



# CONTINUING EDUCATION

## CENTER FOR DESIGN AND BUSINESS

[www.centerdesignbusiness.org](http://www.centerdesignbusiness.org)

This joint venture between Bryant University and Rhode Island **School of Design** offers continuing-education programs, **roundtables** and conferences on business and **design topics** for entrepreneurs and creative professionals.

## PRATT INSTITUTE [www.pratt.edu/ad/dm](http://www.pratt.edu/ad/dm)

Pratt offers a master's degree in design management, the first of its kind in the U.S. The two-year program trains professionals from all design disciplines to effectively manage their own practices, to grasp and solve key business problems and to assume leadership roles in corporate environments.

## STANFORD INSTITUTE OF DESIGN

[www.stanford.edu/group/dschool/index.html](http://www.stanford.edu/group/dschool/index.html)

A division of Stanford University, the institute (dubbed d.school) is part academic program, part cross-disciplinary think tank and **part design lab**, where students, teachers and industry professionals from various disciplines can collaborate and learn.

are taught to "think like designers." With the current focus on design and innovation, the need for designers to have a voice in the business world is more important than ever.

If you've ever felt drawn to the business side of design, you're not alone. More and more experienced designers are developing their business and management skills to move their careers into a new arena: design management.

## INTERSECTION OF DESIGN AND BUSINESS

Design management is a fairly new field in the U.S.; it's more widely known and recognized in the U.K. and is emerging in other parts of the world, as well. However, the term "design management" is often misunderstood, because its meaning has evolved from the traditional definition of managing a design department or firm.

Technically, design management is the identification and allocation of creative assets within an organization to create strategic, sustainable advantage. Simply, design management is design-minded leadership. Design management is the bridge between design and business. It moves design beyond the aesthetic to change experiences, organizations and opportunities—and design managers are trained specialists in this role.

In many companies, design is an afterthought rather than a central component of every strategic decision. Mary McBride, director of the graduate design management program at Pratt Institute's Manhattan campus and a partner in Strategies for Planned Change in New York City, teaches students and clients that design needs a strong voice within an organization in order to fully support corporate strategy. "At the point where executives are having conversations about the

company's strategic intent," McBride explains, "designers need to be directly involved in that conversation, not told about that conversation later. Then designers can say, for example, 'If our intention is to be profitable, we can do the following things. If our intention is to also be known as a company that cares about its community, we cannot do the following things.' Design executes directly on intention."

Successful organizations understand this and use design to increase company performance. Apple, for example, is more than a computer company that makes well-designed products. It has designed the brand, the customer experience, the retail and online environments, and the customer culture. The innovative company recognizes opportunities both within and outside the organization that can improve aesthetics, user experience, quality and service. And in return, Apple has an incredibly devout—almost cult-like—following of happy customers who identify with the Apple experience and brand.

Witnessing such successes, more corporate leaders are catching on, and the list of design-driven companies is steadily growing. To further sway executives, organizations such as The Design Council in London and the Design Management Institute in Boston educate businesses, designers and consumers about the power of design and its impact on company performance. Even companies that fully recognize the value of design can find new opportunities to discover untapped creative resources in their organizations.

## A BLACK-AND-WHITE CASE

Creative assets are operational assets that, when used strategically, can add value to the business. Branding specialist, educator and design manager William Schroeder explains: "Within the realm of graphic design, creative assets should be seen as everything visual attached to the brand. For example, print materials, premium and gift items, retail environments and signage, uniforms—anything physical or visual that has been designed, including the office space, the choice of fabric on the sofa—all can be seen as creative assets.

"Brand helps drive the success of the organization," Schroeder continues, "and the strategic management of design is an important part of that success."

After a decade of consulting and working for branding firms in New York City and London, Schroeder now works in-house at the Manhattan headquarters for the global law firm White & Case. While few people would typically associate law firms with design, according to Schroeder, White & Case is an increasingly design-focused firm that uses creative assets to support its brand attributes: bold, innovative, forward-moving and contemporary. Ideally, clients experience these attributes in every contact and communication with the firm.

When clients enter the London office, for instance, they see brushed-aluminum signage, glass walls, stone floors and glass elevators, which help to tell a visual story of a bold and innovative firm. The design of every creative asset—from the texture of the walls to the 38»

# Anúncio

music playing in the cafeteria—helps to strategically support the firm's brand promise. White & Case's modern approach reinforces clients' expectations that they'll meet with smart, forward-thinking professionals who will help to solve their legal problems in a contemporary fashion.

However well-designed the assets, though, a strong brand must be supported by a quality product or service. Because the components rely on one another, creative assets alone are difficult to measure in terms of financial success. Fortunately, published case studies and financial reports are becoming more available to support what designers have known all along—that good design is good business.

For example, a recent study by The Design Council tracked the stock market performance of design-award winning companies in the U.K. during a 10-year period. Not surprisingly, the design-led companies outperformed the FTSE 100 Index (an index of the 100 most highly capitalized companies traded on the London Stock Exchange) by more than 200%. The Design Index report (available online at [www.designcouncil.org](http://www.designcouncil.org)) demonstrates the direct effect of design on company performance and provides tangible evidence to help persuade corporate executives.

## **CONNECTING THROUGH TEAMWORK**

Increased financial performance isn't the only rationale for incorporating the discipline of design management into a company. Design can be a pathway to positive change and innovation, as well. Design management aims to add design thinking to every area of the company—from the employees to executives. With a seat at the boardroom table, design has an executive voice that aligns design with the company's strategy. It connects design to the top level and validates the role of designers within the organization.

Design management also connects designers with one another. In many organizations, the design and interactive departments work independently and produce materials based on visual aesthetics rather than corporate objectives. Without collaboration, designers have limited exposure to new ideas and external issues, such as current trends and language barriers. Successful design management brings together the design of various disciplines—architects, interior designers, graphic designers, web designers, product designers, developers—to work together to share processes, resources and information.

In addition, design management links the unified design departments with the non-design divisions of the company to involve designers in every project from the beginning. Multidisciplinary teamwork, including design, helps develop better products and services in the best interests of the designers, the company, the customers, and the local and global communities.

"We try to think responsibly about the messages we send to our clients," Schroeder says about the designers at White & Case. "When selecting imagery for our materials, it's more than just choosing an interesting photograph. We ask: Who is going to see this image? What are they going to think when they look at it? 40»

## RESOURCES

### BUSINESSWEEK: INNOVATION & DESIGN

[www.businessweek.com/innovate/index.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/innovate/index.htm)

This site serves as a portal to present research and thinking on design and innovation in the business world.

### FAST COMPANY'S DESIGN RESOURCE CENTER

[www.fastcompany.com/resources/design](http://www.fastcompany.com/resources/design)

Columnists examine the design of business and the business of design to explore ways for leaders to gain competitive advantage by leveraging design principles in their work, their prod-

### NEXTDESIGN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE [www.nextd.org](http://www.nextd.org)

**NextD** aims to expand design's reach, reinvent design leadership and **discuss** ways to meet the challenges of cross-disciplinary **design and** innovation leadership in the 21st century.

How does the image reinforce what we stand for as an organization? Since we're a global organization, we work hard to design our messages and visuals to resonate with many different cultures."

This global design consciousness is a result of thinking about design strategically. Design managers drive the growth of design, increase awareness in the corporate arena, encourage creativity and innovation, and support designers.

## CALLING ALL DESIGN LEADERS

Bringing all these elements together requires determination and big-picture vision. Design managers enter the field because they want to expand their business skills, but most feel the call of design leadership. Creatives can build their design-management abilities by taking business classes and gaining real-world experience. While an advanced degree isn't required, it's a plus; programs that are specifically oriented toward design management, like Pratt's, offer a unique mix of creative and business learning not available in traditional MFA or MBA schooling.

"Students are entering Pratt's graduate program from all design disciplines," McBride says. "They seem to have one thing in common: They're talented, creative professionals who want to take on different sets of responsibilities—more directive, more managerial, more strategic—even if it takes them away from the thing that they love to do most creatively. They're signing up for strategic leadership of design rather than drawing, illustrating, building and fabricating."

That was the case for designer and business owner Denise Anderson. When she decided to advance her career, Anderson entered the design management graduate program at Pratt. "Design management is an area that bridges the gap between design and business," Anderson says. "To be a true design leader, I knew this had to be my next step."

Anderson's current position as director of marketing services for the New York City-based financial services firm Pershing LLC, gives her the opportunity

Anúncio

## ORGANIZATIONS

**CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE DESIGN** [www.cfsd.org.uk](http://www.cfsd.org.uk)

CfSD facilitates innovative thinking, discussion and research on eco-design and the environmental, economic, ethical and social considerations in product and service development and design.

**CORPORATE DESIGN FOUNDATION** [www.cdf.org](http://www.cdf.org)

CDF provides resources for business leaders, designers, educators and students who are interested in the integration of design and business.

**DESIGN COUNCIL** [www.designcouncil.org](http://www.designcouncil.org)

The Design Council is the premier design-management organization in the U.K. and a world leader in promoting the vital role of design in a modern economy. It offers information and support services for business managers, educators and designers.

**DESIGN MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE** [www.dmi.org](http://www.dmi.org)

DMI brings together design and business professionals to raise awareness across all categories of design by providing resources, training, tools, conferences, seminars and publications.

to put her education into practice. "True innovation can only come from an environment that nurtures and integrates creative thinking," Anderson says. "Someone with the right expertise has to make a business case for investing in and supporting design as a core competency for innovation."

## A FUTURE OF POSSIBILITIES

As businesses continue to realize the potential of design, exciting opportunities should emerge for creative professionals. "Design and business must understand each other's language," Anderson explains. "When everyone understands the value of design and the role of creativity, and idea-making is encouraged—even required—then you have fertile ground for innovation."

Working together to meet the growing demands of a modern economy is an opportunity to build a new future for enterprise in the 21st century. It requires organization, administration, direction and an ability to imagine new possibilities. Designers are able to look at a problem and question, "What if this was completely blank and I could start all over again?"

"That kind of intelligence is now really necessary," McBride says. "It's a creative intelligence that enjoys problem-solving and can find opportunities in places where other people have given up. That's way past strategic—that's leadership by design." HOW

Kristin *Leu* has a BFA in graphic design and a master's *degree in* design management from Pratt Institute. She's design director at New York City-based Instinet and also runs her own company, LeuDesign. [ferisleu@yahoo.com](mailto:ferisleu@yahoo.com)

**DENISE ANDERSON** JERSEY CITY, NJ [danderson@pershing.com](mailto:danderson@pershing.com)

**MARY MCBRIDE** NEW YORK CITY [dmapratt.edu](mailto:dmapratt.edu)

**WILLIAM SCHROEDER** NEW YORK CITY [www.whitecase.com](http://www.whitecase.com)

# Anúncio