



Before you begin a print, web, or exhibition project you should consider the following points:

Budget – What are you willing to spend? In most cases your budget will determine how a project progresses. For example it may mean the difference between full color or just one color, the type of bindery, or even if your images are clip art or custom illustration. For web design you will also want to budget for website upkeep after the project is completed.

Time – Do you have enough time to carry out the design, proofing, and production of the piece you desire? If not, can the piece be scaled back to fit within the time available? Always add a few slop days to your timeline. Unavoidable delays can happen anywhere in the process caused by everyday jams like computer problems, miscommunication, shipping delays, holidays and illness.

Audience – Who are you gearing your materials toward? Your audience will determine how a piece is written, designed and printed. Some examples of different audience considerations:

- For a younger audience you may want your materials bright and active using unusual papers and images.
- For an elderly audience you may want to use larger print, matt papers, straight-forward design.

Function – What do you want the piece to accomplish? Is it to sell a product? Give instructions? Inform? Tease? Educate? Remind?

It is easier to fulfill your goals and produce a productive piece when you determine what you want.

Life – Is the piece for one event or will it be used indefinitely? Will there be different editions of the same publication?

Check List for Print Jobs

Print jobs have special considerations. The first thing you need to consider is when you need it. The more time you allow for design and printing, the less likely there will be errors or misunderstandings.

Will the piece be mailed? If the answer is yes, you need to consider the following points:

- Will it be mailed in an envelope?
- Will it be bulk mailed?
- Do you have or need a postal permit?

Timelines

Typically it is best to allow a minimum of 10 working days to print a job. Allow more time if many people must review the printer's proofs.

Some print jobs require extra time for production. Here are a few instances where production timelines may need to be increased:

- Is your piece oversized?
- Are there special folds, embossing, foil stamping, etc.?
- Does the piece require special bindery operations? (hand collating, stitching, glue folds etc...)

Quantity

Always order more than you need. Reprinting jobs is far more costly than ordering extras. A couple reasons why you may want to pad your print order: Standard trade printing customs often allow a 10% underdelivery, and pieces often get damaged in the mail house and bindery equipment.