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# Chapter Forty-Eight

## *The Creative Strategy Brief*

Another critical part of your plan will be the platform you take the time to build before running off to create any piece of communication. The time invested in developing thoughtful consideration of what you are trying to accomplish is a critical step. There are a variety of creative strategy brief worksheet formats out there. Find the format that works for you and use it. An earnest attempt to complete a simple set of basic questions will go a long way as you engage those creative individuals you hope will help give you find the edge in your communications. This will pay dividends as you execute everything from a sales flyer to your national advertising campaign. (It's basic blocking and tackling!) As a result, your secret weapon will be superior creativity and smart planning of message strategy and tactics. Creativity adds value. Spend time finding relevant and compelling creative strategies. Consider the following creative strategy brief format. It is an example of brief that will help guide execution.

### **Creative Strategy Brief**

Date:

Client:

Job Name:

Description:

Elements:

Timing:

CC:

#### **1. Goal:**

(Phrase or one sentence statement of what we're trying to accomplish with the project)

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Market objective:

Financial objective:

## 2. Key Facts/Market Overview

(Relevant background, market conditions, competitive situation, etc. Concise, bullet point statements pertinent to this project)

## 3. Opportunities/Problems

(Client's or competitors' unique strengths/weaknesses that can be leveraged into an impactful program; environment, legislative issues. Bullet point format)

Opportunities:

Challenges/weaknesses:

Competitors' strengths:

## 4. Positioning:

For \_\_\_\_\_(the target audience defined in terms of benefits sought), \_\_\_\_\_ (our brand) is the \_\_\_\_\_ (competitive set/category) that \_\_\_\_\_(differentiating benefit/USP).

## 5. Positioning Support:

(Why is the positioning correct, believable?)

## 6. Target Audience:

(Who is the best customer? What do they know or believe about our product and the category? Include demographics, psychographics, lifestyle information)

## 7. What is the customer journey?

(What are the rational and emotional stages a customer goes through to experience the brand?)

## 8. What are the touch points during each stage of the customer journey?

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(What relevant touch points will the customer pass during the journey?)

9. What channels can be used to address the touch points at each stage of the journey?

(Channels can be created to address specific needs.)

10. In stages in the customer journey, where is brand most relevant in the life of consumer? (When will the consumer have a chance to act?)

11. What messages are relevant at each stage in the customer journey?

12. Communication Objectives:

(Generally stated in terms of awareness, positioning, changing perceptions)

13. Communication Strategy: (How are we going to going to accomplish the objectives?)

14. Tactics/Elements:

(What do we use to carry out the aforementioned strategies? Identify pieces and describe them)

15. Look/Tone/Feel

(Use two (or more) adjectives to describe the product/service personality you wish to emerge from the advertising)

16. Mandatories: (Logo size, legal copy, etc)

17. Timing: (Materials close dates, delivery dates, direct mail drop dates, etc.)

**ADDENDUM/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT MIGHT PROVIDE INSIGHT**

*The creative strategy brief is an important tool. The above example is the format favored by Geileon Marketing Communications. As I have said there are a lot of different formats. It is remarkable how much a simple document like this can help get all key stakeholders focused on the specific communication needs and challenges. The*

*important thing is that there is a reasonable amount of thoughtful debate and review of what is needed and what the communications will accomplish if successful.*