why did it cost more than I expected?
TIPS TO KEEP YOUR PUBLICATION COSTS DOWN

plan, plan, plan

Before you even start your project, have a planning session to determine all the major factors—content, audience, staff members who will be involved, the approval process, deadlines, etc. The more you plan, the fewer surprises you'll encounter, and the less money you'll spend.

establish a budget

Some managers shy away from budgets, preferring to tell their staff members to "just spend as little as possible." Rather than saving money, this sets up most projects to be financial failures. Having a budget allows staff members to strategize how best to use their limited funds and gives them a figure with which to negotiate when talking to vendors. It also establishes the limits of the project for all parties up front so that no one wastes time or money on ideas which can't be produced on the available budget.

follow word counts

Whether you're working on a print or Web publication, word counts matter. Your designer should be able to provide reasonably accurate word counts, so ask for them and stick to them. You'll save hours of design time, and your budget will thank you for it.

finalize text

Although designers will occasionally ask for rough text to use in the development of an initial design concept, when it's time to deliver the real thing, make sure your text is as finalized as possible. Request that all involved parties review and approve the text before layout begins so you don't learn that an article, section or photograph has to be removed after you've paid a designer to lay it out. Emphasize to your editing staff and management that changes at the layout stage will always cost more money than changes at the word processing stage, and will often significantly delay the project as well.

give clear instructions

You're more likely to get what you want from consultants and staff members on the first try if you provide understandable, written instructions. Whether you're working on a printed publication or a website, provide your designer with clearly labeled text and image files, and include a simple outline of the issue or site that lists which files go on which pages. When it's time to make changes, make sure your notes are organized and legible.

deliver electronic files

You can save a lot of time and money by not paying your consultant to retype your material. Provide text in word processing files or even pasted into the body of an email. This is especially important when it comes to lists of names and numbers.

send changes in batches

Rather than sending your consultant every change in a separate phone call or email, collect a reasonable amount of edits and deliver them all at once. Your consultant probably charges you for every phone call and every time your files need to be opened, so a single delivery of changes can save time and money—and will help you keep your own workday moving smoothly.

adhere to project specs

To really save money, stick to your agreed-upon specifications. If your project expands to new and exciting proportions, your invoices probably will as well.