

Annual Reports

Ten tips for success

1 Budget in thinking time

The thinking time you invest up-front will pay dividends. And there's plenty to think about. You could kick off with a review of last year's report. What were the good, and the not so good points? What feedback did you receive? What would you like to do differently this time? How could you measure response more effectively?



Girlguiding

Hampshire West

girls in the lead.



2 Identify your audience

Who do you want to reach, and why? How can your report help you meet the strategic goals of your organisation? In the light of this, what messages do you want to convey, and what response do you want to elicit?



3 Develop a theme

Think about what your organisation stands for, and what you've achieved over the year. This can help you develop a theme that's consistent with your organisation's goals.

Salvation Army Housing Association



People...



4 Tell engaging stories

When you've worked out who your readers are, consider how you can involve them more fully. Finding stories, and presenting them in an engaging way, is a great way to maximise reader involvement.

TOOLS FOR SELF RELIANCE



5 Involve key people

It's vital to involve key people in your organisation, so they're on board with your vision from the start. Consider the wider partnership of people, internally and externally, that will make your report a reality: for example you'll probably need a project manager, a writer, a photographer, an editor, a designer, a printer and perhaps a mailing house.



6 Write a clear brief

Your brief defines what you want. It doesn't need to be a major tome, but should communicate what you want to achieve, and enable everyone to check that the creative work stays on course. Get the brief agreed in-house before launching creative work. Think about how your report can support, and not detract, from your brand.



a time
in our lives



Network Housing Group

7 Be realistic about time

Work out when you need the finished reports, and when you can make content available. Then find out if this is realistic from all concerned. If colleagues are supplying content it's vital to make sure they stick to deadlines. Bear in mind that this kind of project generally takes from about three to five months to complete.



8 Use strong images

Strong photographs can transform an annual report, while mediocre shots are likely to detract from your message. Use professional photography if you can, and be ruthless about ditching less than perfect shots. Stock photography can be a cost-effective option, especially when anonymity is required. If you're using your own digital camera, check first whether the quality will be good enough. And make sure you get your subjects' permission before using their picture.



9 Get the copy right

Writing, and gathering content from a number of contributors, can be time-consuming work, so allow for this in the schedule. Commissioning writing can reduce this burden, and offer a valuable outside perspective. Writers should be able to work with your designers, and help whether you need your draft editing or copy written from scratch. Make sure you're completely happy with content before pages are created to keep your costs down.



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Frontline agencies in partnership

10 Maximise your investment

It may seem obvious, but don't forget to plan distribution, so readers can actually get hold of your report. Run-on prices are usually low, would extra copies help spread your message? Reports are often launched at an annual general meeting – an event with much PR potential. And finally, don't forget to include a version of your report on your website.



About us



Total Coverage – different from day one

Total Coverage is a co-operative graphic designers – a group of committed, creative people with a passion for ethical business practice and a talent for innovative, intelligent design.


We help you to communicate your message through marketing materials, corporate publications, websites, display graphics ... and just about anything else you might need.

We work in areas that matter, with ethically enlightened organisations that aspire to go beyond the bottom line. Like the organisations we work with, we put our values before profit so we share your

passion and commitment and we understand the issues you want to communicate.

We're a co-operative so everything we do is guided by our co-op values; putting honesty and social responsibility at the very heart of our business.

In a co-operative, everyone benefits; we all have an equal say and an equal stake in the company so your business is important to every one of us. We put our values into action; working together to create memorable design that is as refreshing as our approach to business. We're celebrating our 20th year in business so, with two decades of success under our belt, you can trust us to deliver.



“You really have made the whole process very easy for us and I particularly appreciated your willingness to adapt to the fact that we do our work outside normal office hours!”

Angela Milln
County Commissioner
Girlguiding Hampshire West

“Thank you for an excellent service and a quality product – the feedback has been excellent.”

Matthew Pickerill
Public Health and Primary Care
Information Manager
Portsmouth City Teaching Primary Care Trust

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If you'd like to discuss your next project or to see further examples of our work, please call us on 023 8067 8330.

