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English Period 8

13 April 2012

Programming the World: A Career as a Graphic Designer

What image comes to one's mind when one thinks of Apple Computers? The apple, right? Can one imagine designing games and advertisements for multimedia production companies? A career as a graphic designer is vocation where one can create designs for companies that will help them sell their products and associate their product worldwide with just one image. I have researched a career as a graphic designer and investigated the educational training, the duties and responsibilities, and the job outlook for a graphic designer. A graphic designer must design advertisements, company logos, and product packaging that are impressive and reach the public. What they design must grab someone's attention and be unforgettable. The whole point of graphic design is to use art to communicate something. There is a certain amount of education need, and most graphic designers need at least a bachelors degree. There are also classes in high school which will help future graphic designers pursue their careers. There are many opportunities for someone who loves art in the field of graphic design.

To become a graphic designer, one must successfully complete specific education training. One can take classes while in high school, in art and design, which will provide a valuable experience. It is also helpful to work on the school's newspaper or yearbook to learn the techniques of page layout.

In addition, one can apply for a part-time job at a graphic design firm while still in high school: "Part-time and summer jobs are excellent ways to become familiar with the day-to-day requirements of a design job and gain some basic related experience" ("Graphic Designers" 621). Exploring these options in high school can help with a future career in graphic design. Graphic designers need to complete a bachelor's degree or an associate's degree. Degrees in graphic design or fine arts are offered at many colleges, universities, and art schools.

Education is important, but on-the-job training can help one become more skilled in the craft of graphic design. This training period usually lasts one to three years where graphic designers will work with more experienced designers for guidance. Besides art classes, today's graphic designers must also be able to use the computer for design: "Many programs increasingly emphasize the importance of using computers for design work. Computer proficiency will be very important in the years to come. Interested individuals should select an academic program that incorporates computer training into the curriculum, or train themselves on their own" ("Graphic Designers" 620). Computer programs are used to prepare layouts and sketches that used to be done by hand so any graphic designer must have these skills. Therefore, to become a graphic designer,

one must not only concentrate on art and computer classes, but gain valuable experience by working a part-time or summer job.

There are specific duties and responsibilities that graphic designers must follow to produce quality work to please clients. They are basically artists that use their creative skills to design whatever the client may need: "They design a wide variety of materials including advertisements, displays, packaging, signs, computer graphics and games, book and magazine covers and interiors, animated characters, and company logos to fit the needs and preferences of their various clients" ("Graphic Designers" 618). Clients must always be involved in the design process. After all, they are the people that are paying the graphic designer, and they must be happy with what the designer creates. There are several steps the designer must take, and the first step is meeting with the client to discuss their needs. According to the *Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance*, a plan is developed by the designer and the client:

The graphic designer does some preliminary designs (generally two or three) to present to the client for approval. The client may reject the preliminary designs entirely and request a new one, or he or she may ask the designer to make alterations. The designer then goes back to the drawing board to attempt a new design or make the requested changes. This process continues until the client approves the design.

(619-620)

Graphic designers must put many hours into the design process to meet the clients' expectations. In addition, designers use many tools to perform their jobs. When a client approves a design, the graphic artist will construct a model using many different mediums: "Designers may work with oils, watercolors, acrylics, pen and ink, silk screen, plaster, metals, or other media to create designs" ("Illustrator and Graphic Designers" 115). Computers are heavily used for design today, so the artist does not have to make many hand-drawn copies. A graphic designer has many different opportunities because there are many industries that he or she can work in. These industries include publishing, television, and interactive media. The computer has created many jobs including designing web sites and touch-screen displays. Video game design and programming are also something a graphic artist with strong computer skills can do. Thus, graphic designers have many duties and responsibilities when creating products for clients.

Furthermore, graphic designers have a good job outlook for the future which gives artistic people a good career option. The job outlook for graphic designers is promising, with estimated growth of 13 percent over the next several years. Many companies are spending money on distinct logos and packaging that catches the viewer's eye. Whenever one sees a red and white bulls-eye, he or she knows that is the Target logo. The number of jobs will continue to increase because companies are really paying attention to visual appeal when trying to sell their products. According to *Careers in Graphic Arts and Computer Graphics*, probably the most exciting changes for graphic designers are due to the dominant use of computers:

Before computers became widely available and easy to use, graphic art was a dynamic, creative field, but the number of opportunities within it was not growing. Now, with all the new joys that the computer has created, opportunities within the field of graphic arts are growing rapidly. Graphic artists are in demand in the areas of Web design, film and video productions, animation, and video game production. (27)

Think of all the graphic designers that create Web-based advertising. Many people browse the internet several times a day, seeing hundreds of graphic designs used in advertising and on company web-sites. With internet browsing ever increasing, “growth in Internet advertising, in particular, is expected to increase the number of designers” (Graphic Designers). Who creates all those apps for I-phones?

Even though the growth outlook is good for graphic designers, it does not mean a job will be easy to find. Clients are looking for talented individuals with lots of experience. If one lacks education, skill, and experience, he or she will be overlooked. Competition for jobs is strong and one will have to be good at what he or she does in order to excel. Therefore, the job outlook for graphics designers is good, especially with the never-ending growth of the internet.

In conclusion, after researching the education, the duties and responsibilities, and the job outlook for a graphic designer, I find that I’m highly interested in this field and would like to pursue graphic design as my career. I feel that being a graphic designer, I can let my imagination run freely and can do anything I want. I can create advertisements for magazines, television, and the internet. I can even create animation

and make my own video games. I hope that in ten years you find me in my very own studio creating designs on the computer for many products.

Works Cited

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