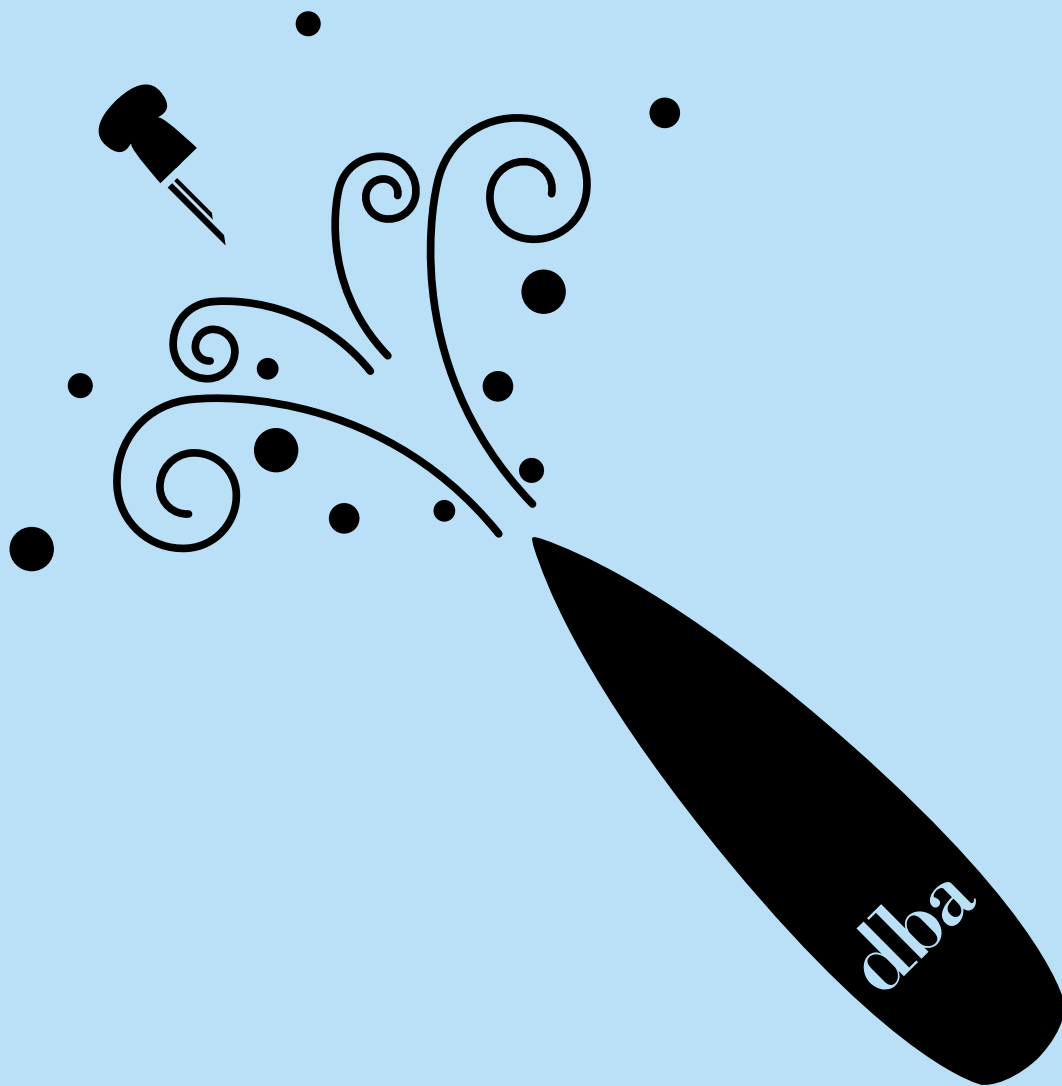

Insight

Issue 10 | Winter 2008



**DBA Design Effectiveness Awards winners /
Small agencies, big differences / Dare to get digital /
Why you should export / Billing the un-billables**

Don't get left out in the cold



Part of my daily constitutional includes reading the FT; it's up there, just a point or two below going to the gym on my list of horrific ways to start any day! Interestingly, this morning I read about one sector of industry bucking the downward trend and that's...chocolate sales. It would seem that the best thing to do in the current climate is to go out and binge on chocolate. That's not currently a part of the arsenal of advice you could be getting from the DBA about what to do over the coming months, but I might add it in.

So, two things – if you're a member today reading this article and you're not taking advantage of all the help and advice available to you, then get in touch. This is not the time to be withdrawing your support of the DBA simply because you haven't made the most of it over the last few months. Consider the hard earned cash you've already sent our way a credit balance in your DBA account – don't waste it by walking away – draw on it, today.

And if you're not a member, why not cash in on everything we know about what you might do to safeguard your position in the marketplace. Joining the DBA should be the one investment you make that pays for itself time and again – consider us that person sitting in the chair next to you. But before we take your money, be warned, we'll want to know why you want to join. Only then can we be sure to deliver against your expectations. So what are your three biggest challenges in the year ahead?

Deborah Dawton Chief Executive, DBA

Book Review

An Appeal to Reason: A Cool Look at Global Warming by Nigel Lawson

This is a book that we all should read – not because Lawson is necessarily against the claims made by the global warming fanatics but simply because neither the science nor the economics of the matter are settled. A fair hearing should be given to both sides.

For example, the UK's new legislation to halve CO₂ emissions by 2050 is not just vainglorious grandstanding but positively dangerous. The combined output of all the 2000 wind turbines built in Britain is less than a single-sized gas fired power station.

Further more, Janet Daly explained in *The Times* that one cannot be a party for the poor and a party for the environment. If you are rich, you can insulate yourself from rising food prices and energy prices. But for the most of us, ecological righteousness is a luxury we can no way afford.

An Appeal to Reason explains how the science is far from settled and the economics are far from being clear. Lawson seeks a more balanced debate, asking us not to treat it as some newly arrived religion, whose dogma has to be accepted without argument. In the Red Corner, we have publicity hungry Greenpeace, quangocrats like Carbon Trust, sensation seeking media, exploitive businesses and tax-hungry politicians. In the Blue Corner, we have little (post-diet) Nigel Lawson. I strongly recommend this book, not to seek conversion, but to seek balance.

Review by Antony Simmons-Gooding Chairman, DBA

An Appeal to Reason: A Cool Look at Global Warming by Nigel Lawson is published by Gerald Duckworth & Co Ltd.

Profit or loss?

The DBA states, 'On average 26% of a design agency's potential income is lost through inefficiency, inaccurate quoting or free pitching.' In this economic climate, 26% is a huge sum of money to just leak away.

Being a design agency is all about creative excellence but to provide this, your agency must stay in business. To stem this potential loss of income, a design agency must be supported by systems that will ensure revenues are maximised and costs are controlled. Specifically, we encourage using an integrated job costing and accounting system. This can be defined as a system that will follow the lifecycle of a job: from concept and pitch, through planning and production, to completion and billing. In addition, it will provide reports on capacities, efficiencies and highlight areas requiring improvement across the whole organisation. Systems such as these can reduce administrative overhead by shortening the time required to input data and understand information. The latest generation can be proactive in alerting users to potential pitfalls before they occur.

If the DBA is correct and inefficiency and inaccuracies lose design agencies around 26% of potential income, then there are really only two paths to take. Agencies can either seek an extra 26% of new business, which in a poor economic climate may prove costly and difficult, or implement an integrated system, which will solve the problems of inefficiency and inaccuracy and provide a return on investment in a matter of months, not years.

Steve Hoddinott Sales Director, Paprika Software

Recruit, retrain, rethink

Recent research from the Cranfield School of Management adds to the evidence that flexible working gives employers a competitive edge in recruitment, retention, employee commitment and, crucially, performance. At a time of economic downturn, it has never been more important for businesses to embrace this powerful motivator.

This month we have seen the introduction of a four-day week by major manufacturers and I believe that this is something we will start to see even more of. Why not use this as an opportunity? Ask your team whether they want to work less hours. You can save overhead and they can achieve the work-life balance they have always wanted.

There is a misconception that in a recession you don't have to look after your staff because they will be desperate for a job. In fact, the opposite is true – good people can always get another job. It is important to recognise the value of the non-material things and make sure that they are part of the work environment. Motivated employees will be productive – a necessary factor in keeping companies buoyant during a recession – because during difficult economic downturns a high turnover of staff is something that no sensible company can afford to risk.

Lin Dickens Managing Director, Aricot Vert



The first recipient of Lloyds TSB Britain's Best Boss award.

Should you be exporting?

Whether times are good or bad, it's always worth having some international business. When the jobs at home get difficult to win, it's even more attractive to look abroad and now is a good time to be doing just that.

UK designers have a lot going for them. The UK has a long-standing reputation as a centre of design excellence and innovation. UK design is seen as being passionately creative and eclectic, placing a high value on independent self-expression and judgement. It is known as highly professional and results-focused with a strong track record in delivering design-based services to commercial partners. And UK designers are skilled at working in multi-disciplinary teams and participating in creative/technical-scientific collaboration.

Europe and the United States are currently the major markets in which UK designers are operating but there is growing interest in the Middle East and Asia, especially China. These markets will probably not be expanding as fast as they have recently, but their appetite for good design is developing all the time. In China, product design and branding are most in demand. In the Middle East, it's branding, communication and interior design.

But this is not a quick fix. Many markets take years to understand and develop, and companies have to devote time and resources to establish a presence. It's worth finding out about the help available from the government through UK Trade & Investment which operates both with specialist advisers in the UK and with commercial staff in British embassies around the world. They are at www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

Many companies have found that working for an overseas client makes them more competitive overall as it forces them to refine their offer, to really think about points of differentiation and how they present themselves. So for those companies not yet exporting now could well be the time to start doing so.

Andrew Summers Chairman, Design Partners



What's in sight

Three strategic objectives continue to drive what we do and where we're heading.

1 Bringing Business to Design

The DBA's programme of events in 2009 should furnish designers with everything they need to make informed decisions and weather choppy business conditions. Make the time to learn from your peers and DBA Experts who have battled through previous recessions.

2 Bringing Design to Business

The relaunch of the DBA's Members Directory coupled with a programme of awareness raising aimed at industry will position the DBA as the gateway to the best in UK design. We will be working hard to make the case for design in business with a view to driving up enquiries for work.

3 Bringing Design to Government

The DBA will be working with the APGDI to run a year-long project looking at the issues related to procurement in the public sector. Our aim will be to publish a best practice guide back into Government this time next year.

The client crunch

Can clients still afford to commission brand-building design in a credit crunch? Can they afford not to?

Winning the visibility battle is suddenly mission critical. Certainly, shoppers are responding to the news by switching out of premium brands. But mainstream-premium brands can gain from this as much as own-brand.

The fundamentals of branding haven't changed.

Distinctive, relevant brands are the only sustainable route to avoid commoditisation – and the default to price which inevitably follows. Aggressive price comparisons between brands and own-brand, and retailer and retailer are driving the grocery sector into a profit-destroying war of attrition.

As members of the DBA, it is our individual and collective responsibility to justify the title 'Design Consultant' by helping our clients respond positively to a crisis of confidence. While every business will be affected by a prolonged downturn, there will be winners as well as losers. We must help clients to win tactical skirmishes while defending their value-added proposition. Remind people about what makes their brand special and relevant, not what makes it the same.

Within our own client base, we are seeing growth from new designs for Birds Eye, a low-waste, healthy frozen food, for Robinson's squash, an enjoyable and affordable alternative to expensive juices and for Muller Corners, a great value, everyday treat. All recording growth in contravention of received wisdom.

As the DBA Design Effectiveness Awards continue to show, design is perhaps the most cost-effective investment any business can make, so let's start leading and stop following. We are the medium of the moment.

Andy Knowles Chairman, Jones Knowles Ritchie



DBA Design Effectiveness Awards Winners Page 8

Ask the Expert

The DBA gave Adrian Rasdall, a turnaround and business improvement specialist and partner at Revenue Matters LLP, an imaginary company to evaluate. How does their forecast look? What should they be doing?

Company X's Profile

Nickname:	Design Agency
Weight:	12 people
Age:	12 years
Hometown:	Manchester
Hobbies/interests:	We do a bit of everything.
Our fan clubs:	35 clients, one of which provides 40% of our agency's total revenue. DBA member

Here's what Adrian had to say:

Situation

Before advising on the future, we need to determine where the company is now, i.e. whether it is a healthy business or one that's underperforming. Notwithstanding the 40% client, our Manchester company could be an outstanding business. So let's paint a picture of what this business looks like.

A business with 12 staff, with a bank of specialised freelancers available, should probably be billing around £1.5million to £2million with profits of £200,000 to £300,000. To be really safe, there should be around £350,000 in reserves with debtors of about £275,000 and maybe creditors of £100,000. Financials of this ilk would represent a fairly safe business.

Evaluation

This is not a healthy business by accident. It is driven and enjoys the many challenges thrown at it. The owner is leading the new business programme within a very hard-working culture. Their creative product is excellent with real home-grown talent. The staff are focused and dedicated to delivering to their 35 clients.

As long as the clients are not in high-risk sectors, predominantly finance, property and retail, this business is doing a lot of the right things. New business should be stepped up but there is also a need to stay close to existing clients since competitors will be sniffing around and an unloved client can be fickle.

Potential thorn and solution

The 40% client represents something of a risk: any client over 20% starts to create a dependency. In reality, the relationship is probably very strong and there is a huge amount of client knowledge vested with the agency; two factors that generally drive margins higher.

If however, the figures don't stack up and things in Manchester have not been going well, then we need to look more closely at the root cause. From the most recent P&L account, we can see the current trading position and also an accumulative year-to-date. This should tell us whether sales are down, the

cost of producing creativity has increased or whether overheads have increased.

If sales are down, is this just a glitch or has there been a reduction of work from one or more clients? Is it market or management? If it is the market, and has been declining for more than three months, then action is needed. How much did clients spend last year and how much are they likely to spend this year? Look at what it cost to produce the work last year and the overheads.

Over to you...

This is all basic information that every business should have at its fingertips. By understanding how much it cost to run the business last year, projections can be made about next year. Look at monthly historic peaks and troughs and use the same formula to map out the shape of the current year. Now, at a glance you can see from your P&L if you are up or down on the month.

The market is hard to affect, so early realisation gives you time to right-size your operation. If there are management issues, and each company has its own set of challenges, these are in your gift to fix.

One final thought for all businesses: now is the time to glance at your balance sheet. Are the debtors high or getting higher? That's something to look at sooner rather than later. Clients may be slowing down their payments which means you that will have to work harder to get your money from their bank account into yours. Also study how much working capital you have available. From now on, it is all about cash.

Adrian Rasdall Partner, Revenue Matters LLP

Efficient. Effective.



Many people suggest pushing for new clients to ensure that turnover remains high. Whilst new and bigger clients are the key to growth, they take time to develop. Add the pressures of free pitching and increased competition and suddenly you have an additional level of work vying for the agency's time; and we all have a finite amount of resources.

So what should be our focus? I've found that people overlook the efficiency with which they manage jobs. Effective management will serve you well for years to come and help drive up profitability on existing jobs and save a lot of running around.

Second, it is crucial to manage your estimated vs. actual costs – by the time the job is finished, if you are over budget it's often too late to discuss the issue with your client. Consider the possible loss of just £150-300 per job. On 20 jobs alone you could lose £6,000. Suddenly better planning and negotiations make sense.

And third, if the first two points are taken on board, scheduling tasks and identifying weaknesses will become much easier. Directors will find that they can make better, more informed and faster decisions that benefit the company in the future.

Barry Watts Account Manager, Co-efficient Software

Barry has more than 8 years of experience in consulting and providing software services.

The Blair effect



Newcastle based consultancy Blumilk attended the most recent set of Blair Enns' 'Win Without Pitching' DBA workshops, as part of their improvement programme for 2008, and wanted to share with us the journey

that this took them on and the impact this learning has had.

Colin Robertson, Blumilk's Managing Director explains, 'Eve Stoner, Brand Development Director, and I attended Blair's workshop in Manchester. We couldn't stop talking about it. We were really challenged, really motivated.'

Dynamic Management Consultant, Blair Enns, is a popular DBA speaker, advising design consultancies and their new business staff how to rethink their roles as salespeople, and how what a consultancy sells is determined by how it sells.

Footers and disclaimers

Modern emails seem to carry a huge amount of information. Sometimes the headers or footers are many times the size of the actual message. Isn't it annoying to get a one line email that takes two pages of paper to print out because of all the 'stuff' at the top and bottom? So why do people do it and does it actually achieve anything?

Essentially the information falls into two categories. First, there is the information that all businesses are required by law, to disclose on all email business communications. Second, there are a number of information statements that can be made to the recipients of emails either about the communication itself or about the way the business handles email communications that it receives. Request our factsheet, available to DBA members, which explains what you have to do, what you might want to do and gives examples of both.

Darrell Stuart-Smith Partner, Humphries Kirk

For a factsheet, email nancy.khurana@dba.org.uk

HK Humphries Kirk
SOLICITORS AND ARBITRATORS

Colin continued, 'We decided to take our Creative Director to a second workshop in Glasgow to broaden the reach within our company. It was also a great opportunity to gauge our progress over the six months between the two workshops. We realised how much we had improved, how much more confident we were and of course, how much more we could do.'

Those attending the workshop learned what Blair calls the Four Ps—the principles of positioning, product, process and personnel. Then came the Fifth P, the old endless debate of pitching, where he challenges the assumptions of what is required to win business and offers a way out of the vicious cycles of endless pitches and proposals.

The team at Blumilk felt empowered by Blair to change, but along with the excitement came the great fear factor: fear of how this would effect an already successful business.

Key decisions centred around how to reposition the company, agreeing on who they are and what they actually do. While undergoing the process of change, Colin notes a change in Blumilk's level of confidence: 'We recognised the impact we have on the businesses and not for profit organisations we work with. We're no longer shy in explaining how our expertise can make a positive change to their bottom line or

to the achievement of their social objectives. We are now happy to pose the question about relationships – do they want us to be an expert or simply an order taker?'

Blumilk now see themselves as business strategists specialising in design and marketing, through planned and deliberate positioning.

'We are seeing changes already,' says Eve. 'Our pitch to win ratio has improved dramatically and our profits have increased. There's also a change in the power structure in the buy/sell relationship because of our new positioning strategy.'

Overall, they felt the opportunity to step back and look inward, sharing similar experiences and discussing issues with fellow agencies and clients, was priceless.

If you'd like to know more about the impact of Blair's advice, don't hesitate to contact Colin at colin@blumilk.com

blumilk
a litewhite limited company

Balancing the books



DBA Expert Gary Baxter gives some top tips on how to calculate your targets for the year ahead.

Step Two: Understand your costs

- Analyse your costs into categories: Premises, Technology, Promotional, Administration etc.
- Now highlight those costs you could strip out if you had to.
- Now highlight (in another colour) those costs you could strip out if you really, really had to.
- Break these costs down into the calendar for the year ahead.

Step Three: Aim to make a profit

- From the above work out the total cost of salaries and overheads (don't forget directors dividends).
- Add 17.64% to the sum of the above (this will give you a net profit margin of 15% of Gross Income).
- That's your Gross Income target... how does it compare to your team plan?

Gary Baxter Managing Director, Lightbox Consulting

Gary is an accredited DBA Expert. Contact him at www.dba.org.uk/experts

Step One: Reality check

- Create your team plan, with salaries (+NIC), allocate realistic charge rates and set budgeted chargeable time for each person.
- Tot up the potential value of the team from the above, then deduct 25% for write offs. Discounting the impact of freelancers, this is your projected best outcome for the year.
- Add on a percentage for the expected profit from re-charged expenses (based on historical experience).
- Now analyse existing clients and project what income you predict from them over the year ahead (we know nothing's real after week thirteen, but do it anyway).
- Calculate your 'new business' target by comparing the two totals from the above.
- Analyse the 'new business' target and take action (which might be to reduce the team).

Employers' liability

As an employer, you are responsible for the health and safety of your employees. If they suffer an accident in the workplace, they may bring a claim against you for compensation. By law, businesses must have a minimum of £5million of cover.

The Courts Act 2003 (in force since April 2005) lets Judges insist employers pay periodic payments to claimants rather than one-off sums, so you could be left with a life-long financial commitment.

The uncertainty created will force up the claim costs and make writing business less attractive. From 2007, the NHS has been able to recover the cost of treating workplace-related injuries from an employer. In its present cash-strapped position, the NHS is likely to make full use of its new powers. Then there is the increase of work-related diseases and conditions, and so an increased awareness by employees of their rights. These factors, coupled with a steady increase in awards, will be another driver behind an inevitable rise in premiums.

So what can employers do? Put health and safety high on the agenda – a well-run business will pay less in premiums in the long run than a poorly run one.

Paul Lloyd Account Executive, Layton Blackham

Layton Blackham is the DBA's insurance partner and offers competitive rates to DBA members.



Layton Blackham

INSURANCE BROKERS

Your management matters



You haven't noticed yet, but there are several little red light points on your chest. And no, it's not because the neighbour's kid is playing with the presentation pointer that fell out of your briefcase last night when you

stumbled home after a hard day at work. It's more likely that you're in the cross hairs of one or more people who are watching how you'll react in the next few weeks.

You've crossed a threshold by either managing people for the first time, or trying to do it right for the first time. You've experienced a seminal event in your life by entering the 'management' room that you've only heard of in the past. You've criticised the people who have occupied this room without ever knowing what it was really like to be in their shoes.

Now you get to find out and do it better. Are you ready? Do you understand the minuses that will come with the pluses?

I can't remember much about the first time I managed people. Maybe for you it was like my experience, a gradual transition where I was managing them in reality long before I was managing them officially. Being promoted was more about recognising what was already taking place. That's probably the best way for it to happen.

But I probably don't remember that first time simply because our culture doesn't value management all that highly. You don't read about great managers like you do great athletes. We aren't accustomed to thinking of the entry to management as some sort of anniversary. It is, though, because it changes your life. It may not change your life to the same extent as childbirth, marriage or divorce, but it certainly sets a course with all sorts of implications.

This is a change, and how you react to it will affect your happiness, relationships, health, and wealth. It will also have a strong impact on the people you manage. Twenty years from now, let me sit down with one of your current clients and ask them about you, your impact, and what they learned. Chances are they won't even be able to dredge a name out of their murky memories. The same is true of your suppliers.

But let me do that with one of your current employees in twenty years and they'll remember you for sure. Hopefully it'll be for the right reasons. That's the opportunity in front of you.

David C. Baker

David will be delivering a two-day workshop for the DBA on Managing Creatives and Creativity on 4 & 5 December 08. For details visit www.dba.org.uk

Dare to get digital

The digital domain is *the* most important channel for a brand to succeed in.

For traditional studios, the leap to doing digital convincingly may seem enormous. Whilst the output medium may be vastly different, many of the core design skills can be applied to digital based projects. Designers succeed once they learn the rules and boundaries, and how to push them.

Designers used to working in print need to break the habit of working at a level of zoom and relying on run-outs. Examining their efforts on screen at its true size is the first step to producing a good digital based design. Go online and discover what works and what doesn't. Many online resources explain techniques. Ask questions on forums and get work critiqued. Be sure to work alongside a digital creative.

In the same vein, many digitally trained designers feel they missed out on some of the cornerstones of a traditional design education. So the digital team also has plenty to learn from their colleagues in an integrated studio. Integrating a range of design disciplines, from identity design and brand development, right through to an in-house architectural practice, increases the exposure of designers from different backgrounds to new disciplines. As a result, you'll boost creativity and develop a more confident and convincing digital future.

Matt Silcock Head of Digital Design, Lloyd Northover

Matt has more than 15 years experience in the digital industry.

Small business advice

Successful organisations know there's opportunity in every market sector, no matter how difficult.

Re-examine the five essential dynamics of your business:

Competitor positioning: Is your offer competitive? Differentiated? Focused? Is it what design buyers want right now? They're also under pressure.

Management and resource capabilities: Make sure you have a lean and fit organisation keeping overheads low without destroying the fabric of the company.

Relationships: Be open and upfront with clients, staff and suppliers. Cherish them, get them on your side and manage expectations. You'll be amazed how helpful and supportive they will be.

Marketing and new business: Don't stint on new business activity. It's your lifeline so make sure you have a pipeline.

Financial information and internal controls: Be up-to-date and proactive about managing profitability, cash flow, the bank, clients and suppliers.

Talk to the DBA Experts. Most of us worked our way through the last recession so are well placed to give you advice on a whole range of subjects. James Caan, of Dragon's Den, explained how he survived the 1991 recession: 'By getting the support of a reduced work force, offering reduced fees, taking reduced commissions and working harder than ever before.'

Peers de Trensé Partner, Tapestry Consulting

Peers is an accredited DBA Expert. Contact him at www.dba.org.uk/experts

If the banks aren't lending, why are you?

You don't think you are? What about all those customers on your debtor list? They don't need bank loans and overdrafts because you are extending free credit to them.

In these times, good credit control is the only thing that will safeguard your cashflow. Customers who paid before will not necessarily pay now if you don't chase them. Not because they don't want to, but because they haven't been paid, or because their bank has withdrawn facilities.

It's hard to chase money from a client with whom you have a relationship. The fear of upsetting an existing customer in a time when you are fighting for every bit of new business is a dilemma faced by many companies, particularly in the design industry.

Unfortunately the hard truth is that the client that could go bust on you is probably not a new one, or someone you don't know. It's more likely to be one you've dealt with for years as these are the people you don't chase, that you don't want to upset by asking for money.

In actual fact, in this climate, your customers expect to be chased. You don't have to be rude, you just need to be persistent and

The importance of billing in earnest

Your clients may not have adopted fictitious identities to evade your credit controller, but getting them to settle invoices can be challenging.

Accurate creation of invoices is essential if they are to be quickly approved by the client and paid. With estimated jobs, the invoice should be a replica of the estimate. Ensure that your account handler has sight of what was estimated along with all actual costs incurred in completing the work. Encourage them to bill for chargeable amends etc., but do this on a separate invoice so queries don't delay payment of your main invoice.

Include details with the chargeable amends invoice to reduce queries. This requires accurate collection of time costs, including a brief description of what was actually done. Also, billing should take place throughout the month based on the status of jobs, not just at the end of the month.

Get clients to pay invoices via Bacs Direct Credit. Invoices should have your sort code and bank account number along with the message 'Pay Us Direct.' Follow up with a phone call 3 to 4 days after so problems can be addressed early on, and you can be sure they've received it.

Effective agency management systems encourage good practices. In conjunction with the cash flow benefits of billing earlier and accurately, you can dramatically improve profitability.

Nick Lane Director, Synergist Express

Nick has been working in the creative industries for 10 years and has worked with over 250 UK consultancies.



professional. Anyone who says that you can trust them to pay is not necessarily lying, their intention is honourable, however the ability to follow through on the promise may well be out of their hands.

If someone is upset that you chased them, ask yourself why? You wouldn't need to chase if they paid. Most reasonable business people are in the same position and will respect both your need to keep a tight leash on your cash and you for doing so.

Bear in mind that everyone else is chasing. If you don't, you could well be the last to be paid. Who would you pay first, someone who is calling every day or someone who hasn't asked at all?

All that hard-won new business is not a sale unless it's paid for. This is a time for action. The livelihood of your business depends on it.

Helen Gray Managing Director, Fluid Finance

Helen Gray, Chartered Director and former Managing Director of PDD, has been advising company directors for the last three years and also advises one of the UK's largest credit checking agencies.

DBA Design Effectiveness Awards

Design delivers, and with return on investment at the forefront of clients' minds, this year's DBA Design Effectiveness Awards winners prove that design can deliver directly to their clients' bottom line. Winning a DBA Design Effectiveness Award is an invaluable way to prove your value, and create the all important standout from the crowd.

This year saw 43 awards presented, with 9 Gold wins awarded and ukTV channel Dave taking the Grand Prix top prize. We also introduced a new award for the Top of the League, honouring the client and consultancy sitting at the top of the DBA Design Effectiveness League Table, based on the results over the last 3 years. Waitrose took the client crown, whilst Pearlfisher came top for consultancies.

If reading the following case studies inspires you, and you think you have a project that could be a contender for next year's awards, contact natalie.maher@dba.org.uk for a copy of the DBA Design Effectiveness Handbook with all of the winners in more detail. We'll be sending out the 2009 Call for Entries in the New Year, as well as running a series of workshops and surgeries on how to enter, but it is never too early to start considering which projects have potential – we'd be more than happy to discuss any ideas you have in mind.

The trophy challenge



The DBA Design Effectiveness Awards trophies this year were produced with the direct help and advice from the Materials Information Service (MIS) of the Institute of Materials. This national group, working closely with the DBA, overcame the challenges encountered in previous years to produce the solid silver bullet. The iconic trophy is a two part 'ying yang' bullet design which is unique but difficult to cast and polish. Casting porosity was a recurring problem year-on-year. After extensive experimentation and product testing, the MIS Group developed an optimised route and casting alloy (LM6 for those in the know) that generated a perfect fit and high surface polish without bubble porosity problems. The MIS/DBA team are now working on a way to create new surface textures and colours to provide gold, silver and bronze trophies for next year's awards – watch this space.

Grand Prix Winner Dave



Client
uktv

Design Consultancy
Red Bee Media

"This is as good as it gets – intelligent design based on consumer insight demonstrating how it can transform the futures of a channel in an exceptionally fragmented market sector."

Conrad Bird, Head of Strategic Campaigns, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Since ukTVG2's relaunch, Dave has seen growth from the 29th biggest channel in multi-channel (MC) homes to 10th, and has become the joint largest MC channel among 16-44 year-old men. It has attracted eight million new viewers to the network and has grown from being the fifth to the second most profitable channel within the ukTV portfolio.

In the first six months alone, Dave delivered a £4.5million profit, and the channel's incremental growth is set to contribute a staggering £25million in ad-sales revenue in 2008. Spontaneous awareness of Dave has risen from 2% to 32%, lifting the channel above well-established competitors such as More4, BBC4, ITV3 and Bravo.

Gold winners



Legible London

Clients
TFL, Mayor of London, City of Westminster, New West End Company

Design Consultancy
AIG

When surveyed, a remarkable 62% of pedestrians said the Legible London way-finding system would encourage them to walk more.



Core

Client
Core

Design Consultancy
Good Creative

Core's sales increased 16% year-on-year from 2006 to 2007, and in 2006 Core was the second biggest player in the market with an 11.5% market share.



Morrisons

Client
Morrisons

Design Consultancy
Landor

Morrisons has seen its market share decline not only halted but reversed, climbing from 11.1% to 11.6% representing an increase in revenue of £350million.



Virgin Premium Economy Super Seat

Client
Virgin Atlantic

Design Consultancies
Virgin Atlantic In-House Design Team, Pearson Lloyd

Working within an existing frame, the new seat reduced the overall shipset weight by 70kg annually saving £136,000.



Comfort – Project, Juicy

Client
Unilever

Design Consultancy
The Juicy Collection for the Comfort range was the most successful fabric conditioner launch of the last three years.



Molton Brown Gift Boxes

Client
Molton Brown

Design Consultancy
Jones Knowles Ritchie

By Christmas Eve 2006, Molton Brown had sold 50% more boxes than by the same time in 2005 delivering over £3million extra sales.



Fellowes Binding and Laminating range

Client
Fellowes

Design Consultancies
Shoal Creative Product Development Technologies

The new design and packaging resulted in a 48% global sales increase and a pre-launch year loss of £1.6million turned around.



Nairn's Brand Revitalisation

Client
Nairn's Oatcakes

Design Consultancy
Tayburn

Sales of Nairn's Oatcakes have increased by almost £4million. Nairn's now accounts for 52.4% of the total oatcake spend.

Silver winners

Another Place	Absolute
BT Baby Monitor	Alloy
Juvederm	Creative Leap
Epadern Tubifast	Dog Star
Thirsty Planet	Elmwood
Make Mine a Builder's	Elmwood
Melbourne Writers Festival	Elmwood
HiQ	Fitch
Royal Mail	Home
Stella Artois	Jones Knowles Ritchie
Vitalograph Lung Function Meter	Kinneir Dufort
Traidcraft	Landor Associates
Famous Grouse	Pearlfisher
Klene Liqueur	SOGOOD
BAA Passenger Communications	The Team
Leeds College of Music	Thompson Brand Partners

Bronze winners

Kuoni Travel Store	20/20
NHS Patient Safety	999 Design
Thomson Grass Valley	Alloy
Heinz 'Beans with Ballz'	Cowan London
Polycell	Elmwood
Bill Oddie's Bird Food	Elmwood
HSBC Sharesave	Greentarget
Prime Magazine	Hemisphere Design
Harrods Herbal Teas	Honey Creative
Aberlour	Lewis Moberly
This Water	Pearlfisher
BT Business	PlayGroup
Virgin Narita Clubhouse	Virgin & Klein Dytham

Scottish update

Well it's all go despite the cold wind of financial collapse and the wintry conditions I experienced in Henley this morning. Life and business go on in the valiant search for some good news and I'm glad to say that at DBA Scotland we're all still smiling.

The end of November will see the first, of what we hope will be many, speaking opportunities in partnership with the Royal Bank of Scotland. We identified some time ago that educating businesses about the DBA and the role it plays in championing effective design is crucial for our region. This lunch-based event will see us talking to a group of key RBS customers about 'Spending Creatively in a Downturn'. The message being that if you as a business are going to invest in design, in these challenging times, you need to ensure you are spending your money wisely. Where better to look for a trusted partner than the DBA membership?

Our committee is also looking at how we can open up speaking opportunities to colleges and universities in order to educate the designers and marketers of tomorrow about our beliefs and objectives. We are looking at building relationships with key journalists in the business press and to give our local membership a platform we're exploring our own microsite/online newsletter to be populated and edited by the local membership.

All this will take time and money and, as with all initiatives, some will fly and some won't, but it's good to be working closely with other likeminded designers on something positive that we all believe in. The perfect tonic for the doom and gloom!

Keith Forbes is Regional Head of the DBA for Scotland and MD of Good Creative.

Regional activity



Would you like to represent your region?

The DBA regularly runs an extensive range of events and training courses across our regional centres: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leicester and Bristol. To deliver this activity, the DBA is supported by a network of Regional Heads of Development who are passionate about developing the communities within each region. We currently have opportunities to fill these roles in the North East and Midlands. To get involved, contact nancy.khurana@dba.org.uk

- Scotland** Keith Forbes, Good Creative keith@good-creative.com
- North West** Alistair Sim, Love a.sim@lovecreative.com
- South West** Tony Marwick, Oakwood tony.marwick@oakwood-dc.com

Liverpool Design Symposium

What does the European capital of culture have to offer us when it comes to design? Well, as it happens, quite a lot. On 23 October the new, and hugely successful, Liverpool Design Symposium took place at the stunning St George's Hall,



pulling together a combination of design speakers and events. The Symposium was a sparkling new addition to Liverpool's creative scene and with over 300 delegates attending the event it looks set to have a long and rosy future ahead of it.

The DBA were very proud to be part of this event alongside co-partners D&AD, Merseyside ACME, Design Initiative, The Drum and Carnyx. Collectively we were able to bring the crème de la crème from the design industry to Merseyside including Matt Pyke from Universal Everything and Bruno Maag from Dalton Maag passionately discussing his love for all things related to typography, plus our very own Adrian Rasdall from Revenue Matters discussing how to survive the credit crunch.

If you missed out this year then do try and attend next year. For more information about the event, visit www.liverpooldesignsymposium.com

The year ahead...

As 2009 comes around don't forget to set a little time aside to consider your business' training needs for the coming year.

Next year the DBA will be delivering key training events to help you drive the professionalism and profitability of your design consultancy. Issues that will be addressed include managing your clients, fine tuning your sales skills and tips on how to make your staff feel more valued.

Email harsha.patel@dba.org.uk for a calendar of events.

The DBA is well known for the high calibre of speakers at our events and training programmes. If you have valuable knowledge and insight that you would like to share with the design industry please contact Harsha. We're looking for experts who understand the design industry, whether design consultant or supplier, and would love to hear from you.

2008 salary survey

**Do you know if you're charging your clients enough?
Are you paying your staff the right salaries?**

The 2008 DBA charge-out rates and salary survey report launches in December and is exclusively available to DBA members. This invaluable publication will allow you to compare your fees and salaries with the industry average and competitively price your services. Be the first to get your hands on a copy by attending the networking launch event, after the Financial Management seminar, on 8 December in London from 6.15pm and hear about key trends that have arisen out of this year's report.

Tickets are £15 + vat and exclusive to members. Visit www.dba.org.uk/events to book your place.



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Training dates for your diary

Presentation Skills with Shan Preddy

- 18 March** One-Day Workshop
- 26 June** One-Day Workshop

Professional Practice Stage One

- 19 June AM** Initiative and resources
- 22 June PM** Written communication skills
- 22 June AM** Time management
- 23 June PM** The design business and its commercial context
- 24 June AM** Legal and business frameworks for design
- 24 June PM** An introduction to people management
- 25 June AM** The client relationship
- 25 June PM** Presentation skills - an intro

Professional Practice Stage Two

- 06 May AM** Negotiation skills
- 07 May PM** The marketing of design consultancy
- 12 May PM** Financial management in design consultancy
- 13 May AM** Terms of business: dealing with clients and suppliers
- 14 May AM** Design & the law
- 14 May PM** Human resources in design
- 18 May AM** Design from client perspective
- 18 May PM** Understanding management issues in design
- 19 May AM** Design consultancy in the international marketplace

Visit www.dba.org.uk/training to book your place.

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