D2M

CHOOSING A
PRODUCT DESIGN FIRM

Your product design partner is likely to heavily affect the future success of your new venture. Make sure you choose the right one

10 essential considerations

>> **01** Have they got the skill set to do everything you want them to do?

>> **02** How much experiences does the lead designer on your project have?

>> **03** Are they going to manage your risk?

>> **04** Do you like them? Rapport and mutual respect makes a big difference to this going well.

>> **05** Does the design team have direct experience in the same sector as your product?

10 essential considerations

06 Are they interested in your success or just winning the next design award?

07 Does the design firm develop products with feedback from your target market?

08 Will the product be designed with manufacturing in mind from the beginning?

09 How big is the team?

10 How's their knowledge of the whole process?

LET'S GET INTO THE DETAIL

Have they got the skill set to do everything you want them to do? For example, if you want to get your product all the way into production you don't want an agency with skills only in concept development and ideation.

Do you like them? You will be working with your product design firm for a good few months. Rapport and mutual respect makes a big difference to this going well.

How much experiences does the lead designer on your project have? If they are a few years out of university and you have a complex project, you might want to be cautious.

FURTHER EXPLANATION

Does the design team have direct experience in the same sector as your product? For example, if you have a golf product, some understanding from your design consultancy in that sector could be helpful.

Are they going to manage your risk? If they aren't talking about risk and have no plan to minimise your risk then be very careful as this will all be down to you and may decrease the chances of a successful outcome.

Are they interested in what success looks like for you or are they just interested in winning the next design award? For your project it is likely to be more important that a commercially viable solution is produced than you win some minor design award...

FURTHER EXPLANATION

Does the design firm develop products with feedback from your target market? A designer or design firm that thinks it knows best is less reassuring that a well research company that will ensure (as much as possible) that what they are designing is appealing to your target market.

Will the product be designed with manufacturing in mind from the beginning and so they have manufacturing contacts? Both of these elements will be critical in reducing time to market and reducing further development costs later in the process.

How big is the team? A large team 10+ might imply that your project might not be that important to the design company. If there's only one or two designers then your project might get unforeseen delays if they get busy or ill.

FURTHER EXPLANATION

How's their knowledge of the whole process? If they are just design process focussed then you will get less added value than if they have an overview of the whole process and contacts for elements like IP protection and testing.

We would always recommend a minimum viable product approach. Launch something that is viable and then innovative that further rather than continual scope creep that pushes the launch date back.

Choosing a product design consultancy is a critical element of your project. Take your time over it, request references and speak to 3 or 4 different design agencies before taking your final decision. After all better to get it right now...

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THANK YOU

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