



## GRAPHIC DESIGN PROGRAM BACKGROUNDER

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### MEDIA CONTACT:

Jacquelyn P. Muller  
Vice President – Public Relations  
The Art Institutes  
Office: (412) 995-7262  
[jpmuller@edmc.edu](mailto:jpmuller@edmc.edu)

Abby Pelletiere Shaffer  
Director of Public Relations  
The Art Institute of Indianapolis  
Office: (317) 613-4858  
[ashaffer@aii.edu](mailto:ashaffer@aii.edu)

Corporate identity programs, brochures, product packaging, advertisements, video graphics, computer imagery, signs, exhibits, interactive Web and multimedia – all these are created by graphic designers to communicate effectively with consumers. Graphic designers are visual communicators who combine principles of page design, color, typography, symbology, graphic and photographic imagery, and illustration in creative, innovative ways to inform, motivate, sell, educate or entertain.

Some of today's most dynamic industries are based on graphic design. The fields of advertising, publishing, television and graphic design offer great opportunities for trained visual communicators, especially designers and artists. Advertising agencies require the talents of many professionals.

Graphic Design students begin with foundation classes in color and design, drawing and computer skills. In the associate's degree program, students focus on color and page design, visual expression, and print and interactive production. In the bachelor's degree program, students build on these skills with additional courses in conceptual thinking, creativity, problem solving, project management, art direction, business practices, and advanced and specialized design skills. As part of their coursework, all students create a portfolio of their work to show to prospective employers.

Emphasis is placed on learning the skills and techniques of both computer graphics and traditional design and production tools, such as the drawing board and drawing instruments. Advanced training includes the execution of assignments encountered by professionals in the field. Students learn both Macintosh and PC computer platforms, with industry-related software, for print, interactive, and Web design and production.

Armed with a marketable, production-based portfolio assembled in their classes, graduates are prepared to enter an increasingly technical and competitive industry. Graduates are prepared to seek entry-level positions such as graphic designer, graphic artist, associate art director, or production coordinator. Many entrepreneurial graduates enter the market as freelance designers or open their own design studios.

The Art Institutes ([www.artinstitutes.edu](http://www.artinstitutes.edu)) is a system of over 40 education institutions located throughout North America, providing an important source of design, media arts, fashion and culinary arts professionals.