

Creative briefs speed the design process

Asking the right questions at the outset will save you design time

By Dan Antonelli, President and Chief Creative Officer, KickCharge Creative

As designers, we're often tasked with trying to create an image and brand for businesses. It's a balance of trying to figure out their needs and the needs of the target audience they're trying to attract with their brand or signage.

Designing something that appeals to both takes a great deal of time to execute properly. You have to get inside the mind of your client, while imagining what someone they sell to might be drawn to. And you have to carefully consider how this image you are creating will be translated into all the other mediums which

it may need deployed on—vehicles, online, print, signage, apparel and so on.

The brief collects important info After working on over one thousand logos over the years, I feel like we've developed a good system developing brands. About five years ago we began using creative briefs to assist us in getting the right information from clients to give us the best opportunity for design success, and to avoid conceptualizing ideas which weren't the direction the client envisioned.

Once our contract has been signed and a





Here's what we ask in a logo design brief

We send our new clients a brief that tells them what we need to know about them and their business to come up with a successful logo design. We then review this information and look at their competitors before our first call or meeting to talk about their project. —Dan

Exact name of company to be used:

Current website address:

Why have you made the decision to rebrand?

What is the primary nature of the business?

Is there a unique story behind the business?

What does your audience care about? In other words, what is typically the most important part of their decision-making process in choosing your company?

What do you want to achieve with the new logo from a business perspective?

What words do you want your audience to associate with your company?

What message and brand promise are you trying to convey with the new logo? What do you want it to communicate to your audience?

Are there any mandates or specifics that must be included in the development of your new logo or should not be included in the development of your new logo?

Please list your top three to five favorite logos from our portfolio and provide thoughts on why you like each logo.

Who are your top three to five competitors online? Please include the domain URLs so that we may review their brands.

Who is your target audience? Who is the end user? (Be specific about segmentation, demographics, perceptions or attributes.)

deposit received, we send a creative briefing document that helps provide the foundation for our initial kickoff call to discuss their project. Prior to that call, we review the information submitted, review competitors, and have a solid understanding of the nature of their business and direction.

Discussing clients' intent On the call, we'll go through all of their responses and have a discussion. What we're trying to do is make sure we're both aligned on direction before any sketching actually takes place. While we do a lot of work in similar verticals, I try to not let that prejudice my art direction.

It can take some tact and finesse to navigate through this discussion, especially if the clients' direction runs contrary to what their target audience might like to see. But that discussion must be had. I try to make clear to the client that it's more important to appeal to their audience than it is to appeal to

themselves. Of course, there's a balance, and we obviously want the client to love their logo, too.

On page 47 are some of the basic questions we use for our brief. Note that we ask clients to use our portfolio as a reference to help us identify genres they're interested in, so making sure your website is up-to-date, with plenty of examples, really helps the process as well. **SC**



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