

What to look for when hiring a graphic designer or ad agency

Look at the type of work in their portfolio and ask about their roles in the projects they show you. Ask about their credentials, and try to ask specific questions, such as....

- How long did it take to complete this project (start to finish)?
- Were you the only person working on the project? If not, what were your responsibilities for the project?
- Did you write the copy?
- Did you hire out any parts of this project, or is all your staff in-house?
- What parts of this project were provided by the client?
- What do you need from me to get started on this project?

Ask relevant questions to your project, such as....

- Have you worked with professional photographers before? On what type of project? Will I have rights to use these photos elsewhere in my marketing (total buyout)?
- What kind of printers have you worked with? Will you be available for press checks and communication with the printer?
- After my job is completed, who holds onto the final art? What are your policies?
Example: If it is logo work, you will want them to provide you with files you can use to develop in-house forms, etc. If it is brochure work, you might want the final cover design to appear as a graphic on your web site. If you ask about these things in the beginning, there should be no “price surprises”.

Look to hire a graphic designer who fits your project and your personality. Design is very subjective, and your perception may not be their reality. If at all possible, when working with a new designer (or working with one for the first time), start with a small project. It will allow you to get to know them and their process. If you have problems, or feel that your needs are not being addressed, communicate immediately. Most designers would rather know your concerns than give you something you are not happy with.

Web Design vs. Print Design

These are very different processes. Some web designers started in print and know both areas really well. Other designers will practice in one area. If a person has done only web design, you probably don't want to hire them to produce your direct mail brochure, and a designer specializing in print design, should be able to easily convert your art for the web.



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