



10 Design Brief Essentials

From corporate branding and websites, to product packaging, collateral materials, catalogs, tradeshow booths, banners, and more—a good (or bad) design often means the difference between business failure and success.

But let's face it, we're not all designers. As the business owner or executive in charge of the look and feel of your brand, you probably don't have time to keep up on all the latest design trends, technologies, and user experience studies. You're focused on running your business, managing your teams, and leveraging opportunities to positively affect the bottom line.

How can you be expected to know what makes a good design?

Luckily, you don't have to. That's what creative teams and design experts like the Barrel O'Monkeyz team do. We keep up on the latest dos and don'ts from a design and technology standpoint, and can get you faster to market and closer to the design that will work for your brand and your target audience than if you were try to go it alone.

That said, it's always good to explore your own ideas so that when you do meet with a designer or design team, you have something to discuss or show. The following "Design Brief Essentials" Worksheet asks a wide range of questions so you can capture in writing everything you need to work with either an in-house or external design team.

DESIGN BRIEF ESSENTIALS

1. Company Context

- What is your company?
- How big is it? How long have you been in business?
- What is your corporate culture like?
- What product or service do you offer?
- What is your history? What are you most proud of?

2. Nature of the Work

- What is the design project? Is it a logo, website design, new branding, advertising, stationery, PowerPoint presentation, or all of the above?
- What is the required format (software, sizes, file types, digital, print, etc.) for the design deliverable(s)?



3. Budget & Timeframe

- What commitment of time and resources is your company willing to make to the design project?
- What does the budget include? What does it NOT include?
- How does budget affect what you can or can't do?
- When does the work need to be completed?
- What is driving this date? Are there firm deadlines in place due to other commitments, or is there room in the schedule?
- Are the timeframes realistic?

4. Design Team

- Will the work be done in-house, or will you employ an outside design team?
- Do you already have a team in place, or will you have to budget time to do a search?
- Who will coordinate that search, and once the team is in place, who is responsible for coordinating day-to-day activities?

5. Approvals

- Who is responsible for approving various project steps and designs along the way? Who has sign-off authority?
- What kinds of materials will this person need to see in order to give his or her approval—digital files, print files, proofs, etc.
- What kind of turnaround times for approvals should you anticipate?

6. Target Audience

- Describe your target audience—age, gender, income, education, profession, marital status, and other demographics important to your brand selling proposition.
- How do consumers typically make their purchase decisions for your type of products or service?
- Where do they get their information?

7. The Competition

- Who are your competitors?
- How do they engage audiences?
- How are they alike and how are you different?
- What kind of design approaches do they use online and in print?

8. Design Preferences

- Does your brand lend itself to imagery or words, or something in-between?
- What design elements will your target audience respond to best?
- What kind of tone are you trying to convey—corporate, professional but approachable, or casual?
- What colors do you like or don't like?



- If you have a current website or collateral materials, what do you like or dislike about them and why?
- Are there other websites you like or don't like . . . and why?
- What typography do you find appealing?
- Do you have photographs you can use for the project, or will you need to engage a photographer or buy stock photos?

9. Previous Materials

- Are there existing design guidelines in place that need to be followed, changed, or adapted in some way?
- If you have a logo, do you have access to the files necessary to reproduce it online and in print?
- Are there materials online and in print that are currently being used? Will new designs need to be compatible with these previous items, or are you looking for a complete redo?
- What good features of previous designs do you want to retain? Which do you want to get rid of?

10. Project Goals

- What is the goal of the design project?
- Are you simply producing a new look with new materials, or are you looking to generate measurable business results? If so, what are those desired results?
- Are you looking to introduce or relaunch a brand to increase brand awareness?
- Are you looking to boost sales, foot traffic, grow a leads list, or revamp your image?

LET'S GET CREATIVE

Barrel O'Monkeyz is a San Diego-based strategic marketing agency specializing in Sports and Active Lifestyle markets. We serve as a seasoned, outsourced marketing team for companies looking to ramp up sales and launch new products. Our barrel is full of talent and creative arms ready to prove we don't just monkey around!

Contact Barrel O'Monkeyz Today | monkeyz@barrelomonkeyz.com