

# Considering a Design Career?



*If you are creative, intelligent and curious, graphic design might just be the perfect career for you...*

## What can I do as a Graphic Designer?

You can use your talent and skills on projects, such as:

- Corporate and organizational reports, booklets, and brochures that deliver important information in a concise format. Well designed advertisements can generate strong awareness from consumers.
- Packaging, promotions and advertisements. Innovative packaging and image design are important aspects of successful marketing.
- Corporate trademarks and logos that give a unique and distinctive visual identity to a company. Businesses require designers to produce functional yet creative stationery items to enhance their professional image.
- Magazines, books, calendars, and other publications require designers with an excellent knowledge of typographic design.
- Exhibit and installation designs that require a thorough understanding of three-dimensional design. And promotional posters have traditionally been the most visible work of graphic designers.
- Web sites and new media. New technologies require creative interface designers with a working knowledge of psychology, colour and typography.

## Careers in Graphic Design

Although graphic design has had an enormous and significant impact on Canadian culture, it remains a mystery to many, even though its practitioners create the images that educate and inspire the public each day.

Designers have put a face to our government, institutions, products and services. Cereal boxes, postage stamps, transit shelter advertising, textbook, magazine and newspaper design, video graphics, websites, logos even shopping bags, are all produced by trained professional designers.

Graphic designers thrive on solving visual problems, meeting tight deadlines, and producing original designs within budgets and technology. It is a portable international profession.

Once you're working in this dynamic industry, you can look forward to working with other talented and creative people, such as photographers, illustrators, writers, marketing strategists, typographers, printers, programmers and fabricators.

You will be a part of the huge communications industry, one of Canada's largest employers. Whether you work with a small studio or large institutional design department, you'll find exciting design challenges, rewarding financial benefits, and unlimited career options as a graphic designer.

## The Design Process

Graphic designers are visual problem solvers. They thrive on the challenge of working with clients to produce effective visual communications.



The design process usually begins with a meeting to discuss the client's needs. After the goals, budget, market, scheduling and content have been determined, the designer draws up a contract detailing expectations about the work, process, deadlines and payment.

The designer then heads to the drawing board to analyze the problem. Research is an important component of the design process. Designers look at the client's competition, they look through journals; they get a feel for the market and existing solutions. They may go back to the client several times for more information and to seek clarification.

“Roughs” - sketches of initial ideas - are produced, which begin to illustrate the solution. These initial drawings show how type and visuals will work in the layout, and are further developed into formal presentations. They may be pencil “linears” or full colour layouts using sophisticated computer techniques.

Once a client approves the initial design, the designer assembles the final artwork for production. If photographs or illustrations are required, they must be produced. If a website is needed, the designer must establish the structure and functionality. Then the designer must manage the production, which may require working with photographers, artists, web designers, or even other designers.

In the past, graphic design normally meant printing onto paper, but today it encompasses signage and architectural graphics, vehicle identification, clothing graphics, web and multimedia, and computer, film or video imagery.

This design process usually takes days or weeks on smaller projects, but larger projects can take months or even years. To be able to produce creative work on schedule, regardless of turnaround time, is one of the most important skills of a professional graphic designer.