaw). How do you place yourself now in the marketplace? Having been involved in such a process, you are now very able to present your organisation as ‘innovation creators’ or ‘change agents’. In such a volatile economy, companies look for others to guide and navigate them through uncharted territory.

The first phase of your journey is now complete. Where you go from here is up to you ...

Take these learnings with you into your next venture.

Case Study

ISIS VIC Pilot Integration (ATC/Media Saints)

Export-award-winning, family-owned, regionally-based manufacturing company The Australian Turntable Company (ATC) designs, manufactures and installs so-called 'rotational movement solutions'. A principal aspect of their business at this stage is vehicle turntables which may be used domestically (such as in homes with limited driveway space on busy roads or in apartments to maximise the number of car-parking spaces) and industrially (ATC has created a train-carriage turntable in the Pilbara, and the largest revolving restaurant in the world, situated in Tehran). The company recognises its need to continually innovate in order to compete with its small number of competitors internationally. ATC regarded ISIS as an opportunity to engage with experts from Interactive Media to explore new business models.



Melbourne-based Media Saints, a highly regarded digital production company, was selected as the Interactive Media Team for the Victorian ISIS Pilot Integration. Their professional experience spans across games development, e-learning, film and television, online broadcasting, web design and interactive media. Since being introduced in late 2011, the partnership has formed particularly well under the guidance and support of the ISIS Integration Framework, the ISIS Management Team and the ISIS Business Mentor. Entering the project with no specific area of ATC's business to focus upon, the teams embarked on a rigorous and dynamic 'imagineering' process which resulted in a particular area of ATC's operations being identified which the teams felt could best benefit from the 'integration' of interactive media.

Modelled on ATC's existing approach to expand their company overseas through an international distributorship model, the goal was then set to develop an online extranet that streamlined the set-up and maintenance of a global export operation for SME's. The new service is designed to assist Australian manufacturers (and exporters in general) prepare and execute growth in new regions.

This innovative business approach would not have been identified were it not for the successful bringing together of two diverse groups of experts under the ISIS project to explore new commercial opportunities facilitated by digital technologies and interactive media.

The prototype for the platform was successfully developed during the ISIS project. By early 2013, it is planned to publically offer the product for other companies to use. Preceding this will be the formation of a new company co-owned by ATC and Media Saints that will operate the service as a Joint Venture.

Australian Turntable Company www.turntables.com.au – Ben Chapman ben@turntables.com.au

Media Saints www.mediasaints.com – Per Bredenberg per.bredenberg@mediasaints.com

Case Study

ISIS NSW Pilot Integration (SiMERR-UNE/Toggle Media)

The ISIS Pilot Integration in NSW is a case study of a regionally-based operation transforming itself through expert guidance to reap the rewards of the digital economy.

Since first being brought together in November 2011, teams from both the National Centre of Science, Information and Communication Technology, and Mathematics Education for Rural and Regional Australia (SiMERR) and Toggle Media have engaged effectively and enthusiastically. The teams have agreed to develop an online adult numeracy development tool. Informed by information processing theory and neuroscience, the QuickSmart numeracy program is currently delivered to over 10,000 children in disadvantaged primary schools across Australia (many of them with a high proportion of Indigenous students). Research findings have proven the program very successful with many participants ‘transforming’

from disengaged youth into willing and eager students. The extension of this program to an online form is an obvious and progressive step, allowing a range of benefits including wider reach, automatic collation of comparative data and minimising ‘on-the-ground’ resource allocation. The program developers at SiMERR lacked the skills and know-how to take their increasingly sought after product into an online environment and identified ISIS as the vehicle for this innovation.

Through ISIS, SiMERR was partnered with Toggle Media, whose team had extensive experience in online learning tools development and electronic entertainment games development. Following the processes as set out in the collaborative co-creation guide, the ISIS Integration Framework, and overseen by the ISIS Management Team and the NSW ISIS Business Mentor, the teams worked together to transfer knowledge and arrive at an initial scoping document which is set to deliver an effective prototype for the online delivery of QuickSmart. The design for this prototype was brought to the attention of key federal government representatives who were immediately taken by the proposed program’s potential to assist adult numeracy development in Australia. It was proposed at this time to re-target the online program from middle school students to adults, which was agreed to by the NSW ISIS Pilot Integration stakeholders.

Currently the production of the prototype is on schedule, on budget and displaying a high degree of considered and robust software engineering. Beyond the prototype delivery for ISIS in early June, there exists a further deadline with federal government representatives in early July to present a working online prototype. Once the SiMERR/Toggle team effectively delivers this, there is a possibility that further development funding will be made available to take ‘QuickSmart online’ to market across Australia and, later, internationally.

SiMERR www.une.edu.au – Professor John Pegg jpegg@une.edu.au

Toggle Media www.togglemedia.com.au – David Bartolo eminfo@togglemedia.com.au



Case Study

ISIS QLD Pilot Integration (GBI & Zone4)

Qld Pilot Business, Ground Breaking Innovations (GBI) is a Brisbane-based SME widely regarded for its expertise in evaluation of productivity data for Australia's mining industry. Their traditional business model was to develop productivity reports and efficiency recommendations through in-depth analysis of large amounts of data on mines or mining equipment. These detailed reports would be presented by GBI representatives to the mining operators on location at the mine sites. ie. GBI personnel would regularly travel the country to present from lengthy written reports. To GBI this presented two fundamental challenges: 1) extensive resource allocation of their staff and 2) a failure of many of the mining operators to understand the recommendations effectively enough to implement productivity changes to the mines. As an extremely customer-oriented business operator, the CEO of GBI identified that change within his own organisation was necessary to rise to the challenge of serving his clientele better. He recognised the ISIS project as an ideal vehicle to transform his organisation.



Zone4 Media has been involved in the development of interactive media for the past 13 years and has been involved with a number of international award winning entertainment projects. Over the past number of years, the Brisbane-based company has been devoted much of its resources to developing world-class data visualisation. The alignment of GBI's need for more effective delivery of its data analytics and Zone4's skills in data visualisation presented an obvious correlation. Since their partnership commenced in November 2011, the teams have successfully worked together with the ISIS Management Team and the Qld ISIS Mentor to reengineer GBI's business model. Identifying the nascent commercial opportunities a partnership between the companies could have, the companies have since established a joint venture company, GBI Data. This new venture will allow both companies to transform their operations and effectively engage in the digital economy.

Strategic benefits of GBI Data include subscription-based, real-time mining data analytics, significantly less staff resource allocation to travel, a far broader client base and the inherent prospect of taking their services internationally. Beyond delivery of the prototype for the ISIS project in early June, the teams have floor space booked at the upcoming MinExpo Conference being held in Las Vegas in September of this year. MinExpo is a four yearly conference for the mining industry and the biggest in the world. It will provide an ideal (and hopefully lucrative) venue for GBI Data to demonstrate the benefits of their mining analytic data visualisation services developed by the teams through the ISIS project.

GBI www.gbimining.com – **Graham Lumley** Graham.Lumley@gbimining.com

Zone4 Media www.zone4.com.au – **Thom Saunders** thom@zone4.com.au