

Classroom Resources

Career Facts & Figures for Graphic Design

Definition:

[Answers.com](#) describes **Graphic Design** this way: "*n.* The practice or profession of designing print or electronic forms of visual information, as for an advertisement, publication, or website."

[Wikipedia](#) says this: "**Graphic Design** is the applied art of arranging image and text to communicate a message or facilitate understanding. It may be applied in any media, such as print, digital media, motion pictures, animation, product design, packaging, and information signs. Graphic design as a practice can be traced back to the origin of the written word, but only in the late 19th century did it become identified as a separate entity."

"**Graphic Design**" According to [Nathan.com](#), it is an older term for the field of Visual Design. This term refers specifically to the use of graphic media (such as color, symbol, and type) to communicate a style or expression. In practice, however, Visual Design is a better term since most Graphic Designers are skilled in more than this narrow scope of visuals and graphic elements are only a subset of the possible visual components applicable to visual expression."

Professional Skills, Proficiencies, & Competencies Necessary

"They must be creative thinkers, conceptualists, problem-solvers, image makers, and marketing specialists. They must be self-disciplined enough to start projects on their own, to practice time management principles, and to meet deadlines and production schedules.

They must be able to communicate their ideas verbally, visually, and in writing. They must be imaginative and observant in order to spot and translate social trends." Source: [Graphic Design Careers website](#)

- **Written Communication** – letters; memos; reports; presentations
- **Analytical Ability** – complex problem solving; detail orientation; conceptual; visual branding; math; design
- **Computing Ability** – software and hardware technology applications and trends including Adobe Illustrator CS2, Photoshop CS2, QuarkXPress, After Effects, Dreamweaver
- **Oral Communication** – active learning; active listening; critical thinking; public speaking

- **Social Skills** – teamwork; coordination; motivation; negotiation; persuasion
- **Systems Skills** – judgment and decision making; visioning; systems evaluation; multi-tasking
- **Resource Management Skills** – management of materials, people, and time
- **Technical Skills** – page design and layout; thumbnails; storyboards; comp and final art printing; typography

Graphic Design Career Options:

Entry Level... up to 3 years

Freelancer · Junior Art Director · Assistant Web Designer · Assistant Production Artist · Layout Artist

Mid Level... 4+ years

Art Director · Designer · Illustrator · Logo Designer · Production Artist · Photo Editor

Senior Level... 10+ years

Senior Art Director · Creative Director · Owner, Partner, Principal*

*Source: [Graphic Design Careers website](#)

Products & Services Created by These Professionals:

Posters, marketing and branding, outdoor and environmental graphics, brochures, direct mail merchandising, logos, graphics on apparel, point-of-purchase signage, promotional displays, CD/DVD covers, movie titling, on-air television graphics, interactive websites, multimedia programs, overall layout and design of magazines, newspapers, journals, corporate reports, and other publications.

Work Environment:

They work in advertising agencies, consulting offices, corporate in-house design departments, publishing, retail, and the film, television, and computer industries. Some choose to work for themselves as freelancers, and some start their own companies.

Median Annual Income:

The latest salary figures published by the **American Institute of Graphics Arts (AIGA)** report the following 2002 incomes:

- Solo Designer \$53,000
- Owner, Partner, Principal \$90,000
- Creative / Design Director \$80,000
- Art Director \$60,000
- Senior Designer \$50,000
- Designer \$40,000
- Entry-Level Designer \$30,400
- Print Production Artist \$38,000
- Print Production Manager \$48,000
- Web Designer \$50,000
- Web Developer \$56,900
- Web Programmer / Developer \$60,000
- Web Producer / Senior Producer / Executive Producer \$73,000

The U.S. Department of Labor 2002-03 Occupational Outlook Handbook states the median income as follows:

- Art Directors \$56,880
- Advertising Industry Art Directors \$63,510
- Multi-media Artists & Animators \$41,130
- Computer & Data Processing Services \$44,290

Toby Blue, Vice President of Petrol Advertising, has confirmed the following salary medians for the entertainment industry:

- Entry-Level \$38,000
- Art Director \$75,000
- Senior Art Director \$120,000
- Creative Directors \$175,000

***Projected Growth of Graphic Designers in the United States in 2000:**

"National demand for professionals with Graphic Design skills is predicted to increase as much as 22% through 2012."

(Growth figures represent a ten-year period ending 2012. Source: *Industry-Occupation Employment Matrix*," a U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics publication.)

The U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook 2002-03 states, "Overall, the employment of designers is expected to grow faster than the average of all occupations through the year 2010. Demand for Graphic Designers should increase because of the rapidly increasing demand for web-based graphics, and the expansion of the video entertainment market, including television, movies, and videotape."

Sharon Ryan, **FIDM** Industry Relations Executive Director, adds that "the future of the industry expands daily as more demands are created by the increasing video gaming, music, theatrical, broadcast, and home entertainment industries."

"Employment in the advertising industry is projected to grow 32% over the 2000-2010 period, compared with 15% of all other industries combined. New jobs will be created as an expanding economy generates more products and services to advertise. Increased demand from advertising services, also, will stem from growth in the number and types of media outlets used to reach consumers, creating opportunities for people skilled in preparing materials for presentation on the Internet." *U.S. Department of Labor, 2002-03 Career Guide to Industries, Bulletin #2541*

Estimated Number of California Workers 2002-2012

Employment Estimated = 21,200. The California Employment Development Department Career Center

Source: [California Employment Development Department](#)

Industries That Employ Graphic Designers

The California Employment Development Department Career Center Labor Market Information lists the following industries that employ Graphic Designers:

- Specialized Design Services
- Advertising & Related Services
- Newspaper, Book, & Directory Publishers
- Motion Picture & Video Industries
- Management of Companies & Enterprises
- Educational Services
- Architectural & Engineering Services
- Cut & Sew Apparel Manufacturing
- Scientific Research & Development Services
- Computer Systems Design & Related Services
- Electronic Shopping & Mail Order Houses
- Local Government

Professional Associations for Further Information:

"National Association of Schools of Art & Design [[NASAD](#)]; American Institute of Graphic Artists [[AIGA](#)]; National Association of Photoshop Professionals [[NAPP](#)]; Special Interest Group on Graphical Display [[SIGGRAPH](#)]"

Student Competitions - FIDM

National Scholarship Competition: Five (5) one-year scholarships to attend **FIDM/The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising**. Scholarships are available to high school students. The deadline is April 30th of each year.

- Graphic Designer of Tomorrow
- Fashion Designer of Tomorrow
- Fashion Merchandising Executive of Tomorrow
- Interior Designer of Tomorrow
- Visual Designer of Tomorrow
- Digital Artist of Tomorrow