Product brochures for the Final Presentation event

Teams customarily choose to produce a product brochure to be distributed at their booths during the 2.009 Final Presentation event, even though one is not required. Nonetheless, a brochure is an excellent supplement to your team’s final presentation and should be done with care as well as time for drafting and revising it. Guests with a particular interest in your prototype, technology, or market can find the brochure to be an effective tool for understanding your product and contacting the team for follow-up. Think of the audience for your brochure as your most interested potential customers or partners.

There are lots of great resources, on the Web and in print, that address brochure design and content principles in general. For example: “How to Create an Effective Brochure,” University of Nebraska-Lincoln (2011); “How to design a brochure: 10 top creative tips,” CB Creative Bloq (2012); “20+ Brochure Design Examples; Ideas for Your Print Projects,” You the Designer (2010); and (print) Design Matters: Brochures 01: An Essential Primer, Rockport (2008).

We have studied the ones done by 2.009 teams in prior years to isolate some particular qualities that are good to keep in mind as you design a brochure to represent your product and team. We have selected a few illustrative examples among many good ones.

1. **The brochure, for this occasion, emphasizes the product design, value proposition, and believable business model; it avoids a direct sales pitch.** You might show your product in more than one view – e.g., exterior and interior; photograph(s) and CAD model; or system and detail. Furthermore, the technology and design can be mapped to user needs. The incorporation of details, including assumptions, from your business plan establishes the credibility of your analysis.

   Examples:

   2010/Happy Egg/Final Presentations
   [http://designed.mit.edu/gallery/view-2010-happyEgg.html](http://designed.mit.edu/gallery/view-2010-happyEgg.html)
   Happy Egg’s business case is nicely made. Assumptions are clearly stated and anyone in the audience can calculate the financial projections presented and understand where they came from.

   2009/aquAIRius/Final Presentations
   The team has a very strong graphic design for its logo, and its brochure uses the image of the product in several views to highlight envisioned uses. Call-outs explain how the various parts of the device are envisioned as meeting client needs. The thoroughness of acknowledgments also conveys the helpers, partners, and teamwork necessary for bringing a well-designed and thoughtful prototype into being.

   2009/iceTek/Final Presentations
   When someone opens the iceTek brochure, the device itself in its final integration appears alongside an analysis of market need and an abbreviated product contract. The emphasis on the product is supported by a snapshot of the business plan.

2. **The look and feel of the brochure is visibly tied to the design of the final presentation and the prototype,** and there should be obvious coherence in graphics and information among all materials related to your product. The color scheme, choice of font(s), and logo should be as deliberate, unified, and well resolved as your product and final presentation are.
Examples: 2012/Sky Beacon/Final Presentations
http://designed.mit.edu/gallery/view-2012-SkyBeacon.html
Sky Beacon, an emergency signaling device for marine use, has a form that conveys robustness, simplicity, and visibility. The brochure, presentation, and product itself are unified as to these attributes. Color and form are consistent. Text that describes the design is tied to functionality and implies the use case.

2010/Noribo/Final Presentations
http://designed.mit.edu/gallery/view-2010-noribo.html
Noribo is a robotic food-delivery system, turning on a series of tracks from kitchen to customer that enables delivery and provides entertainment. The configuration becomes critically important to the business value proposition. Brochure graphics convey the tracks and seem to trace the business’s expansion route.

3. **Images and graphical details carry the message, and text is economical and may even be mostly in the form of bullet points or labels.**

Examples: 2011/Phil/Final Presentations
http://designed.mit.edu/gallery/view-2011-phil.html
When one unfolds the Phil brochure, the device itself is on the left-hand inside flap, and the customer need is on the inside flap. Customer need is 100% captured by the three images; text would be redundant. (Nice logo and thank you section also.)

2010/Spence/Final Presentations
http://designed.mit.edu/gallery/view-2010-spence.html
Spence has a wonderful logo for a kitchen tool aimed especially at storing and dispensing flour and sugar. The brochure plays nicely off its logo; it has a rich supply of good, substantive images, but some panels end up being very crowded and dense. It is important to remember that with both brochures and slides, a sharp focus on a handful of important words and images works best.

4. **The layout of the brochure must take into account the reader’s experience of the folding scheme.** A brochure designer must be aware of how a reader opens and reads a brochure as a sequence of panels and lay out the brochure in a way that is attentive to this experience. The cover of the brochure is important – in a standard two-fold, six-panel brochure, what is the next panel a reader sees when the brochure is opened? What does a reader see when the brochure is opened all the way? (Tip: after you have a simple sketch or draft of your brochure that indicates the major sections, fold it, and ask a friend for feedback on the layout’s relationship to the folding scheme.)

Examples: 2011/Phil/Final Presentations
http://designed.mit.edu/gallery/view-2011-phil.html
Phil’s great strength is the clarity of the device itself and the call-outs. Taken together they create a clean, visual representation of the device and the underlying technology on a nicely design brochure fold out.

2010/Happy Egg/Final Presentations
http://designed.mit.edu/gallery/view-2010-happyEgg.html
Happy Egg’s brochure has a minimalist design but an effective six-panel layout. Part of the reason for that is the clear way the panels fold in on one another, but part of it is that the brochure relies on the images to tell important parts of its story.