

# Digital Business Master Class

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## *Course Guide*



Aalto University  
School of Business

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# Welcome words

## A warm welcome to the Digital Business Master Class!

Aalto University organised the first Digital Business Master Class sixyears ago. Recent discussions around AI, data privacy and the power of the most prominent digital platforms show that digital business topics are as relevant as ever. We hope that in this summer’s course, you will gain valuable insights and skills that help you succeed in the ever-evolving digital landscape.

Our aim is to offer you insightful international learning experience and a platform for meeting other people interested in digital business. In addition to enjoying our expert lecturers’ insights, sharing experiences from your own diverse backgrounds is a great way to learn.

Working on the company project is usually our alumni’s favourite part of the course. In addition to diving deeper into a digital business topic, you get a dedicated group of colleagues to share the experience with. Take a bit of extra time to get to know your teammates. I promise it will make working together much more fun!

This guide was put together as an information package to help you prepare for the Master Class. Whether you are looking for information about our online learning environment, teamwork tips or assignment instructions, you will find it here. All of the deliverables and grading rubrics can also be found in our digital workspace MyCourses, where you will be invited soon.

Wishing you inspirational weeks at DBMC!



**Laura Kitinoja**  
Programme Director  
Aalto University Summer School

# Course information

## Schedule

- **8-28 July: Pre-work**  
Individual orientation to course and project
- **5-16 August: Intensive weeks**  
Lectures and project work at Aalto
- **19-25 August: Post-work**  
Deadlines for the project report and course reflection assignments

## Online learning environment

We will be using MyCourses as the learning platform for the course. The course site will include all grading rubrics, course materials and assignment submission boxes.

You can access MyCourses with your Aalto account, so please activate it as soon as possible. Instructions are also available via email for those who have technical issues.

## Teaching events

The lectures will be organised Monday-Friday from 9-12 Finnish time (GMT+3). Please see the separate course schedule for the topic of each day, additional project-work-related teaching events and social programme.

Interaction and workshops are an important part of the course learning experience. Attending teaching events is mandatory, with a maximum of two absences allowed to pass the course. Each topic has a different specialist lecturer that comes from the academic world or the industry. We love an interactive classroom and encourage you to take full advantage of the teachers' expert insights!

If a student is unable to attend a lecture on-site due to illness, special arrangements can be discussed. Support for project work is always available in these cases.



# Course overview

## Learning objectives

- Explore and implement key topics in digital business
- Differentiate between digital transformation and digital optimisation
- Evaluate the constantly evolving digital business landscape both locally and globally
- Gain theoretical and practical knowledge on digital strategies
- Work in international multidisciplinary teams
- Apply project management in on-site and virtual projects
- Develop recommendations for a real-life case

## Project Work

Challenge based learning is at the core of the Digital Business Master Class approach and an important part of the learning experience.

The project work is completed in an international and multidisciplinary team of students. The teamwork is carried out as a combination of online and in-person work.

While you are starting your project, pay attention to the project scope. Define your goals and your plans for approaching them. Make sure that what you have in mind is achievable within the time frame of the course and answers the challenge presented in the project brief.

## The aim of the project work:

- Produce professional deliverables that answer the client's needs
- Use your previous education, work experience and insights from DBMC to achieve the best possible outcome
- Deepen your understanding of IT and business alignment and the strategic use of digital tools and technologies
- Enhance teamwork and project skills
- Help you find your strengths as a professional



# Teamwork tips



## 1. Team contract

Aligning expectations and setting common rules at the beginning of the project is crucial. Things to be agreed upon include communication channels and frequency, meetings, collaboration tools, team roles and goals. Have an open conversation about your possible constraints, preferred ways of receiving feedback and decision-making strategies.

Setting clear rules will make sure all team members know what is expected of them. At Digital Business Master Class, the first day of classes is dedicated to kick-starting your teamwork and drafting a team contract.

## 2. Set a clear schedule

In a short project, such as the Digital Business Master Class business case, planning and background work are important. Students from

previous years recommend setting deadlines and outlining the schedule for the entire project at the very beginning. A clear schedule ensures you will be able to fit in all the necessary research for delivering a valuable concept to your client.

Setting internal deadlines before you have to turn in the assignments is a good idea. This way, you have enough time to figure out possible problems and get feedback from the whole team before submitting your work.

## 3. Communication

Communication is key in all teamwork. Firstly, it's important to choose suitable communication channels for your team. You will be meeting in person during class, but you might also want to create a Whatsapp group or discuss how you will be using other digital workspaces.

Secondly, create practices for sharing information with your team. Share your findings and possible solutions with everyone, so all team members have more extensive knowledge of the case. Sharing information can help you avoid a lot of misunderstandings.

## 4. Regular meetings

DBMC alumni recommended having frequent, even daily, meetings to align the team. Take a good look at your schedules at the beginning of the project, find a time that works for all of you and stick to it. Book the time from your calendar so that you don't miss any team meetings.

When you are in a meeting, make it count. Having an agenda for each meeting helps you be efficient and cover all the necessary matters. Make sure that you have clear action steps, tasks and responsibilities after the meeting and send short minutes about decisions and deadlines to your group chat.

## 5. Digital co-working

Using digital collaboration platforms is essential, even on an in-person course. Platforms that allow both synchronous and asynchronous collaboration are ideal since you will likely want to work on the project both together and individually. Microsoft Teams gives you the possibility to have video calls, team discussion, file sharing and real-time editing all in one place. You can also use Google Drive, as long as you log in with your Aalto account to ensure data ownership and security.

To make work more manageable, divide individual tasks for people to work on. This will

help make sure everyone contributes to the work equally and knows what is expected of them between check-ups.

## 6. Respect the common commitment

Committing to the course workload and taking time for the project is one of the most important things you can do for your team and your own learning experience. We strongly encourage committing to full-time studies during the two intensive weeks.

Along the same lines, respect the team rules and deadlines you set together. In diverse teams, other people might not think like you. Listening to everyone's opinions and expressing your views patiently is important. Remember that the end goal is a good project outcome, not winning a debate.

## 7. Get to know your teammates

Last but not least: spend time on team-building and getting to know each other. Having casual talks to get to know your teammates as individuals and not just professionals is time well spent, even when you are working on a tight schedule. You will create trust and a more natural working environment, discover new capabilities and most importantly, have more fun working together. As one of our DBMC alumni from summer 2020 put it: "Be open-minded and allow yourself to learn from your teammates - that's the best part of the course."

## Additional resources:

[Teamwork First-Aid Kit](#) | [Aalto University](#)



# Deliverables

## Grading

All graded assignments will be evaluated on a scale of 0-5, where

0 = fail (0-49% of points)

1 = poor (50-59% of points),

2 = satisfactory (60-69%),

3 = good (70-79%),

4 = very good (80-89%),

5 = excellent (90-100%)

Grading rubrics for all assignments are available on MyCourses. Please read the assignment instructions and rubrics before submitting the assignments.

Please note that there will be a sanction for late submissions. Up to 24h late: -10% of the points awarded for that assignment. 24-48h late: -20% of the points. Following the same pattern, -10 percentage points for each day.

Course workload	
Pre-work exercise	10 h
Contact hours and in-class exercises	40 h
Class preparation	40 h
Project work	60 h
Post-work exercise	10 h
Total	160 h (6 ECTS)

## The total course grade consists of:

- 20% Pre-course exercise (working paper, video introduction)
- 10% Course participation
- 60% Project work and presentations (breakout pitches, final presentation, final report)
- 10% Post-work exercise (reflection video, teamwork analysis)

## Naming files

The file name should include the title of the assignment as well as your name / your team's name.

E.g. Final report\_Team Finland (team deliveries) or Working paper\_Surname (individual deliveries).

# Pre-work

## Individual Delivery: Personal introduction video (pass/fail)

Students deliver a personal introduction video to help everyone learn a bit about all the participants in advance. Tell us who you are, where you come from, and anything else you would like to share about your background! All DBMC participants will be able to see each other's videos.

**Format:** Video file or linked video, 1-2 minutes  
**Audience:** DBMC staff and students  
**Goal:** Brief introduction with a memorable fact about yourself.

**Deadline:** Sunday 28 July 2024 at 23:59 Finnish time (GMT+3).

## Individual Delivery: Working paper (20% of final grade)

During the pre-work weeks, team members individually conduct background research in the given project case. After the research, the students should have a basic understanding of the project organisation and industry it operates in. In addition, the students should have gained a basic understanding of the project topic and conducted a small literature review and best practice mapping for the topic. Please see project-specific instructions in the file shared with your team.

**Format:** Written working paper, length 1500 words. Academic referencing expected. (Recommended style: Harvard or APA).  
**Audience:** DBMC staff + your team (to share research results)  
**Goal:** Initial background research and benchmarking for the project completed. The student understands the context of the project, the industry the case company operates in and the project topic on a general level.  
**Deadline:** Sunday 28 July 2024 at 23:59 Finnish time (GMT+3).

## Intensive weeks

### Team Delivery:

#### Breakout Pitches (10% of final grade, peer evaluated)

#### Monday, 12 August at 9:00-12:00

Teams prepare pitches where they present the initial solutions to their projects based on the findings and analysis conducted up to this point. Students are divided into groups that include members from different teams. Everyone presents their own team's pitch and gives feedback on other teams' pitches.

**Format:** Short pitch accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation (or similar). Pitches are given simultaneously in several meeting rooms, one team member in each. Participants share the presentations from their computers.

**Duration:** 10 min pitch + 10 min for discussion and feedback

**Audience:** DBMC participants and faculty

**Goal:** Clearly and credibly present the initial solution to your team's challenge through a pitch. Create a visual presentation that supports the delivery. Actively participate in discussion about other team's projects.

**Next steps:** Take the feedback and comments back to your team. Iterate the solution based on the comments.

**Deadline:** Monday 12 August 2024 in class.

### Team Delivery:

#### Final Presentation (20% of final grade)

#### Friday 16 August at 9:00-16:00

Teams prepare and present a presentation where they share their project solutions. The audience includes case company representatives and other DBMC students. Teams answer questions from the audience and consider possible suggestions for improvements while finishing their final report.

**Format:** Live presentation accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation (or similar). Not all team members have to present, but everyone should participate in the following Q&A and discussion session.

**Duration:** 15 min presentation + 15 min for discussion and feedback

**Audience:** Case company representatives, DBMC staff and participants

**Goal:** Presenting the final solution for the team project. The presentation should clearly and credibly show the added value to the client organisation and connect the created solution and its benefits to the original problem. Pay attention to the visuals and logic of your delivery.

**Deadline:** Friday 16 August 2024 in class. Presentation file submitted also to the MyCourses assignment box.

## Post-work

### Team Delivery:

#### Final Report (30% of final grade)

In the final report, teams present their solution for the project in a clear, logical and concise way. The report should include a brief description of the project context and company case, mostly focusing on the team's key findings and concrete suggestions for the project company.

**Format:** Written report of 2500 - 3500 words + cover page, reference list. Return as a pdf file.

**Audience:** Case company representatives and DBMC staff

**Goal:** Creating a valuable concept for the case company. The report supports the presentation with additional details. Focus on your team's solution, making sure to provide logical reasoning for all decisions and suggestions. Display good reporting skills, with attention to details such as table of contents, captions, referencing and the consistency of your writing as a team.

**Deadline:** Sunday 25 August at 23:59 Finnish time (GMT+3).

### Individual Delivery:

#### Reflection video (10% of final grade)

Students share the idea, theory or methodology that they found the most important or valuable during the course and reflect on why it was the most important takeaway for them. This can also include reflection on the project work.

**Format:** Video file or linked video, 2-5 min

**Audience:** DBMC staff

**Goal:** Present your key takeaway(s) for the course, analysing their importance in personal, academic and work-related contexts. Pay attention to the logic of the delivery and depth of reflection.

**Deadline:** Sunday 25 August 2024 at 23:59 Finnish time (GMT+3).

### Individual Delivery:

#### Teamwork Analysis (pass/fail)

Teamwork analysis is conducted online. Each student will receive a personal link for filling the evaluation form.

**Audience:** DBMC staff

**Goal:** Analyse and reflect on the teamwork throughout the course, focusing both on your own performance and the teamwork experience.

**Deadline:** Sunday 25 August 2024 at 23:59 Finnish time (GMT+3).