

Guest Blog written and published for Office Beacon - <https://inkbotdesign.com/good-design-business-growth/>

Five Reasons Why A Good Design Propels Business Growth

Even before you finish reading the first line of this article you have made an opinion about it. Yes! Because it takes one-tenth of a second to form the first impression¹. You would agree that first impressions are hard to alter. But then, just a few microseconds of time to impress can be very challenging for a business entrepreneur. Couple this with stiff competition and the pressure to grow your business every moment and you surely have an uphill task to accomplish. How does a company ensure it creates the right impact with limited resources? The answer lies in creatively communicating your message through meaningful graphic designs.

Some interesting pictures, carefully chosen words, a lot of thought, and a little magic of creativity can help you make lasting impressions on your target audience. That is the power of designing. In fact, your decision to click on this article to read from a list of other topics is also somewhere based on the image design along with the interest in the topic. Think about the immense potential that a good graphic design has when used the right way.

Do you have a design strategy in place?

While it may look simpler, designing is definitely beyond just using good images and text. There is a lot of thinking that goes behind it. It is a good idea for designers, marketers and company leaders to brainstorm together to understand the purpose behind the marketing campaign before working on the design.

Have a clear purpose

A purpose-driven design always works well for the business. As they say, "Make it simple, but significant." This approach helps companies to execute the campaign first time right. This means the resources are put to productive use and are not wasted. A purpose-led approach is beneficial for all the stakeholders -- the designer, the company and the target audience. A clear brief for the designer with specific objectives and business goals is always a good starting point. For companies, it is easier to evaluate the efficiency of a design and see if it fulfils a particular purpose else it can be re-worked. The target audience will look at design only if it offers a solution or a value-add to them.

Make a plan

Planning is another critical aspect of designing. It is worth to put down your thoughts on a rough paper, build prototypes and dummy designs before shaping the final artwork. Sculpting your thoughts into a good design is dependent on your depth of planning. Many times, designers have to work on stringent deadlines. It is a good idea to work your plan backwards with the delivery date in mind. Always keep some time for feedback and management approval.

Tell a story

Consumers don't buy products, they buy a story and a concept. Conceptualise and develop a meaningful narrative through your design. Like every story has characters, every design should have

¹ <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/how-many-seconds-to-a-first-impression>

some key brand elements or values. For example, if your brand is young, environment-friendly and simple then your design, logo, packaging etc should revolve around these elements and bring out the essence of the brand.

How good design results in business growth?

If your strategy and planning are in place and your design is purpose-driven then half the battle is won. But, to generate some real impact on the bottom line you will have to look at certain aspects of designing closely. Here are a few ways your design adds real value to your business:

1. Engages the audience

Everyone would agree that one should design to wow your customers. Once you have their attention, the next step is to keep them engaged for a longer duration. That is possible if you understand your customer demographics, their preferences and understand their circle of influence. A well planned and executed design strategy engages the audience at different levels and has a clear call to action. For example, an attractively designed social media post that asks your target audience to click on the register button will not just generate leads but can also help you close a sale.

Additionally, it is important to keep yourself in your customer's shoes while working on the design. A B2B design will be different from a B2C one. One should also make sure there is a lot of variety in the design. The viewer can get bored of seeing the same images every time and may not pay attention to your advertisements anymore. To break the monotony try incorporating different messages in your communication. There is a lot you can talk about subtly about your brand identity besides your offerings. But make sure your tonality and voice are consistent, the colour palette of the brand is followed and the brand style guidelines are not violated.

2. Connects emotionally

Pictures, colours and even the choice of fonts can have a deep emotional effect on the viewers. There are certain colours that stand for a particular virtue of the business. For example, blue colour denotes stability, professionalism and confidence. A lot of logos are hence designed in blue.

Pictures also have a deep emotional impact on the target audience. Even a simple smiley can convey a lot of different emotions. A lot of designers make their designs based on human psychology. For example, using images of cute animals or images of babies in an advertisement generates an immediate emotional response.

Culture too plays a key role in generating an emotional response. Releasing a product during a particular festival or including the cultural nuances of a household in the design are some of the ways you can instantly connect with your customers at an emotional level.

3. Helps in brand building

A very important value-add of designing is that it helps in building your brand. A brand is what your customers think about you. As a smart entrepreneur, you have to shape their perceptions about your company through various communication mediums like social media, advertisements, business cards, product packaging, logo, emailers etc.

Designing these communications with positive imagery, usage of specific colour palette, right typography etc will ensure you create a positive brand identity. Brand identity and brand awareness are two very critical goals of a company which may have recently entered a market. Both these tasks can be well accomplished by a good design strategy. Smart logo design, appropriate packaging,

attractive web pages, meaningful social media posts and emailers that evoke a response are some of the must-haves for a business. All these are rooted in good design.

4. Differentiates your brand

Another reason a good design is important for a business is it helps a business to stand-out in the crowd. To differentiate your business from others you need to create a brand personality. Your business might be unique in a few areas. For example, the price could be a differentiator, or you could be catering to a niche segment of customers, your services and offerings could be unique in the market etc. Identify the personality traits, include the visual brand components in your design and communicate that unique element through your artworks. It is a good idea to create a design style guide that includes specifications about your brand identity like logo placement, label sizes, font sizes etc.

5. Generates good ROI

Joel Spolsky says "Design adds value faster than it adds costs." Many would agree that design does add value to your business. So this means that there is a return on investment (ROI) associated with it. How do you measure this ROI is the big question. A lot of experts believe that the biggest ROI of a design is the emotional impact it has on people which no financial transaction can ever achieve. Corporate reputation, customer loyalty, brand awareness and brand image are some of the best returns of good design.

Conclusion

While we are quite clear of the benefits of designing to a business, there are a few aspects of a bad design that one should be careful about. A bad design can ruin your reputation, send wrong messages to your consumers and can permanently damage a company's image.

Some of the ways you can go wrong with your design are by using too much text in your design and generating an information overload. Using a low-resolution image is also a big no. One should also be careful about choosing the right typography. It is a good idea to select one or two font families in a design. Try testing your designs before publishing or printing them. A dummy or prototype is always easy to correct than making changes to all the designs you upload online or print hard copies. Lastly, hold your temptations to go too creative. Ensure that your design is usable, meaningful and legible.

It is always a good idea to be clear and concise in your designs, have clarity of action and purpose and last but not least make sure there are no copyright issues. Brain Reed sums up our point really well "Everything is designed. Few things are designed well." Take your pick.