

Creative Brief Checklist for Advertisement or Marketing Collateral

1) Background / basis for opportunity

- What is the current situation
- Why will the advertising make a difference?
- Why are you advertising at all?
- What have been the efforts to date?

2) Concept

- What are you trying to communicate with the promotion to the audience about your product/service, your organization, you brand, etc?
- What components need to be included in the promotion, calls to action, included gifts or
- Will the respondent have to register or sign up for some information or offer?
- Is there a website, micro website?
- Will there be multiple ways for the customer / prospect to respond to the promotion?

3) Product or Service Definition

A.. Description of product:

What product or service are you offering? Describe it in 50 words or less. Be sure to enclose a sample of the product.

B. Purpose of product:

What does the product do? How is it used? How does it work?

C. Product features:

Give all the details about the product - color, size, weight, material, number of parts, power ratings, number of working parts, and/or whatever other facts and

What are the key features?

What are the features or aspects of your product/service that make your

What points support the key benefit? Place them in order of most importance.

D. Main benefits of the product:

What is the key sales appeal of this product?

What are the other major benefits?

What will it do for the user?

Does it save time or money?

Will it make life easier or better?

Does it solve a problem?

If so, what is that problem and how does it solve it?

E. Comparison to other products:

How does it compare to other products already on the market (or about to come on

What will it give users that they can't get anywhere else?

How is it different?

Newer Better?

Is it unique?

An exclusive?

Less expensive?

A better buy?

Do you provide better service?

Do you have any related products?

If so, how does this product tie in with those?
Will you later sell those products to buyers of this product?

F. Unique selling proposition:

What distinguishes the product or service from other choices?
Does it have parity attributes that we can preempt and own?
How should the product be positioned?

G. Positioning

What is the positioning of the product/service?
What is the key point of difference?
What one thing should someone think of this product/service?

H. Brand character

What image does product or service have?

I. Insights related to product / service

Are there any other aspects of the brand, product, or offer that you feel are important and necessary to communicate the overall function and value of the product to assist the buyer in making a decision to respond to the advertisement or campaign?

4) Price

What is the price?
Any extra costs such as shipping and handling?
Any discounts?
Any deluxe versions?
Any alternatives?
Any deadlines for receiving special offers?

5) Payment Methods

What options will you be offering for payments?
Cash with order? Billing?
Purchase order required?
Credit cards?

6) Offer / Motivation

What is the offer?
What do you want the recipient to respond to?
Is this a special offer?
A premium?
An introductory offer?
A prepublication discount?
A limited-time offer?
Free information?

7) Package or Promotion

Direct mail package consisting of what elements? Letter? Lift letter? Brochure? catalog?
Or is it a display ad?
A newsletter?
A postcard?
An insert?
A television or radio commercial?
An email advertisement
A SMS text message

A social media (YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google +, Pinterest, etc.)

Website or landing page for promotion?

An entire campaign? Enclose samples of previous promotions for this product or other products your company has sold. Which were winners? Losers?

8) Tone / Personality

The tone of your advertising must reflect and be consistent with your brand's personality

How does your brand speak to your audience?

What human personality traits are important in communicating your brand's personality: seriousness, warmth, imagination, etc.?

What feeling, style or approach will create a living personality for the product or service?

9) Themes or Images

Are there any particular themes or images that you would like your advertising to

10) Look and Feel

What kind of visual or written tone would you like your advertising to convey?

11) Product Considerations

Filming, printing, paper usage, etc.

12) Creative Objectives

What are the objectives of your marketing campaign that you are developing a creative

13) Distribution / Circulation Considerations

Is the advertisement/campaign being distributed via mail, ride along, electronically?

What are the quantities of the advertisement/promotion?

14) Deadlines

What are the design, production, launch, etc. deadline dates that must be adhered to?

15) Creative Execution / Legal Mandatories

What are the mandatory creative or legal considerations must be included in the campaign/advertisement or must be taken into consideration as the campaign is

Are there legal disclaimers that must be part of the campaign/advertisement?

16) Key Messages

What are the key messages that the promotion should communication with the target

Are there any secondary messages that need to be communicated?

17) Objectives of Promotion or Advertisement

To gain direct sales? Leads? Inquiries?

Or is it to provide product information to customers?

Gain an extra sale?

Respond to inquiries?

Announce new products?

Build the company's or product's image? If so, what image should be conveyed?

18) Calls to Action

What do you want the targets to do?

Respond (via phone, email, web landing page) to apply or order?

Accept our call?

Request more information?

Remit something?

Other?

19) Target Audience

Who is the prime prospect?

What are the characteristics of the target audience or audiences?
If a business audience, what is the title and/or responsibility of the prospect?
If a consumer, what are the interests, problems, concerns, demographics, and characteristics of the typical prospect?
Are there any secondary audiences? If so, is it worth preparing separate versions of the promotion for them?

20) Buyer Problem

What buyer problem is your product/service trying to solve?

21) Target Audience's Current Beliefs / Behavior

What is the target audience thinking today?

Do they know and think about the product?

What do they know and think about the company?

The focus must be on what the target audiences are buying, not what you are selling.

22) Desired Target Audience Attitudes

Perceptions.

Behavior.

Take-a-ways.

23) Principle Competition

Is it indifference?

What are they using now?

Is there a pre-disposed mindset that might prevent people from buying it?

What is the competition advertising?

24) Lists / Media To Be Used

What lists or media will you be using? Be specific.

Which have you used in the past?

Which worked?

Which did not?

25) Tests

Will you be conducting any tests? If so, what points will be tested?

Will tests affect the design of the package? The offer? The copy?

26) Budget

What is the budget for this promotion?

How much will be available for each part of the promotion? For lists? For the package?

Are there any restrictions? For example, no 4-color brochures or no flashy involvement

27) Schedule

When do you need the complete package?

What are the approval dates?

When will you be sending out the first test mailing or placing the first advertisement?

28) Testimonials

Do you have any testimonials for the product?

Celebrity endorsements?

Reviews?

Other media coverage?

Enclose samples.

29) Complaints

Have you ever had any complaints about this product or any similar products?

Do you have any letters from unhappy customers?
Any bad reviews or media coverage? Enclose samples.

30) Must Includes

What points absolutely must be included in the copy?
What benefits or features must be stressed?
What design elements absolutely must be part of the package?
Any points that absolutely must be avoided? Any words or phrases? Any designs?

31) Any Taboos

Anything that cannot be offered or promised?

32) Guarantees

What is your guarantee? How strong is it?
What are its limits? 30-day free trial period?
100% money-back guarantee?
Return privileges?
Inspection privileges?
A warranty?

33) Order or Purchase Method

Will you provide a BRE (business reply envelope) or BRC (business reply card)?
Accept phone orders?
Order online through website or landing page?
Accept collect calls?
Will you have a toll-free phone number?
Will you use a 800 phone number?
What percentage of your orders are now by phone?
Will orders come any other way besides mail and phone?
Will you have a dedicated landing page for this offer or promotion?

34) Company Background

What is the history of the company?
Any special points?
What about the personality of the owner?
Any special expertise?
Any points about the company or owners/managers that might have impact on sales?

35) Anything Else

Note any other information or points which could be useful to the copywriters and
Include any background material that you think might be helpful.
Recommend additional reading material, if it is appropriate.
Suggest other people they might talk to.



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