

BDI Guide to appointing a design partner

Work with a BDI member

Whatever your proposal entails, it makes sense to consult reputable professionals first. BDI member companies can provide you with far wider services than simply the development of design ideas.

BDI members are experienced Industrial Design companies involved in creating, developing and delivering innovative commercial solutions for all industries through product, service and interaction design, and bringing those solutions to market.

Complemented by high-level expertise in technology and manufacturing processes, they address the risk of consumer acceptance using a variety of tools such as ethnographic user research, experience mapping and rapid simulation and visualisation techniques.

They operate industry best practice procedures and observe strict client confidentiality through the exchange of non-disclosure agreements.

How does the client/designer relationship work?

Following initial discussions, you can select any or all of our designer's services – from creative visualisation, prototyping, IP protection and designing the brief through strategic design and project management to designing the supply chain, final manufacture and onsite delivery. BDI members are also experienced at making the visual business case for projects seeking inward investment or funding from third parties.

Proposals are normally split into stages, with agreed objectives, deliverables, schedules and cost estimates clearly set out at each stage.

How much does it cost?

Depending on your situation and the size and scope of your project, BDI members would normally propose a fixed fee for services, a rate for billable time, or a "shared risk, shared reward" arrangement – or a combination of these. BDI members discuss costs with clients in a transparent manner at all times and agree them with you in advance.

How do I find a design partner?

Clients often directly approach a BDI member who is known to them or who has been recommended, or whose work they admire. This is a perfectly acceptable solution. However, if this does not apply to you, or you require a partner with sector-specific skills and experience or from a precise geographic location, a more structured process of selection is desirable in order to match your needs.

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To select the right design partner for you, simply visit the BDI Design Directory at www.britishdesigninnovation.org. The Directory contains our members' company profiles, case studies, testimonials, awards, location and contact details to help define the best fit for your needs. Alternatively contact BDI at 01273 621 378 or info@britishdesigninnovation.org.

We suggest you initially select a shortlist of two or three companies. Contact the new business manager at each one, provide an outline description of your project and ask if they are able to accommodate it. If the answer is positive, exchange non-disclosure agreements with them and commence more detailed discussions about your proposal. Then select the company best suited to your needs.

Whether you're an individual entrepreneur, a start-up company, a small or medium-size business or a global corporation, you'll be amazed at the results.

What information does your selected design partner require?

The ultimate success of your project depends on the quality of your brief. By discussing your requirements in detail with a BDI member at the earliest stages of your project, you enable them to bring their design expertise, global vision and decades of experience to bear on quickly and efficiently mapping the best route to a successful outcome. Ideally, you will be able to provide the following information:

- **Business summary**
Describe your business or the business you seek to establish. What are your aims and objectives?
- **Proposition summary**
Describe your proposition, its core objectives and the unmet need or gap in the market it addresses; and its current status, budget, IP protection and brand position.
- **Customer/end-user summary**
Describe your typical or desired customer or end-user and their unmet needs.
- **Market summary**
Describe your market, its size, your main competitors and how you envisage delivering your product, service or brand proposal to that market.

And finally...

Please contact our head office staff at any time if you require further assistance or have additional queries. They and all BDI members want to help you achieve success!