

DESIGNING BROCHURES

Brochures are the ideal vehicle to give a lot of information quickly. And here are some tips you can follow to improve on your brochure's effectiveness.

For many companies, their brochure becomes the public face of the company. When a client or potential client gets a brochure, their impressions may be formed from this simple-but very important document. A poorly designed and printed brochure may prevent your company from selling your products or services.

A brochure is a place to show off your capabilities - your areas of expertise to prospective customers - or - a place to reacquaint existing clients of your capabilities they may have forgotten, or introduce them to any new products / services. A request for you to send out your brochure may be an indication that the person requesting the brochure is ready to purchase. Sending for one can be the "call to action" in an advertisement, email or flyer. A new brochure can be the anchor of a mail campaign that gets your product under the noses of consumers, and the "excuse" for a follow-up phone call from your sales staff.

Think of your brochure as an extended sales presentation. But there are a few questions you must ask yourself before commissioning the design and printing of your brochure. Well thought out answers to the following questions before visiting our print shop - Wheeler's - will save you time and expense. After all, no one knows your company, your product and your services better than YOU!

1) How will people get the brochure?

Answers to this govern how we design and print your brochure. For instance, do you intend to mail out the brochure - as a self mailer to save the cost of an outer envelope, or will you mail out the brochure in its own envelope. If in an envelope, will this be a standard #10 envelope, or a larger 9" X 12" envelope, perhaps with additional collateral material. This is an important question to consider as it will help you set the goals and parameters of the brochure. If it is a product brochure, it may have many pages that go into great detail. If it is a teaser, say for a mutual fund where more specific detailed information may be presented later face to face, then the brochure design should be short & sweet, and highlight key points.

2) How will people get the brochure? Will it be handed to them or left on a table? Consider the many ways a brochure gets out to potential customers. Maybe it will be distributed with many others or made available in a rack. Perhaps it must compete for attention with other competitor's brochures. If this be the case then identifying, eye

catching graphics, text and/or pictures should be kept high on the cover. Keeping the delivery method in mind will help you make design decisions. If mailed on its own, then consideration of Canada Post's requirements for address location must come into play. If there is a self mailing coupon attached to the brochure, then there are minimum postal requirements concerning paper thickness to consider.

3) What should go into the brochure?

No matter what the tone of the brochure, never forget the basics - Contact name, address, phone, fax, email and web address are very important. And don't forget to triple check the spelling, once the designer presents you with a proof. But don't put this information first. The reader should be guided through a little tour of your company in your brochure and expect to find your contact information at the end. Do you have testimonial letters from satisfied past customers? Put short excerpts from these throughout your brochure, providing the reader with proof that your firm is a safe company to do business with. Do you belong to the local Better Business Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, professional associations, etc? If so, prominently display these association logos, to bolster your credibility. Refrain from mentioning the reader can find you in the yellow pages- they can find your competition there too. Professionally shot product photographs, while more expensive than your own photography, must be considered as a wise investment. The professional pictures will be in focus, shot in proper lighting and showcase your product in the best possible way.

4) How long will the brochure be used?

If the brochure is to be used for a season or a limited period, then time considerations are not too important. But if it is to be used for a year or more, think about omitting prices and phrases that will date the contents. Instead of writing "a decade of experience", consider instead "more than a decade of experience", or like Wheeler's, "serving your printing needs since 1994." If prices are important then include them on a separate price sheet that can be updated quickly as needs arise.

5) How big will the brochure be?

Taking size into consideration right off the bat can save you much grief and money later on. Choosing standard sized paper is a good way to save money but may not give the most eye-catching effect when competing against a bag full of other brochures at a convention.

Our staff has been designing and printing brochures, since 1994. Our experience will help you communicate your message more effectively and sell more of your products and services. Call us today.

