



SEE DESIGN

Sharing Experience
on Design Support
for SMEs

Case Study of Good Design Support Practice

This case study is a snapshot of activities taking place during the lifespan of the SEEdesign project from 2005 to 2007. For updated information please contact the organisations directly.

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Australia

Design for Business Conference

lab.3000



THE
PREMIER'S
DESIGN
AWARDS

VICTORIA 2006

The Design for Business and Business for Design conference was a major component of the State of Design programme delivered by lab.3000 during October 2006.

lab.3000 was established in Melbourne, Australia in 2003 as a centre of excellence in design and is funded by the Victorian Government and RMIT University. The conference was organised by the Business Bureau division of lab.3000 which connects clusters of businesses with research institutions to create and develop innovative and value-adding products, processes and services.

This inaugural event aimed to promote and celebrate Victoria's design excellence, creativity and innovation, position Victoria as an international design leader and demonstrate how design can be utilised as an economic driver.

It was targeted at business executives and managers from the private, public and design sectors and was delivered by Craig Kamber with some additional part-time support. Craig is Manager of the Business Bureau within lab.3000 and a senior executive with experience in the creative and design sectors. His background encompasses the private and public sectors including Government, media, education and cultural institutions and industry in Australia and abroad.

The design of the event was informed by the need to balance the strategic direction and budget of lab.3000 with the needs and expectations of their customers. These were assessed via a combination of factors including their regular interaction with lab.3000 and research/focus groups with key design organisations. The theme for the conference was the key theme for lab.3000 during 2006 which had already been determined by the Director – Associate Professor Di Fleming.

Craig identified and secured the involvement of appropriate speakers and selected the presentation content. Presenters were chosen in order to reflect a cross section of the diversity of where design can have a positive impact within business – whether by a product, process or service. Venue logistics and event management

issues were dealt with and the event was marketed via print materials, direct mailing and an online presence. The conference sponsors included the Design Institute of Australia (DIA) and Lexus

15 organisations gave presentations at the conference including design companies, international design organisations, and representatives of the branding, food, automotive, media and nanotechnology sectors. It aimed to position Melbourne as an internationally recognised design capital, raise industry awareness of the business value of design, create export opportunities and enhance the export capabilities of Victorian designers. The conference was fully subscribed with more than 120 paying participants from Government, industry, SMEs and design professions.

The conference enabled international and Victorian business leaders and design professionals to articulate and explore the real benefits of the investment in design and its contribution to the economic growth of Victoria. It provided a key networking opportunity for industry and design professionals, strengthening key relationships within and between Government, business, manufacturing and design sectors.

Whilst the conference was considered a successful event which attracted a large and diverse audience and enhanced networking and communication between the different sectors, lab.3000 states that it is an ongoing challenge to get SMEs to embrace the positive economic effects of design in business and its beneficial impact on their bottom line.

For more information on the conference programme and speakers go to:

www.stateofdesign.com.au/events_conference_dffbdf.php

www.stateofdesign.com.au/events_conference_dffbdf.php