

Graphic Designers use a variety of print, electronic, and film media to create designs that meet clients' commercial needs. Using computer software, they develop the overall layout and design of magazines, newspapers, journals, corporate reports, and other publications. They also may produce promotional displays and marketing brochures for products and services, design distinctive company logos for products and businesses, and develop signs and signage systems—called environmental graphics—for business and government. An increasing number of graphic designers develop material to appear on Internet home pages. Graphic designers also produce the credits that appear before and after television programs and movies.

Graphic designers must have talent and an understanding of the business world, including issues of finance and production, and should be familiar with computer technology such as PageMaker, Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and other painting and graphic design tools. Graphic designers must be able to work in a variety of media and meet deadlines, sizing limits, and financial restrictions, especially those who wish to work as freelance graphic designers rather than in-house salaried designers.

Basic pre-professional coursework should include design, drawing, computer artwork, and specific knowledge (for example, anatomy for medical graphics designers) relating to any area of specialization. Professionals must assemble a working portfolio to approach companies for work of any scale. For those who wish to pursue further study, over 100 schools offer accredited graphic design programs, according to the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, and each of them addresses issues of the working life of the graphic designer along with issues of design.

Salary Information:

- Visual Communication Technology, Associate in Applied Science
\$35,000 Median Salary (Follow-up Study, Monroe Community College Graduates, 2007)
- Graphic Designer, Bachelor's Degree
\$46,750 Median Salary (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008)

Graphic Designers for the Rochester, New York area:

\$41,600 Median Salary Range (Career One Stop, 2008)

[*Salary varies based on education/advanced degree, work-experience & setting/location.]

Additional Information:

- Graphic Communications Council: www.npes.org
- Graphic Arts Information Network: www.gain.net
- National Association for Printing Leadership : www.napl.org

