

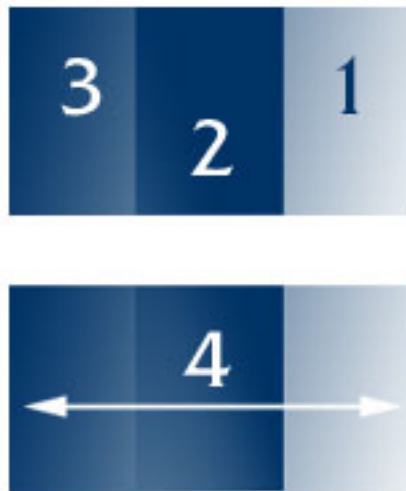
## Trifold Brochure Writing Tips

Tips for preparing text:

The bifold, tripanel brochure, often given the misnomer "trifold", is constructed by folding a 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper twice to create 3 panels on each side. It is the brochure type most commonly used by small business because it can be mailed in a standard #10 envelope.

**General guidelines** When preparing your text, keep it short and sweet. The reader should be able to grasp the main points by simply glancing through the piece. If you bury your messages in dense text, the reader may simply decide that it will be too much work to read your brochure and just throw it away.

- Speak directly to the potential customer. "We help you"
- Use headings and subheadings to group ideas and help the reader focus on items that are of interest to him or her.
- Avoid industry jargon and acronyms, even if you are sending to industry people. Use clear language that everyone can understand.



**1. Front cover** The front cover should be visually appealing and provide enough content to invite the reader to open the piece and read more. Many companies simply rely on the logo, company name, a great "tag line" that sums up their products/services. This is the approach we recommend. Some companies want to bullet some items on the front, but remember that space is limited. You can easily go overboard and ruin the piece with too much clutter.

**2. Back cover** Don't put anything on the back cover other than contact information. This is the panel that people are least likely to read, so if you put an important message there, it will be lost. If you own a small company, you may want to consider just listing phone/fax numbers, web site address, and email contacts and leaving the physical address off. This gives your brochure

more shelf life if you move.

**3. Inside front panel** This is the most important panel of the piece. We recommend that you use it to summarize why the customer should choose you. It is also a good location for a glowing testimonial. While this is the most important panel, we recommend that you write it last. By writing the inside spread first, you will have a better idea of what you want to summarize on the inside front panel. The inside front panel also is a great place for your phone number and/or web site address.

**4. Inside three-panel spread** When you open the piece fully, you have three full panels to write a complete description of your company and what it does. Here are some ideas to get you going.

- Start with a one- to two-sentence description of what your company does. Try to word it in a way that makes the reader feel that he or she would be "smart" for choosing you.
- Provide a list of your products and services. Keep each item short and save the lengthy descriptions for your web site or for sell sheets.
- Write a paragraph or two for each of your competitive advantages. This is more important than providing long boring descriptions of each of your products or services. Customers want to know why they should choose you over your competitors. For example, you may sell the same kind of widgets as your competitor, but your widgets are of a higher quality or can be quickly customized to the customer's needs.
- Tell the reader how you typically work with your clients. Customers like to know up front what the process is that you will take with them.
- Refer the reader to your web site for detailed information. If you do not have a web site, invite the reader to call you directly to discuss his or her needs or to request detailed "sell sheets".