



Design
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Dear DLN Members and Partners,

I am writing to tell you about an amazing opportunity that the DLN has to offer. As a leadership organization in the design industry, the DLN is always seeking to provide inspiration, guidance and thought leadership to all of us with the ultimate goal of supporting the elevation of our companies and in turn - the entire industry.

I have had the amazing benefit of being part of a broader business organization called YPO (Young President's Organization) for 10 years and one of the cornerstones of YPO are small peer-to-peer groups called forums. These groups are selected randomly within the chapters with close attention to ensuring minimal conflicts of interests due to competition among forum members. The key to forums is absolute confidentiality thus enabling members to delve into issues from business to personal and receive great feedback and support. At the beginning of 2017, I was returning from my forum retreat where we had had an amazing facilitator who helped me enormously and I thought it would be fantastic if we could form a similar forum experience within our industry.

I talked to Peter and Becky about the idea and we all agreed that it would require time, investment and careful planning to make successful. We decided to pilot the idea with a forum that convened in October. For this pilot program, we set out to find a group of members who were interested in taking a risk to try something new, located in different parts of the country to avoid competition issues and people willing to invest the time and money. We had our first meeting in October with an outside resource facilitating. The initial meeting was very successful by all accounts. This group, named "Montauk Forum", decided to continue and our second meeting occurred in early February. We brought in another facilitator to guide the formation of our forum including setting norms. The Montauk group agreed to meet 4 times a year in different locations throughout the country and to adhere to absolute confidentiality. Each member agreed to make the time and financial investment to be present at these meetings and to do the deep personal work that inevitably results from these meetings.

After several meetings with Becky and Peter, we believe we are ready to implement more forums within the DLN. We would like to launch the next forum(s) during Q3 of 2018. If you are interested in joining a forum we invite you to complete the attached information form. The purpose of the form is to gain a better understanding of you and your firm so we are able to build groups with minimal competition and a healthy mix of designers, architects and vendors as well as geographic diversity. Lastly, we are asking you to think both about why you would like to join a forum and what you hope to gain from a forum experience.

Three main things to consider:



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- 1) Are you interested in sharing with a peer group at a deep level with the idea that they are holding you accountable for growing personally and professionally?
- 2) Do you have the ability to meet three to four times per year which will likely be the equivalent of 8 days when you include travel?
- 3) Are you willing to make the financial investment each year to cover facilitators and meeting spaces?

I could not be more excited about this opportunity for each of us individually and for our industry. We've included the names and contact information of the Montauk Forum members below. They're available to answer any questions around the forum concept and their experience – feel free to reach out!

Warmest Regards,

Catherine Connolly

CEO, Merida
DLN Leadership Board Member

Members of the Montauk Forum:

Catherine Connolly, CConnolly@MeridaStudio.com
Elizabeth Dinkel, lizziedink@yahoo.com
Frank Ponterio, frank@frankponterio.com
Janice Parker, janiceparker@janiceparker.com
Jillian O'Neill, jillian@jillianoneill.com
Liz Caan, liz@lizcaan.com
Magd Riad, mriad@marmistone.com
Matthew Berman, mdb@workshopapd.com
Michael Cox, mc@foleyandcox.com
Rebecca Birdwell, rbirdwell@designleadershipnetwork.org
Stan Dixon, sdixon@dsdixonarchitect.com
Susan Ferrier, susan@susanferrierinteriors.com
Tom Kligerman, thomas@ikekligermanbarkley.com