

design^{WEEK}

Creative Survey 2010

Charting the success
of top UK talent

Giant topplers

Digital design and interaction consultancies have made a huge impact on this year's Design Week Awards tables. Though often ignored in major design awards, their ability to maintain creativity across a whole campaign really justifies their inclusion among traditional high-scorers. **Design Week** takes a look at the creative movers and shakers

There has been a slight yet significant shift at the top end of the charts, with a couple of groups finally managing to breach the duopoly of The Partners and Apple Design Group, which for the past couple of years have alternated in first or second slot in both of the main league tables.

The Partners continues to dominate the Top 50 table for all awards wins, but Apple has been elbowed into third place by digital giant AKQA. Other high achievers from interaction design include Poke and BBC Interactive, which shows the impact our decision to broaden out the creative survey to take in digital awards the Webby's and the Bimas has had on the rankings.

No one can doubt the creative prowess of the likes of The Partners, which has topped the charts more often than any other consultancy. However, we believe that it is time to draw interaction design more closely to the heart of design, rather than leave it in the wasteland between design and advertising. It makes our trawl more comprehensive and indicative of the future of design.

The upshot is that 13 digital groups make their entrance this year. This demonstrates the talent the UK has in digital design, given that most interaction awards are international. The proliferation of new names, meanwhile, indicates how important award wins are to that sector. Interestingly though, Imagination's chart debut can be directly attributed to its digital strength, as can Guardian Media Group's.

But it's not all about digital, and it's good to see branding and print group Purpose making its way into the charts. Consistently good work for clients such as English Farming and Food Partnerships has paid off for Rob Howsam and his team. Manchester group Music, meanwhile, had a bumper year, particularly in the Design Week Awards and Benchmarks, to earn its 19th position, while Scotland's creative giant Tayburn makes its debut mainly through a string of wins in the Scottish Design Awards.

Over in the UK charts, **Hat-Trick Design** leapfrogs both The Partners and Apple to claim pride of place, Turner Duckworth storms into fourth place and Williams Murray Hamm makes a steep ascent up the charts to claim joint fifth position with Johnson Banks. One of the main drivers of these changes is the fact that this year we have included the Benchmarks alongside the more established Design Week and D&AD Awards. This is on the grounds that it is, if anything, harder to achieve creative quality across a branding programme or campaign than in the single piece of work that has more likely been honoured by the Design Week Awards and D&AD.

Hat-Trick has virtually cornered the market for Benchmarks wins over the past couple of years, with projects such as the British Heart Foundation's outstanding Small Creature campaign which helps children face bereavement over loved ones through heart disease. This is reflected in a massive hike in points this year and new-found supremacy.

Similarly, Turner Duckworth owes its impressive leap

TOP 50 - UK Awards 2010

2010	2009	Company	Award points	Disciplines
1	3	Hat-Trick Design	216	BCFGI
2	1	Apple Design Group	190	CHI
3	2	The Partners	173	BCFGHI
4	10	Turner Duckworth	79	BFI
5=	5	Johnson Banks	63	BCDFG
5=	26	Williams Murray Hamm	63	BFGI
7	38	Purpose	55	BDFG
8	4	GBH	54	BCFG
9=	32	Red Bee Media	52	C
9=	9	Mark Studio	52	BFG
11	-	Music	46	BFGI
12=	20	Channel 4/E4/Film4/4Creative	42	C
12=	12	NB Studio	42	BFG
14	-	B&W Studio	41	BFG
15=	8	The Chase	40	BCDFGI
15=	29	Muma	40	DE
15=	6	Love	40	ACEFGI
18=	17	Fitch	38	BCFH
18=	17	Moving Brands	38	BCDFG
20	11	Funnely Enough	36	H
21	12	Matt Dent	35	H
22	29	Pearson Lloyd	30	H
23	35	True North	29	BCFG
24=	12	Poke	28	C
24=	12	Radford Wallis	28	BCDFG
26	27	Navyblue	27	BCFG
27=	-	Landor Associates	26	BF
27=	-	Rose Design	26	BCG
29=	-	HGV	25	B
29=	22	This is Real Art	25	CG
29=	22	Michael Peters and Partners	25	BF
32=	27	Studio 8 Design	24	BFG
32=	-	RKCR/Y&R	24	C
34	43	Applied Information Group	20	BCDFGHI
35=	7	Virgin Atlantic Airways	19	EH
35=	-	Magpie Studios	19	BFG
37	-	Elmwood	18	BCDFGI
38=	38	Royal Mail	17	GH
38=	-	Blast Design	17	BG
38=	25	Pearlfisher	17	BF
41	-	Jason Bruges Studio	16	CDIH
42=	34	Seymour Powell	15	H
42=	12	Studio Myerscough	15	BDDFGH
42=	-	The Brand Union	15	BCFGI
45=	-	Bostock & Pollitt	14	BCDG
45=	43	S4C	14	C
45=	-	Coy Communications	14	ABC
48=	-	Lambie-Nairn	13	BC
48=	-	Cartlidge Levene	13	BDG
48=	-	Terence Woodgate & John Barnard	13	H

Disciplines key

A = Advertising
 B = Corporate branding
 C = Digital
 D = Exhibitions
 E = Interiors
 F = Packaging
 G = Print
 H = Product
 I = Other
 -

up the charts to the success of the Coca-Cola rebrand in the Benchmarks, having already taken honours last year in the D&AD and Design Week Awards. Williams Murray Hamm, meanwhile, is back with a bang after a couple of years of relative quiet, partly because of its work on Jamie Oliver's Recipease food and kitchen shop where people can learn to cook, which did well in a couple of award schemes including the Benchmarks.

Particularly welcome in the UK awards chart this year are London architect Muma – which simultaneously makes its debut in the 'all awards' listings – and architect-cum-lighting genius-cum-environmental artist Jason Bruges Studio, which makes its chart debut. We don't see enough interiors and exhibitions teams making the grade, partly because there are fewer awards schemes in these areas.

Muma notched up extra points by winning a D&AD Yellow Pencil for the prestigious Medieval & Renaissance Galleries at London's Victoria & Albert Museum – a rare feat for a UK design group these days. Jason Bruges Studio's successful projects, meanwhile, included Mirror Mirror, again for the V&A with moving image event pioneer Onedotzero.

Product groups are rarer in the main charts, with even Apple owing much of its success this year to its D&AD Black Pencil-winning website and Virgin Atlantic Airways, now bereft of Joe Ferry, who has moved to Intercontinental Hotels, largely resting on past laurels. Pearson Lloyd and Seymour Powell continue to feature in the UK awards charts, but are eclipsed by digital consultancies in the broader table. Again, there are very few awards schemes for such groups to enter.

In terms of geographical spread, Northern groups appear to be doing well at present. Manchester's Love, Mark Studio and True North have, for example, become chart-regulars, alongside Leeds-based global group Elmwood, which enters the UK awards chart this year, and Coy Communications run by Manchester's hugely creative, if a tad eccentric, Mark Denton. But it is good to see the tiny Leeds-based B&W Studio shooting into the UK charts for its work for homelessness charity St George's Crypt, which won Best of Show in the Design Week Awards. It is also heartening to see Music, from Manchester, with a portfolio of award wins that clearly demonstrates that its superb pale blue branding for Manchester City Football Club and its Eastlands stadium wasn't just a one-off.

Many of the top groups in these charts are relatively small, challenging the might of the likes of Apple, and most are independent. But the bigger groups and conglomerates are picking up. WPP's creative supergroup The Partners is joined this year by stablemates Fitch, Landor Associates, The Brand Union and Lambie-Nairn in the UK charts and Fitch and Landor in the general table.

It all goes to show that size and location don't have a direct bearing on creative talent or awards success. That can come from anywhere, as long as designers are sufficiently confident in their work to submit it for the scrutiny of their peers. ■

Growing reputation

Reflecting on a client-driven ranking, **Lynda Relph-Knight** looks at the success of chart-topper Seymour Powell and suggests it is a consultancy's reputation, not necessarily its awards prowess, that draws in the clients

It is great news that Seymour Powell has finally topped a chart for creativity. The formal recognition of a team that oozes innovation and style is long overdue and it is particularly pertinent that the accolade should come from top-flight clients.

Just about everyone in design is aware of the creative prowess of the product and structural packaging team led by industry legends Richard Seymour and Dick Powell. The duo pioneered design on TV with the successful Channel 4 series *Designs on Your...*, which reappraised an interesting array of everyday products from the loo to the bra. Both partners have served their time as D&AD presidents, with Powell working a double shift as the organisation instigated changes in its accounting year and stepping in as chairman when the splendid Anthony Simonds-Gooding 'retired' earlier this year.

Though the Loewy-owned consultancy continues to turn in outstanding work way beyond the kettles and irons that form its bedrock to challenge ordinary things – take the award-winning redesign of the saddle a couple of years ago and the new nappy project (DW 21 October) – it has never made a representative showing in Design Week's Creative Survey.

This is largely because so few awards exist for product designers, compared with, say, branding and print. Seymour Powell doesn't shy away from the limelight though. It won Best of Show in the first Design Week Awards with a motorcycle and has gone from strength to strength. But you can't score points if the awards aren't there for the taking.

Though it has now extended beyond its product design roots to take on structural packaging and graphics, you could argue that Seymour Powell owes its prominence among the clients that You Gov approached in creating the chart published here to its public profile. We have highlighted ratings for 'effective creative', just one aspect of the trawl carried out by the research company for Design Week's sister website Pitch, which ranks agencies of all types within the marketing services mix according to client perceptions. Seymour Powell ranks first overall for design – not just for creativity, but also topping charts relating to value for money, strategy and senior management quality.

Seymour Powell's standing throws up an interesting question for design groups about the importance of winning awards to woo clients, particularly as Creative Survey stalwart The Partners doesn't feature at all in Pitch's Primary League listings. Do award wins attract new clients or are they more about stroking existing ones and celebrating the client/consultancy partnerships that lead to significant wins? They certainly carry some sway in attracting the best designers and building and sustaining great creative teams.

But the appearance of **Hat-Trick Design** – which dominates the Creative Survey charts for UK awards this year (see page 15) and ranks fifth in the All Awards listings (see page 14) – towards the top of the Pitch Primary League suggests the two things aren't mutually exclusive. Perhaps The Partners is happily focused on a small group of clients with which it has deep relationships or has to work behind closed doors in the corporate world, unable to share its

CLIENT PERCEPTIONS

Company	Points
Seymour Powell	8.63
Figtree	7.81
Blue Marlin	7.71
Pentagram	7.7
Design House	7.67
Saatchi & Saatchi Design	7.66
Red Bee Media	7.6
Reading Room	7.6
Attik Design	7.52
Hat-Trick Design	7.44
Studio Conran	7.33
Pearlfisher	7.31
Imagination	7.29
Bell Design & Communications	7.27
Coley Porter Bell	7.25
Lime Creative	7.24
Future Brand	7.23
Interbrand	7.23
AKQA	7.14
Wolff Olins	7.14
Brand Me	7
The Design Group	6.95
Factory Design	6.88
Fitch Design	6.87
Brahm	6.83
20/20	6.79
Identica	6.61
Bulletproof	6.5
Creative Lynx	6.45
Lambie-Nairn	6.42

Source: You Gov survey for Pitch

Though high-profile consultancies continue to turn out great work, regardless of shifts in their creative line-up, the personalities and legacy of their founders must play some part in their current standing

projects with a wider audience, while Hat-Trick has made its mark mainly in the high-profile cultural and charitable sectors. But if the WPP-owned consultancy – and others that don't figure in the You Gov research – are looking to expand their client repertoire, the findings suggest they need to put more work into raising the profile in the media, on conference platforms and the like.

It is no surprise to see Pentagram scoring with clients for its creativity, given its reputation over so many years, along with other long-standing players like Studio Conran, Imagination, Coley Porter Bell, Future Brand, Interbrand, Wolff Olins, Fitch and Lambie-Nairn. These form the bedrock of the design community and have ridden many economic storms. Interestingly, though, only two remain independent of the big marketing services groups.

It is good, too, to see the next generation – invariably spin-offs from those groups – represented here by Figtree (Interbrand), product consultancy Factory Design (Seymour Powell and Pentagram), Identica (set up by seminal packaging and branding star Michael Peters) and Pearlfisher (the now defunct Michael Peters Group).

Surprises for a design audience include Saatchi & Saatchi Design – still seen by some to be more in the advertising camp – and Bell Design & Communications, best known for setting up in China. Then there are groups like Design House, Bulletproof and Creative Lynx that are highly respected for their heritage and business performance, but are virtual strangers on the awards scene.

It is also interesting to see such an array of design disciplines represented in the You Gov survey, given that its starting point was the top end of the marketing profession – marketing directors mainly – while product and interiors are more likely commissioned by others on the client board. This is surely evidence that it is reputation, rather than just direct experience of working with specific consultancies, that counts for clients.

Digital design occurs in spades in the You Gov trawl though, as it does in the main Creative Survey charts. Reading Room and Lime Creative may seem odd choices to outflank top Creative Survey interaction design group AKQA, but remember this ranking isn't about awards.

Though high-profile consultancies continue to turn out great work, regardless of shifts in their creative line-up, the personalities and legacy of their founders must play some part in their current standing. You can't ignore the benefit reputation has with founders like Seymour and Powell, Pentagram partners past and present, Terence Conran, Michael Wolff and Wally Olins, Rodney Fitch and Martin Lambie-Nairn.

In many instances, though, the founders have moved on, for example, with Wolff working independently, Olins as chairman of Saffron, Fitch now independent and running retail design courses at universities in Delft and Mumbai, and Lambie-Nairn happily ensconced at London branding group Heavenly. We'll see if this makes a difference to next year's trawl as clients twig exactly for what, or for whom, they are voting. ■

How it was done

The ranking shown here forms part of a wider survey of top-end clients, in terms of their design spending, about their perception of design consultancies across a range of attributes. Though these range from 'value for money' to 'senior management quality' and 'strategy', we have selected the data relating to 'effective creative' to balance the main Creative Survey charts.

The survey was conducted by independent research company You Gov for Design Week's sister website Pitch – an online resource exclusively available to top spenders in the marketing community with budgets of at least £100,000 a year for design. The survey was completed by 668 senior marketers, almost half of which carry the title marketing director, managing director or chief executive.

They were asked to name three consultancies they have experience of and select a further two from a list compiled from Design Week readers. The top 30 listed here each received more than 20 in-depth survey answers, each ranked 1-10 according to the client's experience or perception of the group for each of the professional attributes.

Ideally speaking

Hat-Trick Design has topped our UK Awards chart for the first time this year. So who better to open our Creative Survey than co-founder **Jim Sutherland**? Here he talks about what makes a great client and designer



We have been lucky enough to work for some amazing clients over the past few years – the Royal Mail, Land Securities, Natural History Museum, National Museums Scotland, Norwich University College of the Arts, the Salvation Army, Twickenham and the British Heart Foundation.

From our perspective, the aim is always to build a long-term relationship. It sounds obvious enough, but we recently figured out that 80 per cent of our work comes from clients we have worked with before. It takes time to build a level of trust and respect.

I thought I'd try working out exactly what makes a good client. What qualities should we look for? I asked everyone in the studio what they felt – from the secretary to the senior designers. There were a lot of common themes, which I have listed here – almost a wish list of how we'd like a client to be.

A good client wants designers who will:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be interested | <input type="checkbox"/> Be straightforward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be committed | <input type="checkbox"/> Be honest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be ambitious | <input type="checkbox"/> Be open-minded |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Want to do a fantastic job | <input type="checkbox"/> Be enthusiastic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be on time | <input type="checkbox"/> Be prepared to take risks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a sense of humour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be generous | <input type="checkbox"/> Be supportive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be polite | <input type="checkbox"/> Be organised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy the process | <input type="checkbox"/> Be receptive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be genuine | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen and respond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be brave | <input type="checkbox"/> Stand up for what's right |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be prepared for change | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer you a cup of tea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be appreciative | |

Okay, some of these goals could easily be viewed as unrealistic and setting unachievable expectations (no excuses for the last one, though). No one – client or designer – can live up to these ideals all the time. But we can all at least agree to give it a try.

We want someone who will:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be interested | <input type="checkbox"/> Be straightforward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be committed | <input type="checkbox"/> Be honest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be ambitious | <input type="checkbox"/> Be open-minded |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Want to do a fantastic job | <input type="checkbox"/> Be enthusiastic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be on time | <input type="checkbox"/> Be prepared to take risks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> Have a sense of humour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be generous | <input type="checkbox"/> Be supportive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be polite | <input type="checkbox"/> Be organised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy the process | <input type="checkbox"/> Be receptive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be genuine | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen and respond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be brave | <input type="checkbox"/> Stand up for what's right |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be prepared for change | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer you a cup of tea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be appreciative | |

Maybe this is asking a lot of clients – but not when you ask the same of yourselves. It occurred to me you could apply exactly the same criteria to the designer as to the client. It's a useful way of seeing things from their perspective. ■



1



2



3

1 The Small Creature campaign for British Heart Foundation

2 Identity for children's charity Friendship Works

3 Charles Darwin stamps for the Royal Mail

All work by Hat-Trick Design

