

Commissioning Graphic Design

A Step by Step Guide

- **An overview**

Good commercial graphic design is effective. Professionally, well designed, well printed material can do a range of important things for your enterprise. It can:

- Position your company in the desired marketplace, making sure that it is perceived in the correct way.
- Ensure that you are talking to and appealing to the appropriate clients and customers
- Reassure your client or customer that your service or product is the right one for them.
- Make it easier for your client or customer to access your services or products.

- **Finding a designer**

Finding a sympathetic designer or company is, of course, the first step. Ask around, find out the names of designers whose work you have seen and liked. Ask to see a designer's portfolio and look at examples of previous work. Nexus Creative prides itself on having a friendly, approachable team who are always happy to discuss your ideas and show you previous projects. Our portfolio is always available online at www.nexuscl.com

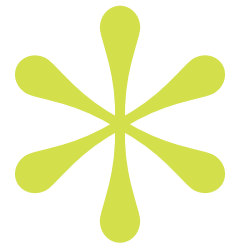
- **Establishing your requirements**

It may seem obvious, but consideration of the overall message to be conveyed is vital at an early stage. This objective should be clearly described at the initial stages and referred to frequently as the project progresses. It is important to know:

- what you want to say
- who you want to say it to – considering the 'end-user', their ages, interests, expectations and aspirations.

And once you have decided, we need to consider

- how best to say it
- the formats for the communication (is it a brochure a website, an exhibition stand, or all three?)



- **Preparing a brief**

Whether the project involves a company logo and stationery, sales brochures and catalogues, flyers and leaflets, a newsletter or magazine or interpretive graphic panels and exhibition material, the construction of a good brief is essential. We need to be clear and concise about your aims and objectives. There is no standard format for the brief; it may outline a scheme and request the designer to devise ideas for the specific project format, or it may contain firm ideas about the format and require the designer to work on the contents. Your designer can help you to write the brief or can take a brief from verbal instruction at an informal meeting.

- **Preparing the content**

The content of the scheme also needs to be considered carefully. Again, talk to your designer. They may have advice about what format and content may be best for you. When preparing the project content, try to keep the copy brief, simple, readable and engaging. Don't worry about making it short; volumes of text may compromise the impact of the project.

It is generally best to supply your copy to your designer as a text file, created in a text editing such as Microsoft Word. These files are generally small enough to e-mail.

Talk to your designer about the photographs to be used. It will necessary to provide them in the appropriate form for the project in hand; digital pictures will need to be of the correct resolution (usually 300dpi at the size to be used for print work), hard copy photographs will need to be scanned. A problem that we encounter frequently is the supply of photographs in digital form which are too small in size, often from low resolution digital cameras. Generate good photographs and keep them in a resource library; they can often be re-used in other projects and for press promotion. Your designer may also be an illustrator and photographer, or will be able to commission them should they be required. Nexus Creative has in-house photography, illustration and copy writing facilities should you need them.

- **'Pro-active' design**

Good design agencies, if invited to do so, will offer suggestions for new projects and ideas to enhance their clients' businesses. The whole Nexus Creative team regularly 'brainstorm' on behalf of their clients, offering them a select list of ideas for possible development.

Good design can make your business more effective and profitable.

Consult a designer today!

*The nexus creative portfolio and other useful downloadable PDF guides can be found at:
<http://www.nexuscl.com>*

*by **Robin Dallaway**, a senior designer at Nexus Creative, email: robin@nexuscl.com
Nexus Creative, Worcester. May 2006*


nexuscreative