

creating a design brief

A design brief is one of the foundations upon which a successful design project is built. It is a fundamental communication channel for your designer and a clear consolidation of your project's objectives and desired outcomes.

what is a design brief?


Designers use design briefs to understand their client's goals, the scope of the project and issues that may arise.

You can use it as a tool to clarify the need and direction of your project and how its success will be measured. But most importantly, a design brief will ensure that all parties involved fully understand the objectives, audience, and expected results of the project from the outset.

what is in a design brief?

- > Project title
- > Company profile
 - > Who are we?
 - > What do we do?
 - > Where do we do it?
 - > How are we seen in the market place?
 - > Where do we want to go?
 - > What is the perceived personality of the company?
- > Key project personnel
 - > Who is the project manager?
 - > Who will kick the project off?
 - > Who will approve the work?
 - > Who will approve payment of the invoices?
 - > Who will evaluate the success/failure of the project?

- > Project objectives
 - > What do we want to achieve?
 - > Who is the target audience and what hot buttons do we need to focus on?
 - > What are our branding issues that relate to this project?
- > Scope of work
 - > Critical dates that need to be considered.
 - > What is our budget for the project?
 - > How are we going to evaluate the success and failure? Identify KRA's.
 - > You can also include information that will help a designer understand your company and the context in which the project will be run.
- > Issues
 - > Explanation of internal approval process.
 - > Technical Constraints.
 - > Environmental requirements.
 - > Computer system.
- > Procedural requirements
 - > Contractual.
 - > Approval.
 - > Financial.
- > Design examples you like, or find relevant to your project
 - > Current relevant company marketing materials.
 - > Websites.
 - > Brochures.
 - > Annual Reports.
 - > Advertisements (Print, TV and Digital).
 - > Posters.



Of additional value is the opportunity for you and your designer to meet the CEO, key business development person or other senior manager in your organisation. This helps the designer by:

- > Hearing first hand their vision for the company.
- > Understanding any specific hot buttons or any issues of concern they have.
- > Creating greater awareness of your project in the company.

Of course, wouldn't it also be useful to have a checklist covering the key issues mentioned in this document that you could use for each project you do to help you manage the briefing process?

We've created a checklist for developing your design brief. This is included as separate page you can print out and use time and again. But remember every design project has a number of unique elements and considerations, so make sure you add anything that is specific to your project needs.



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design brief checklist

- Title
- Company profile
 - > Who/what/where
 - > Corporate identity/image/personality (conservative? adventurous?)
 - > Market share/perceptions
 - > Company vision
- Project Objectives
 - > Your project goals
 - > Proposed medium
 - > Who is your target audience
 - > Hot buttons/key messages
 - > Branding issues
- Project Management
 - > Identify Project manager
 - > Identify sign off authority
 - > Schedule and budget
 - > Additional information about the project: context, marketing material
 - > Identify key performance indicators and evaluation process
- Procedures and Issues
 - > Contractual arrangements
 - > Approvals process
 - > Technical limitations
 - > Computer system
 - > Environmental requirements
- Additional support material
 - > Examples of company work or marketing materials etc

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