

Guidelines to Write a Marketing Brief

Why write a marketing brief?

- There are many benefits in writing a marketing brief whether for an agency or for your colleagues. Writing and agreeing a brief helps ensure your colleagues are on-board. In turn the brief itself focuses effort on meeting your needs and thus better achieving your desired business outcomes. Here are some questions to consider and headings to help structure your brief.

Background to brief

- First, describe the problem you wish to solve i.e. what makes this brief necessary? Include any relevant context, for example, work to date, what information you have, what has changed to prompt your need, and how the issue or challenge fits with any initiatives within your organisation.

Nature of the brief

- There are two main types of marketing brief. Either for a strategic or for an executional piece of work. So first, ask yourself whether you have a strategy in place, and whether it is robust? If the answer to these questions is 'yes', then write your strategy into your executional brief. If the answer is 'no' or 'I don't know', then this suggests that you need to devise a strategy too. Work that is based on a strategy that is not founded in customer needs is more likely to fail.

Business and marketing objectives

- Next, describe your business objectives or outcomes (usually in monetary terms), marketing objectives (in terms of customers and products). Also relevant marketing or brand strategies (most commonly, who are your target customers and what is your [brand strategy](#)). If you are unable to answer all of these questions, don't worry. This just helps clarify a potential need.

Stakeholders

- Now consider who needs to sign-off and act on the outcomes of this work. Poor stakeholder management is a recipe for disaster on major strategic or change projects. So clarifying the stakeholders will help an agency anticipate your needs and design a process to get everyone on-board with a plan.

Envisaged process, scope of work and guidelines

- Also include any pointers or guidelines, such as 'dos' and 'don'ts' and why. Specifically cover timing, budgets, and any decision-making criteria. This helps guide on the scale of work as well as ensure a solution is affordable, achievable and delivers desired outcomes and appropriate returns. Again if you don't have all the answers don't worry, we'll advise on the best way forward.

Deliverables

- Finally, define what should the project deliver. For example, do you require a communication campaign, a new or improved product, service or brand, or to get a new business off the ground? If possible include a few words on what you hope success will feel like too. Though do not be too prescriptive if you do not wish to stifle a creative response to your brief.

Style and tone

- Throughout try and use plain language and clarify any technical, or unusual in-company terms. This is helpful as some marketing terms have different meanings in different companies and may confuse rather than clarify.

Request an inspiring proposal

- For a totally tailored and inspiring response to your marketing brief, email hello@themarketingdirectors.co.uk or call Guy Tomlinson on +44(0)1628 473 699. While your written brief will be of immense help, we find that speaking is usually even more revelatory and beneficial. As marketers we know too that by truly understanding customers' needs, we're better able to anticipate issues and opportunities and add immense value.