

How to create a brief

At The Design Lab, we pride ourselves on the help and advice we offer our clients. We are on hand from the very beginning to get your project off to a flying start, but it is still important for you to create a brief pinpointing exactly what it is you want the project to achieve. Making decisions will be quicker and easier with a brief in place, and you will feel in control and fully involved from the word go. If you've never written a brief before, it can sound more daunting than it really is.

Here are a few key points to get you started:

- Look at other companies' promotional material, particularly businesses within your own field, and jot down what elements you like about them, and what you don't like. This could be the elegance of their logo, the atmosphere created by their brochure, or the impact of their website.
- Consider what the principal aim of the project will be – is it to generate sales, create brand awareness, or simply to give information to existing and potential clients?
- Give a detailed profile of your company – describe your products or services, your target market, the image or style you aim to portray, what sets you apart from other companies in the same field, and who your competitors are.
Corporate Identity:
- Your company's logo is the most important aspect of your identity and communication, as it creates a first impression for customers. Spend some time considering the values that your company represents, as this is what your logo should reflect.
- Consider your target customer. Who is your current market? What future markets do you want to reach? This will have a significant bearing on the image you portray, helping you decide on a classic look or a more contemporary feel.
- Again, consider your competitors. Provide some examples, both good and bad!

Websites:

- You will need a basic idea of what you want the website to incorporate – company info, product listings, a news section, the ability for customers to buy products direct from the site? Roughly how many pages do you imagine the website will need?
- This will help you to gauge what services you might need us to provide – depending on what you want the website to do, you may require database/ecommerce software, photography, copywriting, animation and sound, or additional graphic design (for a new logo, for example). Would you like to be able to update parts of the website yourself as and when you need to?

Design for print:

- With any advertising material, from company stationery to a brochure, it is vital to think about the content and the aim of the publication. Whether you are looking for increased brand awareness or are planning an aggressive sales campaign, we can generate a wide range of solutions to suit the project.
- Consider the practical details. Is it to be mainly a colour production such as a brochure, or is it, in the case of advertising, to appear within black and white publications such as newspapers? How is the item to be supplied after production
- is posting weight an issue?

Budget:

- Setting out your budget and timescale at this stage is vital - even if you can be flexible, it is important to have at least a rough guideline.

A brief can be as detailed as you like, or it can be a fairly simple document, incorporating just the key factors. You may find that you change your mind about some elements, but you will be confident that you have considered all the vital aspects of the project. But please, don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you are unsure about any part of the process of creating a brief; we will be very happy to answer any questions you may have.

Your brief will be the beginning of an exciting dialogue between The Design Lab and your company – it will enable us to understand your expectations, so that we can begin immediately to deliver the results you want.