**Graphic Design**

**History**



Figure - Graphic Design

While graphic design as a discipline has a relatively recent history, with the name 'graphic design" first coined by William Addison Dwiggins in 1922, graphic design-like activities span the history of humankind: from the caves of Lascaux, to Rome’s Trajan’s column to the illuminated manuscripts of the middle ages, to the dazzling neon of Ginza. In both this lengthy history and in the relatively recent explosion of visual communication in the 20th and 21st centuries, there is sometimes a blurring distinction and over-lapping of advertising art, graphic design and fine art. After all, they share many of the same elements, theories, principles, practices and languages, and sometimes the same benefactor or client. In advertising, art the ultimate objective is the sale of goods and services. In graphic design, "the essence is to give order to information, form to ideas, expression and feeling to artefacts that document human experience." *(See Table 1 - Graphic Design*)

**The advent of printing**

During the Tang Dynasty (618–906) between the 4th and 7th century A.D. wood blocks were cut to print on textiles and later to reproduce Buddhist texts. A Buddhist scripture printed in 868 is the earliest known printed book. Beginning in the 11th century, longer scrolls and books were produced using movable type printing making books widely available during the Song dynasty (960–1279). Sometime around 1450, Johann Gutenberg's printing press made books widely available in Europe. The book design of Aldus Manutius developed the book structure, which would become the foundation of western publication design. This era of graphic design is called Humanist or Old Style.

Emergence of the design industry in late 19th century Europe, especially in the United Kingdom, the movement began to separate graphic design from fine art.

In 1849, Henry Cole became one of the major forces in design education in Great Britain, informing the government of the importance of design in his Journal of Design and Manufactures. He organized the Great Exhibition as a celebration of modern industrial technology and Victorian design.

From 1891 to 1896, William Morris' Kelmscott Press published books that are some of the most significant of the graphic design products of the Arts and Crafts movement, and made a very lucrative business of creating books of great stylistic refinement and selling them to the wealthy for a premium. Morris proved that a market existed for works of graphic design in their own right and helped pioneer the separation of design from production and from fine art. The work of the Kelmscott Press is characterized by its obsession with historical styles. This historicism was, however, important as it amounted to the first significant reaction to the stale state of nineteenth-century graphic design. Morris' work, along with the rest of the Private Press movement, directly influenced Art Nouveau and is indirectly responsible for developments in early twentieth century graphic design in general.

**Twentieth century design**

The name "Graphic Design" first appeared in print in the 1922 essay "New Kind of Printing Calls for New Design" by William Addison Dwiggins, an American book designer in the early 20th century.

Raff’s Graphic Design, published in 1927, is considered to be the first book to use "Graphic Design" in its title.

The signage in the London Underground is a classic design example of the modern era and used a font designed by Edward Johnston in 1916.

In the 1920s, Soviet constructivism applied 'intellectual production' in different spheres of production. The movement saw individualistic art as useless in revolutionary Russia and thus moved towards creating objects for utilitarian purposes. They designed buildings, theatre sets, posters, fabrics, clothing, furniture, logos, menus, etc.

**Applications**

From road signs to technical schematics, from interoffice memorandums to reference manuals, graphic design enhances transfer of knowledge. Readability is enhanced by improving the visual presentation of text. (*Refer to Figure 1- Graphic Design)*

Design can also aid in selling a product or idea through effective visual communication. It is applied to products and elements of company identity like logos, colors, packaging, and text. Together these are defined as branding (see also advertising). Branding has increasingly become important in the range of services offered by many graphic designers, alongside corporate identity. Whilst the terms are often used interchangeably, branding is more strictly related to the identifying mark or trade name for a product or service, whereas corporate identity can have a broader meaning relating to the structure and ethos of a company, as well as to the company's external image. Graphic designers will often form part of a team working on corporate identity and branding projects. Other members of that team can include marketing professionals, communications consultants and commercial writers.

Textbooks are designed to present subjects such as geography, science and math. These publications have layouts, which illustrate theories and diagrams. A common example of graphics in use to educate is diagrams of human anatomy. Graphic design is also applied to layout and formatting of educational material to make the information more accessible and more readily understandable.

Graphic design is applied in the entertainment industry in decoration, scenery and visual story telling. Other examples of design for entertainment purposes include novels, comic books, DVD covers, opening credits and closing credits in film, and programs and props on stage. This could also include artwork used for t-shirts and other items screen-printed for sale. (*See* ***Twentieth century design*** *)*

From scientific journals to news reporting, the presentation of opinion and facts is often improved with graphics and thoughtful compositions of visual information - known as information design. Newspapers, magazines, blogs, television and film documentaries may use graphic design to inform and entertain. With the advent of the web, information designers with experience in interactive tools such as Adobe Flash are increasingly being used to illustrate the background to news stories.

**Skills**

A graphic design project may involve the stylization and presentation of existing text and either pre-existing imagery or images developed by the graphic designer. For example, a newspaper story begins with the journalists and photojournalists and then becomes the graphic designer's job to organize the page into a reasonable layout and determine if any other graphic elements should be required. In a magazine article or advertisement, often the graphic designer or art director will commission photographers or illustrators to create original pieces just to be incorporated into the design layout. Or the designer may utilize stock imagery or photography. Contemporary design practice has been extended to the modern computer, for example in the use of WYSIWYG user interfaces, often referred to as interactive design, or multimedia design.

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