

# Developing and evolving graphic design industry

[Science](#), [Computer Science](#)



The sole purpose of graphic design is the communication of a message and idea through art and graphics. Its beginnings can be traced back from the first cave paintings in Lascaux, France, to the hieroglyphs of the Egyptian culture, and eventually to the introduction of print and digital mediums. For an ancient practice that has turned into a massive industry, it is troubling to see that according to a poll question that was conducted in 2012, about 93% of graphic designers agreed to the statement that the graphic design industry is in bad shape and do not know where the discipline is headed (Tortorella). They believe that it is heading for its inevitable failure and fear for its sustainability for the coming years. However, from its first inception as a practice it has shown its strength in survival as an art form and even now as an industry. The graphic design industry has been one of the main creative industries that have been active, developing, and expanding for years and its success and sustainability through the decades is the direct result of , its ability to provide a unique service , its economic advantage and its adaptive designers.

Graphic designers who have worked in the industry for years feel that the industry is on its way to its inevitable failure. They have expressed their concerns for the industry as they see that other creative industries such as game design, motion picture, animation, and fashion are outgrowing the graphic design industry in terms of its popularity and demand in society. This created the notion that “ graphic design fails to register as a necessary activity in the radar of key areas of society and businesses” (Poynor). These graphic designers argue that since the development and sale of new technology and new programs such as the Creative Suite, there would be no

need for graphic designers as other people can do what graphic designers do for a living but for a cheaper cost. They believe that the industry and its designers, who once were considered important in corporations and even “ had a seat in the Board Table, so to speak” (Tortorella), are losing their true value, because clients often undermine the designers creativity and skill. In addition, they feel that clients are asking too much of graphic designers, because they expect “ a print designer, web designer and developer, multi-media designer, animator, videographer and project manager rolled into one” (Tortorella) making specializations no longer considered to be a great feat for a designer to have. In reality, graphic design is still considered an important industry by society and as well as other industries because there is a considerably large amount of them that still crave for original and creative ways of representing their business and identity in any form of medium. The only industry that could achieve and effectively satisfy this need is the graphic design industry. Even if someone could do what a graphic designer does for a living but for a cheaper cost, the quality of work that will be produced would not be as effective and engaging as the work created by someone who has been educated in the field and spent years in the industry. Few companies are going to launch a new product or campaign without the help of the graphic design industry, since “ poor design would make the company lose more money than they would spend by hiring a graphic designer” (Jackness). Moreover, graphic design is not truly losing its value, it is merely evolving and expanding to adapt to the new needs of its clients.

The graphic design industry provides a service that other creative industries do not. The industry specializes in creating a brand and identity for the client. Essentially, the industry creates the face, the image that the client's targeted audience will remember. The graphic design industry is the only industry that " makes the brand tangible ... It is the graphic designer who ensures that what is presented to the brand's audience is a genuine expression and communication of the brand. And the visual expression of the brand is a powerful means of communication" (Baldwin and Davis 228).

Branding and identity is crucial for clients who have businesses and corporations because it's what identifies them, it's what brings in business and it's what puts the client's corporation out there. The branding and identity produced by the industry can be strategically placed on everything from posters, bags, shirts, hats, brochures, websites, business cards, billboards, and other means of advertising and promotion. From what the industry can create for the client, there are millions of possibilities and ways of promotion. Success in promotion can only be attained when good graphics is created by graphic designers in the industry and not just by someone who just happens to have the means of creating the identity. The industry is the only one who could provide good graphics that will immediately give the intended audience confidence in a business or corporation (" Why Graphic Design"). As a result of good graphic design, famous logos of companies such as IBM, Coca-Cola, Apple, the American Broadcasting Company, Nike, Adidas and many others are still renowned and easily recognized by people. For the most part, the graphic design industry is a type of industry wherein its client base is composed mainly of other major industries. A client oriented

relationship is prominent in the graphic design industry because it is the type of industry that centralizes its attention more on its client and the client's intended audience. The industry's success and sustainability could not have been achieved by the mere means of its ability to provide a service that no other industry can provide, but it's partly due to its economic advantage also plays a huge role.

The industry has the economic advantage of being able to become a recession proof industry. Recession is a period of temporary economic decline, and the United States have suffered through recessions numerous times in the past and it is bound to occur again. But " graphic design could be recession proof because good graphic design can be seen as a necessity or an " inelastic good" in economist terms" (Jackness). In the 1970's the graphic design industry had a major technological shift, which stimulated investments in printing presses as the relative cost of process color and pre-press dropped considerably, defying the inflation, the high interest rates and high unemployment rates at that time. During the last recession, 1990-1991, graphic design employment, wages, and the establishment grew tremendously that it exceeded normal industry growth. Even after a couple years later, the number of establishments expanded even though full-time employment shrunk. This was because of one reason, the same reason that contributed to the success of the industry in the 70's, technology (Romano). Programs like the Creative Suite, which includes Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign and other programs, were created in the late 80's and early 90's. The development and accessibility of the program meant that even though graphic designers were out of design firms or corporate jobs, they can still

inexpensively set up a home office and become freelancers. The development of technology eventually led to the development of the internet, which became an abundant work source for the graphic design industry and its designers. If a recession were to occur, web-based projects would provide job security for graphic designers. In addition, there is a positive job outlook for the graphic design industry in the web medium today. “ Employment of graphic designers in newspaper, periodical, book, and directory publishers is projected to decline 16 percent from 2012 to 2022. However, employment of graphic designers in computer systems design and related services is projected to grow 35 percent over the same period” (Bureau of Labor Statistics). The number of graphic designers will increase significantly over the years, although at a slower rate than last year, it’s still slated to rise. This is due to the fact that the industry can be recession proof because it could have multiple ways of earning an income and work flow. Nevertheless, the industry’s economic stability is possible mainly because of its main contributor to its success, the graphic designers of the industry.

The industry would not have existed for decades if it weren’t for the graphic designers. They are notable to being adaptive to their changing environment and this could best be seen with their use of technology and through their compliance the changing client base’s needs. The graphic design industry’s main focus before the era of the internet was mainly on print. All that the industry produced were tangible physical copies such as book covers, magazine layouts, album covers, logo design, posters, flyers, packaging and brochures. To be able to create print materials took a lot of time and work as

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most of them were made by hand. But as brand new technology emerged and developed, the graphic design industry was not going to get left behind. With the development of technology the industry has found a way to create print collateral in a much more efficient manner. The creation of the Adobe Creative Suites and development of technology again helped the industry in a massive way. With the help of the programs the industry was able to create print collateral much easier and efficiently. Technology opened new opportunities for the graphic design industry, and it was able to quickly conform to these new developments. As computers became more popular and the World Wide Web became established, a new opportunity for the graphic design industry has opened. With the social and economic environment changing, the graphic design industry easily adapts to these changes. With technology, the graphic design industry always keeps up with the latest development and enhancement. The industry will always seek the newest technology because, the industry is a problem solving industry, and likes to solve problems in a very efficient, easy and unconventional way. The client base's needs and taste for design is another thing that seems to always change. Today, clients often ask for firms to design websites for them. Because of the strong demand of websites, the graphic design industry now includes web design. The internet is a booming sector for graphic design. There is an increasing amount of websites which provides constant work flow for graphic designers, creating more design jobs for the industry (Jackness). Some may say that web design completely differs from graphic design but with the needs of clients changing, the definition of what graphic design really is, it's evolving. The industry has expanded to websites,

digital illustration, e-book covers, and even to the icons of applications in smart phones. These expansions changed designers into more than just graphic designers, which is not necessarily as bad as senior graphic designers thought because “ The changing of business structures to more fluid, collaborative structures offers designers a change to work in broader areas and apply their talent in different media and areas of work” (Baldwin and Davis 288). The versatility that the graphic design industry have opened up more opportunities and jobs for designers. As long as there are websites to create, packages of food to design, covers of books to illustrate, events that need publicity and corporations that need branding, there will always be a job for graphic designers. The industry will continue to adapt to a changing environment.

Graphic design proves to be one of the most needed industries out there. Although graphic designers who have been in the industry for years feel that it is on its way to its inevitable failure and do not see where it is going. The print medium wouldn't exactly be deleted from existence, but the industry is simply in a shift from the print to the digital medium. This change would not deter the works of graphic designers. The graphic design industry has been one of the main active, developing and evolving industries and still remains to be one of the strongest creative industries because its graphic designers are well accustomed to the changing social and economic environment and can easily adapt to these technological changes. With the ability to adapt, they can shift through different mediums and ultimately be considered recession proof. And lastly, this industry will survive because it provides a one of a kind service to other creative industries that distinguishes the



industry from the others. The graphic design industry is rising, amidst all the observations and predictions of senior graphic designers. Graphic design will still make a difference in the future of communication in all forms. The world still needs graphic design.