Letter B Four Step Process
Strategic Communication

Letter B uses a Four Step Approach to working with our clients that guides how we iteratively work on projects. This document outlines those steps when applied to the design and development of Strategic Communications. This repeatable process is to ensure that the strategies and materials truly meet the needs and wants of not only the primary stakeholders, but to the primary audience.

Plan

Client and User Interviews

Brainstorm and Conceptualize

Use Case Mapping

Functional Specification Analysis

DESIGN

Rapid Prototype Design

Information Architecture

Interaction Design

Page Flow

Wireframe

Persona Design

YOUR USERS

TEST

Government 508 Test

Usability Test

Accessibility Test

Collect Test Results

Test Result Reporting

Feedback and recommendations

DEVELOP

Style Guide

CSS Stylesheets

Ajax Javascript development

Graphic Design

Step One, Listen

We listen to the stakeholders, managers and experts to identify key points about their specific communication needs. During this time, in order to learn more, we ask questions about company history, product history and direction. We intently listen to the answers to collect and categorize them. We then take that information and turn it into a set of initial requirements that are sent back to all for review. After refining the requirements, the initial solution is clarified in a set of delivered requirement documents.

Step Two, Design With Change in Mind

Through Step One of the process, we learned about the product, the target markets and needs, then turned those into an initial set of requirement documents. In this step we start by taking those targets that were discovered and turn them into personas. A persona, in design terms, defines a detailed view of a person outlining who they are, their major and minor task interactions with the system, and what their goals are. Additionally. we work to get an initial dissection of the scope of marketing needs using market research and analysis methodologies. We apply the developed personas to a prototype of the initial materials. These activities are being conducted at the same time that the graphics team is working with colors and base sketches. Before completion of this process, both teams need to work together and make sure there is a good understanding of what the initial materials are to look like, and the message they bear.

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Step Three, Develop Iteratively

Deliverables from Step Two such as prototypes, communications plans, site maps and content definitions go into Step Three, the actual development of the content. At this point the team has worked hard to get a good picture of what the materials look and function like. However, things will be discovered during development that may change the course of the documentation and require documents that are affected, be updated. For this reason, we work with the development team closely to make sure that designs, content and layouts, fit the message being sent. We also work with stake holders to set iterations and create reference points to track the changes and adjustments over time.

Step Four, Test Continuously

During the development stage of the process, testing is imperative to providing a deployment-ready solution. Usability testing, focus group discussions and user acceptance testing can be conducted with users in both design and development stages to help designers clearly get an idea of how users understand the message.