

S10: Keep abreast of industry developments, creative trends and innovations, knowing what's emerging, and when to act to make cost-effective use of new and emerging tools and technologies

Overview of Experience

Staying current with industry trends and emerging technologies is essential in creative digital design. I've learned to make this part of my regular workflow, not only to keep my skills relevant, but to make informed, cost-effective decisions about which tools to adopt and when. This skill has been especially important as I've explored AI, immersive media, and web platforms across both academic work and professional contexts.

How I Stay Informed

To monitor trends and innovations, I:

- Engage with **online design communities** on platforms like LinkedIn, Behance,
- Subscribe to newsletters and updates from **tool developers** like Adobe, Figma, Synthesia, and Canva
- Trial free or beta versions of new tools before committing to them financially

This proactive approach helps me identify which tools offer genuine improvements in workflow or audience engagement, and which are less suited to my needs.

Cost-Effective Decision-Making

A good example of this is my early adoption of **Synthesia** for AI avatar video creation. After researching AI video trends and testing the platform, I recognised it as a time-saving and cost-effective alternative to filming presenters for e-learning. Instead of paying for video shoots or voiceovers, I could produce high-quality, personalised content quickly, a major advantage when updating training materials or reaching diverse learner groups.

I also evaluated website platforms and chose **IONOS** to build my business website because it offered a balance between creative control and affordability, compared to more complex or expensive options like Webflow or custom development.

Application in Practice

I apply this skill by reviewing my toolkit regularly and updating my workflow when a new technology offers a clear benefit. For instance, if a new Figma plugin streamlines UI prototyping or improves accessibility checks, I trial it immediately and assess its long-term value. If it saves time or enhances quality, I integrate it into my standard practice.

I also share emerging tools and trends with colleagues, helping others stay current and benefit from efficient, scalable design solutions.

Evidence by Academic Year

Year	Focus Areas	Emerging Tools Adopted	Key Projects
Year 5	Evaluating immersive and AI tools	Synthesia, Skybox, Spline	IMM200 – Immersive Media, UX200 – UX/UI Design
Year 6	Choosing cost-effective solutions for professional use	IONOS, Vyond, Canva Pro (for brand/social content)	PRP300 – Personal Research Project, CRP300 – Critical Research Project