



THE IMPACT OF DESIGN

**TEN WAYS TO
MAKE YOUR
PROMOTIONAL
LITERATURE
MORE EFFECTIVE**

A GUIDE FOR SMALL ORGANISATIONS

THE IMPACT OF DESIGN

1 Start With A Plan

All successful design projects start with an outline plan. Whatever kind of leaflet or poster you're designing, readers should be able to progress through a logical journey of Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. Sketching this out in draft format first will help you to understand which pieces of text should go where and how content can be best positioned on the page.

You can then decide what size and shape are most appropriate. Will A5 flyers fit in your leaflet racks? Will A3 posters be too big for your notice boards? Confirming these details in advance will help prevent embarrassing mistakes later on.

2 Know Your Audience

Are you creating a community fundraising brochure? A report for stakeholders or corporate sponsors? A poster campaign to attract young people? Each audience is different and will therefore need a different approach.

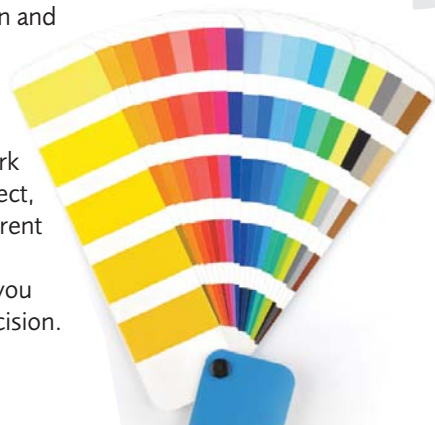
Put aside your personal preferences for design and style and consider how your audience will feel when they see your leaflet. Will they be attracted by the first page? Will they be moved to read further? Will it 'speak' to them in their language? You need to understand what drives your audience before you can effectively communicate with them.

3 Choose Colours Carefully

Ever wondered why so many fast food chains use red in their logos? Or why so many corporate brochures are blue? Colours are more than decoration; they're a form of non-verbal communication that can influence what people do and how they feel.

Choose one main colour for your publication that will reinforce your message and complement your existing corporate identity. A secondary colour can then be used to highlight key parts of the document but don't be tempted to use too many colours as this can muddle the design and overwhelm your message.

If you're not sure which colours work best for your project, try out some different options and get feedback before you make the final decision.



4 Find a Font that Fits

To give your leaflet or flyer a professional look, it's usually best to limit the number of fonts you use to a maximum of two. You can use italics or bold variations of these fonts for emphasis throughout the text but otherwise aim for a simple uncluttered look.

Generally, serif fonts (such as Times Roman) are considered best for long pieces of text, with sans-serif fonts (such as Arial) used in headlines, for on-screen reading and for more informal publications... but there are no hard and fast rules. The real test is how easy it is to read. Print out a few options and ask friends, family or colleagues for feedback.

5 Less Is More

It can be tempting, sometimes, to cram every last little detail about your project or organisation into a new leaflet or brochure. Resist! It's nearly always true that the more you try to say, the less people will hear. Instead, restrict the content to the bare minimum but provide details of how readers can find out more information if they need to by, for example, providing a web address or other contact details.

6 Use Great Images

A strong image on the front of your leaflet will really help to grab attention and, used alongside a punchy headline, can create a powerful message.

Digital cameras make it really easy to take your own photos these days but keep your pictures simple. A photo of one person taking part in an event, for instance, will have more impact than thirty people all crowding into the shot. Similarly, using one large image on the page will be more eye-catching than several smaller ones. Make sure there's an uncluttered background and, wherever possible, ensure the subject is making eye contact with the camera.

If you're not able to take your own photos, consider using an image library which can be a really cost-effective way of making your designs look more professional.



7 Embrace Technology

There are hundreds of different design software packages available but you don't need to spend a fortune to get great results. Microsoft Publisher and Adobe Photoshop Elements, for instance, are two great packages that are easy to use and will help add a professional feel to your designs. Buy a manual or take a course to get the most out of the software.

Think, too, about how you'll want to distribute your leaflet. Use PDF (Portable Document Format) versions for e-mailing or downloading from your website but optimise the file size first to make it easy for people to access.

8 Make it Accessible

We all have a duty to ensure that our publications are as accessible as possible.

So, make sure the fonts you use are a reasonable size and that there is good contrast against the background colour... not everyone has perfect eyesight.

Remember, too, that English may not be your reader's first language so consider whether a translated leaflet might be appropriate.

9 Check, Check and Check Again

Nothing spoils the impact of a flyer or brochure more than the dreaded typo. It screams "we don't care" and that's not the message you want your audience to hear. If grammar and punctuation just aren't your thing... find someone who loves this kind of detail and ask them to proofread.


Don't forget the legal stuff either. Add a disclaimer, just in case things change after publication. Make sure you've got permission to use all the content, especially images and, if you're using photos of children, always get their parents' consent.



10 Get Professional Support

Follow the tips in this guide and you won't go far wrong... but remember that it can sometimes be quicker, cheaper and less hassle in the long run to call on specialist support. Using a graphic designer, for instance, can help you to see things in a new light and introduce fresh approaches that perhaps you wouldn't have considered otherwise.

Copywriters, too, can help cut through the detail and pull out the key messages in a way that's best for your audience. Getting your leaflet professionally printed can also be cheaper than you think, even for short print runs.



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