

How Can the Vision 2050 Pathway Info-Mural be Used?

The work of the Vision 2050 task force of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development has been synthesized into two large visual displays:

1. Vision of 2050. This poster contains the 22 key elements that define the sustainable future identified by the task force of 29 companies involved in the WBCSD project.

2. Pathway to a Sustainable 2050. Decade by decade this info-mural details 350 major milestones needed to be on track to a sustainable 2050. These milestones are portrayed on 10 tracks (energy, transportation, buildings, materials, economy, food, forests, governance, etc.). In addition, the mural also identifies 40 “must haves” and 40 “big risks” for the next 40 years.

How might companies use this mural? These visual displays can be powerful tools for thinking about sustainable futures. Each group will use them for their own specific purposes. We describe and illustrate four such example uses on these pages.

Bob Horn

Human Science and Technology Advanced Research Institute (H-STAR)

Stanford University

WBCSD Vision 2050 Project Synthesizer (and Muralist)

1 Murals provide opportunities to learn and to integrate learnings. Some organizations have not yet thought strategically and in detail about possible sustainable futures. Taken together, the 350 milestones indicate that there is a lot to be done and that there is no magic bullet. Consequently, More comprehensive thinking and innovation will be needed across a vast set of complex futures that must entail the whole organization. The *Pathway* mural is a major step toward providing one such detailed and comprehensive view of sustainable futures.

The visual displays thus will provide a foundation for both individual and organizational learning and sustainability education. They could be used widely in schools and universities.

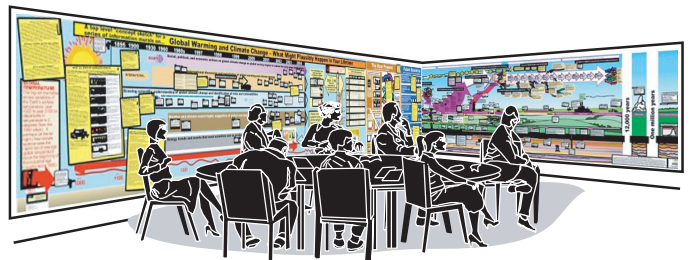
Flexibly and easily changed. These visual displays are created on a computer and individual elements can be flexibly and almost instantaneously modified to reflect evolving corporate and industry factors.

2 Context for more detailed strategic discussions. One major purpose of information murals such as the *Pathway* mural is to provide a contextual tool for strategy evaluation. For some organizations, these murals are cogent reminders of the sustainable world in which they would like to be operating. The mural also illustrates how rapidly changing futures will affect the products, services, and markets of many companies.

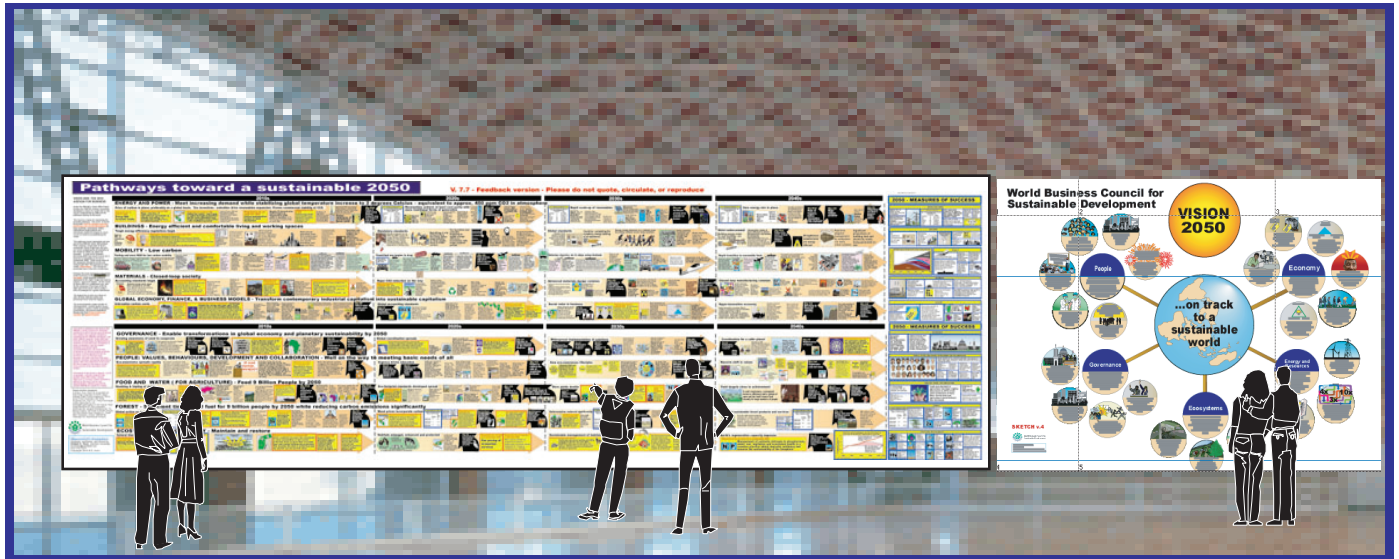
Workshop exercise. The *Pathway* mural can be used as we did for the biannual meeting of Foresight Canada where planners, forecasters, and futurists from all over the country gathered and spent 3/4 of a day asking “*How do these milestones apply the Canada?*” Similar questions can be usefully asked by industry associations, cities, and regional groups.

New murals can then be made to provide analyses that focus on sector-specific issues, companies or industries. For example, we have used multiple murals to analyze causes, and consequences of global warming.

A sustainability “war room” containing murals – projected on walls or on printed paper – can be used for analysis, evaluation and decision making. Such a room might look something like this:



3 Aligning the organization with evolving strategic environments. Some companies have placed the *Vision 2050* poster and *Pathway* info-mural in prominent places at their corporate headquarters (and other buildings) as a way of inviting stakeholders to learn about these critical sustainability issues and how the company is thinking about them. The concept illustration below shows the visual displays in a rather large exhibit space. One of the WBCSD member companies, Akzo Nobel, has put such an exhibit in the lobby of the World Trade Center in Amsterdam, the location of its headquarters. Murals can be printed at almost any size. They can be laminated or printed on vinyl for durability.



4 Murals in the hallway leading to the CEO's office. An information mural shows one set of topics important to the company's strategy, business environment, and goal setting. Some CEOs or other executives may wish to sensitize employees and visitors to the organization's views on the importance of sustainability issues that inform the company's strategic agendas. Hanging the mural in the hallway leading to the CEO's office is a move guaranteed to attract the attention of major company stakeholders. Specific parts of the mural of particular importance to the company could be enlarged and further detailed.



World Business Council for
Sustainable Development

MacroVU® Analytics
Robert E. Horn, Stanford University
hornbob@earthlink.net
415-775-7377
Copyright 2010 R.E. Horn