

# How to Write a Successful Brochure

Written brochures are an excellent way to position your company, tell your story, and describe your product or service. In addition, a professionally executed brochure adds a sense of stability and credibility to your organization. A good brochure is persuasive: it sells the reader on the benefits of your product or service and encourages him to buy your product or service instead of another. Whether you're writing a brochure from scratch, or you're updating a current one, these tips can help.

## Always Write in Terms of Benefit to the Reader

The most important thing to remember when writing a brochure is to write in terms of benefit to the reader. How will he profit from your product or service? Resist the temptation to talk about your company. Many people reiterate their company's mission statement; most are self-serving and do not talk in terms of the client or customer. Focus instead on the products and services the company offers that will benefit the reader.

## Prioritize Your Message

Prioritize your message in two or three key points. Communication research suggests that people are able to digest and remember only a few points at one time. In determining your key points, bear in mind that people want to know how your service or product will benefit them personally, in everyday life. To be credible, you must back-up your main points with proof; if you can't provide proof, don't use that key point. For example, if one of your main points is that your product is the safest on the market, consider how you are going to prove that point—do you have industry studies that prove your product's safety?

## Tell the Complete Story in Headlines

Face it: not everyone reads brochures cover to cover; in fact, most people only skim the materials that come across their desk every day. Therefore, you should get your message across in the bold headlines and subheads that the reader will likely read. To prove this point, read the headlines in this piece. They tell the complete story: "Always Write in Terms of Benefit to the Reader," "Prioritize Your Message," and so on. It is not necessary to read all of the information in this article to get the main points.

## Include Specific Facts and Figures

Use statistics to demonstrate that you are competent and skilled. For instance, if you run a financial consulting firm, and you can show that your clients make an average of x percent return on their investment, say it. List your qualifications and those of your employees if it will enhance your competence—for example, "All of our doctors are board certified."

## Use Testimonials

A testimonial is a statement from a satisfied customer praising you and your products or services. Sometimes you'll get unsolicited letters from pleased customers; get permission from the customer to use these kind words in your brochure. If you don't have any testimonials, ask for them. Send a short note to customers asking them to write a few words about their opinion of your products or services. Make it easy for them—send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your letter, and ask them to jot down their thoughts on the back of the letter you send them. Be clear in your letter that you will be using their words in ads, brochures, mail, and other promotions used to market your products or services.

## Offer More Information

You can only have so much copy in a brochure. Use all the information you couldn't fit into the brochure in collateral pieces that you can send to people who request more information. Ideas include a "Frequently Asked Questions" about the product or service you provide and a list of the top 10 reasons your product or service is needed. These pieces should be information-oriented, not sales-oriented. They will help to confirm your competence in the mind of prospects.

### **Use Positive Language**

The copy throughout the brochure should be positive, interesting, and vivid. The active voice is usually more direct and compelling than the passive voice. For instance, instead of saying, “The Following Services Are Available Through XYZ Company,” say, “XYZ Company Offers the Following Services.” The active voice usually requires fewer words, leaving you more room to get your point across.

### **Guarantee Your Products or Services**

Ensure that the buyer will be satisfied with your products or services. If you provide a specific guarantee, include it in the brochure. If you do not offer a guarantee, emphasize how you will go out of the way to make sure customers are satisfied.

### **Tell the Next Step**

Provide the reader with information on how to order the product or service or on how to get more information. Oftentimes a tear-off form can be incorporated so that the reader can quickly send for more information. While a form isn't always necessary, a phone number is.

Additional brochure writing advice and assistance will be provided upon request. Please call Shannon R. GaNun at 904-247-6608 if you have any questions or need further information. I look forward to working with you to promote your company.

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