

Generate more business with an identifiable collection of collateral materials

by Renée Dustman

AT A GLANCE

If your business seems to go unnoticed in the marketplace or isn't taken seriously, perhaps it's due to your marketing strategy—or lack thereof. To set yourself above the rest, you need to clearly identify your business. We'll show you how to develop a professional set of collateral materials that will help you do exactly that.

To create a presence in the marketplace, we'll show you how to:

- Properly identify the company, product, or service you're promoting.
- Develop a business set of materials that reflects the brand.
- Simplify the design process of creating business sets with InDesign templates.

Application:

Adobe InDesign 2/CS/CS2

Operating Systems:

Macintosh, Microsoft Windows

Every business needs a collection of marketing communications, or collateral. This includes, but is not limited to, business cards for self-promotion, stationary for communication, brochures for presentation, and packaging for fulfillment. To launch a successful marketing campaign, however, there's a progression of steps you must take. We'll get you started on the right path in this article, so you can go on to design top-

notch print materials like those shown in **Figure A** (courtesy of Scott Design).

Create an identity

For any business, the first thing you want to do is establish an identity. This is often called "branding," and it's an essential part of any marketing strategy. A business without an identifiable brand and cohesive collateral materials has little chance for success.

When developing a brand, identify the following points:

- The company name.
- The product or service.
- The price point.
- The clientele.
- The benefit.
- The goals of the company.

When you develop an identity that reflects all of these factors, you're able to create the sort of impression you or your client wants prospects and customers to have.

Case in point

Take, for example, the Zahm Gem materials shown in **Figure A**. By listening and asking questions, Scott Design was able to assess that "Zahm Gems wanted to reach a larger audience while setting itself apart in the extremely competitive luxury jewelry industry. The company sought rebranding and marketing that would reflect its dedication to acquiring the highest-quality colored gemstones in an industry often over-focused on diamonds."



Start with a logo

Once you have a strong grasp of what the company does and the personality behind it, you're ready to start designing or, shall we say, brainstorming ideas. Typically, you begin with the cornerstone of any business: the logo.

The Scott Design solution: "Philip Zahm had attracted considerable attention by recounting his travels around the world in pursuit of exotic gems. Our creative professionals helped Zahm Gems devise a campaign that would bring Philip Zahm's true tales of foreign gem-buying intrigue to resellers and individual customers. Focused on portraying an adventurer who would stop at nothing to acquire the best, most exotic colored gems, Scott Design created a logo and overall advertising look highlighting Philip Zahm's danger-tinged travels to acquire stunning gems in exotic places."

When designing a logo, such as Zahm Gem's logo shown in **Figure B**, it helps to break down the process in the following stages:

- **Ideas.** Jot down different things that stand out about the company you're designing the logo for. Put together a list of services or products that the company provides. Focus on the product or service and not the company.
- **Sketches.** Sketch anything that comes to mind about what you've read or seen about the company. Say, for example, you're designing a logo for an orange juice company. Round shapes and the color orange are obvious, but not the only things that come to mind. Sunny skies, green leaves, red and white straws, clear drinking glasses, and orange slices are other possibilities.
- **Illustrations.** Take your initial ideas to the computer. Combine type and imagery and experiment with all of the different ideas that you brainstormed. Then, select two or three ideas that you think work the best and focus on refining them.

Design tips

When designing a logo, avoid trendy styles and popular colors. Most companies require their logos to last more than a few years. If you design something that's too trendy, the logo will start to look outdated in just a short time.

Speaking of color, the more colors you use, the more expensive the logo will be to print and reproduce. You can keep your clients' costs down by sticking to two or three colors. Using spot colors will also make color matching more attainable.

Also keep in mind how the logo will be reproduced. Perhaps design different versions of the logo to accommodate the various types of media in which it may appear. For example, create a text-based black and white version for desktop printing and faxing, a more graphic spot-color version for printing, and an interactive RGB version for online.

Lastly, design for scalability. A logo must look as good on a business card as it does on a billboard.

Communicate with style

Once the logo is complete, you can use it to add a professional look to all of your day-to-day correspondence. This also helps to establish name and logo recognition. But don't limit your thinking to just traditional stationary and matching envelopes. Consider creating custom correspondence cards, address labels, forms, invoices, sticky pads, and so on—all of which you can produce in InDesign.

Design tips

As shown with the Zahm Gem materials, you don't necessarily have to use the same colors to establish an identity. Once you've chosen a "look" for any one item in your business set, however, make sure that all other materials follow suit.

Promote business

Other materials you'll need are the essential tools for promoting business. Business cards, for example, enable you to get in touch with people on a personal

Project management tips

The product shots on the cover of this issue are courtesy of Threestory Studio. Their company philosophy is admirable and their design process is filled with helpful project management tips. Here's a condensed version:

- **Scope out the situation.** Discover the real need and develop a project to meet that need.
- **Create a proposal.** Define the scope of the project and establish a budget.
- **Come up with a game plan.** Create a project map that includes objectives, intended audience, key messages, and project constraints.
- **Present your ideas.** Initially, focus on the concept and forget about the nitty-gritty details, like fonts and colors.
- **Be flexible.** Expect revisions. This is the time to settle on fine details, such as fonts, colors, etc.
- **Execute.** Put all the pieces together and design quality materials that accomplish the goal set by the company and clearly reflect its identity.

For their complete story, go to www.threestory.com.

Related articles

This article suggests you create a lot of different materials, but doesn't tell you how to actually create them. For that, use the following links to go to related articles on our website.

- For a tutorial on designing business cards, read the November 2006 article "Upgrade your business card with time-tested design techniques and reap the rewards," available online at www.elijournals.com/premier/journal_archive.asp?vwJournalID=IND#200611.
- For a tutorial on designing tri-fold brochures, read the August 2006 article "Easily create professional-quality tri-fold marketing brochures," available online at www.elijournals.com/premier/journal_archive.asp?vwJournalID=IND#20068.
- For a tutorial on designing postcards, read the November 2005 article "Target your market better with postcard promotions," available online at www.elijournals.com/premier/journal_archive.asp?vwJournalID=IND#200511.



level. As shown in **Figure C**, they don't have to be fancy. The important thing is that they reflect the company identity and include all the important contact information.

Other essential print materials you or your client will need include brochures, like the one shown in **Figure D**, direct mail pieces, presentation folders, posters, sell sheets and, as shown in **Figure E**, advertising.

Design tips

Here are a few tips to keep in mind when designing these sorts of promotional materials:

- Write headlines that draw attention.
- Use boldface type only to emphasize key points or headlines.
- Format type with upper and lower case rather than all caps, which gets a lower response.



Jumpstart the design process

There's no getting around the initial stages required to establish a company's identity. You can, however, expedite the production stage with the use of templates. InDesign comes equipped with a number of templates, including several business sets with templates for stationary, envelopes, business cards, labels, and more. **Figure F** shows a few of the templates.


To access the InDesign templates:

1. Launch InDesign.
2. Choose File ▶ Open.
3. Navigate to Macintosh HD/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Templates/InDesign/Business Sets (Program Files/Common Files/Adobe/Templates/InDesign/Business Sets in Windows).
4. Select the INDT file you want and then click Open.

Now, just swap the existing content for yours and print as usual.

- Increase the leading between lines of text a bit to improve legibility.
- Avoid the use of reverse text, which is often overlooked and hard to read.

In closing, we'd like to quote Threestory Studio's philosophy on humanity: "No matter how technology changes our

world, people respond to people. Ignore the humanity in your audience and your communications become cold and forgettable. Recognize their humanity, and you have a chance at evoking an emotional response." 

Giving credit where it's due

In our search for real-world examples of business collaterals, we stumbled across two design firms that we feel represent the epitome of our profession. We'd like to thank Scott Design and Threestory Studio for supplying us with the artwork and insight used to write this article and design the cover.

Automate InDesign with scripts to simplify common production tasks

by Renée Dustman

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A lot of the tasks we spend countless hours doing in InDesign can be done in seconds using a script. Unfortunately, not many of us have the time or know-how to write scripts. Fortunately, this isn't a problem as there are tons of great scripts to be found and we'll take you to some of the best places on the web.

To get you started with scripting in InDesign, we'll:

- Introduce you to the wonderful world of scripting.
- Take you to where you can find the best scripts on the web.
- Show you how easy it is to run scripts and optimize your productivity.

Using scripts with InDesign adds undeniable speed and accuracy to projects, and may even add functionality that isn't currently available in the application. We'll show you how to tap this energy to release the power within.

Scripting 101

A script works behind the scenes, responding to events that the application or user generates. Scripts have the added ability to seek information, make decisions, and perform calculations.

Applications:

Adobe InDesign 2/CS/CS2

Operating Systems:

Macintosh, Microsoft Windows

InDesign understands three scripting languages: AppleScript, Visual Basic (and Visual Basic Script), and JavaScript. On the Mac, you have the choice of using AppleScript or JavaScript. In Windows, you can use scripts written in Visual Basic (VB), Visual Basic Script (VBScript), or JavaScript.

Table A: Recommended sources for scripts online.

Websites
http://www.adobe.com/uk/products/indesign/samplescripts.html (these scripts are also on your installation disk)
http://www.indesignusergroup.com/services_support/scripting/javascript/_javascript.php
http://www.applescriptcentral.com
http://www.danrodney.com

