

How to prepare a brochure for international markets:

Will your current brochure work in the overseas markets?

Basically, it depends on whether you intend to distribute it directly to the consumer, or whether you use it as an information piece for the travel trade, or both. It will also depend upon the level of proficiency in English held by the target audience.

Oregon's visitor from the German-speaking countries of Germany, Switzerland and Austria tend to read English well, but prefers material in German. Visitors from Japan tend to ignore English material. Japanese members of the travel trade tend to read English. However, a piece in Japanese or a translation of your material is highly recommended.

If you intend to encourage all bookings through the travel trade, then your brochure may only be seen by a handful of people. Provided that it is capable of projecting a positive visual image and can educate and inform prospective customers, there is probably no need for a new publication.

If, on the other hand, you want to distribute large quantities overseas, then it is likely that it will need to be adapted.

It is important to note that web sites containing comprehensive content are reducing the need to produce brochures for international distribution, thus saving hard earned monies. Make sure that the information on your web site is simple enough to enable a prospective foreign visitor to get the information they need and are looking for. This may even include a list of tour operators or your representatives in various countries.

Internet applications that enable automatic translation of a site into a foreign language are readily available. However, the most accurate interpretation of your printed piece is usually that provided by an experienced native translator, especially one working in the target country.

Getting the brochure right:

Brochure production and distribution may be one of your major items of promotional expenditure. Observing a few basic principles during the design phase may avoid misunderstandings and improve the effectiveness of the delivery of your message.

Full-color printing may not be necessary so long as the production is informative, well conceived and attractively produced. Remember that decisions are often made simply on the appearance of a brochure. Here are some important tips to help with your brochure development:

1. Create the right format for the most common use

It is most likely that your brochure will only be used as a reference tool by the trade. Your brochures in overseas markets may rarely find themselves onto shelves in a travel agency. If you are planning on getting your brochure directly to the consumer through consumer shows, consumer distribution channels (e.g.: www.usa.de in Germany), make sure that the American paper format fits the overseas paper format (paper sizes are different from the USA). If you are planning on doing a lot of direct mail, check on envelope sizes in the target market as well.

2. Distribution considerations

Take time to consider how the brochure for use in foreign markets will be distributed. As mentioned briefly in point 1, distribution for the international markets will greatly influence the elements of the piece. Is it for the consumer and/or travel agent, receptive operator (wholesaler) and/or tour operator in specific overseas markets? Or will the piece be handed out here in the US at a visitor center/front desk?

3. Brochure usage on the web

As a means of reducing the cost of printing and mailing the brochure to overseas consumers, it is worth considering making PDF copies of the brochure available on your organization's web site, and in the foreign language if possible.

4. Front-cover layout

The layout of the front cover of any brochure (no matter what size) is most important. The following information should be on the cover of your brochure:

- a. Name of the product and a promotional message – for example: “For a great adventure, try Anybody Outdoor Adventures”.
- b. A strong visual depiction of a product benefit relevant to the target audience.
- c. The word “Oregon” should be prominently displayed on the front cover of the brochure, as well as “USA.”

5. Quality photographs “sell” your product

A bad photo can actually discourage prospective visitors, so use only quality images that demonstrate your product's greatest benefits. Use a professional photographer. A list of professional photographers is available at the Oregon Tourism Commission.

6. Include maps

Include a small map and description of how to get to the product location. It is also advisable to show the location on a map of Oregon (and USA) and indicate the larger cities in the area (Portland, Salem, Eugene, Medford, Bend, Pendleton, Baker City, etc). Use distance measurements from major cities or gateways. Use miles and kilometers (1 mile = 1.6 km), and normal driving times. A distance measurement map is available at the Oregon Tourism Commission office.

7. Prices

Care should be taken when including prices in a brochure, especially when it is for use overseas. If it is decided to include prices in the brochure, consideration should be given to:

- a. including prices on an insert (dating the inserts is important);
- b. clearly stating the conditions and valid period for the prices; and
- c. avoiding pricing “conflicts” with other distribution partners, such as travel agents and receptive operators (wholesalers).

Do not distribute net rates to consumers or travel agents.

8. Remember your target market

Write your copy and design the layout with the customer in mind. Take into account preferences and cultural sensitivities; for example, some Islamic countries are offended by women in swimwear and by alcohol consumption. Different brochures may be required for different markets; changes to text and images may be required.

9. Copy in other languages

Investigate how widely English is spoken before committing to the expense of printing a four-color brochure in a foreign language.

Consider black and white inserts printed on heavier paper stock to enhance your “regular” English brochure that may be distributed in a non-English-speaking country. Consider a design and paper that is not too dark in tone, so it can be easily read when faxed.

When preparing copy in a foreign language, it requires *interpretation*, not just translation. Translation may not provide the exact meaning you desire. It is also essential that you avoid colloquialisms and slang because they can be easily misunderstood.

Make every effort to have the translations prepared or checked by a native speaker and/or checked in the country where the material will be used.

Before the piece is printed, send a copy of the brochure to one who is familiar with the target market(s). Have it reviewed for errors and omissions. Of absolute importance: make every effort to ensure that there are no misinterpretations which may arise from cross-cultural communications!

10. Operating dates and times

If your product is seasonal, include the months you operate. Many countries use what we in the US refer to as “military time:” 1:00 am is “1:00 hours,” 12:00 pm/noon is “12:00 hours,” 1:00 pm is “13:00 hours,” 2:00pm is “14:00 hours,” and so on. Midnight is “24:00 hours.”

Hours of operation in your American brochure might be: “10:00 am – 7:00 pm daily.” In the German version of that same brochure it would be: “10:00 – 19:00 daily.”

11. Brand Identity

At all times be sure that the content, images, tone, feel, and design of the brochure consistently reflect the brand identity that you want to project for your organization.

12. Legal issues

Be certain that product descriptions are accurate and that copy and images are in no way misleading. Consumers are well protected in today’s international business environment. If you are uncertain, seek professional advice before proceeding.

13. Conditions

Do not overlook the importance of this section. Seek the advice of a professional to ensure that you have covered all necessary inclusions, exclusions, and limitations.

The international brochure checklist:

___ Local map?

___ Location easily understood:

___ in Oregon?

___ in the Pacific Northwest?

___ in proximity to the nearest international gateway(s)?
(Portland/San Francisco/Seattle/Vancouver, BC)

___ Distances and driving times from gateway points to your location?

Use miles, kilometers (1 mile = 1.6 km) and normal driving times.

___ Fax number? Telephone number?

Always use numbers – no letters. The telephones of most countries do not have numeral keys that include letters, as in the US. For example, instead of using “555-GET-FOOD” in your German brochure, the telephone number needs to be “555-438-3663.”

Do not use American toll-free telephone numbers such as 1-800, 1-888, etc., as most work only in the US and/or from Canada, but not from countries overseas.

___ Email address? Web site address?

___ Mention the attributes that appeal to visitors from your target market; these might be different for each market.

___ Have you left space for the travel agent’s stamp?

___ Is the brochure printed in the correct language?

___ Is the word “Oregon” featured prominently?

___ Is it cost effective to print and distribute? How much will it cost to mail?

___ Will it fit into a standard envelope common in the country of distribution?

___ Are the images chosen appropriate for the target market?

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