

Guidelines for Developing Printed Materials

First determine when the printed piece is needed for ad placement or distribution and then work backwards. Set up a timetable (example follows). Allow two weeks at the printer. Often it's a little less but don't get caught out. Give the designer 10 working days including time to review, proof and get the second proof back. Check first so he/she can work it into the production schedule. A major project may take more time. Find this out before you begin setting up your schedule. RESPECT DEADLINES.

	Copy to designer	First proof from designer	Final draft approval date	Send to printer or publication	Delivery date from printer
Date					

1st Step—Review

Review previous year's samples. It's cost-effective to utilize the same format if it was successful; then only new copy has to be provided to the designer. A new design is expensive and takes away from branding an event. It's better to stay consistent.

2nd Step—Preparation for Designer

Gather up every bit of copy/content/words.

- Show it to your committee. Check every detail – names, dates, titles.
- Have one person write the narrative copy – descriptions, etc. It should not read as though it were written by a committee.
- Verify all phone numbers and addresses.
- Make sure all vendors listed have agreed to participate.
- Determine if words are to be spelled out or abbreviated. Consistency is the key. Example: Ave. or Avenue.
- Prepare copy for designer. THIS SHOULD BE YOUR FINAL COPY.
- Put all copy into a Word file. Don't copy from an Excel file. Cells all have to be deleted before going into graphics programs. Also, no PDF files.
- Don't use **bold** or *italics*. If you want something to be in bold write the directions within parentheses.
- Don't try to format the copy.
- Repeating: Give all the copy and illustration or photos to the designer the first time.

Give the designer all the specifications:

- Size, B/W or color and when it's due.
- If it's an ad, the name of the publication, due date and the email address for sending it off. Not the date it will appear but when the publication wants it.

3rd Step—Printing

- Whoever is coordinating the printing and design of the project should give all the specs to the printer or printers to get quotes and turn around time/delivery date.
- Before you request quotes, ask the designer if there are details the printer needs to know.

4th Step—Proofing

We all know that despite the best efforts there may be some necessary changes and typos. Remember that this isn't the time to rewrite paragraphs. That should have been done before. If a headline or subhead is too large or small for the space, it is acceptable to reword a line of copy. This is not the time to find just the right word or rewrite a sentence because you think it better expresses an idea. That should have been done before. You're checking now for factual details.

- Select two or three people to proof. No more.
- Only one person communicates with the designer or the project coordinator.
- Check for spelling errors.
- Double check dates, times and contact information.
- Check for spacing or alignment issues.
- Check for the overall appeal.

When you get the second proof back check again to make sure the edits have been made.

Once you give the final approval to the designer, it's not the designer's fault if there are errors.