

1	Preface1	5 What's Next	13
2	Beyond the Traditional Creative Brief2	6 Job Launch Forms Creative Brief	15
3	The Creative Brief4	Assignment Brief: Print	20
4	The Assignment Brief	Assignment Brief: Email	
	Defining the Assignment Brief 6 Mastering the Assignment Brief 9	7 References	26



PREFACE

On April 21st, 1969, Mick Jagger commissioned Andy Warhol to do the artwork for the Rolling Stones' upcoming album. The creative direction he provided? A letter no more than 100 words long, and a copy of the album in question. "I leave it in your capable hands to do whatever you want," wrote Jagger. "And please write back how much money you'd like."

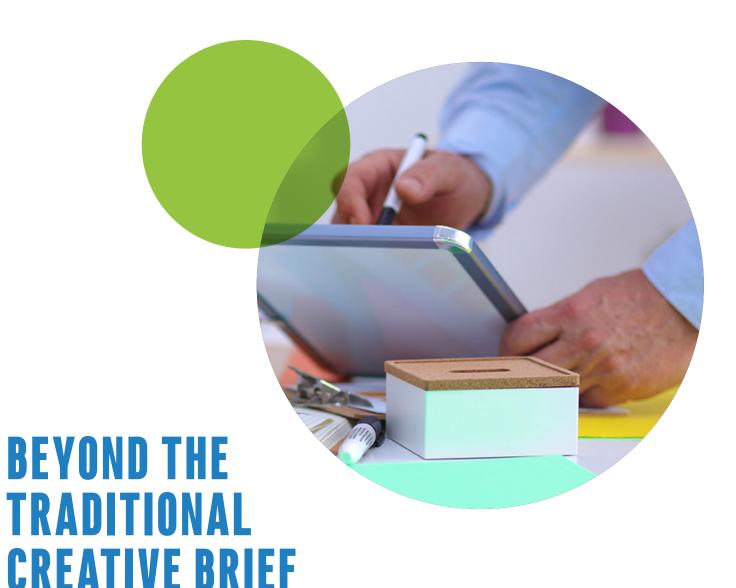
The now-famous letter has become something of an inside joke to creative and marketing professionals who face the challenge of mastering the project launch process every day. The truth is, while Jagger's letter is often dubbed "the best creative brief ever," savvy marketers and creatives know that truly kicking off a project right requires time, energy, and resources.

Amazing creative depends on how it was requested in the first place.

Implementing inMotion means you're one step closer to mastering the art of project launch. The solution's project request forms, task list templates, and resource allocation capabilities make kicking off new work easy.

But as with any new technology solution, inMotion will deliver the best results if it's used to support a process that works, instead of to fix one that's broken.

In this eBook, you'll learn all about best practices for project launch as told by industry leaders. You'll also see examples of project launch forms—or assignment briefs—informed by what today's most efficient marketing and creative teams currently use. With a little practice and creative magic, you'll be well on your way to mastering the project launch portion of your process. That means more time for Warhol museums and Rolling Stones albums (or wherever your interests lie!).



For many seasoned marketers and creatives, the end-all, be-all of the project launch process is a single document: the creative brief.

The traditional approach is to establish a creative brief template that covers virtually everything your team would need to know in order to successfully execute a new project, from strategic information like audience personas and brand standards to tactical information like specs and production quantities.

For a long time, a creative brief was enough for most creative teams. But in today's digital era, creatives are asked for a higher volume of work at a faster pace than ever before. That means more and more industry leaders are looking at how to optimize their process in order to meet the demand. And the best place to start is at the beginning, with project launch.

Google recently hosted a Firestarters conversation series on the future of advertising, with one panel devoted entirely to the creative brief and how it should function in today's industry.



"The brief was designed for a world that no longer exists: a world of scarce media, in which brands could easily attract people's attention with cleverness and creativity. Now, people have endless media options," explained Ben Jones, the former Creative Director of the Google agency team in a Think with Google article recapping the panel.

That's why top creative and marketing teams are embracing a new approach to project launch. The core idea is to distinguish between a traditional creative brief, a document that contains all of the strategy information for a larger campaign or project, and "assignment briefs," smaller documents

that contain the tactical information needed to complete the individual projects that make up the larger initiative.

One of the panelists who has optimized their process in this way is Chet Gulland, head of strategy at Droga5. When launching a new campaign, Chet and his team capture the strategic information and insights related to the project in the creative brief, and they save the "job specific" information for the assignment briefs that stem from the original document.

"[It lets] the creatives keep the big idea in mind, but focus in on what we want someone to do at each point in the process," explains Chet.



"Everything outside the specific problem that needs immediate solving, is extremely secondary. If you have inspired the creative team to understand the breadth and depth of your central problem, you have done an extraordinary job."

- ANDREW MILLER,

CREATIVE AT

WIEDEN+KENNEDY

THE **CREATIVE BRIEF**

To begin mastering your project launch process, first understand the function and importance of the creative brief—and how the creative brief differs from assignment briefs.

function: to inspire your creative team to come up with the most brilliant and effective communication response to

- JAMI OETTING

Jami, section editor of Agency Post also notes, "Creative briefs also help to solve any misunderstandings before people start getting to work. This document should clarify for everyone involved—copywriters, designers, developers, and most importantly, the client—all the aspects of the project, the goals, and even the timeline. The brief should confirm to clients that you understand their problem and have a strategy for solving it."

Your team's creative brief should serve as the primary reference document, detailed enough to cover every piece of information that's relevant to a creative project's success. When crafting the creative brief for a new campaign or project, think through all of the strategic information that will guide the entire creation course:

company, client, and competitor information; audience particulars; style, tone, design, brand, messaging, and executional considerations; success metrics; thought-starters; and timing.

Every team's creative brief will be unique to their individual organization and needs, but the example brief on pg. 15 is a good place to start building your template.

To ensure your project launch process runs at peak efficiency, think of the creative brief as a living, breathing document that can be revised as necessary, depending on how your team and the projects you take on evolve.

Most important of all? Encourage your team to differentiate between the creative and assignment briefs.

"The creative brief should generate ideas that are big enough that they generate smaller ones," recommends Ian Schafer, global chairman and founder of Deep Focus, and one of the Google Firestarter panelists.

Use the creative brief as the starting point for all of the mini-projects that ladder up to the larger campaign. Instead of providing a new creative brief for every job that needs to be completed, supply assignment briefs that refer to the essential information from the creative brief, plus the tactical information relevant to the task at hand.

3 THINGS TO NOT DO

During the Project Launch Process

- 1. Make the wrong team members responsible for briefs.
- "It should be the person or people that are most likely to really dig in to the information about your situation and ferret out a relevant, meaningful, and searing insight," says Dave Hamel, Get Better Creative and strategy principal at MSI Advertising. "Writing creative briefs is a learned skill that takes practice and attention and should be the job of someone who has responsibility for the end product – the creative."
- 2. Use vague language. "Absolutely do not accept the answer, I'll know it when I see it," says Heidi Sanders, senior art director, DHC USA. "Through creative exercises you can easily coax the answer out of the most difficult players. Bring a list of descriptive words and supporting visuals and have them select what feels right. These simple clues will help to navigate a path in the right direction."
- 3. Request complicated assignment briefs. "A complicated questionnaire does not work," says Ashley Pyatt, senior graphic designer at H. D. Smith. "Our clients refuse to fill out long forms to complete a project. We used to have an online form, where we had too many open ended questions and most of the time, we got one word answers."



"Include acceptance criteria. For a creative, the creative process is painful, agonizing and cruel—but nothing is crueler than showing it to a client who only figures out what they REALLY want after you present."

> - DAVID BAILEY, INTERACTION AND VISUAL DESIGNER

THE ASSIGNMENT BRIEF

4.1 Defining the Assignment Brief

Once you've aligned with your team on a creative brief that works, start thinking about how to master the assignment briefs that stem from it, and how those assignment briefs will translate to job launch forms in inMotion.



An assignment brief

is a much smaller document that combines the essential information from the creative brief with the tactical information vital to a specific deliverable.

The best way to streamline your project launch process is to approach the job launch forms in inMotion as assignment briefs rather than creative briefs. The overarching creative brief should live outside of the application, in a place that your team can easily access. That way, when team members accept new work, they can focus on the immediate task at hand and what's needed to accomplish that work, rather than on high-level strategic information that can be referenced in the creative brief as necessary.

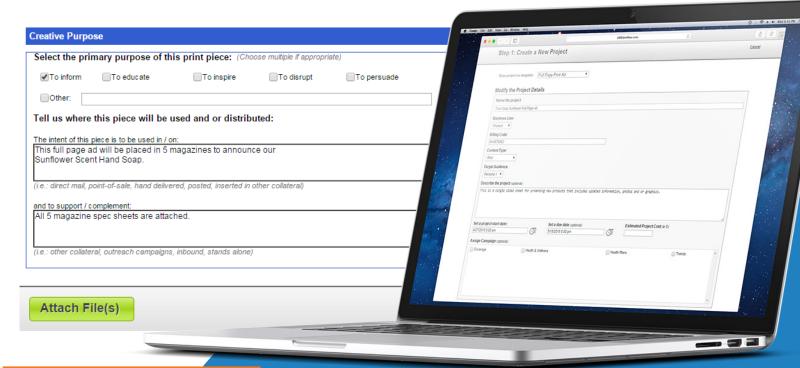
"When implementing a project request, we noticed that less is more," explains Ashley Pyatt, senior graphic designer at H. D. Smith and inMotion user. "Having a simple questionnaire that outlines the key details you need to complete a project is ideal. From a project requester point of view, they are busy and see projects as a minor detail in their day to day. If we overwhelm them with questions, it's harder for them to comply."

Strive to be as efficient as possible when crafting your assignment briefs, and only include the information vital to the deliverable's success. First, establish the overall project information from the creative brief that's always essential to know, like goals, objectives, background, intended audience and channels, success metrics, and timing. Then, include the information specific to the task at hand.

"Spending time on a long, complicated brief every time doesn't work," says Heidi Sanders, senior art director, DHC USA. "The majority of my internal clients have a hard time separating themselves from the brand and distilling the objectives at hand."

The best way to approach creating assignment briefs for the first time is to break them out by content form, as shown in the examples on pages 15 through 24. That way, it's easy for the team members who are assigned new work to quickly determine what they need to deliver, and to identify the specific information they need to be successful.

The bottom line? Save the brand and strategic information for the creative brief, and include tactical information in the assignment brief. You'll help team members zero in on what's important, and deliver better creative.



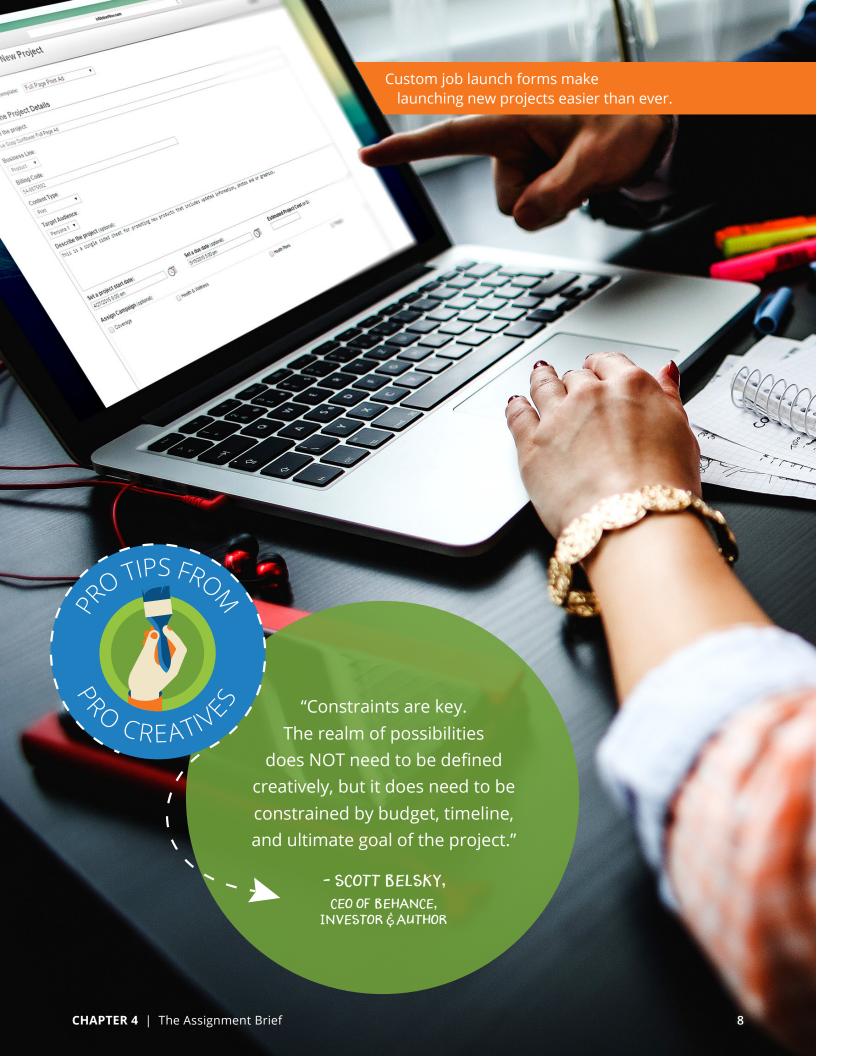
Many job launch forms benefit from radio buttons, drop-down menus, and single selection or checkbox fields.

GET TO KNOW INMO

The Best Tips for Using Job Launch Forms in inMotion

- 1. Avoid overly dynamic forms: Keep them simple and straightforward so they're easy for all users to understand.
- 2. Clearly define what fields your team wants to be required vs. optional in individual forms.
- 3. Consider utilizing radio buttons or dropdown menus for fields that require a single selection vs. checkboxes for fields that allow for multiple selections.
- Vary the size of input fields depending on the length of the expected response: A single line works for shorter answers vs. multiple lines for longer ones.
- Remember that request names do not equal project names, even if a new request is made that's associated with an existing project.
 Consider talking to inMotionNow about turning on auto-naming if it makes sense for your team.





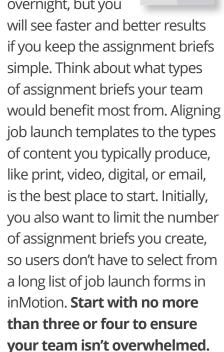
4.2 Mastering the **Assignment Brief**

Building out assignment briefs for your team can have be challenging—but doing so will save you significant time and energy in the long run, and allow your team to increase their overall creative output.

Here are the tips and tricks you need to get started:

Keep Forms Simple

Updating your team's project launch process won't happen overnight, but you



"With too many templates, too many cooks in the kitchen, and too many layers of approval, the deck can get stacked against the possibility of great creative work," explained Eliza Esquivel,

senior director of brand strategy, management, and naming at Microsoft in a Google Firestarters session.

Also remember that creating and maintaining multiple forms in inMotion requires additional time, energy, and resources, both from your team and inMotionNow. Paring the number of forms in your system down to 3 to 4 total—at least for starter's—is the ideal balance of maximum benefit for your team with minimum cost.

At the same time, make sure you're also embracing simplicity within the individual documents. To encourage your team to adopt the new process and minimize communication confusion, stay away from things like jargon-y prompts and lengthy questionnaires.

"Think simple," wrote Howard Margulies, associate director at palio, in a popular AdAge article. "More spaces to fill present a greater opportunity for bad poetry. Avoid theoretical definitions; keep the language at eighth-grade level. Write in clear, declarative sentences."

Manage Change

Doing things a new way can be hard, especially when you want an entire team

the start.

of creatives and marketers to do things a new way, too. That's why it's essential to make the benefits of streamlining your process clear

to everyone on your team from

"People are afraid of change," says Ashley Pyatt, senior graphic designer at H. D. Smith. "We have to help them see how beneficial updating the process is for them. We can process their assignments faster, eliminate the back and forth, and speed the process up. That means we can take on more projects."

Lay out why you're optimizing your process before you begin revamping in order to manage change most effectively. Then, continue to reiterate the benefits you expect to come from the effort, both for the day-to-day activities of individuals and the team as a whole.

Considering stakeholders outside your team is also important. Ultimately, all affected team members should want to align with the process that you create, so make sure you factor in how change will impact different roles.

"A common pitfall can be attitude," says Ashley. "When one of our clients believes a process is too complex, we find that negativity can spread like wildfire. Making sure the process is easy and promoting a positive experience will help eliminate the negativity."

An easy way to make clients or other stakeholders feel good about the new process is making the forms in inMotion simple to use. Embrace things

(3)

Project Contact:

Type of Project: Advertising

Target Audience: * Gender

* Desian Directio

Customer Nurturing

* <u>Aqe</u>

18 - 24

33 - 40

Lead Nurturing

* My Name

nMotion Training

Request Name

Select a Form

Creative Brief

ovide Request Nam

Set a Desired Due Date

like dropdown menus and radio buttons for sections that allow for single selections, and checkboxes for sections that allow for multiple selections. Make the length of expected response to prompts within the forms clear by the size of the text input fields, like a single line for brief answers and multiple lines for longer ones. Verify both your team and clients have a clear understanding of what fields (if any) within the forms are optional. And don't forget to continuously reinforce the net value of adopting the new project launch process for clients and other stakeholders:

clients and other stakeholders:

By submitting projects

through inMotion, they
get more visibility in to the

status of their projects than

Publicity

Strategy

Website

* Education

High School

College
Post Grad

Other

Social Media

inMotion

makes filling

out job launch

forms easy.

Please Select... ▼

ever before through the My Requests Workspace.

Once all involved parties are comfortable with the new process and see how easy it is to use inMotion, managing change will become less of a challenge, and you'll start to see significantly positive results.

Stay Diligent

Optimizing your project launch process is only one part of the path to success: To truly see



positive results, make sure your team adheres to the new way of doing things. That means sticking to both the project request process, and the creative and assignment briefs for specific projects.

"Don't allow deviation from the creative or assignment brief," urges creative operations consultant Debbie Kennedy. "But that means the briefs need to be airtight and truly provide all of the information you need."

Make sure to encourage positive behavior by team members and clients. For example, if your end objective

is to establish that all project requesters ask for new work from your team via assignment briefs, ensure that's reinforced.

"Babying our clients didn't work for us," says Heidi Sanders, Senior Art Director, DHC USA. "Too much hand-holding resulted in them always relying on us to fill out forms. Once you've perfected the questions, the forms are very easy to fill out. If someone needs help, we will help them, but we want to avoid having our clients be too reliant on us to fill the form out for them."

During your team's transition to the new process, keep in mind that you may need to redirect requests that come in via email, phone calls, or other manual means to the appropriate form in inMotion. But if you stay diligent, clients will soon learn requesting work in this manner is the fastest way—and only way—to get your team started on work.

Constantly Refine

While ensuring your team sticks to your project launch process is important, also embrace the idea of constant revision for the sake of constant improvement.

When it comes to creating your library of assignment briefs, start small. Then, test and learn to see what adjustments and additions need to be made.

"A good brief has been tested multiple times by multiple users," explains Ashley. "I don't think any brief is perfect—there is always room for improvement and feedback.

Test the forms regularly."

Think of your process and the forms that go with it as living, breathing things. The ultimate goal is to establish a system that's **timely**, **relevant**, **and adaptable**, so your team runs at peak efficiency, even if workload, team size, or other circumstances change.

Amanda Froehlich, manager of creative operations at Saint-Gobain, shared her experience with project launch at HOW Design Live 2016. Two years after revamping her process, Amanda's team began experiencing the same old bottlenecks. She realized it was time to refine.

"Meet with your entire team once a quarter, once a year, whatever works!," says
Amanda. "Make sure you make time to review your process and tweak."



"The way you communicate from client to designer is largely dependent upon personalities and culture. What may have worked from Jagger to Warhol may have crippled others or made the project run off the rails."

- LARA MCCULLOCH, CHIEF BRAND STORYTELLER, READY2SPARK

WHAT'S NEXT Now that you've learned how to optimize the project intake portion of your creative production process, it's time to get started! Pair a thoughtful, efficient process with inMotion's powerful project intake, and you'll be well on your way to improving your workflow—and doing more of the work you love. See more assignments get accepted on the first send in the job launch workspace by simplifying your process. **To Get Started Improving Your Project Launch Process** true and book time to review how to hand soap set up your job launch forms, STATUS JOB LAUNCH NAME True Soap Sunflower Full Page Ad connect with your Customer Success representative, or visit the inMotion Help Desk at help.inmotionnow.com.

12

() AVAILABLE ACTIONS

Display per page: 10 | 20 | 50 | 100

ASSIGNED TO

JOB LAUNCH FORMS

Example creative and assignment briefs informed by today's most successful marketing and creative teams.

6.1 CREATIVE BRIEF

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project or Campaign Name		
Brief Date		
Responsible Department(s)		
Budget		
Key Players		
Key Deadlines		
Deliverable Form(s)		

Deliverable Form(3)	
	OVERVIEW
Goal(s)	
What is the purpose of the creative	- - -
Objective(s)	
What is the business objective driv	ring this project?
Background	
What information is driving this pr	oject launch?
History	
What past information/experience	s are important to this project?
Research	
What insights have we gathered at	pout this project? What relevant findings do we know?
	COMPANY, CLIENT, & COMPETITORS
Company Profile	
How do we describe our company	?
Company Stakeholders	
Who are the key people involved in	n this project? What are their roles, responsibilities, and areas of influence?
Client Profile (if applicable)	
How do we describe our clients?	
Client Stakeholders (if applicable)	
Who are the key clients involved in	this project? What are their roles, responsibilities, and areas of influence?
Competitive Landscape	
What information about our comp	retitors is important to this project?

AUDIENCE PARTICULARS

Intended Audience

Who are we trying to reach with this project?

Audience Persona(s)

What do we know about the profile of the audience we are trying to reach?

Targeted Channels & Tactics

What channels will we distribute creative in? How will we message in each of them?

Positioning

In what context do we want this creative to exist in?

Obstacles

What are existing or potential roadblocks to our success?

CONSIDERATIONS

Style Considerations

Are there style particulars we need to keep in mind?

Tone Considerations

Are there tone particulars we need to keep in mind?

Design Considerations

Are there design particulars we need to keep in mind?

Brand Considerations

Are there brand particulars we need to keep in mind?

Brand Standards

Is there anything we need to consider in regards to our brand standards?

Messaging Considerations

Are there messaging particulars we need to keep in mind?

Executional Considerations

Are there executional particulars we need to keep in mind?

Other Considerations

Are there any other particulars we need to keep in mind?

SUCCESS MEASUREMENT

Success Metrics

How will we measure our success? How will our audience measure our success? How will internal stakeholders measure our success? How will client stakeholders measure our success?

Key Performance Indicators

Are there specific metrics, milestones, or achievements that will indicate success?

THOUGHT-STARTERS

Creative Examples

Is there work we've produced that we can align to? Is there work others have produced that we can align to? If so, how?

Thought-Starters

What information should be used to kick-start ideation?

Questions

What questions still need to be answered?

TIMING

Seasonal or Event Particulars

Are there any seasons or events we need to consider for this project?

Key Deadlines

Are there any major checkpoints at which creative needs to be delivered or action needs to be taken?

Timeline

What is the schedule by which this project will be executed?

FINAL DELIVERABLE(S)

6.2 ASSIGNMENT BRIEF - PRINT

PROJECT DETAILS	
Assignment Name	
Brief Date	
Campaign or Project	
Responsible Department(s)	
Budget	
Key Players	
Key Deadlines	
Deliverable Form(s)	

PROJECT OVERVIEW	
Goal(s)	
What is the purpose of the creative?	
Objective(s)	
What is the business objective driving this project?	

Background

What information is driving this project launch?

Intended Audience

Who are we trying to reach with this project? What is important to know about them?

Targeted Channels & Tactics

What channels will we distribute creative in? How will we message in each of them? Ex: Mail Stops; Business Locations; etc.

Considerations

What style, tone, design, brand, messaging, executional, or other particulars do we need to consider?

Success Metrics

How will our success be measured by all relevant standards and stakeholders? Ex: Completion Actions; Subscriptions; etc.

Thought-Starters

What questions still need to be answered? Are there creative examples to consider? Is there other information we need to kick-start creative?

Timeline

What is the schedule by which this project will be executed? Ex: Project Start Date; Project Completion Date; etc.

PRINT PARTICULARS
Creative Form
What kind of print asset needs to be created?
Quantity
What is the page count of each deliverable? How many of each deliverable is required?
Printing Particulars
What information do we need to know about how the creative will be printed?
Color Specs
What color specifications do we need to know?
Size Specs
What size specifications do we need to know?
File Formats
Are there additional file formats we need to deliver in?
Delivery Method
How will final creative be delivered?

_

6.3 ASSIGNMENT BRIEF - WEB

PROJECT DETAILS	
Assignment Name	
Brief Date	
Campaign or Project	
Responsible Department(s)	
Budget	
Key Players	
Key Deadlines	

PROJECT OVERVIEW	
Goal(s)	
What is the purpose of the creative?	
Objective(s)	
What is the business objective driving this project?	
Background	

What information is driving this project launch?

Intended Audience

Who are we trying to reach with this project? What is important to know about them?

Targeted Channels & Tactics

What channels will we distribute creative in? How will we message in each of them? Ex: Website; Social Media; etc.

Considerations

What style, tone, design, brand, messaging, executional, or other particulars do we need to consider?

Success Metrics

How will our success be measured by all relevant standards and stakeholders? Ex: Download Rate; Conversion Rate; etc.

Thought-Starters

What questions still need to be answered? Are there creative examples to consider? Is there other information we need to kick-start creative?

Timeline

What is the schedule by which this project will be executed? Ex: Project Start Date; Project Completion Date; etc.

DIGITAL PARTICULARS	
Creative Form	
What kind of digital asset needs to be created?	
Platform Distribution	
What online properties will host this creative?	
Technical Specs	
What technical specifications do we need to know?	
Color Specs	
What color specifications do we need to know?	
Size Specs	
What size specifications do we need to know?	
File Formats	
What file formats do we need to deliver in?	
Delivery Method	
How will final creative be delivered?	

FINAL DELIVERABLE(S)		

6.4 ASSIGNMENT BRIEF - EMAIL

PROJECT DETAILS	
Assignment Name	
Brief Date	
Campaign or Project	
Responsible Department(s)	
Budget	
Key Players	
Key Deadlines	

PROJECT OVERVIEW		
Goal(s)		
What is the purpose of the creative?		
Objective(s)		
What is the business objective driving this	project?	

Background What information is driving this project launch?

Intended Audience

Who are we trying to reach with this project? What is important to know about them?

Targeted Channels & Tactics

What channels will we distribute creative in? How will we message in each of them? Ex: Email Lists; Subscription Services

Considerations

What style, tone, design, brand, messaging, executional, or other particulars do we need to consider?

Success Metrics

How will our success be measured by all relevant standards and stakeholders? Ex: Open Rate; Click-through Rate

Thought-Starters

What questions still need to be answered? Are there creative examples to consider? Is there other information we need to kick-start creative?

Timeline

What is the schedule by which this project will be executed? Ex: Project Start Date; Project Completion Date

EMAIL PARTICULARS
Creative Form
What kind of email asset needs to be created?
Distribution Particulars
What information do we need to know about how this email will be sent?
Sender Particulars
What information do we need to know about who will be sending this email?
Recipient Particulars
What information do we need to know about who will be receiving this email?
Technical Specs
What technical specifications do we need to know?
Color Specs
What color specifications do we need to know?
Size Specs
What size specifications do we need to know?
File Formats
What file formats do we need to deliver in?
Delivery Method
How will final creative be delivered?

FINAL DELIVERABLE(S)

6.5 ASSIGNMENT BRIEF - VIDEO

PROJECT DETAILS		
Assignment Name		
Brief Date		
Campaign or Project		
Responsible Department(s)		
Budget		
Key Players		
Key Deadlines		

PROJECT OVERVIEW	
Goal(s)	
What is the purpose of the creative?	
Objective(s)	

What is the business objective driving this project?

Background

What information is driving this project launch?

Intended Audience

Who are we trying to reach with this project? What is important to know about them?

Targeted Channels & Tactics

What channels will we distribute creative in? How will we message in each of them? Ex: Website; Email Campaign; Social Media; etc.

Considerations

What style, tone, design, brand, messaging, executional, or other particulars do we need to consider?

Success Metrics

How will our success be measured by all relevant standards and stakeholders? Ex: Download Rate; View Rate; etc.

Thought-Starters

What questions still need to be answered? Are there creative examples to consider? Is there other information we need to kick-start creative?

Timeline

What is the schedule by which this project will be executed? Ex: Project Start Date; Project Completion Date; etc.

VIDEO PARTICULARS
Creative Form
What kind of video asset needs to be created?
Platform Distribution
What online properties will host this creative?
Technical Specs
What technical specifications do we need to know?
Color Specs
What color specifications do we need to know?
Size Specs
What size specifications do we need to know?
Audio Specs
What audio specifications do we need to know?
Location Considerations
What information do we need to know about the video shoot location?
Talent Considerations
What information do we need to know about the video cast?
File Formats
What file formats do we need to deliver in?
Delivery Method
How will final creative be delivered?

FINAL DELIVERABLE(S)	

PERFECTING PROJECT LAUNCH

How to Master Your Project Launch Process



Expert Contributors

Ashley Pyatt, Senior Graphic Designer, H. D. Smith
Debbie Kennedy, Creative Operations Consultant
Meghan Miranda, Digital Editor, Pace Communications
Heidi Sanders, Senior Art Director, DHC USA

References

Firestarters: Conversations about the Future of Advertising, ThinkWithGoogle.com

13 Questions to Help You Write a Compelling Creative Brief, Agency Post, HubSpot.com

What Are You Packing Into Your Briefs?, Small Agency Diary, AdAge

Ready to Tame the Workflow Beast?, Amanda Froelich, HOW Design Live

Who Should Write Creative Briefs, Dave Hamel, GetBetterCreative.com

What Goes in to a Fantastic Brief?, Quora.com