



A Marketing White Paper To  
Increase Your Sales

## 10 Graphic Design Tips To Focus & Differentiate Your Business

### **1. Design For A Specific Target**

**Audience.** Tell your designer who you want to communicate with. Be specific. Not just “women,” but “working women, aged 35-55 with aging parents who might need rehabilitation medicine or adult day care services.” See the difference? So will your graphic designer and the work they produce.

### **2. Design Against a Business**

**Objective.** The best designers love a business objective attached to their work. Why? Because even though they’re artists, they are usually a bit competitive and like the challenge of meeting business goals. Again, be specific with your designer.

Don’t say “grow sales,” but “grow sales 5% of our X product by persuading men 18-34 to shop our food store from 4pm-midnight for a

great 12” sub sandwich that’s discounted to \$4.99” This specificity will give lots of visual ideas to your designer and put more “selling teeth” into the design.

### **3. Design For The Medium.**

How many times have you driven down the road and seen a billboard you can’t read, either because the type is too small or there’s just too many words to read in the four seconds you get to understand any billboard? This is a common and expensive mistake of not designing for how the medium is used. The best way to avoid it is to make certain your designer has lots of experience—and success—designing for the medium you are about to invest in.

### **4. Design For Communication First, Creativity Second.**

Here’s how it goes: You describe to your designer the target audience, business objective, what you want to communicate and the mediums you want to use. Your designer gets excited, says he knows exactly what you want, and goes away for a week to work.

The big day arrives and the designer begins to show you the graphic program. It’s clever, it’s creative, it’s colorful...but you don’t get it. It

doesn't communicate what you want about your business. What do you do? Thank your designer for a great effort, but be clear that these pieces aren't communicating yet, and then send them back to the drawing board.

Under no circumstances allow yourself to be talked out of your initial reaction if you didn't understand the work. To underscore this point, ask yourself: How many multi-million dollar Super Bowl ads have you watched and said "I don't get it?" Trust your instincts. It's your money.

**5. Demand a Big Idea.** You'll get a big marketing idea from a great graphic designer IF you are clear about what you want to communicate about your company AND you challenge your designer to produce one. You'll recognize a Big Idea when you get really excited about your graphic materials and think to yourself: "I couldn't have said it any better myself!"

**6. Consider The "Tone" You Want To Convey.** Every company has a unique "DNA molecule" that is a key reason customers do business with you. Articulate that to your designer. It will influence things like typeface and photographic selection, and add

one more layer of wonderfully clear communication to your graphic work.

**7. Realize Words—Sometimes—Get In The Way.** It's nearly impossible, but if you can communicate everything you need to in a visual-only way, do it. As you add words to your design to communicate, do so. But always challenge yourself and your designer to included "just enough" copy and content to complete the business communication. Don't shortchange your copy, but remember: It's a visual world. Make it work for your company.

**8. Have Your Designer Look At Your Competitors.** Why? Two reasons: First, you don't want to look at the first round of graphic work only to say, "Hey, that logo looks a lot like our competitors!" Happens more often than you think. Second, it helps your designer find unique ways to position your company in a more competitive way. And at the end of the day, making your company stand out is what great graphic design must do.

**9. Have A Hook.** Good designers will work overtime on your business if it has a "Hook," that one unique point-of-difference you have that

your competitors don't. A hook also helps focus your designer, graphically calling out what makes you special. Also, push your designer to create a cool hook for your company that sets you apart. If they're good, they'll find one.

**10. Design For "Action."** Tell your designer specifically what you want your target audience TO DO after seeing your message. Visit a website? Call? Visit a store? Clip a coupon? Send an email? Write down a number? Whatever it is, your designer can find unique ways to make it easy for people to take action in your company's direction.

**11. Have Some Fun.** The best graphic designers we know have great senses of humor, are often solid business people and pragmatic about their work. So have some fun through your graphic design process. The work your designer produces will get you re-energized about your company's potential again...and make some money as well. Who said art can't be fun?

Remember:

Good Marketing + Common Sense =  
Good Design.

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