

Educational Opportunities

Over 120 schools offer post-secondary Graphic Communication programs, covering everything from internships to one-, two-, and four-year degrees. Workers can also gain knowledge by joining industry associations and participating in in-house training. Continuing education is important as new processes and methods are introduced.

The Graphic Communications industry needs bright, talented, hard-working people. Customers' ever-rising expectations and increasingly complex projects require individuals with a variety of skill sets, including verbal and written communication, math skills, computer literacy, critical thinking and problem solving.

Joining the Graphic Communications Field is a wise career choice. Our industry is interested in all individuals who want a solid career path and want to make a good living.



Educational Opportunities



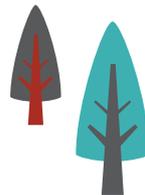
Your Future in Graphic Communications

Graphic Communications companies feature competitive starting wages and salary packages. Nearly all have comprehensive benefit packages for their employees— 97% offer health plans, and a majority offer retirement savings plans. The hourly wage for production personnel averages higher than those in automotive repair, retail and health aides.

Ongoing demand for printed products and constant advances in technology have stabilized the number and variety of careers available in Graphic Communications. The following examples illustrate just some of the possible career paths in an industry that employs thousands, and touches so many lives daily.

For more detailed information about the following job titles, see the reverse side of this booklet or visit pgsf.org/career.

- Bindery Operator
- Copywriter
- Customer Service Representative
- Department Supervisor
- Educator
- Engineer or Scientist
- Graphic Designer
- Illustrator
- Lean Manufacturing Coordinator
- Mail Data Specialist
- Marketing Specialist
- Material Coordinator
- Photographer/Videographer
- Pre-Press Technician
- Press Operator - Conventional
- Press Operator - Digital
- Print Buyer
- Production Manager
- Project Estimator
- Sales Representative
- Social Media/Web Specialist
- Wide Format Specialist



About the Print and Graphics Scholarship Foundation

The Print and Graphics Scholarship Foundation (PGSF), was founded in 1956. It administers the largest scholarship and fellowship program for students pursuing technical, undergraduate or graduate degrees in Graphic Communications. Each year, PGSF administers over 200 scholarships and fellowships, ranging in value from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Since its inception, PGSF has helped over 7,000 students. These scholarship and fellowship programs are made possible by donations from individuals and companies involved in Graphic Communications.

For additional information, visit www.pgsf.org.



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Graphic Communications
as a Career

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Your Future in Graphic Communications



Overview

Graphic Communications is a broad term for all of the industries involved in reproducing an image. The image - be it words, a photograph, or illustration - is reproduced on paper or a variety of other media so that the message has a widespread audience.

Graphic Communications touches our lives daily through advertising, catalogs, product packaging, magazines, and signage. As America's most geographically dispersed manufacturing industry, it is a major force in the economy of nearly every state, and is projected to remain strong for the foreseeable future.

Jobs in the field are highly skilled, creative and innovative, and range from professional to production. Employees are needed in all areas as current workers retire and new technologies are implemented. Career opportunities include positions with printers, publishers, packagers, paper and ink makers, equipment manufacturers, and in-house design and printing departments within corporations, banks, and even retail stores.

From small companies to large plants, Graphic Communication companies are entrepreneurial and cutting-edge. They have modern equipment and stay current with advances in technology. All offer a solid career in a thriving industry.

The industry encompasses many segments including:

Careers in Graphic Communications

Not every career in Graphic Communications can be listed here. These are simply some that are asked about most often. The educational requirements for these careers vary according to the type of work, size of company, and level of responsibility. For more information on a career in Graphic Communications go to pgsf.org/career.

Bindery Operator

The bindery performs finishing functions, which can include cutting, folding, gathering, collating, trimming, die-cutting and binding. Bindery operators must be able to operate various machines and have functional flexibility.

Copywriter

Copywriters can be technical, creative, marketing or journalistic writers. A copywriter should have a good command of the language and be concise and accurate.

Customer Service Representative

The customer service representative, or CSR, is a liaison between production and the customer. A CSR should be knowledgeable about the production process, and be able to communicate effectively with customers and internal personnel.

Department Supervisor

A department supervisor is responsible for the personnel in that area of the company. They may make recommendations for equipment and personnel and are responsible for the performance of their area. Normally achieving this position will come after serving for some years in a production role. Leadership and communication skills are required.

Educator

An educator presents an accurate picture of the current state of the industry. Teaching positions are available in high schools, vocational/technical schools, colleges and universities. Opportunities also exist within the industry itself, such as training programs that are available to clients.

Engineer or Scientist

The engineer designs machinery, and the scientist conducts research in areas such as ink formulation, papermaking, health and safety standards, and quality control. Many of these positions are found within companies that serve as vendors to the graphics industry.

Graphic Designer

The designer establishes the style and layout of the printed or digital piece. Materials are created utilizing computerized design programs. Designers should have an eye for detail, color, composition and typography.

Illustrator

The illustrator creates artwork to complement the written word. Most illustrations are now created using computerized software programs. An illustrator must still have precise artistic talent as well as a knowledge of composition and proper use of the tools of the craft.

Lean Manufacturing Coordinator

Lean Manufacturing Coordinators develop an action plan for lean process improvement and work with management to identify, develop and implement continuous improvement projects. In addition to analytical and cognitive skills, knowledge of Six Sigma, project management and software are required.

Mail Data Specialist

The specialist administers and oversees direct mail projects, data cleansing and manipulation, statistical reporting and analysis, and utilizes mailing list management software. They are a key to the relationship between clients and effective use of mail resources. Necessary skills include organization, prioritization, self-motivation, maintaining confidentiality and a high level of accuracy.

Marketing Specialist

Marketing Specialists analyze how the company can do business more efficiently. They are responsible for promoting the work of the company through multi-channel campaigns. Individuals should be creative and stay abreast of current trends and technologies.

Material Coordinator

Materials personnel are responsible for the logistics of receiving, staging and distributing materials throughout the production facility. Much of this work is done using mechanical equipment, but some manual labor is required.

Photographer/Videographer

The photographer/videographer produces the images or videos required for a variety of digital and printed materials. They must have proven creative talent, ability to direct a photo shoot and familiarity with current technology.

Pre-press Technician

The Prepress Technician performs a variety of functions that are key to the production and processing of a job. Duties include pre-flighting, scanning, file repair, trapping, imposition, outputting of proofs or plates, and finalizing files for production.

Press Operator - Conventional

The conventional press operator runs multi-million-dollar printing presses, putting "ink on paper". They must know the mechanical and technical workings of the machine, possess good manual dexterity, and think quickly on their feet to produce a top-quality product efficiently.

Press Operator - Digital

Ink jet or toner-based digital devices are common in nearly all production facilities today. Operators require technical skill, color knowledge and the ability to move quickly from one job to another. Hardware and software advances are nearly continuous in this area.

Print Buyer

The print buyer contacts various vendors, such as designers, writers, and photographers, to get bids on a specific project. They coordinate production to stay within budget and ensure a quality end product. A print buyer must be organized and stick to deadlines.

Production Manager

The production manager organizes traffic flow for production, making sure that each piece of material gets where it should go at the proper time and in the proper sequence, from the time the job enters the plant until delivered. Production managers should be well-organized, able to plan ahead and troubleshoot.

Project Estimator

The estimator determines the most efficient method to produce a project in their plant once they receive all specifications from the client or print buyer. The estimator's analysis, production recommendations and predicted project resources are the basis for the firm's bid on a job. Qualifications for this role include an analytical mind, comfort with computer programs and a good grasp of numbers.

Sales Representative

The sales representative solicits business for an organization on its behalf. They work with clients to determine their needs, and then create solutions to ensure a smooth sales process. Excellent communication and listening skills, knowledge of products and services, willingness to learn new things and resilience are all important characteristics of a professional sales representative.

Social Media/Web Specialist

Print/mail is often coordinated with digital channels. The specialist may coordinate e-blasts, manage database files, update websites, write blogs, post to social media, and perform other tasks related to electronic communications.

Wide Format Specialist

The production of wide format, or display imaging, materials is offered by many providers throughout the industry. Wide format printing is accomplished using a variety of substrates and finishes to produce displays, banners, fixtures, and much more. Wide format specialists must be flexible and creative to handle a large variety of projects.

Past PGSF Scholarship recipients, featured on the cover:



Hannah Brown 2013 graduate of Western Michigan University; Digital lab Coordinator at Schattdecor, St. Louis, MO.



Colby Kibbe 2012 Master's degree from Rochester Institute of Technology; Project Manager at EFI, Houston, TX.



Hope Carroll 2016 graduate of Virginia Tech; Assistant professor at University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, WI.



Nick Tuma 2012 graduate of Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University; Owner of Untouchable Designs, Tallahassee, FL.

- Commercial Printing
- Digital Imaging
- Magazines/Catalogs
- Financial/Legal Printing
- Books
- Greeting Cards
- Label/Tag Printing
- Screen Printing
- Packaging

(all under NAICS code group 323)

With recent technological advances, products and services have expanded well beyond the core printing model:

- Creative Design
- E-Commerce
- Fulfillment
- Retail Display Design
- Web Design/Hosting
- Mailing

