

NAME

Things To Watch Out For tool

AUTHOR/OWNER

Design Business Association

SOURCE

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INTRODUCTION

Proposals will come in a variety of different formats and layouts and will cover most issues. However, there are areas that can be forgotten or not thought about until a problem arises. If essential areas are missing from a proposal and problems do come up, ask the designer how they would like to deal with the issues. For more information, go to the "Plan" stage of the Shape resource.

NOTES

Some of these issues might be:

Changes to the brief

The proposal is based on the brief given and any changes to the brief might make the proposal invalid. It is wise to ask the designer to indicate the likely impact of the change BEFORE making the decision to change. This could be a timescale problem as well as a financial issue.

Design changes

The same is true for design changes when a design solution is already decided on. If a change needs to be made, again, you need to discuss the cost and impact of the change BEFORE requesting it. The earlier in the project the changes are made the less impact it will have on the overall project.

Record keeping

Meetings and decisions should always be recorded either by creating meeting minutes/notes or in the form of a contact report from the designer. If there is a project manager this will be their responsibility, if not it will fall to the designer. However, you can think about the possibility of someone in your organisation writing the meeting minutes/notes to reduce the cost.

Unscheduled meetings

The designers will have allowed for a number of client meetings per stage of the project. If this is not clear, ask. If unscheduled meetings are arranged the designers are spending time on this and therefore the costs can increase if you are asking for meetings that weren't scheduled.

Travel time

It is recommended to talk about this issue when selecting your designer, looking at the distance and therefore the time it takes for the designer to get to and from your office. If the distance means that the designer will spend more time travelling than in the meeting, ask how they will be charging for this. Some designers have a travel rate but others will expect the client to pay the standard day rate. Splitting the meeting venues between the designers and your offices can reduce cost.

Mark up and bought in items

The proposal should indicate where needed how the designers will deal with buy in items such as copywriting, photography or website programmers. It may also include specialist researchers or consultants depending on the type of project. The designers may increase the price of the service either by applying a 'handling fee' (a percentage will be applied) or by allocating extra 'project management' time to look after the bought items. If this is not clear ask and perhaps negotiate. Typically percentages are between 10% and 15%.

Expenses

Different types of expenses will be incurred as part of the project. Expenses are likely to include materials and travel as well as items such as colour reproduction and couriers.

Expenses are variable and difficult to estimate up front. Ask for an estimate but be aware that it will depend on how the project is running and what you demand of the agency.

Extra presentation boards or more colour run outs will be charged and therefore you should be given to the option of using normal post instead of a courier if the distance is small or the delivery is not urgent. Always ask for a breakdown of expenses in the invoice from the designer and ask that the designer gets your permission for any large or unusual expenses first.

USEFUL LINKS

www.dbadirectory.org.uk/dba/uploads/pages/1section-8-asking-for-a-proposal-document.pdf