

Bre Franco

Career Project Final Report

## **Typical Projects**

Graphic designers are visual storytellers who make designs to evoke emotion and communicate the impression of a client's brand. With the specifications the client has given them, the graphic designer creatively approaches the problem-solving process and arrives at a final design that the client can apply to a variety of products. A graphic designer can be responsible for developing many different kinds of products for a variety of applications.

Through independent research, I learned that the kinds of special projects achieved by graphic design can be divided into these categories: visual identity, marketing and advertising, user interface (UI), publication, packaging, motion graphics, environmental, and art and illustration.

For the sake of this project, I wanted to focus on visual identity design because that sounded the most mysterious. Some ways that graphic design can apply visual identity are through logos and brand assets (think merchandise), business and advertising, web and digital products.

Designers tasked with establishing a company's visual identity may be responsible for refining a vast range of elements such as typography, color palettes, imagery such as photography and video content, simple graphics like forms and shapes, and physical assets like store layouts and employee uniforms. Visual identity graphic designers collaborate with professionals such as business owners and investors to solidify clear brand style guidelines.

The steps of any design project begin with the design brief. This is often formulated in the first meeting with a client in which they will outline any specifications, or, essentially, what they want from you. The next step of the typical design process will be to do market research and to learn more about the client's business as well as their competitors. You are trying to get an

impression of what does well with the company's target audience and what designs tend to succeed within its industry. Next, is the process of mood boarding, which involves gathering and organizing visual information, or more specifically, elements that work together to evoke the mood that the brand wants to convey to its audience. Then comes brainstorming. This is my personal favorite step of the design process! The goal of a brainstorming session is to generate as many solutions for the task at hand as possible. When an idea emerges, it is added to the list even if it would be discarded later. It is crucial to be judgement free during this process. Next is thumbnailing, which means sketching or rendering more complete ideas of how the concepts could be implemented. Following that is evaluating the thumbnails and deciding which concepts are worth refining and developing further so that you arrive at the final concept you will design and polish for the client. This leads to "Visual exploration". Basically, you will use software to render and experiment with your concept. After experimenting, you will revise and refine the idea, critique what you have made so far, and improve upon it. You will then present your design to the client and receive feedback. Using said collaboration will result in revisions to a number of drafts. You may have to repeat these last two steps a number of times before reaching the final stage, which is client approval! Once the client is happy with the designs, it is time to hand over the "deliverables". This step involves packaging and delivering the files the client will need to send your design into production. Here is my diagram of these steps!

# 13 Steps of the Design Process

1

Brief

2

Market  
Research

3

Moodboarding

4

Brainstorming

5

Thumbnailing

6

Concept  
Development

7

Visual  
Exploration

8

Concept  
Refinement

9

Client  
Feedback

10

Revisions

11

Client  
Approval

12

Final  
Delivery

13

Production

Every designer need tools to make their vision a reality. This process is achieved by the right hardware and software. Common software graphic designers use includes Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, and After Effects. Some designers will also use ProCreate which is exclusively available on iPads and other applications like Sketch which is a vector editing program growing in popularity. Other tools include notebooks, sketchbooks, external hard drives, a large high-definition monitor, a Mac OS computer, a digital camera, and drawing tablets and pens.

### **Skills Analysis**

Graphic designers need to have technical, communication, and creativity skills. Also, they must be able to appropriately manage their time and pay close attention to detail. Additional skills, to name a few, include an understanding of color theory, marketing, cost estimating and integrating design into social media platforms. Education requirements for a designer is often a bachelor's degree in a related field or equivalent experience. However, I found a source that argues that a degree is not a requirement if you have gained a design education in other ways and establish a great portfolio of work to showcase your abilities. Still, with or without a design degree, one should look to acquire education via alternative routes and as much professional experience as possible. Skills that I have developed thus far that transfer to a career in graphic design are technical skills with using design software, communication skills with my academic writing and customer service experience, and creativity skills such as critical thinking, reflection, brainstorming, etc. In preparation for pursuing a career in graphic design, I need to practice consistently implementing time-management techniques. I should also focus on communicating more openly and continually improving technical skill by building a larger portfolio of work. While I've exhibited a lot of potential and many transferrable skills needed to create successful graphic designs, I have not had enough practical experience to market myself to corporate

clients. This being said, I am looking forward to creating my own career in something I'm passionate about.