

recording the stations but as long as you can consistently describe movement then it is a map (anchored to the tube network) that you can share with others. But, I hear some argue “if the tube map is a map then can’t I declare my systems diagram a map as there is no alternative?”

Well, by such a declaration you are saying that the only way this system can be is the way you’ve drawn it. You are declaring that there is no alternative and the components cannot themselves change i.e. CRM will always be this CRM and no-other solution will exist. You are stating (as with the tube map) that “this is just the way it is”.

Obviously, a modicum of experience in business or IT will tell you that change happens. Unless you’re dealing with something which is as semi-permanent as the tube network where you can afford to assume that the tube network isn’t going to start rapidly changing with new tunnels appearing this week or stations going for a wander then I’d stick with mapping to the landscape itself. In business, that means mapping against the competitive landscape e.g. the user (anchor), the value chain (position) and evolution (movement).

Now, I’ve made quite a detour into tube maps because they are currently a vogue in the business world with various companies creating them to describe complex environments. For example, in figure 149 we have a “tube map” of the digital world. The map lacks context being simply a grouping of technology and digital concepts. It has position of components but it is not clear what anchor is used. If we assume that the “tube network” is the anchor then according to the “map”, if I wish to go from Online Ad Networks to Agency Holding