

Because Design MattersTM

Raising awareness of the value of design within North East Lincolnshire and highlighting how design can help SMEs survive and compete in challenging economic conditions.

Design- A Natural Process

Design is one the most natural things in the world, it can be seen in nature and all around us, it is why flowers have distinctive and colourful petals and interesting pleasant aromas to attract the birds and the bees.

Within society the biggest misconception is that Design is a luxury, however design is a fundamental of life it is what attracts our attention and responds to our most basic instincts.

Good design works, we believe that good design is about choosing the best look and feel for each unique brief. It's about inspiring and moving people. Good design is a seamless harmony of content, communication, functionality and style.

Good Design is a source of competitive advantage.¹

The Cox Review of Creativity in Business found that, many UK and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) currently don't know how to access and use **Good Design**, which limits their potential for innovation and growth.² SME's do not make the most of what the design industry has to offer, that is why SME's need to have access to more information on what is available and who best to approach for the best possible results.

There are 270,000 businesses in Yorkshire & Humberside, only 12% see design as integral to their business, compared to 15% UK average and 26% East Midlands.³

¹ Design Council (2008) "Design Council Briefing 01 - the impact of design on business" London: Design Council

² HM Treasury (2005) "The Cox Review Of Creativity In Business: building on the UK's strengths" London: HM Treasury

³ Design Council (2007) "Value Of Design Facfinder - Added Value Research 2007" London: Design Council

Adding Value Through Design

There Are Four Criteria On Which U.K. Businesses Compete:

- Added value or product/service
- Price/cost
- Distribution/availability
- Innovation

Companies that invest in design can avoid competing on price alone.³

The Design Council Published A Piece Of Research Called Added Value Research 2007⁴, Which Found That:

- Two thirds of companies who ignore design have to compete mainly on price, in companies where design is integral only one third do so
- Design is integral to 39% of rapidly growing companies but to only 7% of static ones
- A business that increases its investment in design is more than twice as likely to see its turnover grow as a business that does not do so
- 34% of businesses that see design as integral or significant say added value has had a great impact on their turnover. Where design plays only a limited role the proportion is only 21%.

³Design Council (2007) "Value Of Design Facfinder - Added Value Research 2007" London: Design Council

⁴DTI (2005) "Economics Paper No15" in Design Council (2007) "Value Of Design Facfinder - Added Value Research 2007" London: Design Council

The Impact Of Design On Your Figures

In order for businesses to maximise the return on their investment in design, they need to look at design as a long-term investment not a commodity cost.

You may wonder how much return will a business get from investing in design? Research has found that business that invest in design are more likely to increase their turnover growth.⁵

“On average it takes 20 months for design projects to pay back the investment”⁶

The Value of Design Factfinder Report published by the Design Council in 2007 found that:

‘Every £100 a design alert business spends on design increases turnover by £225.’⁷

⁵Design Council (2008) “The Link Between Design & Better Business Performance” available at [www.designfactfinder.org.uk] London: Design Council

⁶Ibid p1

⁷Design Council (2007) “The Value Of Design Factfinder Report “ p12 available at [www.designfactfinder.org.uk] London: Design Council

The Power Of Branding

For any company a strong brand identity is possibly the most important investment their business will make because this brand will stay with the company and create added value in the long term, the brand may be refreshed in the future but ultimately will be recognisable as the initial design. This brand will shape peoples views and perceptions of the company.

In a 2007 Survey Of The Value Of Global Brands By Branding Agency Interbrand, Coca-Cola's Brand Equity Was Valued At \$65.3bn Just Under Half The Company's True Market Value.⁸

"If Coca-Cola were to lose all of its production-related assets in a disaster, the company would survive. However if the all consumers were to have a sudden lapse of memory and forget everything related to Coca-Cola the company would go out of business."Coca-Cola Executive⁹

You may wonder what does Coca-Cola have to do with my business, they have been around forever, of course their brand is valuable. Well branding is as important to your business as it is to Coca-Cola.

In the past decade consumers have become very sophisticated in their buyer behaviour and much more visually aware, brand management is more important than ever in creating differentiation and standing out in a crowded market place.

Any organisation can benefit enormously from creating a brand which represents the company as distinctive, trusted, exciting, reliable, etc.

⁸ Design Council (2008) " The Power Of Branding: a practical guide" available at [www.designcouncil.org.uk/thepowerofbranding], London: Design Council

⁹ Ibid p2

How To Get The Best Design For Your Business

Finding a designer:

- recommendations
- research your local directories
- Design Business Association
- British Design Innovation
- Chartered Society Of Designers

Choosing a designer:

- check out their portfolio - do you like what you see?
- find examples of work that you like - contact the designer
- go to their clients' websites
- call their clients for a reference
- call designers in your area and assess if you can work with them (chemistry is very important in the design process, because design is very subjective and the designer needs to be on the same wave-length as you).

Writing a brief:

Be clear and concise in your brief, including information about your products, customers, the size of your business your financial performance, competitors, the reason for commissioning a design project, desired outcome, your current position in the market, aspirations, ideas of growth, long-term vision.

Agreeing costs & time scales:

Design is normally costed on an hourly rate which varies from company to company, each project is unique and cost is based on the brief from the client. It is unlike other services as it does not have a one fits all approach.

- include annual design costs in you long-term business strategy
- be up front about your budget
- if your are unsure of the cost and quite what you want talk to your designer and tell them what you want to achieve, as they can provide various costed options
- find out where your money is being utilised - a good design company will give you a comprehensive breakdown of the costs needed to achieve the project.
- plan for extra costs - print/photography/ fitting/ amendments etc
- be clear when you need the finished design for - plan for print, delivery and possible delay times - be realistic!

Choosing The Right People For The Job

First and most important of all is understanding the design process and what type of companies can deliver the sort of design we referred to earlier as “long-term investment in the business”.

Getting this wrong may result in extra costs, trying to put things right. Make sure the company you choose has the right skill set for the task required. i.e. design to designers, print to printers etc.

Design Agencies / Design Studios / Graphic Design Consultants / Freelance Designers	creative graphic design services, web design services, multimedia, illustration, branding, advertising design, 3d visualisation
Web Design / Development Companies	web design, web development, database management, e-commerce
Advertising Agency / Marketing Consultants / Marketing Agencies	advertising, copy writing, marketing strategy, PR, (sometimes work in collaboration with design companies or have in-house designers)
Printing & Signage	basic layout design services, art working, printing services

The table above is a basic generalisation and there are many companies which offer a wider mix of all of the services mentioned.

Resources:

08/08

**Finding And Working With A Designer:
A Free Step By Step Guide For
Small Businesses**

[available at:
www.designcouncil.org.uk/findingadesigner]

**Design Council Briefing 01 The
Impact Of Design In On Business**

[available at:
www.designcouncil.org.uk/briefing01]

**Design Council Briefing 02
The Role Of Design In Public Services**

[available at:
www.designcouncil.org.uk/briefing02]

**The Power Of Branding: A Practical
Guide A Free Design Council Resource
For Small Businesses**

[available at:
www.designcouncil/thepowerofbranding]

**Getting A Great Website:A Step-by-step
Guide A Free Design Council Resource
For Small Businesses**

[available at:
www.designcouncil.org.uk/gettingawebsite]

**Design Council (2007)
'The Value of Design Factfinder Report'**

[available at: www.designfactfinder.org.uk]

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