# What is a brochure?

You have by now planned the production of marketing material, and developed a newsletter.

While the purpose of a newsletter is to inform, the purpose of a brochure is to promote. So, keep in mind when writing content that your brochure should function as a promotional device.

A brochure is usually a bi-fold or more commonly tri-fold advertising medium that is usually used to target a specific product or services or a group of related products or services.

There are many considerations when developing a brochure that we will examine here.

## Size

The size that you choose for your marketing material can depend upon how much money you have to spend. In order to be able to calculate the cost of printing the marketing material, it is important to select the paper size you will be using. The International Standards Organisation (ISO) rates paper in the following sizes:

Size Height (mm) Width (mm)

A0 841 1189

A1 594 841

A2 420 594

A3 297 420

A4 210 297

A5 148 210

A6 105 148

Ensure that you select the most appropriate size of marketing material. Therefore, it must be big enough to make an impact and communicate the information you require, yet small enough to ensure costs are not exorbitant.

If you intend to send your brochure by mail you need to consider the size of your brochure very carefully. Remember that there are mailing costs involved that vary depending on size, shape and weight of the material selected.

## The front cover

* Since this is the first part that the reader is likely to see, it is probably the most important to design. Ways to grab the reader's attention are to:
* Have a single inspirational photo
* A montage of images that give a good idea of what the content will cover
* Key words or statements of what will be communicated
* Something that makes it stand out on a coffee table
* Since much of the page will be hidden when it's filed away on a rack, put the most interesting images on the top right half of the cover.

## Choosing paper and envelopes

Paper Quality

One of the biggest selling points of your marketing material will be the quality of the medium.

Your images, layout and design, and content will entail a single, constant cost that is not effected by how many copies you produce. However, the cost of actually publishing your marketing material increases as your quantity increases. One of the single greatest contributors to this cost is the quality of the paper you publish on.

Should you wish to gain some working knowledge about what materials you may use for your marketing material, contact a paper merchant. They should be happy to assist you with your paper selection and order in any material that they do not have ready. It's easy to attain a catalogue of available materials that includes samples of each material.

Glossy styles are good if you want to include colourful images. Matt finish on the other hand is cost effective. If you have more pages, perhaps thinner paper is in order to reduce postage costs. A heavier, more durable material should generally be used for the front and back cover.

## Using colour

Colour may be used in marketing material to influence the mood and impressions of your audience.

Below is a list of colours, and the corresponding moods that they stimulate and the impressions that they convey.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Colour | Mood or Impression |
| Reds | Warmth, vitality |
| White | Clean, fresh, clinical |
| Blue and Green | Crisp and efficient |
| Yellow | Happy |
| Burgundy | Sophisticated |
| Browns and Oranges | Relaxed comfort |

## Using images

It must be remembered that every aspect of your brochure must reflect a positive professional attitude and instil confidence in your business, its products and services. All images should be professional quality and should show your business to its best advantage. These are vital things to keep in mind if taking the images yourself.

## Image Libraries

Image Libraries can be an important resource when developing marketing material. They can be important because they contain many illustrations that you may find useful to include in your marketing material. There are many benefits of selecting a "stock" photo from an image library. For example, you can browse an extensive list of images before purchasing the rights to use them. You can then avoid having a professional photographer take photos, which can be expensive and may still not capture what you wish to be portrayed.

There are various public domain website image libraries such as the World Wide Arts Resource Photography Page. You may also wish to search the internet for royalty free images that you can use in your marketing material.

## Buying Illustrations and Photography

Illustrators and photographers are an important asset when developing marketing material. This is because they can provide customised images that you can include in your marketing material. Such images may compliment your content well.

To gain a better idea of what your prospective illustrator's style and abilities are, you might like to build up a collection of books that contain current suppliers of illustrations and catalogues of their work. Alternatively, a quick search on the internet will provide you with many sources of images which can be readily purchased.

If you want to collect some photography and you have a style in mind, create a shortlist of illustrators and try to attain a copy of their folio. Then it's just a matter of working out the contract.

There are a number of issues that should be clarified before a contract is signed, including:

* An approximation of the photographer or illustrators' expenses
* Any limits on the amount of film that you wish them to use
* Whether they are allowed to sell any photos they have taken on the day to another party
* To make sure that releases are signed by any persons in the photograph.
* Ensure that all agreements are in a written contract before your photographer begins to take pictures.

Your concerns should not differ from on site to studio photography. In both cases it is good to be there when the photos are being taken. This way you can ensure that everyone holds a common vision.

If your budget does not allow you to include any outsourced illustrations, it is still possible to keep your material jazzed up. You can do this by making the font exciting, and presenting many of the contents in visual forms such as graphs or charts.

## Preparing a brochure for printing

Printing your marketing material will often mean using external print houses. With desktop publishing increasingly a Do It Yourself affair, explaining to a printing house what you wish to be produced is far easier.

It is now possible to provide most printing firms with a CD-ROM, DVD, Memory Stick etc for them to print your prepared marketing material from. Many will also allow you to email them your material.

When preparing a brochure for printing with an external printing house, it is a good idea to:

* Set the marketing material out similarly to how you want it to appear in the end form.
* Then, adjust the layout according to any suggestions from the printers.

Factors you will need to include along with the specification report that you submit are:

* Size
* Colours
* Paper
* Photos
* Layout
* Quantity
* Deadlines

Remember that in this electronic age, much of what was done by printing companies has been made easily applicable by the individual. Now, anyone with a computer, a publishing package, and a bit of flair can design a moderately professional looking document. Consequently, it can be best to find out the platform and software of your prospective printers. This way, you may send off the final copy in electronic form (be it on disk or otherwise). You can then have the printers produce your marketing material directly from computer. Having already rendered much of the specs into their desired form, you will have a much shorter specifications list. This also reduces the design and set-up costs considerably and can represent significant savings for your business.

## Seeking quotes for printing

Make sure that each printing firm that you obtain a quote from understands your required specifications. When obtaining a quote, make a note of the:

* Date
* Name of the person who gave you the quote

Obtaining a variety of quotes allows you to compare the costs of each printing house.

In deciding which printing house to select, printers who are experienced in the printing of marketing material may be of greater importance than cost. It will be helpful to ask for previous examples of their work that is comparable to what you have in mind, and compare quality. Finally, make sure that the final quote is recorded in writing.

Since a lot of your printing costs will simply be setting up of the original artwork and the plates, it is far better to over order rather than under order the number of copies.