

How to Create a Brochure

You have only one chance to make a first impression. In many instances, your brochure is the first point of contact. In order to achieve a positive first impression, your brochure should be well written, attractively designed and on good quality paper stock.

This year, at the American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting in Baltimore, the Chapter Public Relations Liaisons met for a lively discussion on "How to Create a Brochure." **Stephen Serpas** (Publications and Public Relations Assistant of AALL) and I (AALL Public Relations Committee Chapter Liaison) presented information that will enable each Chapter to put its best foot forward.

Some of the most difficult questions arise before any work is done to prepare the brochure. The very first step is to identify your audience and how the brochure will be used. Is the brochure being sent to law firms that do not have a librarian to encourage them to consider hiring a professional, or will it be sent to library schools as a recruiting effort, or will it be distributed to other law librarians to demonstrate how fantastic your Chapter is, or will it be sent to all of the above? The answer to these questions will dictate all aspects of creating your brochure.

a brochure or similar document before; and whether Chapter members have the time and energy to devote to producing a brochure. Each Chapter will have to decide what is best for it.

The actual writing and editing of the text is the most time-consuming aspect of the project. The text should be well written and easy to read. Keep in mind that the brochure should include the phrase *A Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries*.

Your brochure should have a title page. This is often merely the name of the Chapter. Make sure it is easy to read and distinctive on the page. If your Chapter has a logo or other identifying mark(s), they should appear in the brochure. This will give you consistency with your other organizational literature and make the brochure more identifiable.

Your text should include: who and what you are (especially important—that you are an established Chapter with a strong record); qualifications of members (it never hurts to remind our audiences that we are highly trained professionals); benefits of membership; committees; officers; types of libraries served; types of publications offered; and anything that would be appropriate to underline the importance of your organization. Finally, one page

brochure. Be prepared for a time lag while the Board analyzes the brochure. It is helpful to indicate the date of preparation somewhere on the brochure.

If you are working with a designer, the designer will be responsible for text layout. If you are using desktop publishing, you should choose the paper to be used. Because of the wide variety of paper available, it is important to select the stock early to take into account the paper's shadings and nuances in laying out the design. The brochure should not look too crowded or busy. Be sure that all columns are approximately the same length. Use boldface type to introduce different subject areas. Any graphics should underscore the professionalism of the Chapter. Cartoons may be acceptable. Keep in mind that not everyone will see the humor in them.

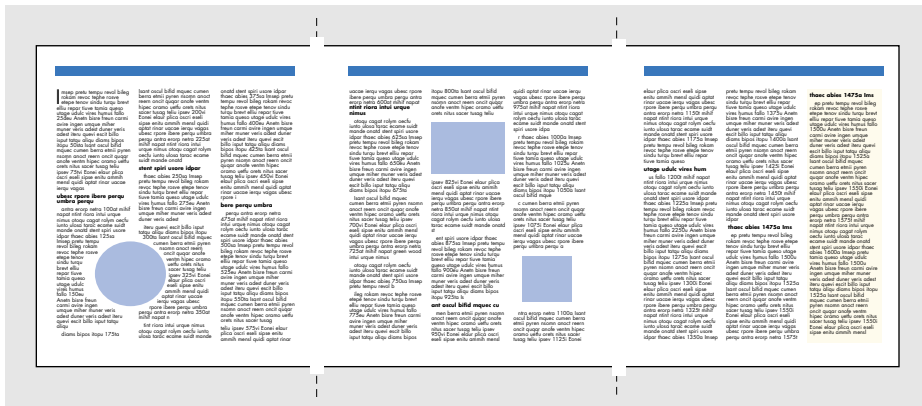
Your brochure should be error-free. Have more than one person proofread. There is nothing worse than a typo, grammatical error, or incorrect information in a brochure that tells everyone how wonderful your Chapter is and how professional its members are. When you think you are ready to send the brochure to the printer, proofread it again and again if necessary.

Designers often regularly work with a specific printer. If your designer recommends a printer, it is usually a guarantee that the printer has already met performance expectations and will produce satisfactory work for you. Many Chapters rely on desktop publishing with satisfying results. Keep in mind that the same high standards that apply to a professional printer also apply to desktop publishing.

Congratulations! You have successfully written and produced a spectacular brochure. If you experience any difficulties at any point in the process, contact Steve Serpas at Headquarters. He has extensive experience in all phases of brochure design and production and will gladly answer any questions you might have.

Laura Hyzy, AALL Public Relations Committee Chapter Liaison, is Library Manager, Hinshaw & Culbertson, Chicago, Illinois, and guest wrote this column.

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Another decision that should be made early is whether or not to use desktop publishing or hire a designer. The factors to consider in making this decision are your budget (can you afford a designer?); whether your Chapter has members who have prepared

should be devoted to contact information. A tear-away form is extremely helpful for the recipient, who can return the form to indicate what type of information is desired. Most Chapters require the Board to have final approval of all phases of the