

HOW TO CHOOSE A GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Professional design involves research, creativity, strategy and cooperation, the right combination of which can improve a company's visibility, sophistication, efficiency and desirability over competition. To stand out and effectively position products and services in the marketplace, it is essential to choose a qualified designer who is capable of meeting your needs.

7 Factors to Consider When Choosing A Graphic Designer:

1. Education

Producing effective design work requires adequate training. This training can take place in a College or University Diploma or Bachelor of Design Program or through extended experience working with an established design firm.

2. Experience

Industry experience is important for developing a strong understanding of the strategies and problem-solving tactics necessary to help clients achieve their goals. A good designer also augments his or her knowledge by staying current with tools and best practices.

3. Portfolio

A designer's portfolio gives you a sense of their aesthetic style, their capabilities, and whether they will be a good fit for your project's specific requirements. Look for work that shows creativity, organization and attention to detail.

4. RGD Designation

Registered Graphic Designers have been granted the right to use the RGD designation, signifying their education, training and experience in the industry and their ability to perform to the standard of competence specified by the Association of Registered Graphic Designers and the Examination Board for RGD. The designation offers greater assurance that firms are being run professionally, ethically and with knowledge of industry best practices.

**To find out more about the qualification criteria and procedures for becoming an RGD, visit the web site of the Examination Board for Graphic Designers at www.rgdexamboard.com*

5. Accountability

Responsible designers enter into professional contractual agreements with clients and fulfill their commitments by matching or exceeding expected outcomes. Registered Graphic Designers are additionally subject to and governed by the Association's Rules of Professional Conduct, a guide for ethical, professional practice of graphic design that details the professional responsibilities to clients, the profession, the government and the community.

6. References

If a designer is able to provide references or testimonials from clients they have worked with successfully in the past, this is a good indicator of a positive attitude and a responsible approach to professional design projects.

7. Personality

A good relationship with your designer is key to a successful project. Designers should be responsive and active listeners who will make a consistent effort to fulfill the goals and requirements of the project while also offering a professional perspective on the most effective execution of a client's ideas.

How to Connect with Registered Graphic Designers

1. Online Directory

RGD's online searchable directory connects you with members based on location and areas of specialty, helping you find qualified designers with the specific expertise required for your project's needs. www.rgdontario.com/talent/designer-directory.php

2. Requests for Proposals

If you're looking for a qualified designer to work on a specific project, submit a Request For Proposals to be posted on the RGD website. RFPs will only be made available to RGD Members and must include an overview of what is required and an explanation of how proposals will be evaluated.

Fees/Expenses

Once you've connected with a qualified graphic designer and have reached a mutually acceptable agreement on the services to be provided, the designer's fees and expenses can be determined.

For guidance on the salaries and billing practices of the graphic design industry in Canada, refer to RGD's National Salary Survey of CreativeEarnings www.creativeearnings.ca/.

Hiring Practices

For a general overview of hiring practices in the graphic design industry, including RGD's stance on Spec Work, Internships, and Pro Bono work, visit www.rgdontario.com/talent/hiring.php