

# THE GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION INDUSTRY

## YOUR FUTURE AWAITS

### WHAT IS THE INDUSTRY?

What has usually been called the printing business comprises many segments: commercial printing, digital imaging, magazine, newspaper, book, display graphics, financial printing, screen printing, label and tag printing, packaging, greeting cards, and trade and finishing services.\*

Due to the technology advances and comprehensive scope of services provided by most companies in the field today, it is more broadly referred to as the graphic communications industry. Companies in the business offer services which include creative design, retail display design, e-commerce, web page design and hosting, mailing, fulfillment, and other services that provide horizontal marketing well beyond core printing.

Companies today help the world communicate across a wide range of platforms. Ideas are created on the computer and carried through to a variety of platforms that can include the Internet as well as printed forms of many types and variations, from a personalized digital imaging piece to a long-run conventionally printed magazine to a graphic panel on the side of a bus.

### WHERE ARE WE LOCATED?

Graphic communications is the most geographically dispersed manufacturing industry in America and a major force in the economy of every state. Every state has at least 50 printing plants, over 700 employees, and over \$100 million in production. The average state has over 650 printing plants with 18,000 employees and over \$3 billion in shipments.

Many graphic communication jobs are high tech, highly skilled, high paying, creative, and innovative. They cover a wide range of positions from professional and managerial, administrative, sales, design, creative and job planning through production positions operating machines. Graphic communication companies are innovative and nearly all have modern computerized equipment, staying current with technology changes taking place. They range from small companies with a few employees to large plants with several hundred people on multiple shifts.

You can go virtually anywhere in the country and get a job working in the graphic communications profession. There are more people employed nationwide in the industry than there are working at the top fast food restaurant. Almost all printing that is consumed in the United States is produced in the U.S. and the industry exports billions of dollars of products to other countries. In fact, the U.S. printing industry is projected to remain a strong domestic-based manufacturing industry for the foreseeable future.

### WHERE CAN I GET A JOB?

There are nearly 30,000 established companies and printing is the second largest manufacturing industry in the United States in terms of number of establishments. There are over 470,000 people employed in the industry and almost 80% of graphics companies employ less than 20 people. However, the industry also has many multinational corporations and publicly traded companies. Annual shipments exceed \$80 billion. Contrary to popular belief, 31% of all advertising dollars are spent on printed media, while less than 11% are spent on the Internet.

We anticipate that 40,000 additional people will be needed each year through 2020, due to baby boomers retiring, along with changes in workflow, production, and new technologies. Employment declines for workers in some segments should be moderated by other segments of the industry that will likely experience steady demand, including print logistics (labels, wrappers, and packaging) and print marketing (catalogs and direct mail).

The industry will need digital operators, bindery workers, sales and customer service people, computer operators, graphic artists, chemists, machinists, warehouse operators, mechanics, production supervisors, and all forms of management. Our occupation is stable and there is ample opportunity for career growth. Individuals who have a high school education can start out as trainees and learn on the job for many positions. With time they can advance to lead positions and into supervisory positions. Graphic communication jobs are located in every state, and in every type of community, from rural areas to the largest cities.

For more information on a career in the graphic arts or to receive a copy of the PGSF Career Guide, visit [www.pgsf.org/career](http://www.pgsf.org/career), or scan the QR code below.



Scan to download the  
PGSF Career Guide.



### WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR?

Regardless of the area of a company that a person may consider going into, today's mix of technology, craft, and communication skills require bright talented people.

It requires individuals with a high level of skill sets, including verbal and written communication, math skills, computer literacy, critical thinking, and problem solving. Naturally a good work ethic is always important.

Some secondary schools offer courses such as graphic communication and imaging through their career and technical education centers. Over 220 technical schools, community colleges and colleges offer graphic communication programs. Our industry is looking for any individuals who are interested in a good occupation, having a solid career path, and in making a good living in the graphic communication field.

For more information on schools that offer programs for graphic arts and communications, go to [www.pgsf.org/schoolguide](http://www.pgsf.org/schoolguide) or scan the QR code below.

There are also scholarships available for students who want to pursue higher education and a career in graphic communications. These are offered for all levels of post-secondary.

Scan to download the  
2015 PGSF School Directory.



### HOW MUCH CAN I MAKE?

Companies in the graphic communication industry offer competitive starting wages and salary packages compared to other fields. Nearly all companies offer comprehensive insurance and benefit packages to their employees with 97% having health plans, and a majority offering 401k or other retirement savings plans.

The average wage per hour for production/non-supervisory personnel is \$18.12. Wages average \$21.43 in the industry's core lithographic offset segment. In comparison, wages average \$19.21 in automotive repair and maintenance, \$14.28 per hour in retailing, and \$10.60 for health aides.

Average annual base salaries (not including incentive pay) for department heads or supervisors ranges from \$60-79,000 depending on department. Management salaries range from \$72-95,000.\*\* For greater details on compensation, refer to the PGSF Career Guide.



## Print and Graphics Scholarship Foundation

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