



Making an Impact with Marketing Materials

1. Determine your objectives

Who are you trying to reach and what are you trying to achieve? Is it your objective to educate and inform? Build brand awareness? Or sell a product or service? Are you sending the right message to right audience? The first few seconds are critical. If your message fails to hit the reader's hot buttons, the piece will likely go unread.

2. Simplify your message

In general, it's best to keep your message short and to the point, whether you are creating a brochure, newsletter, advertisement or other print communications. In addition, make your message easier to read by using a variety of graphic design services to break up type and add interest. You can also simplify information by replacing text with tables, charts and other graphics that illustrate key points.

3. Narrow your emphasis

Avoid trying to do too much in a single piece. Narrow your focus to one or two strong messages or benefits. In general, you have less than five seconds to catch a reader's interest. Use headlines, subheads, quotations to add emphasis and draw the reader in. However, it is important not to overdo it and try to emphasize everything. If you try to tell your readers too much, you could overwhelm them.

4. Add contrast to add interest

Add visual contrast to your documents by using white space, typography and size of graphic elements. For example, two photos of dramatically different sizes on a page are more appealing than two photos of equal size. The size difference also communicates which elements are more important.

5. Project the right image

Use consistent type, color and design to create an easily identifiable "look" that distinguishes you from your competition. For example, you may want your audience to perceive your company as professional, friendly, corporate, dynamic or cost-conscious. The design you create reinforces this image by creating the appropriate emotional response. However, be selective. With literally thousands of colors and typefaces, it's easy to go overboard.

6. Edit without compromise

An effective graphic design succeeds by reducing the number of words instead of reducing type size or illustrations to "fit everything in." Eliminate unnecessary verbiage. Review the piece with co-workers or family members to make sure your message is easily understood. It's also important to establish a procedure for proofreading. Nothing can ruin an image quicker than typos, poor grammar or bad punctuation.