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## Marketing >

### How To Create Killer Marketing Brochures

Your printed marketing materials speak volumes about your company. Each person will filter and interpret the messages differently and will make a value judgement about your company based on your materials.

With so much at stake, it's important to take steps at the back end of the process to ensure the best possible result--that the message you want to communicate about your company, product or service is received and acted upon by your target audience. The following points will help you craft a better brochure.

#### Determine Your Target Audience

Who will read your publication? What are their needs? What "pain" are they in that your product or service will fix?

#### Determine Measurable Objectives

Too often, marketing pieces aren't developed with clearly defined objectives in mind. Copy is pulled from the corporate web site, old sales collateral, notes from last year's sales conference, or written "on the fly" on a napkin at lunch. Consider several types of objectives:

**Heads Up:** This is the information you want your audience to know--the conclusions you want them to draw. For example, your reader gains a basic understanding of what your company is about, your product or service offering, and how you can solve their problem(s).

**Heartfelt:** These are the objectives that provoke an emotional response and stir your target to want to do business with your company. With these objectives, the graphic look and feel of your publication comes into play. An example of a heartfelt objective is that your reader has the impression that your company values its customers and pays attention to detail.

**Hands On:** These objectives are the actions you want your target to take as a result of exposure to your publication. An example of a measurable hands on objective is your target reader dialing the phone or accessing your company web site to request more information, register for the seminar, etc.

#### Determine the Message



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Once you have identified your target audience and thought through the objectives, the meat of the publication can be developed. At this phase, content is written, photography and illustration needs are assessed, and the overall graphic look and feel are created. The first step is to determine the overall theme for your brochure.

For example, a company offering financial planning services may decide that the theme they need to communicate is one of security, strength, and wisdom. Likewise, an interior design firm may determine that in order to penetrate the desired market sector, their theme must reflect an edgy attitude —bold and “over the top”—and the content, tone and graphics must reinforce it.

### Craft the Content

Just as there is a difference between “fresh brewed” and “instant” coffee, there is also a huge chasm of difference between “pulling together” article content and crafting a story. The former is becoming evermore the norm in contemporary business culture, as businesses operate on tighter budgets and even tighter time constraints for producing “product.” Unfortunately, this rush to market too often produces inferior communications tools, which in turn fail to generate the desired results, which drives management to determine that “marketing doesn’t work” and the vicious cycle is perpetuated.

### There is another way

Consider entrusting your project to skilled freelance craftsmen – business writers and graphic designers – so the materials can be crafted (and this is key) from a vantage point outside your company, free of the distractions, personal agendas, time pressures, etc., that can stifle the development of your messaging. Too often, messaging created strictly from within an organization sounds good to the folks charged with the task of creating it, but in many cases the message is not the message that potential customers need in order to be persuaded to act – and it’s all about taking action.

The primary goal of any marketing piece is to elicit a response – making a phone call, logging on to a web site, attending a conference, donating to a cause, and even simply thinking differently about a company, product or service. A writer and designer “looking in” with your guidance will bring a fresh perspective and be able to develop content that tells your company’s unique story and effectively delivers the right message for your target audience.

### Create the Graphic “Look and Feel”

Equally important as the crafting of content is the manner in which the information is presented. You need to capture your reader’s attention and get him to at least flip through your publication. What theme do the article headlines and graphics convey? Is information arranged for easy reading? Is the recipient of your publication able to make a quick and accurate assessment of the value of your product, service or cause?

Stunning creative on its own is a wonderful thing, but stunning creative that helps you build market share is better and careful attention to these critical questions as the publication is designed will help you convey your message more effectively.

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