

Shoaf Design Studio's
**creative
innovation**

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The Creative Connection

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What's your image worth?

The Creative Connection

There is no question that as a small to medium size business owner, you need to produce marketing and sales materials that get the word out about your product and services and attract the clientele you want.

With new technology, affordable inkjet printers, and plenty of lower-end desktop publishing software available, it is probably tempting to produce all of your marketing materials on your own.

The real question is: Should you create your own promotional materials? NO. It is much more cost effective to hire a professional designer to do this. Organizations who believe that they are saving money by having an employee create their marketing materials are making a common and potentially expensive mistake.

There is nothing that could damage your image more than a brochure that is thrown together and looks cheap. If you want a professional image, hiring a professional is a must. A graphic designer can help you create persuasive marketing communication that builds a strong company image.

Why hire a professional graphic design firm?

1. You don't have the creative resources. Unlike large corporations, smaller businesses do not have a graphic design department to

create brochures, sales collateral, or newsletters. Having someone within the company that does not specialize in marketing and design is often too close to the product to be objective about the market. This could damage the trust of potential clients and current clients alike. Think of your graphic designer as the marketing department that works only when you need them to.

2. You don't have the time. "Time is money," as they say. When you are running your own business you are doing just that – running your business. Your time is valuable and you may not be able to produce effective marketing materials. Focus on your business while your designer focuses on the look and image of your materials.





Rule of Thumb!

"To many cooks spoil the soup!"
It is better to create a small group of individuals to work on your marketing materials with your graphic designer. Often having large groups will make it difficult to focus on the task at hand.

3. You need someone with the specialized expertise that you don't have. Most business people know their limitations. Leave graphic design to those who have training and experience. All you have to tell them is the message you need to get across, who you want to communicate with and why. The graphic designer will add an appealing look to the materials.

4. It's cost effective! When you contract a designer, you'll pay for only the services you need, you don't waste your valuable time and money, or take an employee away from his/her regular duties to create a mediocre marketing piece.

Great marketing materials are well planned and targeted and may take time to build the image you want. So you should budget properly, plan and consider hiring a graphic designer.

What is your image worth?
Shawna Shoaf,
Creative Director

Hired Gun

Hiring an experienced graphic designer with a marketing perspective brings the expertise that will help you effectively position your company and its products and services. A good relationship takes honesty and what I call the 4 C's of a great graphic relationship.

Chemistry, Commitment, Collaboration & Creativity

Working with the right designer can make all the difference in the return on the investment you make. Make sure that your designer is producing marketing materials that are not only attractive but achieving the overall objective that you have in mind. It's easy to get caught up in trendy visuals and quick solutions; but, if you fail to communicate to your audience you have a piece of paper rather than a powerful marketing tool.

When you consider hiring a graphic designer it's important to find an individual that is a good fit. Take a look at their portfolio, their clients satisfaction, their enthusiasm, and their attitude. You are also going to be working side by side with your designer so chemistry and honesty will be important factors.

A good gauge of creativity and commitment is by the designers portfolio. Also asking the following questions could give you a good idea of their problem solving skills:

- What were the objectives for this piece?
 - How were the objectives met?
 - What were the results?

The designers work may have an aesthetic appeal, but if it does not satisfy basic marketing objectives it will not get the results you want.

You should trust the expertise of the professional you hire. Graphic designers can provide a valuable outside perspective to your product or service. A successful partnership requires trust, respect, professionalism, and collaboration.

All designers work differently. You should fully understand how your designer works, what to expect, and when you will be involved. The more input you provide at the beginning the more satisfying your results will be.

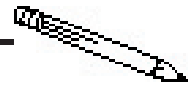
VALUABLE TIP!

Don't hold off looking for a designer because you don't have an idea of what you want. In fact it is usually better if you don't have a visual idea. That is why you are hiring a designer. Instead write down the qualities of your company and the message you want to convey.



Consulting & Presentations

Add creative spark to your advertising, logos, brochures & more. Get your business image in sync with your marketing goals. I consult in total business image building call today and I will give you your first **1 Hour Consultation FREE** of charge. Let me get to know your business and I will share my work with you.



REFERRALS

Your referrals are welcome and appreciated. *Your* business associates can benefit from great design! Tell folks about Shoaf Design Studio.