California Olive Oil Council APRIL 2016

Before You Meet with a Designer | *The Best Tool – Designers Love This!* The Design Brief *by* Kimiko Chan, www.kimikochandesign.com

The Design Brief is simply a short, detailed *list* of written explanations – a Road Map of your project. Whether you are seeking a new packaging design for a new product, or a redesign or refinement of existing packaging, the Design Brief provides enough details that can convey a clear understanding of what you are looking for in a design, and why. An effective and well-thought-out brief can help prevent misunderstandings, provide a definitive direction throughout the design process, and can be a very constructive guide to help establish a collaborative and successful work experience towards your finished packaging project. *So…What do you include in the Brief?*

Here are some key items that can help clarify and define your project goals:

- **Background information:** Describe the history or background of your company and olive oil. Include details that would further explain how and when your company was established, your philosophy, and, if you are the brand, a bit about yourself and your personality.

- **Objective and Direction:** What is your message or brand appeal to the consumer? Is there a story about your company/olive oil that makes it special or appealing? Are you trying to reach a particular audience, such as consumers who value organic foods? Having a strong sense of direction keeps the project moving forward, and provides designers the opportunity to explore a wide range of concepts focused on a particular objective (more depth), vs. trying to explore many concepts to cover many different possible directions (not much depth per direction).

- **Competitors:** Who are your competitors, and which brands would your olive oil sit next to on the store shelf? It's good to know who they all might be, and if possible, the prices for each.

- **Price Point:** How much would you sell your olive oil for, and how does that compare with your competitors' brands? Knowing this will serve as a goal for the designer to make sure the design reflects that pricing.

- **Target Audience:** Who is the consumer you are looking to attract? (I.e. are you reaching out to a specific income level, gender, age group, cooking experience with and/or knowledge of olive oils?)

- **Single or Series of Product:** Let the designer know if you plan to sell only 1 olive oil, or a series of olive oils. This will help determine the time and budget needed for the project, and if a series is required, also allow the designer to think about how to apply designs as a "family" of packaging.

- **Selected Bottle/Package:** Know what you want as a final bottle or package that will contain your olive oil, and have a sample on hand to show the designer. As bottles and containers vary in shape, size, and color, your container selection will impact the shape, size, and color(s) of the label designs.

- **Hierarchy of Elements on Packaging:** For both the front and back labels of a package design (be it a bottle, tin, box, etc.), it is helpful to know what information and/or images are to appear in the packaging, and list them in order of emphasis and importance. Knowing this hierarchy will have an impact on how the design might look.

- **Due Date:** When do you want to have final, finished (printed and delivered) packaging? Timing needs can determine if elements such as custom illustrations, or certain printing techniques may or may not be utilized in the design. Or, if the creative process will require more time than originally estimated. Great design is a lot like baking a cake – if your cake needs 50 minutes to bake, but you only allow it 35 minutes, it may look like a cake, but it won't taste as good as if you gave it the time required to be delicious. Whenever possible, it is worth having the additional time, to allow your packaging to be the best it could be.

- **Budget:** It is helpful to know as designers can propose how to proceed in a project that would work best with your budget needs.

The creative journey of your packaging project can be fun and exciting! A detailed Design Brief will help ensure that everyone will be "on the same page".