

Guide to Print

for Startup &
Existing Businesses



Executive Summary

Starting or building a business involves developing a brand that conveys who you are and what you do and carries through all of your marketing materials and activities. Branding helps customers identify you, builds trust in your company/service, and propels your business forward.

This guide describes the things you should consider when developing your brand or creating your marketing campaigns. It includes tips for a variety of print materials and other marketing elements:

Standard Materials

Every company needs standard items, including business cards, stationery, and signage.

Visual Resources

High-quality visuals take marketing materials to the next level. In fact, the quality of your images is often just as important as the business assets you are showing.

Takeaways

Your brand and your message should be a clear part of everything your customers touch. Include your brand on everything - from standard business items to giveaways and even packaging.

Messaging

Information pieces convey features, benefits, sales and special promotions, prices, and more. These materials contribute to increasing awareness of your company and increasing sales. From newsletters to direct mail campaigns and other advertising, informative materials tell your customers what they need to know.

Conveying Your Company Expertise

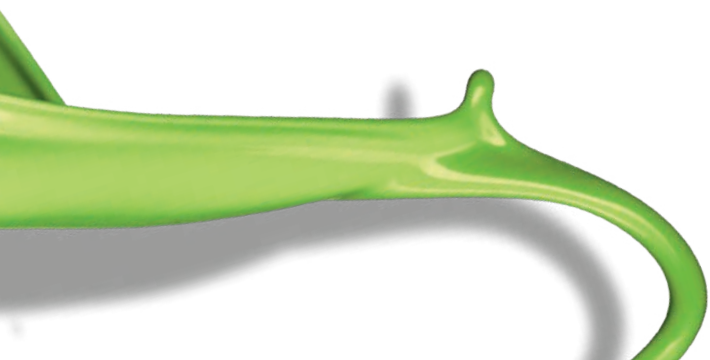
Case studies, testimonials, product specification sheets, and other pieces demonstrate capability and expertise.

Publicity Items

Publicity materials take many forms, including press kits, conference packets, and public service announcements (or some other publicity item)...Create your publicity materials with the public's perception in mind.

Team Brand Ambassadors

Empower your employees to be your best brand ambassadors



Brand It!

What's in a Name?

Your name is everything, which means it should be everywhere. The start to effective branding is having a professional logo. It is often the first thing a business creates and should never be underestimated. Your logo and branding is what represents you when there's no one there to explain your product or service.

Point Out the Obvious

Marking your business with signs, banners, and other forms of branding will help customers know who you are, where you are, and what you have to offer them. Make sure your brand is stamped all over the physical location of your business.



SIGNS

If your business includes foot traffic, effective signage can make all the difference. Make sure your customers know where to go, where to park, and what door to enter, especially if any of these are not obvious.

WINDOW CLINGS

Not just for storefronts, window clings can help when there is no place for external signage. Use them to announce specials or new products. They come with a built-in bonus feature: they can tone down or block out harsh sunlight and add some privacy to your space.

VEHICLE WRAPS

Your vehicle becomes a mobile banner when you wrap it with your logo and add special messaging.

CAR MAGNETS

Car magnets serve as mobile advertising but can be removed easily when necessary.



"I strive for two things in design: simplicity and clarity. Great design is born of those two things."

Lindon Leader – designer of the FedX and Hawaiian Airlines logos

Put it in Writing/Print

Even if you own or run a digital company, there are print pieces that are must-haves for every business.

Business Cards

A business card does more than give your name, address, and phone number to your potential customers; it presents a visual statement of your company. From the placement of the logo and the format and readability of the information to the paper choice, your business card can make you and your company stand out and be memorable.



Stationery

All companies need stationery. The impression that you can make with a beautifully printed letter on traditional or cutting-edge, non-traditional letterhead can make the difference between action and dismissal from your customers and prospects.

Envelopes

Printed envelopes make a statement of professionalism and establishment.

Appointment Cards

For service businesses, appointment cards put your name and brand directly into the hands of your customers. Print them business-card size and they serve two purposes. Or, design them as postcards and they can add visibility on a refrigerator or bulletin board.



Forms

From order forms to receipt tickets, business forms with your brand and customized for your business show your customers that you believe in quality and service.

Menus

There are countless ways to create unique menus that make your food and beverage lists or services lists shine. Nontraditional materials and shapes will make your menu stand out.



Set, Camera, Lights!

In order to create impactful marketing materials that promote your products and services effectively, you need high-quality images that represent the products, services, and people who make your business successful.

If you don't have a budget for quality photos, find another way to present images. It is better to use no photos at all than to try to get away with poor-quality images.

If budget is an issue, focus first on a standout logo. When you can, make professional photos a priority.

Employee Photos

Promote your company through your employees by including professional-quality photos of them on your website and in select marketing materials.

Product Photos

The quality of your photos conveys the quality of your work to your customers. Product photos can enhance the design of any flyer, brochure, or postcard. Your business is unique, so be sure the images of your products are too.

Services Images

If your industry is service-based, it might be cost effective to purchase high-quality stock photos representing the services you provide. However, having your own employees and customers in these photos (taken professionally) may be just the advantage you need over your competition.

Stock images

Sometimes the only way to say what you need to say visually is to use stock images. When that's the case, choose high-quality images. Remember, even though there are plenty of free resources, you will be better served by choosing quality over price.



Take it to Go

Think of the kinds of things that you send home with your customers. Whether promotional items or product packaging, these print pieces convey your brand beyond the customer carrying the item. Consider:

Bags

Bags are a great way to feature your brand. Many people will see your bag and your branding on it. In addition, the type of bag you choose can make just as much of an impression as the products going into it.

Packaging

The look and feel of the packaging of your product creates a direct first impression. Great design can increase the interaction between your customer and your products.

Labels

Labels serve as simple, versatile tools for adding your brand to anything and everything. If your budget prohibits custom-printed bags, for example, consider using labels.

Handouts

Get your information out to your customers through handouts. They can be creative and informative, and they can service multiple purposes. Use them as mailers or during in-person interactions at your store or at meetings and events.

Magnets

Magnets are useful for keeping your brand in plain sight of your customers and others. From business cards to calendars, anything can be made into a magnet.

Calendars

Even though most people have digital calendars these days, physical calendars are still popular. Add your brand and customize your printed calendar with informative business tips or entertaining tidbits, and give your customers the opportunity to “see you” as they plan their days and weeks.

Instruction Manuals for Products

If your product or service requires a user manual, having it professionally designed and printed demonstrates a long-term commitment to your customer.

Aftercare Brochures and Flyers

What do I do now? If your customers have to ask this question after your service, an aftercare brochure would be a great addition to your brand. Customers will feel more at ease with instructions for getting the best results possible.

University Animal Hospital routinely sends their furry patients home from surgery with an aftercare brochure explaining how to provide care based on the procedure. They also send an aftercare postcard two days later with additional tips for care.



The Big Announcement

Sharing big news or important announcements with your customers is always a good reason for a direct mail campaign. What's the big news? Everything! Announce a sale, or launching a new product or service. It doesn't matter what it is, it deserves some pomp and circumstance!

Direct Mail

Direct mail campaigns put your message into the hands of customers and others so they can make an immediate physical connection to your brand. Research shows that direct mail works because it reaches your audience effectively and allows for greater focused results.

Some great ideas for direct mail are:

- Sales Letters
- Catalogs
- Newsletters
- Postcards
- Tri-fold and Quarter-fold self-mailers

Direct Mail Tips

- Focus your topic on a direct, measurable outcome.
- Narrow your mailing list to your target audience based on your desired outcome.
- Find a quality list broker to purchase a targeted mailing list to supplement your current list.
- Measure your results with analytics.

Door Hangers

Neighborhood marketing and advertising campaigns...and door hangers serve as an inexpensive and non-intrusive tool for reaching every household in your targeted neighborhood. Many cities have guidelines and rules related to door hangers and related items, so be sure to check with your town or city officials first.

Catalogs & Magalogs

Whether you print a traditional catalog or combine your products with articles, editorials, and interest pieces to form a magalog, these items make excellent direct mail pieces and are also effective as handouts at events or with purchases.



You're the Expert

Create resources that show your expertise in your industry. Use these resources for your direct mail campaigns or as handouts.

Design Tips for Great Results

- Picture the people you want your brand to reach
- Your images should be powerful enough to express the message of your advertisement, even if your audience doesn't read the text.
- Don't limit yourself to photographs. Get smart with your visual assets, like using infographics.

A national service organization, with branches in every state, needed a newsletter solution that could make an impression of the highest caliber. They worked with their local printer to come up with a replicable newsletter design and template that the organization could customize each month. They sent digital files to the printer, who printed each issue and mailed it to nearly 5,000 members efficiently and on time every month.

Create Your Resources

Flyers
Brochures
Newsletters
Case Studies
Articles
Rack Cards
Product Spec Sheets
Service Menus
Food/Beverage Menus



Meet the Press

Any time your name gets out into the public, it can be considered press coverage. Think of creating materials just like a PR manager would promote a celebrity or a news reporter would cover a story.

Media Kit

Not just for reporters, a media kit is an effective way to package your business...story. Media kits enable you to tell others about your company quickly and help to focus your marketing message.

Media kit elements can include:

- Flyers
- Brochures
- Business Cards
- Case Studies
- Newsletters
- Testimonials
- Annual Reports
- Promotional Items like a magnet or pen
- Product Samples
- Fact sheets about your company history and mission, products, and services



Onboard Like a Pro

People are your best resources. Every company knows that without capable and committed employees, companies cannot provide the best products and services.

Providing new employees with resources during the onboarding process builds your team faster and helps new hires start contributing to your company's success immediately.

Consider the following:

- Employee manuals
- Name tags, plaques, door signs
- Learning tools
- Reference binders
- Banners, posters, signage
- Mission statement
- Employee recognition



"Why is internal marketing so important? First, because it's the best way to help employees make a powerful emotional connection to the products and services you sell."

– Colin Mitchell, Harvard Business Review

Branding is Everything

Every business is different, and every company has unique needs. However, one thing is universal: branding is everything.

It's important to understand the perspective of how customers, the public, and employees interact with your brand and determine which resources are necessary. Use this guide to identify the tools and resources that are right for your branding efforts.

Some key takeaways:

1. Get design help – Quality design is key to marketing success
2. Printed pieces play multiple roles in your overall marketing strategy
3. Everyone matters. From employees to your target market, they all interact with your brand.

About GAM

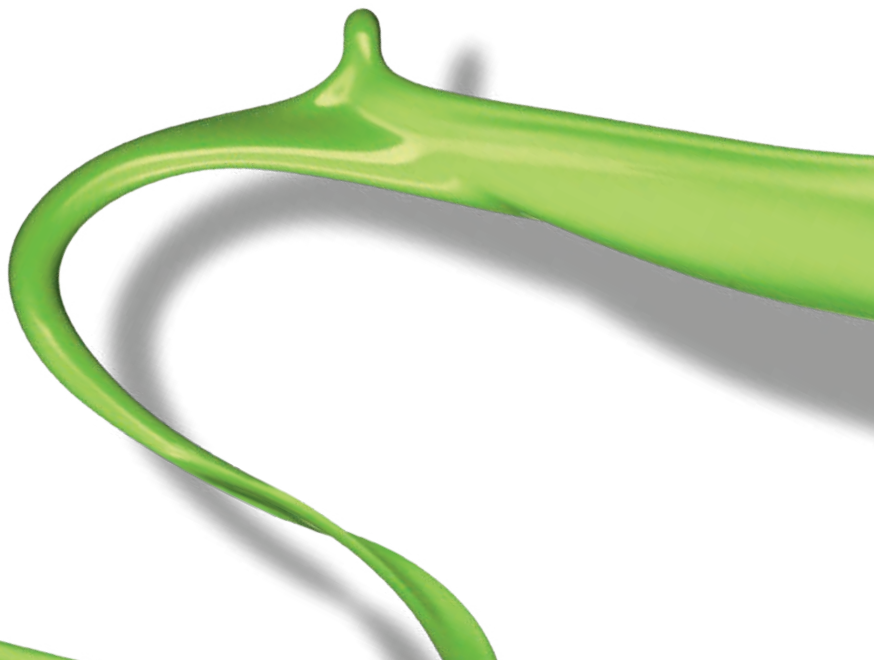
We know that writing effective copy is one of our customers' greatest challenges. Providing resources such as this guide serves as one way for us to help you succeed.

When you are ready to put your copy into print, we hope you will call on us to be part of your success team. Your print materials are our number one focus, and you will find our staff and customer service to be top notch.

Call us to find more about how we can help you develop your brand and grow your company by implementing effective marketing, print strategies and solutions.



GAM – Graphics and Marketing, Inc.
45969 Nokes Blvd., Suite 130
Sterling, Virginia 20166
703.450.4121
GamWereGood.com
GraphicsAndMarketing.com





GamWereGood.com