

# **Creative Brief Instructions and Guidance**

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Wesley Street  
Visual Designer  
317.691.2091  
[info@wesleystreet.net](mailto:info@wesleystreet.net)  
[wesleystreet.net](http://wesleystreet.net)

## Introduction

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Congratulations on purchasing a website development package! You've taken a step toward pushing your organization's message and vision to the public, along with sharing information and even creating a channel for donation to your cause.

This PDF is both an instruction manual and source of advice for filling out the *Creative Brief* document provided to you by eTapestry.

The information in the creative brief is generated by you and used by the website development team as a blueprint for creating the overall "look and feel" of your website. It's important to understand that website development is a joint venture. While we will provide you with a website that is professionally designed and coded, along with suggestions on how to achieve your goals, we will still require your guidance and input. After all, who knows your own organization better than you do?

Before we start, note that the *Creative Brief* document is a Microsoft Word doc. If inputting information into the file proves troublesome for you, feel free to contact your projects coordinator. He or she will be happy to assist.

Let's get started!

## 1. Cover

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Replace **{{ organization name }}** with the name of your organization. Replace **{{ month date, year }}** with today's date. Please format it by spelling out the month, followed by the numerical date, and the full four-digit year.

## 2. Project Background

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What is the objective for creating a website for your organization? What are your goals and reasons for building a site? Think beyond "to be on the Internet" or "because our competitors are doing it." Be specific in what you desire to accomplish.

Four slots are provided in the document to record your goals. Replace **{{ Objective 1 }}** etc. with your goals. If you require more, simply add them.

Sample objectives include:

- meet the growing needs of our organization
- make information architecture and navigation more easily usable by range of audiences,
- create updated online visual branding
- develop a repository of key resources

## 3. Core Online Audience

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While appealing to everyone with your website is a laudable goal, the reality of focused communication makes that nearly impossible. The question to ask is *who is your target*

*audience?* Are you aiming for a specific age demographic or professional field? Or are you targeting a lifestyle? A salary bracket? When you know who is most important to speak to, determining what you want to say and how you want to say it becomes that much simpler.

Here are some examples of audiences:

- advocates
- organization staff members
- community groups
- foundations
- the media
- donors
- government agencies
- social service providers
- teachers
- the public.

After listing each audience ( **{{ Audience Name}}** ), prioritize them as High, Medium or Low. Describe what the audience is ( **{{ Describe Audience}}** ) and describe how you foresee that specific audience utilizing the website ( **{{ Describe what audience is seeking}}** ).

If you only have one target audience, the process is simple but if you have multiple target audiences, it is essential to rank them by priority. And while it may be difficult to say “Group X” is more important than “Group Y,” a focused website is always a more effective one.

## 4. Color and Tone

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What words would you want to use to describe your website (or even your brand)? Current? Knowledgeable? Safe? Equal? Community? List those words out in the first column ( **{{ Insert Word}}** ).

In the second column, assign a color to each word ( **{{ Insert Color}}** ), and in the third describe an image ( **{{ Insert Image}}** ) that you would associate with the word.

Perhaps in your mind the color **orange** fits the word *current* and a matching image would be something consisting of circles or non-linear images, exclamation points, and photographs. Perhaps *equality* is the color **green** and associated with images of blocky areas and strong lines. Perhaps the color **pink** fits the word *dramatic* and a matching image would be soft cloth or curtains.

For more ideas and information, we suggest reading [this blog entry](#) from colourlovers.com.

Free associate and remember that nothing is off-limits or out of bounds. The only limits you place on your visual branding are those that you impose.

## 5. Suggested Palettes

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Your organization may already have an established visual brand or brands. Place the name of the palette(s) in the **{{ Palette Name }}** column and a jpg or gif image of the colors by replacing the sample image in the second column.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Pantone PMS Colors are intended for use in print and are typically much darker when displayed on a computer monitor. Be certain to test the swatch on a monitor before asking the website developer to use it as it may not appear how you believe it will.

If you do not currently have fixed website branding palettes, it's important to devise one that will be appropriate before design work begins. Creating a palette is easy.

1. Go to [www.colourlovers.com](http://www.colourlovers.com).
2. Browse pre-created palettes or create your own by mixing and matching colors.
3. When your palette has been created, right click the palette image with your mouse and hit **Copy**.
4. Delete the sample image, right click the column and select **Paste**.

If you would like us to experiment with more than one palette, feel free to add more.

## 6. Reference Sites

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One of the easiest ways to convey your tastes and to provide direction for the look and feel of your new website is to provide examples of what you like, and what you do not.

Visit one or more of the following catalog websites:

- [www.cssdrive.com](http://www.cssdrive.com)
- [www.cssmania.com](http://www.cssmania.com)
- [www.cssvault.com](http://www.cssvault.com)
- [www.csselite.com](http://www.csselite.com)

These sites contain listings of what we consider to be some of the best in Cascading Style Sheet design. Pick six websites that you find appealing. List the name of the organization or company ( **{{ Website Name }}** ), the site's address ( **{{ Website URL }}** ), what you like about the website ( **{{ List what is liked about this website }}** ), and what you do not care for ( **{{ List what is disliked about this website }}** ).

**SUGGESTION:** Avoid websites that are in any way related to what you do. While it's important to know what competitors or fellow organizations are doing in the Internet, in order to keep a fresh perspective, it is best not to use their site as a design template. Examine websites for their use of color, for their typography, for their use of photography, and for their navigation only. Ignore content. Explore them with your emotions.

## 7. Home Page Content Template

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Content determines design. This is the prevailing wisdom when it comes to web design. So that effect, please provide a paragraph that explains the following:

- List each section of content that will be placed on the home page.

- Describe what each section does. ( **{{ Section }}** )
- Describe what format that content will take (examples: text paragraph, bullet-point list, multi-level bullet-point list, a table of data, a photograph, a callout box, a calendar) ( **{{ Format }}** )
- An example of information for each section ( **{{ Sample }}** ), preferably provided by the website's writer, administrator or photographer.