

## Kirstin Reeder: "State of the Association"

Kirstin: Oh, all these pieces. Okay, I'm so glad that y'all can hear me okay. Did everybody have a good lunch, those of you who ate lunch? I did not eat lunch because it's too early in the morning for me to eat lunch. Okay. I'm going to stop that. I'm going to go here. Okie dokie. So yay, I think we are getting it. Yes, and it was yummy. Awesome. Yay. The lunchtime. Yes. Throwing off my day. I get it. This talk of lunch. What? I don't understand. Okay. So, I am up next. Yay. And I apologize. I've got dogs barking and neighbors mowing. So, I'm sorry. They obviously didn't get the memo that I'm talking right now. But anyway, I am so glad to be here talking with y'all today. What is one takeaway that you took from Gabrielle or Mark or Ben this morning? I mean, there's so much, but name one thing. Name one thing that you took away. Pricing, pricing. Pricing. Yep. Yep.

Kirstin: Be a boss. Pricing. Yes. Yeah. Prices are going up. I get that too. Yes, totally. Great. That is fantastic. I'm so excited. I'm so excited about our sessions this morning and we are going to have more this afternoon, but for right now, we are going to talk about the state of the association. The president has the state of the union. I have the state of the association and the DBA has been around since 2019 when Ben Robinson founded it. And then we started registering members in November of that year. And right after that, we started working on the Certified Digital Bookkeeper exam. We put a ton of research and testing into it and we had several people test it. We had several people test the test so that when we finally opened it up, we would work out all the kinks. And in July, Tanya Killam was the first person to earn her CDB designation.

Kirstin: Woo, yay Tanya, and we are now up to 12 CDB earners and we aim to increase that number soon. I will be talking more with you about that later on this afternoon. We've got something planned to increase the number of CDB earners. And so, we started with that, and then our first big event that we scheduled was the BKX conference with keynote speaker, Erin Brockovich. And that was planned for June 2020, and then the COVID happened and we were forced to postpone it twice. So that was a little frustrating, but it is what it is. And then we started implementing some discounts, working with different partners. And one of the first ones that we negotiated with the DBA was a discount on ENO insurance, through Jock Wols. And he's going to be speaking with us later on today as well. Several of our members have already taken advantage of this discount and its fantastic coverage.

Kirstin: I personally have with my business, I recently switched and I think I'm really going to be pleased with it. But the demands of the DBA quickly outgrew the amount of time that Ben had to devote to it, and that is when I was brought on as executive director and I am thrilled to be here. So, the virtual conference today, this meet and greet, was one of the first things that we started planning

after I joined the DBA team. And thanks to the incredibly talented people that we have involved, as you've seen this morning, it wasn't too terribly difficult to pull together, and I am so amazed at all of these super smart people that I get to surround myself with on a daily basis, I'm so blessed. We also established a board of directors to help guide the DBA down a path of success. And, oh my gosh, talk about a group of incredibly talented people.

Kirstin: I am blown away by the group that we were able to assemble. We've got military retirees, we've got MBAs, we've got CEOs, all on our board, and our board members have a wealth of experience and I am so honored to serve under them. So where are we now? We are in full on planning mode for BKX. Some of the speakers that we had lined up for last year, aren't able to participate this year due to schedule conflicts and things like that. So, we've been securing new ones and we're almost finished. I've got a couple details that I need to work out with some people. And I am absolutely ecstatic about what we have in store for you at BKX. Tickets are on sale now, I mentioned that earlier today. Tickets are on sale at [bkx.com](http://bkx.com). And when you receive your confirmation, you'll be able to book your room because the hotel block is open. We also have a private lunch on day one with Erin Brockovich, and on day three, with Kamal Ravikant and Ben Robinson, and both lunches are restricted to only 25 guests, that's it.

Kirstin: We will be following all of the government and hotel COVID guidelines that are enforced at the time of the event. At this point, our floor plan allows for six feet spacing, and that's why we have such a limited number of tickets. As we get closer to the event and know more about the guidelines, we'll share that information with you. We don't know what it's going to be like then, so we can't really answer just exactly how everything's going to go just yet. For those of you who are unable to attend in person, for whatever reason, we have a virtual option available. You can choose that whenever you purchase your ticket at [bkx.com](http://bkx.com), it'll have you pick virtual or in person. The virtual option will have interactive live streaming. You'll be able to interact with the speakers, ask questions, things like that. You'll be able to network with the other people online as well.

Kirstin: And some of us, we were talking, in some of the downtime about even maybe putting together a virtual happy hour or something like that after hours. I don't know. We're still kind of exploring that idea, but that way it's not just, "Oh, I log in to the sessions," and that's it. You'll still be able to feel somewhat a part of it is really different from the in-person event, but you can still interact with others. If you purchase an in-person ticket and you need to switch to a virtual or you get COVID or you've been exposed to COVID or I don't know someone has a baby, something, you can switch from in-person to virtual, no problem. Just email us at [success@dba.org](mailto:success@dba.org). If you purchase a virtual ticket and you want to switch it to an in-person one, we might be able to do that. It will all depend on the availability

that we have at the time. Kelly, you're able to look up how many in-person tickets we have left right now, aren't you?

Kelly: Yes, actually, while you were... You can hear me, right?

Kirstin: Yes.

Kelly: Okay. While you were talking, I went and looked it up. At this moment in time, we have 59 in person tickets left, that's it. 59.

Kirstin: Okay.

Kelly: Now, obviously the virtual, we can sell as many of those, whatever. But we have 59 in person seats left.

Kirstin: Okay. Awesome, that's-

Kelly: And there are still seats for the Erin Brockovich lunch. There's still seats for that. And there are still seats for the Ben and Kamal lunch.

Kirstin: Fabulous. Fabulous.

Kelly: I checked with Jaime about two hours ago and he's the one kind of managing all of that. So, he said we still have tickets for both.

Kirstin: Okay, cool. Yay. That's exciting. Boy, we would have been really doing awesome if... Because those tickets just, it all opened up yesterday. So, if we would have sold out already-

Kelly: In one day. Oh my gosh, that would've been crazy.

Kirstin: I think Ben might've gotten a big head though, if...

Kelly: That's true, that's true.

Kirstin: If it would've just sold out. Yeah. Then we've got something else that we're offering to attendees, both the virtual and the in-person attendees. We're offering something new and I'm going to have to pay Ben Day later because he kind of alluded to this earlier and he didn't even know it. When you've gone to a conference like today, full of content and information. Do you take notes like a crazy person, like I do? I sit there and I just scribble and scribble and scribble and I copy down the slides as fast as I can. And sometimes I can't even read my own writing later or whatever, because it's just so fast.

Kirstin: And then the speaker moves on and changes the slide and I'm not done. And then I'm kind of freaking out because I haven't got all the information and it's super frustrating because I've missed out on that. And I do not get to actually absorb the information when that happens? Or are you like me and you get focused on getting the notes down, but you miss what the speaker has to say? So, we've got a solution for that this year, we've got a professional note taker that's going to be present and he's going to be taking notes for you.

Kirstin: They are not going to be just transcribing the sessions. They're going to include images, diagrams, multiple pages of information and more. And we're going to package those notes with the recordings of the sessions. And through February 26th, you can pre-order these notes and recordings for 150. You'll receive an email a few days after you register for BKX with a link to order these. But you know what, Kelly, let's go ahead and do you have the link to that order form handy?

Kelly: Yes, let me get that.

Kirstin: Because we can go ahead...

Kelly: Yeah, I can post it in here and where do I post it so everybody can see it?

Kirstin: In the chat.

Kelly: In the chat.

Kirstin: Yeah.

Kelly: All right. Let me see.

Kirstin: Oh, there's mine. Yeah, it should be in the chat and then just make sure that it says, to everybody. Awesome. Perfect.

Kelly: Okay, so did that work?

Kirstin: Yes, it did.

Kelly: Did I do it right?

Kirstin: I think it did on my end anyway.

Kelly: All right, you guys out there, you guys see the link I just put in there? Perfect. Okay, good. I see it.

Kirstin: Yay. Okay, like I said-

Kelly: I can send an email, but it does take a few days, we wait a few days before we send them the email, but they can go ahead and order those notes any time and we can also post that in Facebook too.

Kirstin: Oh yeah. Okay.

Kelly: In the BKX group.

Kirstin: So yeah, I'm really excited about these notes because they're going to allow you to actually be present and engage with the speakers rather than just, "Oh my gosh, hurry up and get all the notes taken down," and all that. So that's BKX, what we've got going on, more information will be coming as we finalize our plans, but know this much, it's happening. Like I mentioned earlier today, if heaven forbid, we have to cancel the in-person event, we'll just move it online and have a virtual event. Our platform will allow for that. Okay. So, in addition to BKX, I've been meeting with different technology vendors to establish partnerships that would provide our members with different benefits, like exclusive discounts and things like that. And I tell you what, as I have been meeting with some of these vendors, it has been so encouraging when I hear how excited they are about the existence of the DBA.

Kirstin: We have several who are jumping in with both feet because they have a similar vision regarding working in the cloud and using technology to serve clients. The DBA is truly unique in our efforts to promote 21st century bookkeeping. And these vendors recognize that. And so, they are really wanting to work with us. So, I'm really excited about that. In addition to discounts, many of the partners are providing exclusive content to our members. For example, coming up at the end of this month, Liseo will be doing a lunch and learn just for our members. It's not going to be for anybody else. And we're going to be stressing education in these sorts of meetings or whatever. So, it's not going to be just sales pitches. Now, sometimes they might have a new product that they want to put in front of us. And so, we might have a webinar for that type of thing, but you'll know going in that, "Oh, they've got this new product. They want to present it to you."

Kirstin: There is nothing requiring you to attend these things. So, they just are eager to get in front of you basically. We are starting a quarterly newsletter soon to keep you in the loop of what's going on in the DBA. And this'll come to our members through snail mail and electronic mail. So, I'm really excited about this, but it's always fun to get actual legit mail nowadays that's not junk. Another thing that we are working on, does anybody remember the, I Love Bookkeeping Podcast? I love bookkeeping. Anybody else remember that? So, we have plans to revive it and record new content on a variety of topics. It's going to be under the DBA's

umbrella now, rather than bookkeepers.com. I'm going to be hosting it rather than Ben. We don't have a date on when this will be taking place, but it is on the agenda.

Kirstin: Another thing, and my speakers just died, so I'll be having to deal with that in a minute. When it comes to marketing the DBA directory and putting you, our members in front of business owners, we're currently spending about \$300 a day on Google Ads. So, the DBA directory shows up in search results on Google. And it has been so exciting to hear from those of you who have had businesses contact you through your DBA profile. But we are looking to do more, and this part is going to be more of a long game. It's not going to be something that happens overnight. I am going to be reaching out to different small business groups and organizations and promoting the DBA and the CDB designation overall to help businesses realize that one, they need a bookkeeper period, they just need one.

Kirstin: And in addition to that, they need a CDB certified bookkeeper. Oh, and by the way, where can they find one? They can find one in the DBA directory. You know, as well as I do that, we're all still in the midst of this step one. People don't realize just how badly they need a bookkeeper. So, it's my mission to convince them of this. Like I said, this won't be something that happens quickly. It's going to be a mindset change that happens over several months, several years. And this is actually something that you can help with also. You know lots of business owners. You've come into contact with them and you've been taught how to Yakkity yak with them. You can also Yakkity yak with them about the DBA. Sometimes you might be talking with a business owner and you realize that they are not going to be the best fit for your practice.

Kirstin: Tell them about the DBA because they can find a bookkeeper that might be a better fit for them, and that they might be a better fit for through the DBA directory. So anytime you're talking with people, if you feel that, this person wouldn't be good for me, but someone else, they might be good, with someone else. Talk up the DBA, talk about the certification. Your other bookkeeper friends, tell them about the DBA. This is open to all bookkeeping professionals. One phrase that we have heard a lot of over the last year is we're all in this together. And this statement applies to the Digital Bookkeeper Association also.

Kirstin: The more that we all talk about the DBA, the more the DBA will be known, and the more that it's known by some, then that spreads. And it's kind of like the, I may be dating myself, but there was an old, old, old commercial, I think it was shampoo or something back in the seventies and eighties. And they tell two friends and they tell two friends and they tell two friends. That is how the influence of the DBA will grow when we all tell people about it. So that's our goal

is to make the DBA be the premier professional organization for bookkeepers, especially those who operate in the 21st century.

Kirstin: So, that was a ton of information, and I can't hear anything now, so I'm going to switch my headphones. So, I guess while I'm doing that, if y'all would enter any questions that you have about what's going on right now, BKX, anything like that into the Q&A, and I will switch audio and I'll let Kelly know when I'm ready to hear what questions you have.

Ben: Yep. And I'll take over a little bit and do a little song and dance while you are doing that, and answer to some questions here. Tanya says that she's excited, missed the podcast. Yes, we're excited, it is going to be coming back again. And by the way, I do want to make one slight modification or addition to what Kirsten said, the newsletter will actually be a monthly newsletter. So, we're very excited about that. Again, as she mentioned, it's going to be snail mail, as well as electronic. We'll also put it in your members area so that you can access all of the archives. It's not going to be something that's 20 pages long. It'll be four to five pages, every single month, updating you about happenings inside the DBA, education, best practices, tips, hacks, that sort of thing. This is just to kind of keep you abreast.

Ben: It's kind of like any other profession. If you're a doctor, you have the Journal of the American Medical Association in the US. If you are a CPA, you have the Journal of Accountancy. So, this is our attempt to start that, right, to go out there and to educate you, to inform you, to keep you up to date on the happenings, best practices, everything, because as a group, we are so much better than we are as individuals. And so, this is our effort to push all this information to you. I know that the last thing in the world that you need is something else to consume, but I promise you, this content will be relevant. It will be exciting. You'll be looking for this every single month. So, we are very, very excited to get that going. We are looking at doing that in second quarter. So hopefully April, May timeframe. Definitely before we get to BKX, unless the world just stops turning right there. Cheryl mentioned-

Kirstin: I can finally hear you again.

Ben: Yay. So, Heidi asked a question. Have there been any suggestions by those who have passed the CDB exam on how they took on the project of taking the exam? So, we've not really kind of, I don't know, debriefed, if you will. We've got the process laid out for you. So, it's not really something that you have to think about. What you do have to do is go through it. It's an arduous process. We've talked about this. It's not easy. It's not something that you can sit down inside of a weekend and do. Tanya, you can attest to that. All the other CDBs that are on here can do the same.

Ben: So, I'm sure that if you inside the group want to ask about that, of course, we cannot talk about any of the content. We cannot talk about the examinations and all that sort of thing. You all know why we can't do that. But if you want to get somebody's opinion on, "Hey, what's the best thing? What's the best practice?" You're certainly welcome to talk about that. But we've got things laid out for you in a very precise manner on how you do it. There's one path to follow, right? You can't skip ahead. You can't go behind. It's got to be this one path. So, everybody's going through the same one, so, that right there.

Kelly: Also, Ben, in Kirsten's is it 4:45, is your next one?

Kirstin: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Kelly: At 4:45, we're going to be talking more about the CDB and we've actually got a really cool thing coming up, I don't want to spoil it. So just stay tuned at 4:45, you're going to learn a little bit more about the CDB and an exciting kind of program that we're going to be starting next week. So, I won't spoil that for you Kirsten, but stay tuned to the 4:45 one for more information about the CDB. And while I'm talking, I want to let you know, we've sold three more tickets. We're down to 56 available tickets, in-person tickets.

Kirstin: So exciting. I'm just excited about people.

Kelly: Seeing people again. Imagine.

Kirstin: I know.

Ben: Yeah, it's definitely crazy times that we're excited about it. Justin says he's so pumped about everything going on. Let's spread the word, so awesome. I'm also so excited about it. I'm even tongue tied right here. Denise, super excited for BKX and the lunch with Ben. Oh, thank you so much. Rachel says that Quizlet flashcards helped her to pass the CDB, and she learned a lot right there, so that's awesome. And Arden says, "It is very arduous. I'm halfway through. So, you're definitely going to earn it out there." Lisa asks, "How many people have achieved the CDB designation so far?" Just 12, right now, and that's why we're going to be starting the CDB Challenge, because we want to get this big group of people up there because as we're promoting this directory, and as we're spending money on advertising, we want to make sure that we have not just members out there, but also people who have distinguished themselves even further through the Certified Digital Bookkeeper Designation.

Ben: And so that's why we're putting this on, because we want us all to kind of be going through this together to earn those, to bump up your results inside of the directory. So, all cool stuff. Brandy asks, "Am I going to scaling new heights to

pitch DBA?" Or actually, I guess that would be you. We don't have plans to this year. Our focus right now is to get our own stuff done. And then we'll kind of be looking at that, but that's a great idea of Brandy and I appreciate you mentioning it.

Kirstin: And we can't this year because it's the same time. We literally cannot do it, but, guys, I would like to in the future. Yeah.

Ben: So anyway, this is cool. So, I believe here in just a couple of minutes, I am going to be interviewing my good friend Kamal Ravikant here in just a second. But Kirsten, we've got three minutes. Anything else that you have on your agenda before we get there?

Kirstin: I don't think so. Yeah, no, that's pretty much it. I left some extra time just in case we had questions, which we obviously did. So, yeah, that's all of that.