

UGH!

Can we fast-track
the schedule?

Where are we on
our timeline?

Project Timelines

A Guide for Communication Managers

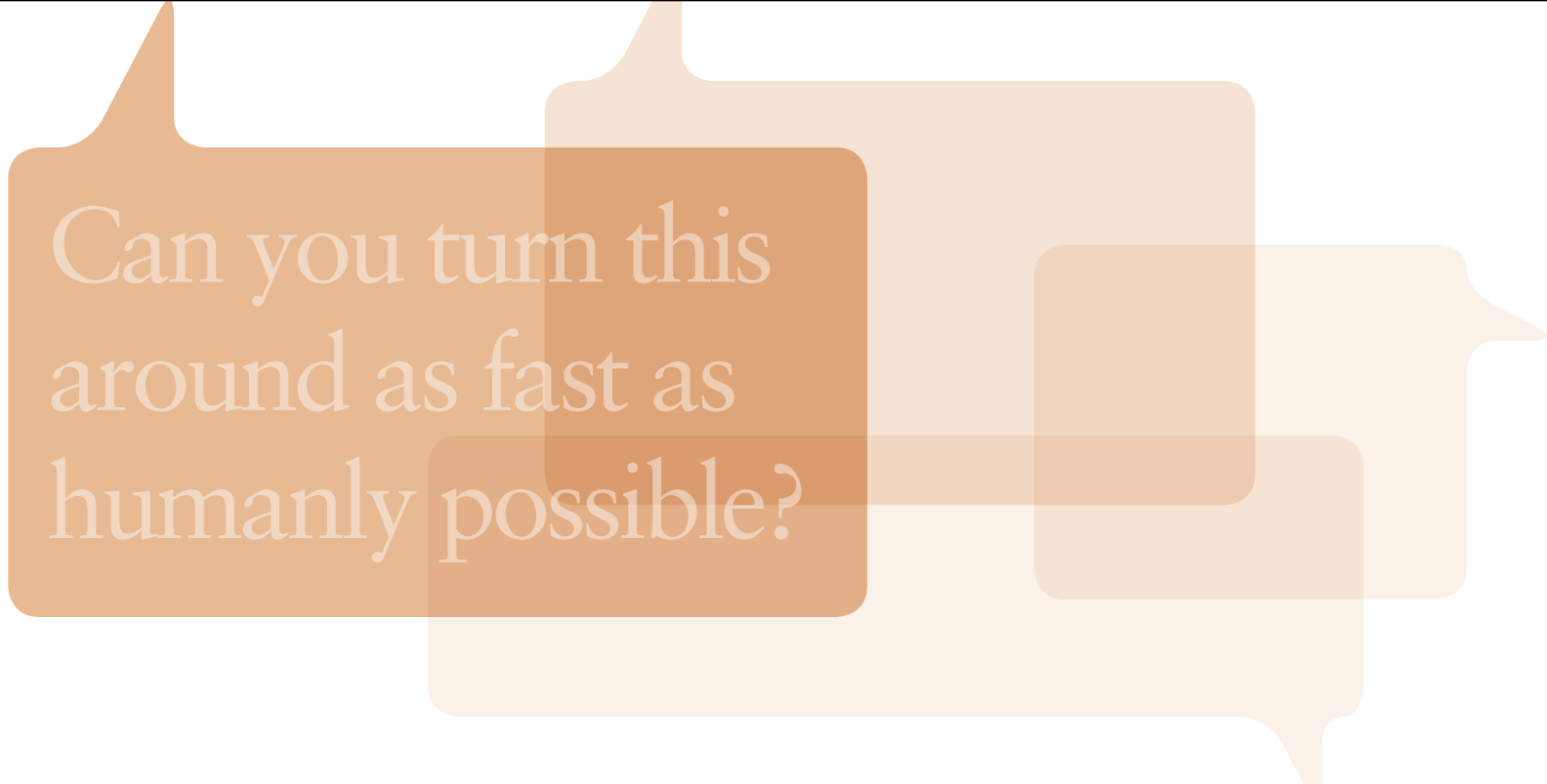
Where is a late
night FedEx
dropoff?

Can we somehow cut this
schedule in half?

We need it
NOW!

Can you turn this
around as fast as
humanly possible?

Ideas that engage, inform and inspire.



Can you turn this around as fast as humanly possible?

If you manage marketing communications or advertising for an organization these project timelines will help you plan your schedules and manage creative service providers.


If you are an account executive or manage a creative services team, you will also find these project timelines helpful for planning schedules and advising clients.



We needed this yesterday.



How soon can we have that?



I know we're two weeks behind schedule on this, we still need it tomorrow!

A clear, concise and realistic timeline is an essential part of project planning and managing. Everyone agrees to that premise, but the problem is there are wildly different perceptions about just how long certain projects take. Obviously it's important that everyone involved in a project be on the same schedule working toward to same goals.

We need it
NOW!

We reviewed the last five-plus years of our own experiences as well as surveyed best practices in the industry to come up with a timeline chart for a variety of marketing and advertising projects. We thought it would be useful to share this with as many people as possible.

Where is a late
night FedEx
dropoff?

We just lost two weeks
on our schedule.

The chart on the next page has project timeframes for advertising, collateral, direct mail, broadcast, as well as online and web projects. It plots out 10 steps in the process from project initiation through production. It presents timeframes for each step along the way with review and approval steps.

What's a realistic timeframe
to get this project done?

So be our guest and feel free to use the chart on the next page for your own planning purposes. We think you'll find these timelines are ambitious enough to keep a project moving along, yet allows enough time for everyone to do their job properly.

Can you turn this around
over the weekend?

TIMING GUIDELINES	step 1	step 2	step 3	step 4	step 5	step 6	step 7	step 8	step 9	step 10							
	Job Initiation To Start Up Mtg.	Start Up Meeting To Concepts	Concept Approval By Client	Concept Approval to 1st Draft Copy	Concept Approval to Comps	Copy 1 / Comp Approval By Client	1st Draft Copy Approval to 2nd Draft Copy	Copy 2 Approval By Client	Copy Approval to Layout	Layout Approval By Client	Layout Approval to 1st Proof	1st Proof Approval By Client	1st Proof Approval to Final Proof	Final Proof Approval By Client	Final Proof Approval to Print/Mfg.	Production (includes mailing)	
Ads (SIMPLE)	5 days	3 days	2 days	3 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	n/a	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	1 day	n/a	24 days (5 weeks)
Ads (COMPLEX)	5 days	10 days*	2 days	4 days	4 days	2 days	3 days	3 days	3 days	2 days	2-12 days**	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day + (multi-versions)	n/a	43 days (8.5 weeks)
Collateral (SIMPLE)	5 days	3 days	2 days	5 days	5 days	2 days	3 days	3 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	8 days	43 days (8.5 weeks)
Collateral (COMPLEX)	5 days	4 days	2 days	10 days	10 days	3 days	4 days	3 days	10 days	3 days	3 days	3 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	15 days	72 days (14.5 weeks)
Catalog	5 days	n/a	n/a	10 days	4 days	2 days	4 days	n/a	7 days	2 days	4 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	2 days	8 days	49 days (10 weeks)
Data Sheet	5 days	n/a	n/a	5 days	3 days	2 days	3 days	n/a	2 days	2 days	1 day	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	5 days	31 days (6.25 weeks)
Invite (SIMPLE/FLAT)	5 days	3 days	2 days	3 days	3 days	2 days	3 days	n/a	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	5 days	32 days (6.5 weeks)
Invite (COMPLEX/DIMENSIONAL)	5 days	5 days	2 days	4 days	5 days	2 days	3 days	n/a	3 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	2 days	10 days	43 days (8.5 weeks)
DM Ltr Pkg (SIMPLE)	5 days	3 days	2 days	4 days	4 days	2 days	3 days	n/a	3 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	8 days	36 days (7.25 weeks)
DM Ltr Pkg (COMPLEX)	5 days	4 days	2 days	7 days	5 days	2 days	4 days	n/a	4 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	10 days	43 days (8.5 weeks)
DM Self-Mail (SIMPLE)	5 days	3 days	2 days	5 days	4 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	8 days	43 days (8.5 weeks)
DM Self-Mail (COMPLEX)	5 days	4 days	2 days	5 days	4 days	2 days	3 days	3 days	5 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	10 days	48 days (9.5 weeks)
DM Postcard	5 days	3 days	2 days	4 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	n/a	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	8 days	35 days (7 weeks)
Radio	5 days	5 days	2 days	4 days (+casting)	n/a	2 days (+casting)	3 days	3 days	2 days (copy 3)	2 days (copy 3)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4 days (recording)	32 days (6.5 weeks)
Video	5 days	5 days	2 days	10 days	5 days (storyboards)	3 days	4 days	3 days	4 days (storyboards)	2 days	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10 days (shoot/edit)	48 days (9.5 weeks)
Broadcast	5 days	10-15 days*	2 days	7 days	5 days (storyboards)	3 days	3 days	3 days	3 days (storyboards)	2 days	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15 days (shoot/edit)	58 days (11.5 weeks)
E-Mail Blasts (SIMPLE)	5 days	3 days	2 days	3 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	n/a	n/a	28 days (5.5 weeks)
E-Mail Blasts (COMPLEX)	5 days	3 days	2 days	5 days	5 days	2 days	2 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	n/a	n/a	31 days (6.25 weeks)
Fax Blasts	5 days	3 days	2 days	3 days	n/a	2 days	3 days	2 days	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	20 days (4 weeks)
HTML Web Sites (SIMPLE)	5 days	3 days	2 days	3 pgs/day	3 days	2 days	4 pgs/day	2 days	2 pgs/day	2 days	4 pgs/day	2 days	4 pgs/day	1 day	1 day	n/a	no less than 43 days (8.5 weeks)
HTML Web Sites (COMPLEX)	5 days	4 days	2 days	3 pgs/day	5 days	3 days	4 pgs/day	3 days	2 pgs/day	2 days	4 pgs/day	2 days	4 pgs/day	1 day	2 days	n/a	no less than 46 days (9.25 weeks)
D-base Web Sites (SIMPLE)	5 days	3 days	2 days	3 pgs/day	3 days	2 days	4 pgs/day	2 days	2 pgs/day	2 days	4 pgs/day	2 days	4 pgs/day	1 day	1 day	n/a	no less than 43 days (8.5 weeks)
D-base Web Sites (COMPLEX)	5 days	6 days	2 days	3 pgs/day	5 days	3 days	4 pgs/day	3 days	2 pgs/day	2 days	4 pgs/day	2 days	4 pgs/day	1 day	2 days	n/a	no less than 48 days (9.5 weeks)
Replycard.com Site	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2 days	n/a	2 days	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 day	n/a	5 days (1 week)
Signs, Etc.	5 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	n/a	2 days	2 days	2 days	2 days	1 day	1 day	1 day	3 days	28 days (5.5 weeks)

* Client is likely to see 2-3 rounds in this period.
 ** Use of outside vendor(s) can add time in this phase.
 As we go forward as an agency, we should be considering original photography and illustration for many projects, and time will need to be built into schedules here.




Wow! You hit the
deadline perfectly!

channel communications



Yes!

That was a great
experience.



I didn't think
we could get it
done in time!

We will engage, inform and inspire your prospects or clients.

To find out how we can help keep your project on schedule,
give us a call or send an email to:

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