

CREATING A BESPOKE PRODUCT

Brainstorming Phase ...

Things to consider

- Why are we giving this away?
- How much should it cost?
- Do I need to be able to report on the return for enquiries/orders?
- When am I planning to give it away?
- How will it be given to the intended recipients?
- Do I need guidance on corporate branding policies?
- How many will I need to give away, where will I store them?
- What age is my audience, is the item appropriate?
- What will the recipients questions be on receiving the give away?
- Does it reflect the style of our company?
- Does it need to be seen as up to date, or classic?
- Does it need to reflect the occasion where it is being given away?
- Will this be the most important thing we are doing at this time?
- How can we make it special?

From here it is possible to consider the following ...

- Product
- Material from which it is made
- Size and shape
- Quantity

With the assistance of the answers to the above a designer will be able to help you either customise an existing product or come up with your own product.

Customising an existing product entails understanding the manufacturing process so that you know which bits you can customise. The printing processes alone from pad printing, transfers, litho and flexo printing plates all have their own limitations and therefore designs for logos should always be created so that they can be printed in spot colours (and colours that are readily available to print onto the majority of substrates) and with registration that is not too tight – here your promotional distributor will be able to advise you.

Customising an existing product is normally fairly cheap as you have to pay only for the printing plates that are used and the time for the production to change the printing plates to YOUR design and clean the ink trays to YOUR colour inks.

Creating a bespoke product will take time – and be wary is not as cheap as an off the shelf item! If you design with a friend, rather than a product designer – the end result may be one not fit for purpose. Remember manufacturers will manufacture what YOU ask them to within reason, and they do not have the benefit of all the initial brainstorming knowledge, to understand how YOU want the product to feel and look. So the print that looked perfect in the design may end up being so small that the elderly audience you are targeting can not read it!

Product designers will consider manufacturing techniques, from injection moulding to forming for the product – the implications of the material to be used (health and safety etc) and then formulate an initial design, all this takes time – and unfortunately as ever time equals money. Once the initial design has been approved, CAD drawings will be created which basically talk computer to computer to enable the product to be created – again time and an understanding of the machines on the chosen factory floor will be accounted for.

Finally approx some ten to twelve weeks from your “I want one of those” discussions, a pre production sample will be available – this may need to be tweaked to really conform with your initial ideas.

From production sample the actual production run depends on the complexity of the product and the production teams scheduling – but normally you are home and dry by now.

Finally – remember that at the end of this if you stated a budget of x ... it could easily become 2x or even 3x – because of the decision to fly in a product if made in the far east – so remember the main questions to consider before embarking on this wonderful and exciting route are :

When are we planning on giving it away?

and

What is our budget?

Good luck and enjoy being creative