

# YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT

In 1969, Mick Jagger 'briefed' Andy Warhol to design the cover for a new Rolling Stones album (see below). Allowing an eccentric genius to have free reign "to do what ever you want" isn't much of a tight remit and the resulting seminal album cover, whilst an inspired piece of design, was problematic from a practical, workable perspective.\*

THE ROLLING STONES LTD  
46A MADDOX STREET W1  
TELEPHONE 01 629 5856

21st April, 1969.

Andy Warhol,  
33 Union Square,  
W.N.Y. 10003,  
NEW YORK

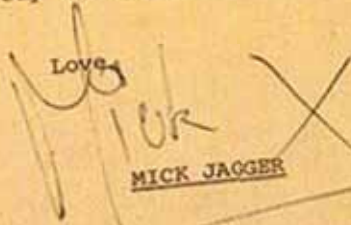
Dear Andy,

I'm really pleased you can do the art-work for our new hits album. Here are 2 boxes of material which you can use, and the record.

In my short sweet experience, the more complicated the format of the album, e.g. more complex than just pages or fold-out, the more ~~time~~-up the reproduction and agonising the delays. But, having said that, I leave it in your capable hands to do what ever you want.....and please write back saying how much money you would like.

Doubtless a Mr. Al Steckler will contact you in New York, with any further information. He will probably look nervous and say "Hurry up" but take little notice.

Love,

  
MICK JAGGER



# OUR TOP 10 TIPS

## to get the most from your creative agency

(with acknowledgement to the Rolling Stones)



### **Biggest Mistake**

(2005 Album track, A Bigger Bang)

## Write a thorough brief

As exemplified by Messers Jagger and Warhol, a full brief is essential to getting an accurate response from your agency. Often agencies are asked to pitch for business, but with neither a formalised brief nor details of the budget. Producing a concise, but thorough, written brief ensures everyone involved starts with a common understanding of what is to be achieved. Agencies are then able to respond intelligently and creatively, but within the parameters they have been given.



### **Tell Me**

(1964 Album track, The Rolling Stones)

## Don't keep your budget a secret

Much time can get wasted when agencies develop an exciting idea, only to find out it's going to cost more than the client's budget. It's far better to have a ballpark figure in mind and inform your agency what that figure is. Of course, you should expect a precise quotation from your agency before they incur any hard costs.



### **Time is on My Side**

(1965 Album track, The Rolling Stones No 2)

## Honest deadlines

Generally you should allow time for an agency to absorb the brief, discuss it with the Creatives, and come back for a question session if requested. Most successful agencies will have a schedule, so your brief will be managed within a production timetable. Sure, most agencies drop everything and work all hours when your job demands it, but giving your agency as much time as realistically possible will ensure the best work is produced.



# WOW!

\*Believed to be for their *Sticky Fingers* album, the sleeve featured a shot of a man's crotch, with workable zip, and for the first time showcased the band's tongue and lips logo. Warhol obviously took no notice of Jagger's warning and produced a cover that caused all manner of problems, most notably scratched copies of the record itself and damage to any albums that were placed on top of *Sticky Fingers* during distribution.



***Send it to Me***  
(1980 Album track, Emotional Rescue)

## Making all information available

Often copy is unavailable at initial concept stage, but if you have draft copy, let your agency see it. In good design, typography and imagery work together and are crucial to the look of the piece. Providing the fullest copy at the earliest stage of the design process, will ensure a more realistic and appropriate piece, rather than finding the design you like is compromised by the amount of copy.



***Time Waits for no One***  
(1974 Album track, It's Only Rock n Roll)

## Getting your copy right

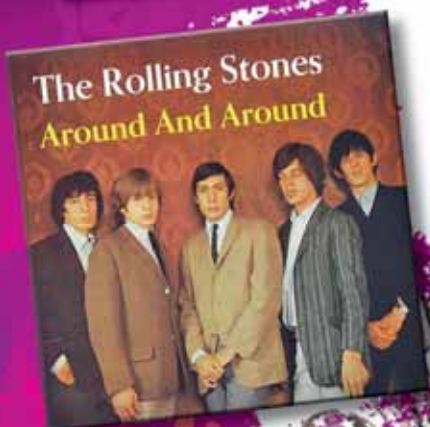
For a smoother and more cost-effective process, copy should be provided in one Word file, showing clear separation of articles as appropriate. Supporting image names should also be included against each article where this is not obvious from the image. And if your copy hasn't been properly proof read, ask your agency to check it for grammar, consistency, typographical errors and ease of understanding. This will save you time and money further down the line.



***Have You Seen Your Mother, Baby, Standing in the Shadow?***  
(1966 UK Single release, Decca Publicity photograph)

## Use quality images

The standard of images used is paramount to the effectiveness of any communication. Professionally shot photography with the appropriate lighting and composition will always stand out. There may however be cases where photography taken by colleagues is the only alternative. In this case some simple precautions like ensuring their camera is set to its highest resolution, the subject matter fills the viewfinder and the date option is switched off, will all help.



***Around and Around***  
(1964 German Album title track, Around and Around)

## Collate your amendments

To avoid incurring unnecessary studio time, try to collate and provide amendments to PDFs accurately and en masse. Individual copy changes can take almost the same length of time to amend as multiples, once the designer has located the file, made the change, saved it and created a new PDF.



### **Honky Tonk Woman**

(1969 UK Single release. First Album release Through the Past Darkly)

## Consider taking risks

For good creative work to catch attention, it has to be a little risky. In every other avenue of your business you know reward is associated with some level of measured risk. Anyone can create advertising and design that ticks the boxes, but if you want to lead your competitors, you might find that you have to do something that, at least from the outside, appears risky.

### **Under My Thumb**

(1966 Album track, Aftermath)

## Many skills, one agency

There are many advantages to a single agency handling all your needs. Consistency, single message, one briefing, consolidated resources and economies of scale. It may not suit all clients, but if the agency has the resources, there are extensive benefits to be reaped. With several designers and account managers on staff, the multi-disciplined team can accommodate your urgent needs, regardless of availability of individual staff members.

### **Let's Spend the Night Together**

(1967 US Album track, Between the Buttons)

## We're all on the same team

Try not to think of your agency as an outside supplier. Treat it as a strategic partner, an extension of your marketing department. Transparency in any business relationship is key, and honest discussion should be encouraged from the start, to smooth out any potential difficulties that may arise at an early stage.

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