

Brochures

Organizations use brochures to convey information to potential customers or constituents.

Generally, brochure information falls into one of the following categories:

- *An organization's purpose, goals, and available products or services.*
A health maintenance organization's brochures might describe its preventive medicine and long-term care plans, while a performing arts group's brochures might provide concert and instruction schedules.
- *A description of a product line or a single product.* An audio/video manufacturer might have separate brochures for compact disc players, videocassette recorders, and car stereo systems.
- *A description of a project being undertaken by an organization.* A college alumni association, for example, might prepare a brochure in conjunction with a fund drive to raise money for a new building.
- *Information which might be of assistance to an organization's patrons.*
A bed-and-breakfast might offer brochures describing local areas of interest, sightseeing tours, and so on.

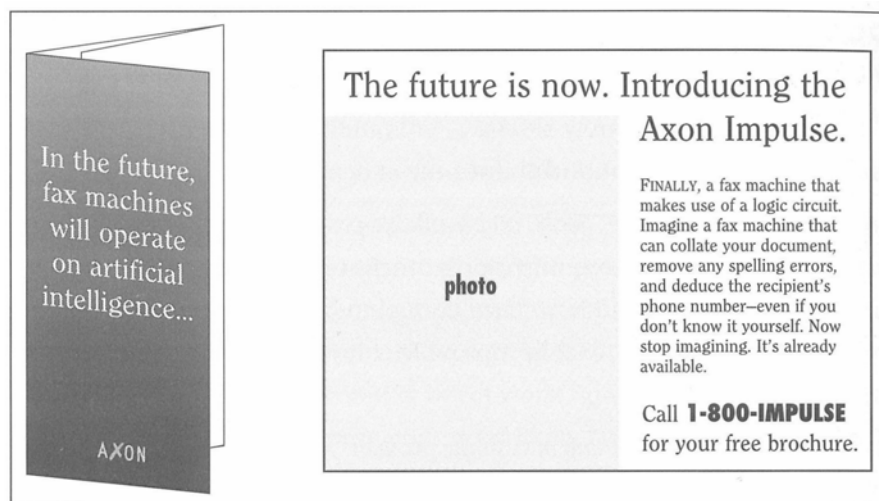
Small brochures are commonly produced by folding an 8½×11-inch sheet of paper into thirds and printing on both sides. Lengthier brochures take the form of staple-bound booklets, produced in any number of sizes. If your brochure's page count starts edging into the double-digit range, it's generally wise to include a small table of contents or an index. Readers who merely want to locate one specific item of interest should not be forced to skim through 20-odd pages.

Teasers

Teasers are brochures targeted to prospective buyers early in the decision-making process.

Teasers don't pretend to tell the whole story. Their purpose is to direct the reader to the next level of action, such as calling a toll-free telephone number.

Teasers are frequently printed on single sheets of paper, then folded into panels (to fit into a business envelope). They're inexpensively produced so that they can be distributed to as many prospective buyers as possible. Teasers are also displayed conspicuously in free-standing or countertop racks so that anyone can feel free to take one.



Tell-All Brochures

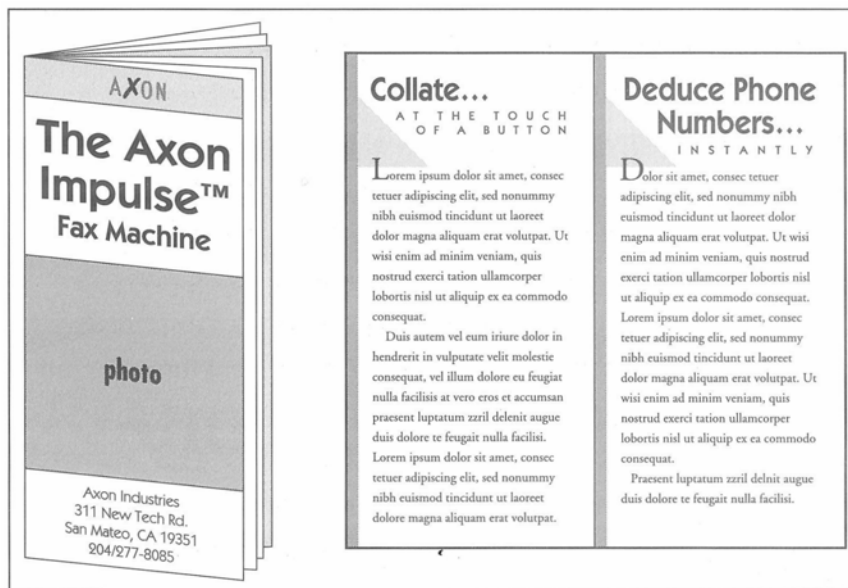
Tell-all brochures target qualified buyers.

Tell-all brochures are designed for the next level—serious potential buyers who are closer to the moment of truth. As the name implies, they provide much more information than teasers—they're designed to answer specific, detail-oriented questions.

Tell-all brochures usually take the form of booklets, printed on glossy paper using spot color or full color. This isn't a necessity, of course, but you need to be aware of the brochures your competitors are producing. If everyone else in the industry is using glossy full-color brochures, your matte one-color brochures will look like cheap leaflets in comparison—unless your design is truly inspired.

If your brochure is copy-heavy, use lots of text organizers to break up the gray space. Headlines, subheads, and bulleted lists should be employed. Even sidebars are not unheard of. If your brochure is product-

oriented, you should include photos of the product. If it's a service brochure, illustrations might be more appropriate.

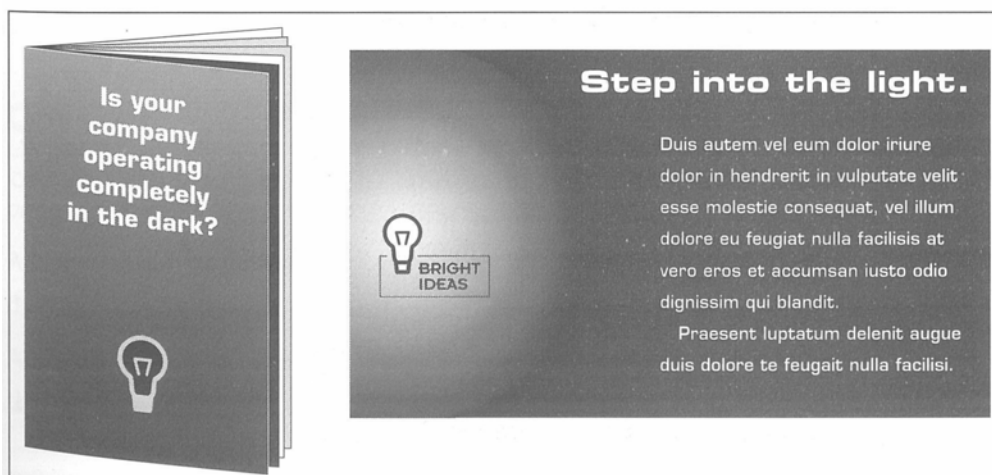


Impressers

Impressers approach the quality of small magazines in design sophistication.

Impressers follow up and reinforce the message at the crucial last phase before purchase. They combine sophisticated graphic design with high-quality printing and paper. An impresser brochure is frequently designed to be part of the product—the high quality of the brochure implies high quality in the product or service.

Impressers are appropriate when the products or services are either emotionally important to the buyer or in cases where benefits can't be measured until after the purchase is made. Examples include luxury items, such as expensive automobiles, complex technical products and services, and intangibles like public relations or financial services.



Brochures And Product Sheets

Brochures should be designed to have a long shelf life.

Full-color, multipage brochures are not the sorts of items you can afford to produce in small batches, bolstering your supply as the need arises. There's a fixed cost associated with setting up the printer, regardless of the size of the print run. You'll only get your money's worth if your print runs are large. As a result, your brochures should be designed to last a long time.

This can create a problem if your brochure is designed to cover an entire line of products. If even one product undergoes substantial revision, you'll be stuck reprinting the entire brochure, and throwing out the old copies. You can avoid this problem by supporting your brochures with detailed product sheets (see the "Product Sheets" section later in this chapter). Keep the brochure on a general level, covering only those aspects of the products that are unlikely to change significantly. Then, create a detailed product sheet for each individual item. These sheets can be revised and reprinted as necessary, at a fraction of the cost it would take to reprint your brochure.

Designing Brochures In A Series

Vary a distinct set of elements across a series of brochures to attain a unified look.

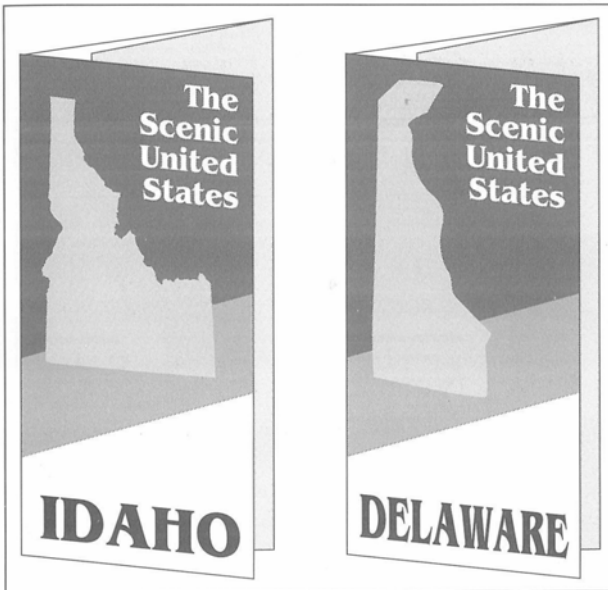
When creating a series of brochures, you'll want to define a distinct set of elements that will change from brochure to brochure. Your list should include some front-cover elements—readers can't be expected to open two identical-looking brochures to check for differences.

The most effective variable element is color. If you're using color printing, assign a distinctive spot color or color scheme to each brochure in the series. If your brochures are single-color, differentiating them may take a little more effort. For instance, if you decide to use a different black-and-white photo for each brochure cover, make sure the photos you choose are easy to tell apart. Scenes that are easily distinguished in color—for instance, rolling waves and rolling sand dunes—can look remarkably similar in black-and-white. The title of a brochure can also help set it apart from its brethren, if it's set prominently at large sizes.

Some design elements should not be considered candidates for variation. Keeping the following aspects consistent will help establish a unified look for your series:

USE VARIATION CONSISTENTLY!

Once you've determined a set of variable elements, make sure you vary them throughout your entire series. If you're using the cover photo to differentiate your brochures, don't use the same photo twice—even if it fits the content of both publications. If you're using spot color, pick a radically different shade for each brochure (color-impaired readers will not notice the difference between red and red-orange).



- Typefaces, type sizes, and type styles for headlines and body copy.
- Margins, borders, and graphic accents.
- Sizes and placements of photos or artwork.

Catalogs

Catalogs are similar to brochures, but they're usually longer and more product oriented.

While a brochure is used to display a single product or a product line, a catalog can display a firm's entire inventory. Catalogs are customarily produced once or twice a year. Because of their longevity, they're usually printed on expensive paper, and feature full-color printing. Page size is sometimes sacrificed for volume, which increases the perceived reference value of a catalog and contributes to its longevity. (Readers generally consider thick media, such as books and magazines, less disposable than thin media, such as brochures and newsletters.)

Covers

Catalog covers are often printed on a different paper stock than the inside pages.

A heavier, glossier paper stock can provide higher quality photo reproduction and better color saturation for your catalog's cover.

A single photo of the company's most popular product is often used on the cover to communicate an identity and promote sales.

Evaluation Checklist

Brochures

- Have you chosen an appropriate size and format?
- Does the front cover encourage readers to look further?
- Have you maintained page-to-page consistency throughout?
- Have you supplied all the information that prospective buyers need to make informed buying decisions?