SETTING UP
EFFECTIVE
COLLABORATIVE
TEAMS

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Insider tips for outsourcing and working
with externals agencies

viabrand™

MORE AND MORE BUSINESSES ARE CHOOSING TO OUTSOURCE THEIR DESIGN WORK.

Working closely with external studios has become an incredibly popular business decision – and for good reason.

Have you considered these benefits?

❒ Design studios have a much greater capacity to take your vision from strategy all the way through to development and implementation – this makes it far most cost-effective, professional and crafted than is possible with a small internal marketing team.

❒ Outsourcing gives you access to specialised skillsets – illustrators, copywriters, coders, animators and designers – as and when you need them.

❒ As experts who work across company sizes, industries and locations, design studios are full of people who are at the cutting edge of the creative fields. This knowledge is invaluable – and all without the professional development costs associated with upskilling an internal team.

If you're considering a collaboration with a design studio, there's a few things to consider, including your internal resourcing and deadlines. We've developed a comprehensive checklist to help you choose the best studio for any of the following needs:

- Strategy
- Copywriting
- Graphic design
- Web design and development
- Digital marketing

Ready to learn more? **Let's get started.**

SCOPING

Choosing the people who will work on your creative projects should be an enjoyable and intuitive process. This checklist will help you find the right studio to fit your budget, deadlines and resourcing.

The best thing you can do to ensure a fruitful, efficient and creative relationship is understand the following:

Your internal capacity

❑ Who will be the key contact in your organisation, and do they have the authority and capacity to work collaboratively with the studio?

Your budget

❑ Many projects are like a piece of string. We can do them on a small budget or large budget, and the resourcing makes a big difference in what we quote. There is a big difference between a $5K website budget and a $20K website budget, so knowing where you sit will make the quoting process far more efficient for you.

Your timeframes

❑ Knowing when you want the end product in your hands will help us work out the milestones along the way – a good head's up for when we'll need your time commitment to move the project along.

Your market position

❑ Being able to articulate your target audience, budget-to-luxury positioning and unique selling point will help to ensure you're on the same boat with your creative studio.

Your references

❑ Having a few examples you love can help your designer quickly understand your visual wishlist.

Once you understand the above, you can start looking for a design studio that:

Has a portfolio you admire

❑ Working with a studio that has a visual history you like is one of the best places to start. Odds are you'll like the work they present you too.

Has a good track record

❑ Many studios will have testimonials on their site, but don't be afraid to ask for some if they don't.

Works in the way you need them to

❑ If your business is fast-paced, you'll need a studio that's flexible. If your brand is young, you'll want your designers to understand the market. If you enjoy face-to-face meetings, make sure your studio is willing to accommodate this personal touch.

Insider tip

Many clients don't want to give away their budget, but budgets determine studio resource allocation and puts the best team on the ground for your project. It sets expectations right from the beginning, ensuring both parties know exactly what level of service is required and the tools, platforms and techniques that can be used to realise your vision.

ENGAGEMENT

Once you've narrowed down the design studios you want to work with, there are some further considerations to avoid unwanted surprises. Ensuring you understand exactly what the design studio will deliver can save you a lot of time and money down the road.

When finalising your contract, you'll want to make sure you know:

Terms

☐ There are two main types of design contracts: project-based and retainers. Projects are fairly open and shut cases, whereas retainers will need parameters to ensure you receive the service you need.

Rates

☐ Project-based contracts generally quote for the entire project, while retainers tend to give an hourly, weekly or monthly rate. Ensure your needs are met in terms of how many rounds of revisions you'll go through, and what exactly your retainer covers.

Penalty Rates

☐ Some studios charge extra for quick turn-arounds or weekend work. Most will charge for extra revisions at an hourly rate.

Next, you'll want to understand the following production processes:

Briefs

☐ How does your studio take briefs? Do they prefer to sit down together in meetings or receive emails? Do they have webforms they need you to complete?

Communication

☐ Studios are busy places, which is why they often have a preferred method of communication. Phone is fairly standard, but sometimes a written brief is required, depending on the project complexity.

Feedback

☐ How does your studio team want to receive feedback and revisions? Email is often preferred, but sometimes a phone call or meeting is required. Fewer rounds of revisions is the aim to achieve.

Delivery

☐ How will your work be handed over?

Finally, you'll want to understand where your studio can add value to your own resourcing:

Project Management

☐ Does the studio use project management software to keep things on track and transparent?

Reporting

☐ We think progress reports are essential for retainers and important for longer projects.

Consulting

☐ Partnering with a studio means you get to workshop ideas with them. When you're not sure about your strategy or approach, you can use their advice to make informed creative decisions.

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Insider tip

Your studio will be able to help you structure your agreement to your needs, so don't be shy about asking questions. If the studio is willing to be flexible, then their approach is to your best interest.

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READY TO GET STARTED?

Choosing the right creative collaborators can be incredibly rewarding for both your peace-of-mind and your business as a whole.

There's a lot involved in successfully outsourcing to a studio, but Viabrand believes in transparency and simplicity as the best tools in a partnership. As long as you have clarity around what you're getting and exactly what's needed from you, we think you'll be fine!

We hope you found this checklist helpful and that you're inspired to start looking for a design studio that suits your needs.

Want to talk?

Say hello on email <u>sayhello@viabrand.com.au</u>
or call us on **(07) 3180 1416**.

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