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TALENT ACADEMY

Reading Material

Course : Graphics Design

Module : Introduction to Graphics Design



## **What is Graphic Design?**

**Amrish Mudgal - Author Amrish Mudgal on Sep 14, 2020 9 min read**

**Are you a creative individual who loves the visual arts? Do you always have a sketchbook close at hand? For many people, arts are a passion and a hobby. But others want to dedicate their lives to the art form, master communicating with visual compositions, and make it their careers. There are many forms of design in the modern world- and more pop up as new technology gets developed. Design is a dynamic and exciting field, and it's a great way to feel productive and creative while pursuing your passion.**

## **What is Graphic Design?**

## **What is Graphic Design?**

**Design is simple, yet it's so ubiquitous that it's hard to pin down in one easy definition. Technically, graphic design is the communication of an idea using visual means. Graphic designers use various tools to achieve the goal, including elements like typography, colors, shapes, and illustrations. When you think of how many ways this art form touches your life on a daily basis, it's staggering. The magazine you read during breakfast? To produce it, many graphic design jobs were created for the cover and layout design, the advertisements, and any special features or infographics. The cereal box and coffee packages? The advertisements you see on your way to work, on billboards, and the sides of buses? What about the business cards and stationery your company uses? And when you look at your phone, each app was laid out and made more usable by a talented UI designer.**

**In short, every aspect of our visual world is touched by graphic designers in one way or another.**

**Graphic design has become a dynamic and varied field that grows with each new technological medium invented**

**It spans old-school media like printed magazines, posters, and fliers to modern methods like websites and apps. It's never going away, and demand for professionals grows every year.**

## **Types of Graphic Design**

**Since it varies considerably and consists of many different fields, it helps to break design into different categories. Designers may work on teams that put together all of these different things or work in a specialized field and only do one. As in all things business, the most successful enterprises are usually the niche ones where a company or individual can become known as an expert in one thing.**

## **Printed Books and Magazines**

**Let's start with the fields that most people commonly associate with design. No matter how simple and text-based they may appear, all books and magazines require a high level of design input. Design is about so much more than illustrations. A simple page layout can be presented in multiple ways, from how many columns it has to how photographs and illustrations are integrated. How are chapters differentiated, and how are topics and subheadings titled? What colors are used?**

**Finally, the cover design is always an essential element since it serves an advertising purpose as well. How does it grab attention? When a casual viewer walks by and sees it on the newsstand, do they immediately know what the publication is about? Do the title, typography, colors, and imagery all work to communicate a clear message? Making it happen is more challenging than it might seem.**

## **Printed Books and Magazines**

## **Advertising and Marketing**

**Ads touch our lives nearly constantly. Websites have them popping up everywhere, magazines seem to be full of them, and roadside billboards fill our landscape. Printed and visual advertising is a clear example of design at its purist it requires the creator to communicate a message in an effective way. Whether the purpose is to educate or to sell, ads require the viewer to receive a message.**

**Advertising agencies hire a lot of designers to put together their campaigns. The ad men (and women) put together the big picture ideas and make the sales, while the line designers make the actual product.**

## **Brand Identity**

**A more subtle form of marketing is corporate brand identity. This is an area of design that requires a lot of big picture thinking and planning. A corporate identity is made up of a logo, typeface, and color selection used in all company materials. In today's connected world, the visual identity is a vital part of how customers connect with a brand.**

**We're all familiar with some famous trademarked brands, like the Coca-Cola typeface or the Apple logo. Think about how ingrained these are with the companies that created them. The red background and white letters on a Coke bottle are the same used on their websites, business cards, and all of their advertisements. The Apple logo is found on every device they've ever manufactured and is generally put on advertisements without any other text. Apple Stores usually only have a logo - do many people walk by and wonder what is sold inside? Probably not very many. That's the power of brand identity.**

**Most companies only dream of reaching that level of brand identity, but it all starts with a talented designer working to make something simple, like an apple with a bite taken out, recognizable and meaningful to consumers.**

## **Minimalist Graphic Design**

## **Digital User Interface Design**

**Websites, computer programs, and device apps all require design on different levels. Of course, there are programmers who are designing the functionality of the app and building it on a technical level. But most of the time, those people will hire experts in UI (user interface) design to make the front end work well and look great.**

**On a broader level, UX (user experience) designers work to make sure the app ecosystem works. It's not just about how things work. It's about human psychology and putting things where users expect them to be. How often have you**

**visited a website and had to hunt around to find a simple piece of information? If the UX design was up to snuff, it shouldn't have taken that long.**

## **Digital User Interface Design**

## **Product Packaging Design**

**Walk the aisles of your local supermarket or big-box retailer, and you will see thousands of products. How can companies make their products stand out? If they're a Coke or Apple and already have a brand identity, it's a lot easier. But what if a company is starting? The brand can only stand for so much when the customer is standing in the aisle looking for a specific thing to buy.**

**Product packaging comes in many varieties. While some of the limitations come from things like box sizes and shapes,**

**there's still a lot of room for a graphic designer to work their magic.**

## **Product Packaging Design**

### **Dynamic Designs**

**As technology evolves, so too must designers. Many ads that were previously static are now moving and dynamic. Animated web banner ads, gifs, and even moving billboards mean that a new specialty in the field has been created. Designers who work in this area need to have experience in animation and moving picture technology, along with compositional techniques and ways to communicate with movement.**

### **Illustrative and Artistic**

**Many folks who get into design jobs do so because they love to draw or love art. They are inherently visual communicators. For them, the brand identity and typography part of the job is interesting and pays the bills, but many want to make more art.**

**Illustration is an integral part of design, too, from children's books to technical manuals. There are lots of artworks published in advertising and print every year.**

### **Illustrative and Artistic**

**Some graphic designers like to create their drawings from scratch, while others specialize in manipulating images and making composite photographs.**

**T-shirts, fabrics, websites, video games, infographics, and comic books are just a few examples of how these designs can be used. There's plenty that is done commercially, and plenty that is created for art's sake.**

**A winning illustrator portfolio is crucial if you are aspiring to make a successful career in the design industry. Here are some stunning Illustrator portfolios on Pixpa that are sure to inspire you to create your portfolio website.**

## **Environmental Design**

**If you were to combine interior design and graphic elements, you would have what is called an environmental designer. They use signs, murals, and branding to improve the overall experience a visitor has to a building. It's most noticeable where many people visit, and the organizers want to make an impression - think about stadiums, conference spaces, trade shows, public transportation, or retail stores. It's common practice in franchise locations or**

**chain brands, too, like hotels or restaurants. These corporations spend a lot of time and money planning a customer experience to be positive and memorable.**

## **Environmental Design Example**

## **Popular Design Tools**

## **Elements of Design**

**No matter what their specialty is, designers use the same elements in their work. These are the tools of the trade. A few examples of design elements include typography, color, shape, illustration, photography, and layout.**

**Typography describes the fonts that a designer can use in their work, but it also is a specialized form of design. Someone has to lay out all those typefaces, and some jobs may require designing a font from scratch. Furthermore,**

**there are many ways to modify existing fonts with kerning, tracking, and leading to flow into a design better without trashing the original typeface's aesthetics.**

## **Graphic Design Fonts**

**Color is a vital element of design, and one of the more important choices a designer has to make. Usually, choosing a color palette is one of the first tasks when beginning a new design challenge. Colors communicate more than you may realize at first glance. They have a profound psychological impact on us, and learning color theory is a big part of training to become a designer.**

## **Elements of Graphic Design**

**Shape, illustration, and photography are all visual elements that can be included in a layout. It's up to the designer to figure out what goes where and why, along with which fonts and colors. The mix of all of these elements is what**

**puts the art in design, it requires creativity and originality, plus a breadth of knowledge about proven techniques and methods.**

**You must read our article on Understanding Principles of Design that outlines the foundational theories that make a piece of visual artwork appealing.**

## **Software Tools**

**Like photography and other creative jobs, Adobe has a near-monopoly on graphic designing software used commercially. There are competitors, and some are gaining quite a bit of traction. Adobe's pricing is far from competitive, and many starting designers opt for a similar program with the same functionality without the subscription cost.**

**Illustration work is typically done in a vector-based art program. Adobe Illustrator is the industry standard. These programs allow for creating vector images that can be printed and resized without limits, unlike photos or rasterized images.**

**Graphic artists also work with raster images for various purposes. Photoshop is usually their go-to tool for doing so. While photographers seldom mess with the functions, Photoshop does have several tools for drawing from scratch, creating paths, and shapes.**

**The final component of design lies in the creation of layouts and entire documents. While Photoshop or Illustrator can be used to make the individual elements, the whole finished product is made in a publishing program like InDesign. Adobe InDesign is used throughout the publishing industry to layout their printed books and flow text with images. Artwork created in Illustrator is added,**

**and elements like shapes, colors, and typography can be added.**

**We have researched and put together a list of the best graphic design software in the field today. These tools are tried and tested and can help you create spectacular custom designs that will leave your clients spellbound.**

## **Graphic Design Jobs**

**Designers work in a lot of different ways. Like many creative positions, possibilities range from working as an employee for a larger organization or striking out on your own and freelancing.**

**As an aspiring graphic designer, you must create a professional design portfolio website to showcase your**

**work and profile. Your online portfolio is the key to attract and impress potential employers, clients or collaborators. Design portfolio websites need to go beyond just showcasing your designs. You also need to think out of the box, uncover your creative genius, find your expression and present your work in the best way possible. We had earlier put together a guide to building your design portfolio, a must-read for anyone serious about graphic design as a career path.**

**Make sure that the portfolio website builder you choose offers the flexibility, features, and ease-of-use you need to put together a professional website without requiring any coding knowledge. That's where a bit of inspiration comes in handy.**

**Pixpa is a website builder platform that is trusted by creative pros around the world.**

**Pixpa offers an easy yet powerful drag-and-drop website builder and includes Client galleries, eCommerce, and**

**blogging tools to enable you to manage your complete online presence through one seamless platform. Explore all features that make Pixpa the perfect choice for designers and other creative professionals.**

**Start your free trial to create photography portfolio sites in minutes on Pixpa.**

**No credit card or coding knowledge required.**

**Showcasing your work online through a well-made portfolio website is essential even for students of design. Your student portfolio website will help you apply for higher studies, internships, jobs, and also if you are planning to start your design practice.**

**As you grow professionally, the role of your design portfolio website in helping you gain new clients becomes increasingly important. It acts as your gateway to the world and the first interface between you and most potential**

**clients. Hence, it's essential that your design portfolio website is designed to complement and showcase your work clearly without being distracting.**

**At one point or another, many designers work as an employee at larger firms. In some cases, these positions may be learning positions, almost like internships or apprenticeships. If you have the opportunity to work with a great designer and learn how they work their business, you should always take it!**

**Inside of companies, you'll find designers working in creative and marketing departments all over the world. The type of company or what they sell doesn't matter - all large corporations hire creative people to fill these jobs and help them build their brands. For the designer, the position may become a bit formulaic, however. Imagine working for Apple. Will you best asked to rebrand the company from scratch one day? No, more likely, you'll work within an**

**existing framework and keep things new and fresh if not exactly original.**

**Designers who work for creative agencies may be able to flex a little more creative muscle. They'll wind up working with many different clients, doing things from freshening existing products to creating entirely new stuff from scratch. A lot more of their time is spent conceptualizing and pitching ideas.**

**Another advantage of working in creative agencies is the growth potential. While entry-level designers aren't getting wealthy, creative directors and art directors are often making six-figures.**

**Finally, there are many freelance designers. This is the best route for artists who have mastered a particular niche that is in high demand. These individuals will make the most**

**money and have the longest client lists. The most successful freelancers have worked in the industry for decades, and who are sought out by name when a company needs a particular look or a specific type of project.**

**The beauty of freelancing, though, is that you can plot your own course. No rule says you can start your career by freelancing, or even freelance while also working with agencies. You can work when you want, where you want, and on your terms. All of this means that you can quickly correct if you need to learn new graphic design skills or try a new market to remain competitive. The hardest part of freelancing, of course, is the business aspects. You are solely responsible for legal, licensing, and tax issues and a host of other things that pop up.**

## **Graphic Designer Salary**

**The average starting salary is between \$40,000 and \$47,000 per year. However, it's a little bit hard to identify precisely**

**what designers make since the job titles vary considerably from company to company. Often, design tasks are given to others while being directed by art directors or other management. In other words, designers are multitaskers.**

**Overall, an average graphic designer salary ranges between \$55,000 and \$83,250. However, huge variances occur depending on where they live and whether they freelance or work for major corporations.**

**The best paying graphic design jobs are those very experienced individuals brought on for specific projects, usually on a contract basis. Another high paying option is for management positions like art director or creative manager, with salaries for high-level positions like these ranging from \$76,600 to over \$110,000.**

## Conclusion

**Designers do a lot more than most people realize, and even within the field, there are more specializations and niches than you can count. For instance, check out these design blogs that cover a range of topics like home decor, web design, product design, and typography. Those listed above are not all-inclusive; even the smallest companies hire designers to work on various projects. For gifted artists with an eye for design elements, it's a dynamic and fun industry.**