



Project managing your publication

This factsheet steps project managers through the key stages involved in publishing a print resource.

The Steps

1. Plan the right product
2. Start to shape your publication
3. Plan your project
4. Draft content
5. User test content and re-draft
6. Design and typesetting
7. Indexing
8. Printing
9. Promotion and distribution
10. Don't let your resource die of neglect

Step 1 — Plan the right product

- Why are you doing this?
- Who is it for?
- What do you hope to achieve?
- Do similar resources currently exist?
See *Plain language law search* on the Law and Justice Foundation's website — www.lawfoundation.net.au/information/.
- What do you know about your target audience?
Information on pathways to particular groups is available on the Foundation's website.
- How will you reach them with promotion and distribution? Where will they look for information?
Refer to the Foundation's factsheet, *How to promote your resource*.
- How will you know if you've succeeded in your aim?

Step 2 — Start to shape your publication

- What format should it be in? e.g. pamphlet, poster, DVD.
- How long should it be?
- What level of information does your target audience need, e.g. is it for the client or their service provider. You may need to produce two versions, if you are targeting both.
- How much will your audience be *willing* and *able* to read?
- What should the language level be?
- Should you charge a fee for it?
- Should you use a commercial publisher?
If you decide to get a quote from a publisher, refer to the Foundation's factsheet, *Choosing a publisher*.

Step 3 — Plan your project

- What is your time frame? Don't underestimate the time involved in producing a resource.
- What is your budget? Get written quotes from suppliers for work which needs to be outsourced, e.g. editing, design, translation, printing, distribution. The Foundation can suggest possible suppliers of these services.
- Who is to manage the project? Make sure that everyone involved understands what their roles are (and aren't). Keep a written record of responsibilities, decisions made, timelines to keep, contact details, etc.
- Determine who is going to sign off on the project.
- Develop a project plan.
- Create a reference group of stakeholders. Consult with this group throughout the project. Have at least one face-to-face meeting.

Step 4 — Draft content

- Work out the content and structure of the resource including the length and level of detail for each section.
Refer to the Foundation's factsheet, *Publishing checklist*, for information on drafting content and what to include in your publications, e.g. date, jurisdiction.
- Use appropriate language for your audience and follow plain language principles.
See the Foundation's website for information on writing in plain language — www.lawfoundation.net.au/information/writing.
- If there are multiple authors, agree on style and format for consistency.
- Edit and proofread.
- Use an experienced editor. A good editor can:
 - see repetitions and inconsistencies
 - see what isn't working
 - check the overall style of the document
 - improve the structure of the document
 - be the reader's friend
 - prepare the text for the designer.
- Brief the editor about the aim of the resource and the audience.
- Find out what format the editor would like to receive the text in.
- Have the information checked by a lawyer with expertise in the area.
- Include relevant sources of legal help.
Refer to the Foundation's list of commonly used public legal assistance agencies.
- Obtain permission for the copyright or moral rights for any work done by someone else, including illustrations.
(Refer to the Copyright Council website — www.copyright.org.au)
 - If you think you will use media clippings in a publication, try to get copyright permission early as it may be difficult to get approval later.
- Include acknowledgement of external funding.

Step 5 — User test content and redraft

- Test content with a selection of potential users including your reference group.
See the Foundation's website guide, *How to find out if your document really works* — www.lawfoundation.net.au/information/writing/howto
- Redraft in response to reference or user group feedback. Have the redrafted sections checked by a lawyer with expertise in the area.
- If possible test the resource again after it has been designed and typeset.

Step 6 — Design and typesetting

- Use a designer. A good designer can:
 - help your readers to understand the information.
 - make a publication look more authoritative and attractive.
 - advise on printing and liaise with the printer.
 - assist with promotion.
- Take time to fully brief the designer as later changes will be charged for. When briefing a designer make sure:
 - decisions are in writing.
 - the goals of the project and the target audience are made clear.
 - the desired outcome and the feel of the publication are clearly articulated. Adjectives can help to do this, e.g. the look we want is 'elegant' or 'funky'.
 - any specific requirements with regard to colours, size, budget, timing and quantities are made clear.
 - any costs likely to be incurred are clear.
- Emphasise readability.
- A designer will generally come up with three different concept designs. Check whether the design is appropriate for the audience and whether it makes the information more accessible.

Step 7 — Indexing

- An index:
 - will help readers find specific information in a larger publication
 - is best done after proofreading corrections, when you are confident that there won't be any further changes that might alter the pagination.

Step 8 — Printing

- Obtain at least two quotes for printing. Prices can vary widely. Check to see if minor changes to a final proof will be charged for. Choose printers experienced in printing the format of the resource you are producing, e.g. book printers for books.
- If possible, leave briefing the printer to the designer who may have a preferred printer who can offer a competitive price. Otherwise you will need to brief the printer on:
 - format of artworks
 - quantity
 - paper
 - size
 - colours
 - timeframes
 - delivery instructions.
- Check printing proofs for any errors.

Step 9 — Promotion and distribution

- Revisit, refine and implement your promotion strategy.
- Think about where your audience might start looking for this information. That's where they need to find you.
- Draw up a promotional plan and decide on a distribution strategy. To assist with this, use your steering committee and focus groups. Consider using a distribution house.
See the Foundation's factsheets, *How to promote your resource* and *Distributing your resource*.

Step 10 — Finally... don't let your resource die of neglect

- Have a system in place to update the resource when there are changes to the law.
- Monitor stock movements for reprints as necessary.
- Keep up the marketing.
- Evaluate your resource.

For more information, please contact the *Plain Language Law Unit* on 02 8227 3200 or visit www.lawfoundation.net.au/information

— 2008

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