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Sales & marketing materials: your brochure

Why do you need a brochure?

How will your brochure be distributed?

What should you consider when producing a brochure?

What brochure opportunities can trade distribution partners offer?



“Having a brochure (online or offline) is a valuable part of our marketing collateral – both direct to consumers but also to B2B contacts. We ensure our marketing materials are targeted to the market, and the end user, and adapt messages, space given to the different properties and images featured accordingly to get the most impact.”

Hayley Stokes, Sales Director, Principal Hotels

Why do you need a brochure?

Consumers commonly research travel and tour options online, however, when tourists are at a destination they still like something they can carry with them and review. On occasions trade partners also like to have a brochure on hand or view in meetings, particularly at trade shows.

Many people collect brochures from the local Tourist Information Centre or their accommodation when they arrive to make their touring decisions.

Trade partners also often refer to online brochures when promoting your product.

You need to ensure that your brochure is an effective piece of marketing that stands out from the crowd. It needs to be fresh and compelling and align with your brand image – what you represent and deliver to your customers.

How will your brochure be distributed?

Before you start to produce the brochure you need to decide whether it will be distributed to consumers, the trade or both – know your target market. You will then need to tailor your brochure message accordingly.

Often distribution decisions will impact your brochure design. Consider where it will be distributed (brochure racks, trade shows, travel agencies) as this will affect the size and layout. Unusual shapes, sizes or layouts are appealing but may limit your display and distribution options. For example, some brochure stands in local visitor centres may be A4 and others may hold brochures in a different format, such as DL.

There are a number of different options available when distributing your brochure to consumers and the trade:

- Many brochure distribution companies will distribute your brochure for a fee within England and overseas
- Contact visitor information centres in your region and in gateway cities to discuss distribution options



What should you consider when producing a brochure?

- **Research** - Undertake research about your customers, your competitors and your budget. Who are your target markets and what will appeal to them? Look at competitor and tourism industry brochures and objectively review the good and bad features. What is your budget to produce and print the brochure? Can you afford to get your brochure professionally designed, or will you be doing it in-house? What is the most common brochure size for your region? Do you want to produce something a bit different, or conform to the norm? Remember, your brochure needs to be practical and fit into a brochure rack
- **Brochure heading & front cover** – Remember that in a brochure rack it is likely that only the top third of your brochure will be visible. Consider if your product will be selected based on your company name, or based on an eye-catching description of your product? This will depend on the strength of your current brand and how well your business name describes your product. For example it may be better to have “Experience the English Coast by Boat” rather than your company name, as this may be more eye catching. Your front cover is the most important part of your brochure as it should inspire customers to select your product over others
- **Written content** - Provide a concise, factual description of your product and your key selling points. Use short sentences and language that’s easy to understand and focuses on the experience. Remember, English might be a second language for some of your customers. Consider having your collateral professionally translated for a specific market should you feel it is worth the return on investment
- **Contact Details** - Ensure there is a clear call to action, include contact details such as physical address, email address, website address and phone and fax number (as appropriate) including international dialling codes
- **Images** - Use quality images that show people enjoying the experience you offer. Images are pictorial language that virtually ‘speak’ to you and conjure up all kinds of thoughts and emotions. Ensure your images are of a high standard and accurately represent your product. Consider using a large photo (like a ‘hero image’) rather than lots of smaller images. Many tourism organisations (e.g. DMOs and VisitBritain/VisitEngland) provide access to their image library (e.g. [visitbritainimages.com](https://www.visitbritainimages.com))
- **Design elements** - Choose a simple, common and neat font such as Verdana or Tahoma. Use this font throughout the whole brochure – don’t overdo it and mix fonts as this can make your brochure look messy and crowded. Based on your previous distribution decisions select your brochure size. Consider the weight, colour and texture of your brochure, ensuring it will stand up to being displayed in racks
- **Brand image** - Your brochure should align to your brand of how you want to look and feel in the market place. It is what you stand for and your product personality. Brand your product and your supporting marketing material so your customers know and trust what you stand for and deliver
- **Product location** - Use a map to illustrate the location of your product ensuring it is simple and clear

- **Consider if you will include prices** - Pricing details may restrict the shelf life of your brochure. Make sure you clearly state validity dates and any terms and conditions. Consider using inserts for rates or directing consumers to your website for further details. Consider using a “from” price to illustrate a lead in. This can give a longer shelf life to your product and allows for price variations
- **Accreditations, awards & endorsements** - Include these; ensure, however, that the awards are recent
- **Proofread & market test** - make sure that you carefully proofread a draft of the brochure before it goes to print. Perhaps do some market testing of the brochure as your customers may pick up something that you have omitted or that may be confusing or non-appealing. Remember that your brochure can be created as a PDF, and may actually not need printing. This is a way to save on print costs, and will also mean it can live online for distributors to download if they need it

What brochure opportunities can trade distribution partners offer?

Distribution trade partners, such as overseas wholesalers, may offer your business the chance to participate in their brochure, normally for a set fee. The advantage of participating in distribution partner brochures is additional exposure and extended distribution.

The participation cost traditionally covers the production and distribution costs, and is a cost of doing marketing, hence should be considered as part of your marketing plan and activities.

Before committing, ensure you have reviewed the quality of the production (including the overall content), how your product will be promoted and positioned (ensuring you get to review a proof before printing) and the exact distribution locations and quantities. Consider, does this align with your target markets and brand positioning? Also consider what estimates can be made on your return on investment, i.e., review the current level of bookings provided by the partner and jointly assess what additional bookings may result from your participation in their brochure.





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