

Design Brief



How To Write An Effective Design Brief

A design brief is a written explanation - given to a designer - outlining the aims, objectives and milestones of a design project.

A thorough and articulate design brief is a critical part of the design process. It helps develop trust and understanding between the client and designer - and serves as an essential point of reference for both parties.

Above all, the design brief ensures that important design issues are considered and questioned before the designer starts work.

This article outlines some of the most important factors to consider when writing your design brief.

Company Profile

Start your design brief with a short, honest synopsis of your organisation or company. Don't take this information for granted, and don't assume that the designer will necessarily know anything about your industry sector.

Tell your designer:

- What your organisation does
- How long you have been established and how many staff you employ
- What your niche market is
- How you fit in to your industry sector

Your Aims

Good design can have a huge influence on the success of a company's marketing strategy - but in order for success to be ensured, clear goals must be set.

For example, do you want to:

- Generate sales?
- Encourage enquiries?
- Gain newsletter subscribers?
- Obtain information from your audience?
- Encourage them to tell a friend?

If your aims and objectives are not this clear, then your design brief has already achieved another purpose... One of most rewarding parts of actually sitting down and writing a design brief is that it helps to clarify your thoughts and can indirectly help to find flaws in what you initially thought was a solid idea.

Your Target Audience

Detail your primary, secondary and tertiary audiences. Explain if you are looking to consolidate your existing client-base or appeal to new markets.

Detail any demographic figures about your audience that may be useful to the designer. These may include:

- Age
- Sex
- Income
- Occupation
- Location
- Important Keywords

Social Networks

Are Social Networks important to your present and future marketing?

Social Networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google + are great ways to promote your organisation to your targeted audience and people of similar interests.

Include information about your current use of Social Networks and whether you require advice/recommendations for integrating your accounts into you marketing materials.



Your Budget And Time-Scale

Even if you can only provide a ball-park figure, a budget expectation will give the designer a good idea of the type of solution they will realistically be able to provide.

Time scale is also an important consideration - so let your designer know if there is a specific deadline that has to be met.

Consult with Colleagues

Consult with as many people within your organisation as possible before sending the brief. Showing the design brief to different people may reveal remarkable differences in the way people see your organisation's aims and objectives.

Resolving any differences in opinion will save considerable time and expense further down the line.

Language

Whilst you should write in clear, concise way - there is no reason why you cannot use emotive language to emphasise exactly what you are trying to achieve.

Design Examples

Providing examples of what you consider to be effective or relevant design can be a great help in writing a design brief.

Make sure to include samples of your company's current marketing materials - even their only purpose is to explain what you don't want from your new marketing materials!

If there is a design style that you particularly like or dislike - then explain why in the brief. If you're not entirely sure why you like a certain design style, then good starting points include:

- Colour
- Imagery
- Quantity and quality of text
- Typography
- The atmosphere that particular designs create

Don't feel that you have to stick to the medium that you are designing for when giving a list of inspiration and influences. If a television advert or music video creates the atmosphere that you want your flyer to create, then that is a perfectly reasonable statement to make in a design brief.

The more clues you give about your design tastes, the more likely the designer will be able to produce something close to your aims. Expecting your designer to second-guess what you require rarely produces the best results.

Design Brief Layout.

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