
dba

Insight

Issue 3

Spring/Summer 2005

The trade association for the design industry



**Designers get plastered /
Design Council link to DBA /
DBA Design Effectiveness
Awards / Charge out rates**

Landmark link between DBA and Design Council

The DBA has forged a strategic alliance with the Design Council that will deliver tangible benefits into the design industry. So important is this collaboration, that David Kester, CEO of the Design Council, is to join the DBA's Board of Directors as a Special Adviser. He takes up the position from April 2005.

In line with both organisations' business strategies, this alliance will see them come together to work in three key areas.

First is a significant piece of research that will seek to clearly demonstrate the profile and size of the sector, its experience and capabilities and the main challenges that the industry perceives itself to be facing.

Second, is the launch in Spring 2006 of a national design referral service to be run by the DBA. It will enable design buyers to identify their needs and assist them through the process of selecting the right design agency to meet those requirements.

And third, the development of skills and training initiatives to ensure that people working in the design sector have a range of effective and relevant skills that will boost their business performance.

The cumulative impact of this undertaking will see the DBA strengthen its representation of the sector, an aim that sits at the heart of the Design Council's objectives to be achieved by 2007.

DBA to influence European policy for the next 4 years



DBA member and BEDA representative, Michael Thomson of Design Connect, has been appointed Vice President of the Bureau of European Design Associations (BEDA). He will serve a 2-year term and then take up the position of President from 2007–2009.

This is an important step for British design in Europe. Although the design industry in the UK is recognised as a world leader, until now it has had very little influence or access to policy making in design and innovation at a European level. Through its activities and lobbying work BEDA influences the EU Commission and Parliament in its awareness and undertaking of the role of design in the European economy. This crucial work helps to create a better economic and legislative environment for the practice of design.

As one of BEDA's 32 design organisation members from 20 countries across Europe, the DBA aims to contribute to best practice and policy initiatives in the international design arena. This network also provides the DBA with direct access to other European design associations with whom resources could be pooled on collaborative projects in the near future. (www.beda.org)

Designers get plastered

An ingenious reinterpretation of the traditional sticking plaster has won the DBA Design Challenge 2004/5 in association with The Helen Hamlyn Research Centre. The challenge invited DBA member companies to integrate the principles of inclusive design into their work. Clevername™, designed by healthcare specialists Pearson Matthews, reassesses how a sticking plaster is used and the problems encountered by disabled users. Plasters are the first thing we turn to when we cut our

finger but when the accident involves ourselves, we revert instantly to the status of a one-handed individual doing a job that requires two. Clevername™ is a plaster that is intended for one-handed use from the start.

Other shortlisted entries included a communications toolkit for people with dyslexia by Corporate Edge, a new bus shelter by Lacock Gullam, a kitemark for inclusive products and services by Enterprise IG and a vacuum cleaner by Rodd Industrial Design.



Clevername™ sticking plasters by Pearson Matthews

Design Industry Bodies

This new column will highlight who's who and who does what in design. So let's start with the DBA, your trade association. It's an important label. So what does it mean?

A trade association is usually the single industry association representing providers of particular goods or services in a specific sector. The DBA is the trade association for the design industry. It is a membership-based organisation, the members being businesses and not individuals. The DBA is funded by membership subscriptions. The DBA's governing body, its Board of Directors, is made up of individuals from member consultancies who have a duty of care to represent the industry in determining what the DBA does and how it does it. It also puts forward the collective position of the members, not only to government departments, agencies and regulators, but also the media and other opinion formers. The DBA also provides other services such as the provision of industry statistics, business advice, training, awards and events.

Top 5 booking now

If you register for just one initiative this year these are the top 5 to choose from. Why? Because they are uniquely tailored for design consultancies and created to help you meet your business objectives and improve your earnings, productivity, profile and profitability.

1. DBA Design Effectiveness Awards – enter now see page 7

2. Masterclass Series – take your clients see page 9

3. DBA Training Courses see page 10

4. Business Briefing – Effective people management to drive productivity see below

5. DBA Design Challenge 2005 launches 28 June – for details see www.dba.org.uk

“The DBA business briefing on how to raise the profile of design consultancies was of immense value. The processes and tools we learnt have enabled us to communicate more effectively with the media resulting in more positive and efficient promotion of our business.”

**Sam Gullam,
Lacock Gullam**

Productivity and Profitability Business Briefings

The DBA Business Briefings address challenges raised by members that impact their businesses daily. June sees the DBA tackling the issue of productivity through effective use of human resources. In the Autumn the Business Briefing will be looking at how consultancies might drive profitability through improved financial management.

- Do you struggle to attract the best designers?
- Lost your best client through poor project management?
- Got any idea how much that last project 'actually' cost?
- Lack the confidence to negotiate an hourly rate increase with an existing client?

Both these events are interactive one-day seminars. They are aimed at anyone who is responsible for

managing the people within a consultancy or tasked with delivering the financial targets for the business. The financial event will also be visiting six cities around the UK.

HR experts, accountants and specialists with experience within the creative industries sector will talk about: the development of effective recruitment strategies regardless of the size of your business; staying on the right side of the law; developing your team and loyalty; how to tackle the glass ceiling that results in you losing your most valuable people; developing sound financial management systems; costing your services correctly; how to measure your performance and how to set realistic financial targets.

For more information email elaine.mcdevitt@dba.org.uk or visit www.dba.org.uk

What's in sight

Three strategic objectives continue to drive what we do and where we are heading: to position effective design as the critical link in business processes, to position design as an investment and not a cost and to demonstrate design's impact on business performance.

1 Bringing Business to Design

Raising the professional standards of the industry is paramount. We are now working with ten design businesses to develop models for growth and investment in the design sector. We are also pulling together HR and finance experts to address the challenges that design businesses face on a daily basis. The DBA is also set to launch its own quarterly **Business Indicator Reports**. These will enable consultancies to track their business performance and benchmark themselves against the other design industry subscribers.

2 Bringing Design to Business

What better way is there for us to raise the profile of design to business than through the **DBA Design Effectiveness Awards**. The Awards are unique: they talk a language that clients understand – measurable commercial success that can be proven beyond the shadow of a doubt. To compliment this, we have launched a new training initiative **Design Drives Business** aimed at developing the skills of clients in the procurement and management of design projects. How can they identify the right consultancy to work with, what does success look like for them and how can they be sure that they are getting value for every design pound?

Longer term, spring 2006 sees the launch of the **DBA Design Referral Service** currently being developed with the Design Council.

3 Bringing Design to Government

The DBA is currently working on a landmark initiative with one government department to draw up a code of conduct for the public sector. If adopted by others, this could begin a groundswell of change in government practice towards design.

Charging too little, paying too much?

Ever wondered if you are **undercharging** for your time? Has your **wage bill** increased at a faster rate than your charge out rates? Are you **billing enough** of your time back to your client? Are all your **staff** deserting to join the competition?

Every year the DBA produces a valuable report that enables DBA member consultancies to benchmark their own charge out rates and salaries against the industry standard. Industry reports of this nature usually cost up to £400 – DBA members receive the report exclusively and free of charge.

The 2004 report delivered some insightful results:

- Charge out rates increased 11% across the board, although consultancies in London were able to charge rates 26% higher than outside the capital.
- 2004 was definitely the year for people working in business development in London – they earned 71% more than their counterparts elsewhere in the UK. In contrast the wages earned by production managers in the rest of the UK almost caught up with London wages.
- Charge out rates for those working in retail and digital services increased the most between 2003 and 2004, while rates for those in product design and packaging increased only slightly.

This free report, a valuable tool for setting your charge out rates and salaries, is only available to DBA members. The survey to compile the data for the next report will be issued in April and the 2005 report will be available this summer.

Join the DBA now to ensure that your company is included in the survey thereby making the report even more relevant to your business.

“The charge out rates and salary report is worth the membership fee alone.”

**Giles Redmayne,
Reef Design
Management**

DBA/NESTA Business Growth Initiative



January saw the launch of Small / Medium / Large, an initiative aimed at developing the business strategy and management capabilities of 10 firms with a view to them growing their businesses. The selection process was rigorous and ten consultancies were selected for this programme of £50,000 worth of business consultancy and training over the coming year. Those selected stood out as businesses that had firm foundations in place that this scheme could build upon. It is hoped that they will act as role models for the industry in the months and years to come.

Working with Pembridge Partner Ltd, our business partners in this process, each firm is starting out on this journey by clarifying the personal goals of the directors running each firm. They'll be mapping out what their firm needs to do to get from where it is now to where the directors want it to be. After that the directors are supported as they follow their individual map with mentoring and with training from the DBA. We'll bring you updates as the initiative progresses.

The 10 successful design consultancies are: 442 Design, Edinburgh; Alloy Design, Farnham; Black i, Tunbridge Wells; Elfen, Cardiff; Mode, London; Northbank Design, Bath; Reach, Bristol; Rodd Design, Lyndhurst; Seachange, London and Vivado, Chelmsford.

Interesting Insights

The selection process was designed in such a way as to give feedback to the DBA and NESTA. Conducted by Pembridge Partners Ltd, some interesting insights were gained although it must be noted that this was a micro sample of only 25 firms. Do some of these ring true for your business:

- **92% of the firms identified business strategy and planning skills as their biggest need** People with creative backgrounds without the necessary business skills traditionally struggle to push their companies forward.
- **Many of the design firms' had clear commercial ambitions** These ambitions were articulated financially – very different from other creative industry sectors such as the UK independent TV sector of which Pembridge Partners Ltd has extensive knowledge.
- **A quarter of the firms had no management accounts** In commercial terms, they are 'driving blind' – a dangerous way to run a business. Companies have to decide if they are managing a hobby to fulfil their lifestyle ambitions or running a business.
- **Market positioning was a big concern for 33%** A third of firms found it hard to say what really made them different from their competitors and even those who said they were confident about that, generally lacked evidence to back up their claims. Less than a quarter had actually sat down to map out their potential customers and competitors and almost a third of firms did no real marketing.

The DBA offers training courses that can solve a number of these fundamental issues. Everything from the marketing of a design consultancy to financial management is covered in our professional practice courses. We are also running a series of Business Briefings focusing on how to increase productivity and profitability through effective people and financial management skills. One-to-one mentoring should also be considered. For more information on our events and courses visit www.dba.org.uk

Members Outlook



Like everyone in a business environment I am interested in return on investment. On becoming a member of the DBA I had to make sure we utilised the services available to ensure value for money.

In the last year, the information we have gathered from the diverse programme of DBA events includes investigating overseas markets, assessing our public relations, freelancer agreements and assessing the potential of a new work management system. The performance ratios and various survey results have even assisted in our decision making for the business.

Perhaps one of the most understated benefits of membership is the networking platform it provides. Sharing best working practices with fellow members must surely give all design consultancies the chance to raise standards for the industry as a whole and help communicate its professionalism. Furthermore, we feel that through our participation and involvement we can help shape the services offered to fellow members and thereby the direction of the industry as a whole.

We also gained an exciting new client, Golden Wonder, via our presence on the DBA's online directory adding to our existing portfolio of FMCG brands.

And one final thought – in addition to a significant return on investment we also happen to find membership great fun!

Trevor Flannery, Sales Director, Stocks Taylor Benson



Stocks Taylor Benson gained Golden Wonder as a valuable client via the DBA's online directory

Membership benefits

There are three key areas where the DBA will help you and your team:

Performance

Tools to improve the performance of your business

- **Free** business management advice including factsheets and guidelines
- **Free** charge out rates report
- **Free** legal advice
- **Preferential** insurance rates

People

Investing in the individuals within your business

- **Discounted** training courses for all levels developed by industry experts
- **Discounted** business focused events on issues that affect you
- **Discounted** networking events with inspirational speakers

Profile

Raising awareness of your business and the design industry

- **Free** page in the DBA online directory
- **Exclusive** use of the DBA member logo in credentials pitches
- **Alignment** with the DBA design effectiveness message

Everything the DBA offers is tailored to your design business. Join now.

Contact Adam or Gemma on
020 7251 9229 or
adam.fennelow@dba.org.uk
gemma.kay@dba.org.uk

“The DBA's services are invaluable and more than save me the cost of our membership fee.”
**Sally Smith,
The Studio-Blackheath**

Events and Awards

Business Briefings

Business growth 1:
Effective people management to drive productivity

2 London

Business growth 2:
Financial management to drive profitability

Birmingham
Leeds

Manchester
Edinburgh

Bristol
8 London

Masterclasses

Presentations by clients on the use of effective design

Birmingham
London

10 Leeds
Manchester

Glasgow

Bristol
London

London

DBA Design Challenge

28 London
Launch event

Judging
(Ceremony
January 2006)

DBA AGM – members only

7 London

London Design Festival

15 – 30 London

DBA Open Studios Tour

21 London

DBA/loD Conference

27 London

DBA Design Effectiveness Awards

Call for entries launch/deadline

6 Launch

8 Deadline

Awards ceremony

London

Training

Presentation Skills
One-day workshop – Level 2

17, 18 London

22 London

4 London

15,16 London

12 London

4 London

Professional Practice Stage One
Available as a four-day summer school or 8 half-day workshops– Level 1

20, 21, 22, 23
London

Professional Practice Stage Two
Available as a whole course or 10 half-day workshops – Level 2

4, 5, 11, 12, 16,
24 London

13, 14 , 19, 20, 25,
31 London

Design Does It – Three-day course for public sector clients only

23, 30 London

7 London

Design Drives Business – Two-day course for commercial clients only

London

London

Other events

PDA Congress www.pda-europe.com

19,20,21 Brussels

Product Design Summit www.centaurconferences.com

19, 20 London

Packaging Innovation Show www.packaginginnovationshow.com

27, 28, 29
Birmingham

Key

Level 1:
Junior staff within
their first 3 years
of employment

Level 2:
Middle to senior
level staff

Call for Entries

DBA Design Effectiveness Awards 2005 Entry deadline: Wednesday 8 June 2005

Business results are the bottom line for your clients

Winners and finalists join an elite list of companies who can categorically prove to their clients that they can make a difference to their bottom line.

Why enter?

- **Stand out on a pitch list:** Independent acknowledgement that your company delivers commercially effective design for your clients
- **PR:** Inclusion in a national campaign targeting business and consumer publications including the *Financial Times*, *Marketing Week*, *Evening Standard* and *Design Week*
- **Exposure:** Promotion at DBA events and exhibitions in the UK and abroad
- **New business opportunities:** Featured on the DBA website and in the DBA Effectiveness Handbook distributed to 3000 design buyers
- **Profile:** A place in the much coveted DBA Effectiveness League Table
- **Positioning:** Your company aligned with the Design Effectiveness message

The DBA Design Effectiveness Awards are widely recognised as the most important measure of effective design. They are entered jointly by the design agency and their client or by the company design team. Entries are judged by a panel of senior business figures carefully chosen for their business experience and acumen.

The judging panel includes:

Chairman of the Judges

Raymond Turner, Design Leadership Consultant and former Group Design Director, BAA

David Arkwright, Global Brand Director, Unilever

Richard Beard, Launch Events & Exhibitions Manager, Ford of Europe

Christian Cull, Marketing Director, Waitrose
Christine Evans, Head of Brand Management, Inland Revenue

Joe Ferry, Head of Design, Virgin Atlantic

Cath Keers, Customer Director, O2
Elizabeth Lockwood, Head of Marketing, Land Securities

Alan McIntyre, Network Marketing Director, Scottish Enterprise

The Small Print

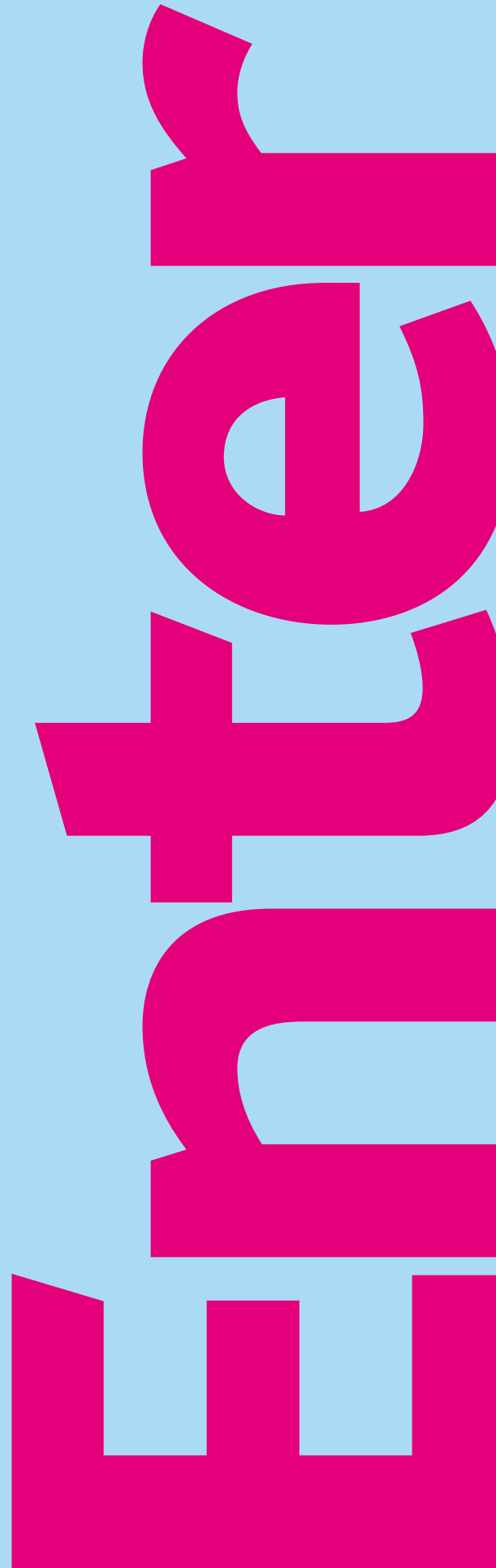
There are 23 Awards across 12 categories including corporate/brand identity, product, interiors, print, packaging, digital media and design management.

Any projects, either re-designs or new products, which demonstrate the effectiveness of design in significant situations for your client's brand or company can be entered.

Projects may have been launched at any time. However your entry must include some evidence collated after 1 January 2004.

DBA members are eligible for up to 50% discount on their entry fee.

For full details on how to enter visit www.dba.org.uk or call Hannah Paterson at the DBA on 020 7251 9229 or email hannah.paterson@dba.org.uk



"Potential clients will queue up to work with a company that has a few DBA Design Effectiveness Awards." **Richard Murray, Director, Williams Murray Hamm**

"We're very proud of our ranking in the top three in the DBA Design Effectiveness Awards League Table. The Awards are the global benchmark of commercial effectiveness and we enter not just for the sake of it, but because it gives our clients the proof of quantifiable results they need." **Johnathan Sands, Chairman, Elmwood**

"We judge ourselves by the influence and impact on our clients' organisations. For us the DBA Design Effectiveness Awards is an important scheme in terms of both exposure and credibility for our business. Our success in these Awards over the years helps to underpin our offer and reassures prospective clients that we can deliver both in the excellence of our ideas but also in commercial terms." **Steve Richards, Chief Operating Officer, Wolff Olins**

"There's no favouritism, no subjectivity, no doubt with the DBA Design Effectiveness Awards, just fact – the design solution worked. For smaller agencies it's good to compete on a level playing field as well as prove to clients that their work works." **Roger Felton, Managing Director, Felton Communications**

Download your entry form at www.dba.org.uk today

DBA Masterclass Series

The DBA Masterclasses are a unique series of presentations given by business leaders who have used design effectively within their business. Design can have both tangible and intangible returns on investment. The Masterclass presenters will focus on the impact of design on their whole organisation and how it can be used as a strategic business tool.

Leeds Masterclass

To the Manor Born – £30k to £1m in two years
Tuesday 10 May 2005 at 7pm

After two years of local success selling under the brand name Manor Born, Debbie and Andrew Keeble felt something was needed to catapult their business into the mainstream and break their local supplier image. They attributed the majority of their marketing budget to a rebranding by Elmwood with a view to increasing sales and achieve a greater national presence in supermarkets. Their investment in design was more than repaid as their business grew from sales of £30k in 2001 to over £1m in 2003. The rebranding and new packaging led to their monthly turnover between June and September 2002 shooting up by 57% – a result achieved with no other communication and no price changes. This event is an excellent opportunity for designers to hear a SME client's perspective on the design process and join in the debate about the value of investing in effective design. If you have a client who needs to see evidence that design really is a strategic tool then bring them with you.



Masterclass presentations will take place around the UK during Spring/Summer 2005 in Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Bristol, London and Leeds. For more information on this Masterclass or the one closest to you visit www.dba.org.uk or email elaine.mcdevitt@dba.org.uk

Developing new business overseas

February and March saw a series of successful DBA Business Briefings around the country on how design consultancies would increase their turnover by growing their business overseas. UK Trade & Investment and Business Links covered the practicalities of working overseas and the availability of financial help. They also included case studies from design companies who are successfully exporting their services to a number of different countries. Notes are available for download from the events section of the DBA website.

“Informative and thought provoking – entering new markets is a key opportunity and this seminar has been invaluable for our preparation.”
Julie Randall, Rufus Leonard

Total Packaging Challenge to Get Smart



The packaging design community is being challenged to Get Smart at this year's Packaging Innovation Show from 27–29 September at the Birmingham NEC.

The Get Smart 2020 Vision Design Challenge asks the design community to envisage how smart, active and other intelligent packaging techniques, plus designers' own visionary ideas can be used to create consumer-centred designs for the year 2020. Designers are being asked to consider how shoppers interact with packs both at point of sale and in the consumer environment.

The aim is to inspire creative thinking throughout the supply chain and in particular to encourage consumer-driven answers for future FMCG markets.

Entry forms and further information available from murphy-mmassociates@tiscali.co.uk

Training courses for you and your team

What DBA training does for your business

By investing in the individuals in your company you advance both the professional development of your staff and your business.

- Become more effective in what you do
- Impact the performance of your business
- Increase your prospects for promotion

DBA training courses cover all aspects of professional development. Courses include:

Presentation skills

Professional practice stage 1 – including time management, communication skills, the client perspective

Professional practice stage 2 – including negotiation skills, marketing, financial management, design law

For full course details and a booking form visit www.dba.org.uk

What DBA training did for me



I guess at Wire, we are like most other small design companies, we loved designing and did what we had to on the business side to keep us in beer. I looked at the DBA courses but immediately acted like a tight designer and convinced myself that I pretty much knew what I was doing. It wasn't until I'd had another day of grief with a client who didn't understand what we were doing and didn't want to pay us much money that I decided to give it a go.

It's hard to say where I benefited most. I reckon that I took about two new memorable and practical things from just about every course. I'd won lots of pitches and done loads of presentations over seven years and was really sceptical about the presentation skills course. I didn't want to learn slick presentation tricks and be turned into a big agency smarm-ball. I was shocked to learn that you could keep your integrity but present so that clients completely understood you and your ideas. In the next month, we went through three, big, difficult pitches and walked away with all of them. It's massively helped with presenting initial ideas too once the projects started. I'll have to accept what the trainer said 'good presenters are made and not born.'

I hate finances and I switch off every time an accountant starts talking but the simplicity and ideas behind the financial planning and management courses have changed the way we operate and monitor our pipeline and growth. The whole experience has changed my approach to the design business. It's a revelation to realise that you can get more creative control whilst making more money. We've now agreed a direction for the company and we'll be expanding into other areas and a new studio in the next year and all without financial risk. We're even about to do our first ever marketing campaign.
John Corcoran, Director, Wire Design

Training courses for your clients

The DBA provides training courses for both public sector and commercial clients to address the challenges they face when commissioning design. The courses will enable your clients to manage the design process more effectively and ultimately maximise their investment in design.

What DBA training did for me

Having recently moved to a new marketing role I found the 'Design Does It' course gave me excellent grounding for my new position.

It was great to hear from such a wide range of speakers who all had in-depth public sector knowledge which meant that everything covered during the course was relevant to me. It was also refreshing to meet the other delegates who face similar challenges enabling us to share best practice tips.

The key benefit for me was learning useful frameworks that I was able to apply to my work straight away. The structure of the course enabled me to input directly into one of my live projects and put everything I was learning into practice. Specifically I was able to learn how to brief and work with consultancies more effectively, how to evaluate concepts and how to present the ideas back into my colleagues internally. And once again, we were able to put our new tools into practice by working with a design consultancy over two of the workshop days.

'Design Does It' was an excellent course. I have already recommended it to colleagues.

Sarah Wright, Marketing & Brand Co-ordinator, Land Registry

See pages 5–6 for course dates. For full course details and to book visit www.dba.org.uk

“The DBA Professional Practice Course was by far and away the most relevant and useful course I have ever been on.”

Chris Chatfield, Senior Graphic Designer, CIPD



**We can
improve your:**

**Performance
People
Profile**

**Join your trade
association
today.**

**Call Gemma or Adam on 020 7251 9229
Or email gemma.kay@dba.org.uk
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