
TOP 10 CREATIVE TIPS



Figure 1 Get you client to outline their brochure design objectives

We've given you a selection of great brochure templates for designers to create a solid design portfolio. But now you've learned enough about brochure design that you can create a brochure from scratch, how do you make it really stand out? The difference between a good brochure and a great brochure are encapsulated in the design tips below.

01. Know your purpose before you start

When you're thinking about how to design a brochure, start by asking clients why they think that they need a brochure. Then, they need to define their objectives. Sometimes they just want one because their last brochure didn't work. If they've come up with a brief for you, take a step back from that and look at exactly what it is they're trying to achieve.

02. Limit your fonts

You don't need many fonts when you're thinking of how to design a brochure – just a heading, subheading and body copy font. But we see it all the time in student portfolios, people think they need to find a headline font nobody has ever used before. Clients will usually take the lead on fonts as they'll often have a corporate identity in place.

03. Take stock of your paper stock

Talk about paper stock before you put pen to notepad. If you're working for a client, ask if it has to be the standard A4. Find out if they've considered using uncoated paper, for example. There's a great post here on making a paper choice.

04. Get your copy right



Figure 2 You may not like to hear it but excellent copy is crucial to great brochure design

Great copy is often the most undervalued element in brochure design. A lot of people don't understand that copy needs to be considered as part of the overall design concept. At the early stage of any brochure design project, experiment with the copy to see if it needs reworking. Headlines aren't something to just drop in later.

05. Put readers first

When thinking of how to design a brochure, keep the end purpose in mind. Is this a brochure that's going to be posted out in response to requests made on a website? Is it a giveaway at an exhibition, or a leave-behind brochure? When someone opens it, what will it say to them? Design for that person, not for yourself.

06. Think of simple statements



Figure 3 Keep brochure design concepts clear and simple

You want to know how to make a brochure that stands out, right? Sometimes the simple ideas are the best. If a client has decided they want lots of clichéd images to get a particular point across, it's probably better to scrap them. The solution might be to use a typographic cover instead, and make a very literal statement about what they want to say.

07. Set pen to paper

Break out the layout pads and try drawing and sketching ideas to start with. Brainstorm everything among everybody, rather than taking a brief away for two weeks and then presenting three concepts to see which one the client hates the least.

08. Keep what works

Don't try to be wacky or different just for the sake of it when you're thinking of how to design a brochure that gets noticed. For example, most designers use the same 10 to 20 fonts across a lot of the projects they work on. There are sound design reasons why Helvetica is used a lot, and why Rockwell is a good headline font.

09. Make a good first impression



Figure 4 You must convey a good impression with your brochure design

Brochure designs need to fit in with what the client does as a business. Charities don't want luxury brochures that'll make people think they've spent a lot of money on them, whereas a new product might need a brochure that looks amazing on an exhibition stand beside it.

10. Shoot sharp

To make a product brochure pleasurable to flick through, you need good photos. If you're using stock imagery – budgets don't always stretch to a photoshoot – try to find pictures that don't look like they're stock images. Never cut corners.