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Freshen up your company's wardrobe

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Like a favorite suit, your business' marketing materials may be more tired-looking than you think. Working with a graphic designer can help freshen your company's wardrobe.

Graphic design plays a critical role in every interaction we have with customers. Even before the first word of any marketing piece is read, an impression about your company is conveyed by its visual impact. This happens with all marketing collateral including brochures, logos, business cards, packaging, book covers, web site design, and print ads.

Updating or creating new materials can be a very effective way of adding pizzazz to your company and its offerings. While you may be tempted to turn back to graphic designers you have used in the past, consider other designers as well. Your current firm may find it difficult to come up with a fresh look for your company. And if it's for a project that involves a medium that they have not worked in, you are often better off working with a designer who specializes in that medium.

There are three "Ps" to keep in mind when choosing a graphic designer: portfolio, process and product. To learn more about this and other marketing services, go to [click here](#).

Portfolio. The portfolio holds the key to understanding what you can expect at the end of the project. Ask to review specific examples of projects that fall into the category of work you want done. As you do, look for trends in the work you review. For example, a designer may tend to focus on playing with typefaces, while another relies on illustrations. You will need to decide if you like them since they are likely to be used in the materials they create for you.

Process. The creative process is obviously hard to define, but it must be done to avoid misunderstanding down the road. Discuss what the process will be like from brainstorming to reviewing concepts to

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creating the final product. Agree upfront to specifics like how many different concepts you will see, how different each concept will be from one another, and what happens if you don't like any of them.

References can give incredibly valuable insight about how smoothly a project will run. Ask about how good the designers were at understanding their requirements. Find out how flexible designers are in incorporating your feedback and revising their work. It can also be instructive to ask references how well they thought the project complemented their existing materials and how satisfied they were with the outcome.

Product. Defining what deliverables are expected is critical when working with a designer. For example, who is responsible for creating the finished product? Bundling the costs of design and production can sometimes, but not always, lower your overall charges. Discussions of file ownership should also occur upfront. If you are interested in re-using design elements, make your intentions clear and ensure that the materials are delivered in a suitable format.

Whether it's basic accessorizing or a full makeover that your company's marketing materials need, graphic designers can help spruce you up to look your best.

Quick tips

Look and feel. If there is a certain look you like when you review a prospective design firm's portfolio, make sure the designer who created it is still around.

Copy writer. Since we can all write, you may be tempted to think that you can provide copy. Think twice about that.

Direct feedback. Be honest about what you like and dislike during the creative process. Although a designer may know how to create a message, you should know how your audience will react better.



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