



The art of correspondence and the letterhead have lasted from the quill pen, to the typewriter and the computer. Although voice mails and e-mails have become the most widely used form of communication, the letterhead is not yet obsolete in the beginning of the twenty-first century. The letter still comes to us in the same way that it has been coming to us since Ben Franklin became the first U.S. postmaster—unless, of course, it comes via FedEx, or as an attachment.

The letterhead, offset-printed on fine paper, remains a core application in the brand identity system even with electronic letterheads. The letterhead with an original signature is still an

important conduit for doing business. It is regarded as a credible proof of being in business, and it frequently carries an important message or contractual agreement. It is still regarded as the most formal type of business communication and has an implicit dignity. For many years banks required businesses to write a letter on their letterhead in order to open an account.

In America the standard letterhead size is 8.5" by 11". This size is referred to as the U.S. standard size and is also used in Canada and Mexico. The rest of the world, however, uses letterhead and envelopes based on the metric system.

characters

Characters:
Summerford Design

Process: letterhead design

Clarify use

- Letters, short and long
- Contracts
- Memos
- Invoices

> Determine need

- Corporate only
- Division letterhead
- Personal letterhead
- Size

> Get content

- Best-case scenario
- Worst-case scenario
- Unify abbreviations
- Tagline
- Regulatory information
- Parent
- Professional affiliation

> Develop design

- Use real letter.
- Show actual size.
- Examine iterations.
- Design envelopes.

> Identify paper

- Appropriate surface
- Availability
- Laser compatibility
- Color

Letterhead design basics

Never design a letterhead without an actual letter on the page.

Never present a letterhead design without a real letter on it.

Take into consideration the location of the folds.

Get an ink draw on the paper that you have chosen.

Do a fax test.

Design a second sheet.

Research the right size for a foreign country.

Feel the paper, and identify the proper weight.

Find out biases regarding formats.

Provide templates for letter positioning, type style, and size.

Always test the paper and envelopes on a laser printer.

The world of abbreviations

There are no universal abbreviations. Consistency is the rule.

Telephone

Phone
Tel
P
T
Voice
V

Facsimile

Fax
F

Mobile

Cellular
M
C

E-mail

e-mail
e
(just address)

Website

Web
(just URL)

Home

Home



characters

memo

estimate

Characters' extensive paper application system builds on its core identity. Characters provides computer-generated production services.

Determine production method

Printing
Engraving
Roll stamping
Embossing
Blotemark

> Manage production

Review proofs.
Watch first run on press.
Develop electronic templates.