

DESIGNING INDUSTRIAL BROCHURES

Size

For the majority of brochures and catalogues the standard dimension is DIN A4 (210x297mm). For other publications size A5 or A6 are preferred following the same standard.

All administrative archiving systems in Europe are based on the same standard. It may be frustrating if dimensions do not conform to the same standard because it cannot be classified or filed properly.

Printers sometimes have their own interpretations of DIN standards, the variations may be as much as 25 mm.

Format

A brochure is mainly intended to give primary information about the company or the product range or both at the same time. It should be concise and clearly readable but above all appealing. The colours used within should be attractive and professionally designed. The cover should be designed in such a way that it immediately generates the interest to read the inside of the brochure. A brochure can have 4, 6, 8 or 10 foldable sides. Pages should be numbered.

The paper weight should be more than 150 g/m² and could have a glossy appearance, but not necessarily.

Text should not run through the margin, which is reserved for punch holes.

A recognizable layout is to be preferred neat and well. Balanced brochures give a serious and professional impression of the company.

Colours

- should match with the colours of your products not to give a very different impression
- not too bright as this is not preferred for industrial presentations
- no pastel colours and a black colour should be avoided
- try to omit different colours for text or headings
- except for full colour photographs, the number of colours for the rest of the brochure should be restricted to only a few
- too many different colours are not common and give an amateurish impression

Layout

Use headings or titles for each text box so information can be easily found by the reader. Try to build-up an informative story in a logical way.

Avoid photographs or a raster as a background for text or worst; other text. This makes reading more difficult for an aging public.

Balance, structure and a logical layout are the most important here and will be appreciated more by the other technical person you want to convey the message to.

Text

Tell explicitly in which business you are in and do not expect readers to have the same background as you. Mention the products you manufacture very clearly in such a way that your activities become clear, also for readers who are not so familiar with your business.

Do not forget that there are more buyers outside than inside your sector.

Be informative and arouse curiosity at the same time. Give concise information which is valuable for the reader. Refrain from posing your pride too much on to them. Write the text with the desires and wishes of the reader in mind and forget about what you want to ventilate.

Make each text box short, clear and to the point.

Close the last page with a co-ordinates box, giving all the address parameters and preferably one telephone number, fax, e-mail address and website.

Do not mention the address or communication numbers of your plant or factory if that is on another location, it will cause confusion and finally irritate the potential customer.

Use no spiritual text or mentioning of military activities. This might be not appreciated by your potential business partners.

Fonts

Restrict the number of different fonts and do not use artistic lettering other than in your logo. Use regular and common fonts for large texts.

Also, avoiding too many different shapes and sizes is essential; otherwise your brochure might create a chaotic impression. Simple fonts such as Arial, Calibri, Verdana, Times New Roman or Garamond are suitable, easy to read and again, they give the entire brochure a professional outlook.

Logo

The logo of your company should be displayed on the first page of the brochure. Treat your logo with respect. Be strict not to allow deviations from colour and size. Try to create recognition through your logo, which is a long term process. Makes sure your logo is not already used by another company in the European market otherwise you might get into conflict with the protection of trade marks.

Photos

If possible, have the photos made in a studio or by a professional photographer in order to ensure high quality and good resolution. It is important that the pictures of your products will be sharp and accurate. Obscure and unrecognizable photos are unacceptable for promotion. Moreover, every photograph should bear a caption with the name of the product.

Do not mix photos with a complete different background and certainly do not mix photos with graphics. Try to choose pictures that are visually attractive and those that capture specific details of your products. This way, you will be able to highlight the unique character of what you offer.

Minimize the amount of photos with people. As a manufacturer of technical products, you should emphasize precisely those.

Presentation

The presentation with a brochure should reflect who you are or better who you want to be.

A brochure should not stand alone in the entire promotion of your company. Other components, such as business cards and website should supplement your promotional activities.

In terms of the presentation in general, creativity is very crucial. Using the same techniques as your competitors would not differentiate you from them. Moreover, something new and creative will be better remembered by potential partners and customers.

Image

Create your own image by presenting a high quality document, which is valuable for readers to file and keep at a findable place. A positive image creates higher chances for you to succeed.