



# Standard Operating Procedures

## Value Stream Mapping Symbols

SOP0007 V3

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## Background

Value Stream Mapping (VSM) is a key Continuous Improvement tool which allows the user to “see the waste” in a process, thereby putting together an action plan to remove the waste and streamline the process in question. This tool, while requiring some degree of understanding through training, can be a relatively simple process, if conducted appropriately.

## Value Stream Mapping

There are two primary methodologies utilized when conducting value stream mapping exercises:

1. The Learning to See Method (named from the book of the same name which introduced the concept of value stream mapping to the world).
2. The Post-It-Note Method (a later version, that visualizes and simplifies the mapping process).

Although the Post-It-Note method has gained in popularity in recent years, primarily due to it's simplicity and ease of understanding with project team members, there are still many applications where the Learning to See method is used or is more applicable to the improvement efforts, particularly in the documentation component of the process.

## Standard Operating Procedure

The VSM symbol sheet **T0007 – Value Stream Mapping Symbols.pdf**, available free from <https://ssiconsulting.ca/free-tools/>, is a visual indication of several of the main value stream mapping symbols that are used when conducting value stream mapping exercises using the 'Learning to See Method'. One of the strengths of this method is a standard convention

for documentation of the process being analyzed, therefore it is critical to understand the symbols that make up this standard convention.

## Outcomes

Adhering to the proper standardized conventions for value stream mapping allows for ease of communication amongst others conducting and utilizing the output from value stream mapping sessions conducted and documented with the Learning to See method. It allows participants and users to gain maximum information with minimum effort and increases the likelihood that actionable items will be understood and pursued, which is the real goal of value stream mapping.

## VSM Symbol Sheet

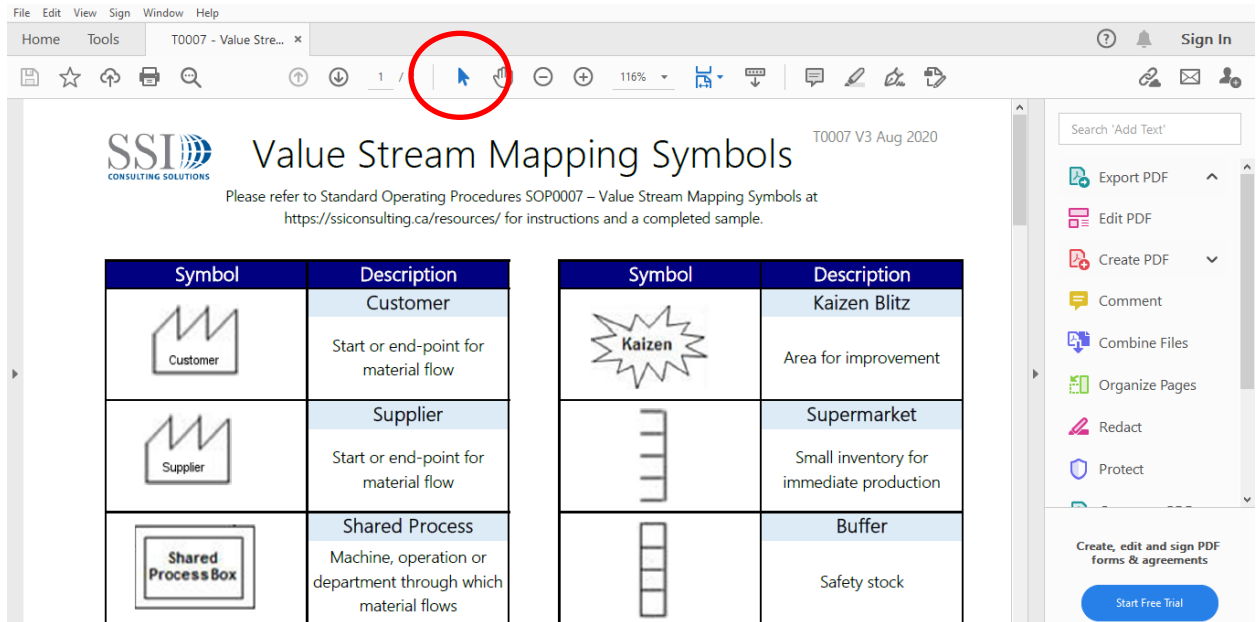
Please refer to document T0007 – Value Stream Mapping Symbols.pdf for a selection of the more common symbols used in Value Stream Mapping.

The symbol images in the PDF document can be copied, for use in other documents you are preparing, by using the following steps which work in Adobe Acrobat Reader. Other PDF readers would be similar.

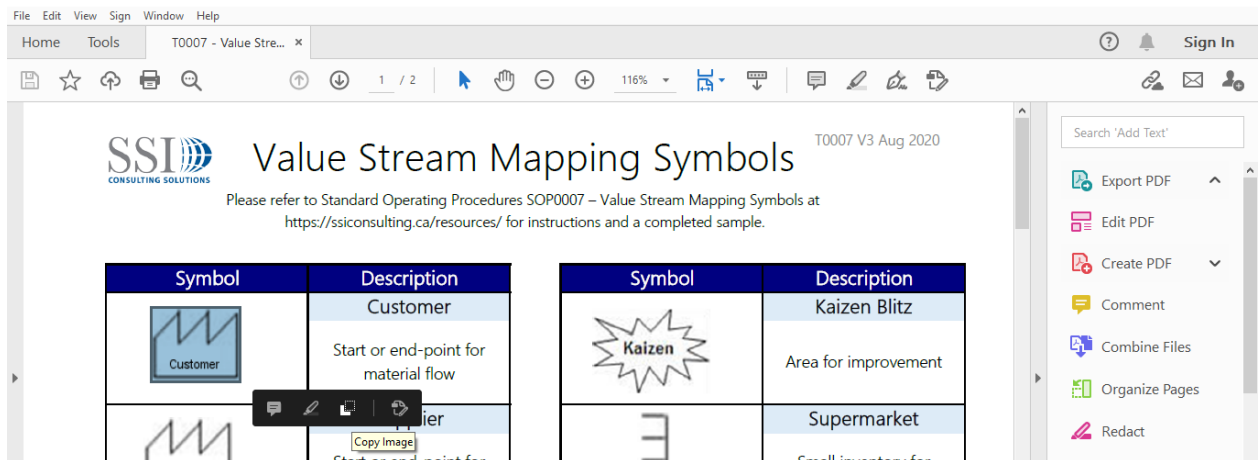
1. Open the file in the PDF application.

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2. Click the 'selection tool' on the menu



3. Draw a square or rectangle around the image you would like to copy. You will notice the cursor arrow changes to cross-hairs when you are within the image area that can be copied. The image will be highlighted in blue and a small pop-up menu will appear with the 3rd option being 'copy'. Either click 'copy' or simply hit the keys, "CTRL c" to copy.



4. Paste the image into your other document by clicking “edit” on the menu of that document and then click “paste” or if you prefer, you can use the keys “CTRL v” to paste. Then click on the image and drag the image to the proper position in your document. Don’t forget to ‘save’!