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## Your Company Brochure

by Kathy Ellis, Business Lab Marketing Coach

Your corporate brochure is a tangible tool that tells your customers, your prospects and your employees who you are and what you do. In the simplest form, your company brochure is the communication of exactly what your company offers. However, your brochure is much more than this, as it makes an important and significant impression on every person who comes in contact with it. In this month's article, we will review four key areas to think about when producing your company brochure and some tips on how to make your brochure stand out in the crowd.

The four key areas to consider when producing your company brochure are: (1) budget; (2) your message; (3) how will your brochure be used; and (4) time frame.

**Budget:** Determining the budget for your company brochure should be the first step in your brochure process. You will need to consider these factors: the size of your brochure, quantity of brochures needed; copywriting and photography; paper choices; inks (full color, varnishes, etc.); die-cuts; bindery; and mailing costs. You will also need to consider the "impact" factor you want your brochure to have. There are many ways to achieve a high "wow" factor without incurring huge expenses. However, there may be some additional work to do by you and your team.

**Tip From The Business Lab:** Involve your printer and/or design professional from the very beginning of your brochure project and provide them with your budget upfront. By having them understand what you want to achieve with your message and knowing what financial/manpower resources you have available, they will be able to help you achieve your exact goals for this project.

**Your Message:** Start by gathering your team and any current literature you may be using to describe your company. As a team, be clear on what message you want to send to your clients, prospects, and employees. It will also be important that your company brochure matches your company/corporate identity. For instance, if you are a very casual company looking to attract casual clientele and employees, you will not want to produce a brochure that looks and feels "corporate." In addition, the "tone" of your corporate culture will be projected by the use of proper and professional photography, specific design elements, the copy; and how they are combined together as an overall "package."

**Tip From The Business Lab:** Keep in mind that you want your brochure to convey the "halo" effect — that is, "if this company can produce this brochure...then they can certainly handle my project too." A good guideline to use when developing your brochure is to ask the following questions along the way: (1) How do we convey that we are able to help our customers/prospects? (2) How do we convey that our company is real and legitimate? (3) How do we help our customer/prospect move forward in doing business with us? (4) Have we told them how to obtain further information?

**How Will Your Brochure Be Used?** Do you intend for your com-

pany brochure to be used as a cold call tool; as a tool for warm-calls; and/or to include follow-up information? This can have a large impact on your brochure—especially in how it is delivered. Remember to consider the mailing of your brochure as the presentation of the envelope and outside packaging is an important part of the overall look, feel and "tone" you are striving for.

**Tip From The Business Lab:** Most companies have the need for incorporating "additional" information with their brochure. This is the type of information that changes frequently or that is customized for a particular customer/prospect. It is very important this type of information be considered in the initial design of your brochure. Otherwise, it will be expensive to make this revision later on. During the initial planning stages of your brochure, you will need to consider these "inserts" and determine the best way to incorporate them into the overall look and feel of your presentation. In addition, consider quantities and the frequency in which your brochure is being used. There are some unique and creative ways to develop a brochure that can be completely customized to your customers/prospects. However, creative brochures may take more time to put together and may involve the use of additional employees.

**Time Frame:** Developing or redesigning your company brochure will take time. After initial meetings to establish your budget and the overall look and feel of your brochure, factor in several other steps such as: copywriting, photography, design comps, selections and additional revisions, final approval stages and press-checks to ensure the colors and overall look are exactly what you expect.

**Tip From The Business Lab:** Start the process backwards and determine the ideal date you would like to have your new brochure in hand. Work with your team and design professionals to set up a specific time-line schedule, including all the events that you foresee happening throughout the project. Place each meeting or event on your calendar and stay in touch with all parties involved. Keep in mind that "rushing" a project like your company brochure can lead to missed details, which can translate into a "sloppy" and "unprofessional" brochure for your company. By working backwards and including your team (including outside professionals) you will create a world-class brochure for your customers/prospects and employees.

**More Information?** If you would like to learn more about this important topic, please send an E-mail to [ideas@thebusinesslab.com](mailto:ideas@thebusinesslab.com) or fax a note on your letterhead to 281-517-0789.

**Author's Note:** Kathy Ellis is a Marketing Coach and the owner of The Business Lab, a full service marketing and graphic design company. We specialize in relationship marketing programs including database marketing, company brochures, client newsletters and promotional marketing materials for our clients. We share with you our FREE newsletter to showcase powerful marketing tips, techniques and ideas to help you improve your business. The Business Lab is based in Houston, TX at 281-517-0998 or by E-mail at [kathy@thebusinesslab.com](mailto:kathy@thebusinesslab.com)