

Communication Design Problem Solver's Guide

The Perfect Starter Book for Anyone Interested
in Learning About Computer Graphics.

By Carley Augustine

Communication Design Problem Solver's Guide

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I want to thank the people in my life who loved me and who have inspired me to be who I am today.



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Foreward

I was once told that a book is a living, breathing document. After working on this piece for so very long, I believe it. This book has been and will continue to be—a work in process. It started a number of years ago when I was working on my Master's degree at Bowling Green State University. My academic advisor (and mentor) Gene Poor and I, worked on these words so much together, that it seemed that we had put them into a kitchen blender and could no longer tell who had said what. So if you like parts of this book—I did those. If you don't like parts of this book—he did those. Fair enough? So this is all we know about computer graphics so far.



Introduction

This is an introductory book for computer graphics technology students. It is designed to help set the stage for a career in one of the most exciting and competitive fields in the world. Computer graphics is a field that requires a wide variety of knowledge and skills. It is a field that is service-based and it generally works in a team-oriented environment with a variety of different types of people. Those people may include clients, account executives, creative directors, other designers, various production people, and even outside vendors and suppliers. Typically, a computer graphics person will work through several stages of a design before a final solution is approved, and several people will have input into that approval. This means that communication skills are as crucial to success in this field as are design skills.

This book will guide you through an introductory experience that provides enough information and hands-on experiences to help you build a strong foundation. You ultimately will work with all types of businesses, clients, and projects, so you will need a broad understanding of the computer graphics world. You'll learn the language and hands-on skills of design and technology. You'll learn to think and design before you get too involved with computer programs.

Computer skills are basic to computer graphics technology. Software skills generally are integrated into the educational process as design tools, not as separate software training. Students are encouraged to learn the subtleties of software on their own. This way through the classroom experience they can concentrate on developing their critical analysis and creative problem solving competencies. If you can ultimately learn to systematically analyze problems and creatively design fresh solutions, your work will be truly professional and competitive.





What is Visual Communication Technology?

The term visual communication has become academically fashionable over the last twenty years. It now commonly represents a wide range of academic programs that consists of areas of study that include primarily visual components. These programs represent such diverse visual disciplines as film production, photography, industrial design, exhibit and display technology, interior design, print production, media arts, computer animation, advertising design, journalism, and even animatronics.

Two of the more common areas represented within the world of visual communication are graphic design and computer graphics. People in both of these academic programs are primarily concerned with the areas of communication technology that include such media as print (ink-on-substrate) web, video, photography, and interactive multi-media. Graphic design and computer graphics are both academic programs that are preparing professionals to work in similar visual communication positions. However, these two programs have been based on very different fundamental and philosophical differences regarding their subject matter and delivery

techniques. More about that later.

Keep in mind, all the areas of the visual communication world stress the importance of a portfolio. A résumé will help you get an interview—a portfolio will help you get the job. A résumé will describe where you've been and what you've done. A portfolio will show how you think and how you solve problems. Portfolios are much more than pretty pictures. They are visual solutions to communication problems. Your portfolio will be judged by your ability to communicate, to solve problems, and to have a unique, fresh look.

Typically, beginning students in visual communication often think that communication technology is used only in the entertainment sector. In reality, communication media is used in all facets of human endeavor including government, law, business, industry, retail, medicine, education, and food service. Actually, it is used anywhere a client wants to solve a problem, share information, sell a product/service/idea, tell a story, or even get somebody elected.

If a facet of visual communication is the career you're honestly considering, it's time to get serious about "walking the walk and talking the talk." For this is a field that requires that you work your visual craft way beyond just getting a university degree. In this field, you will be judged more on your portfolio, your ability to solve problems, your creativity, your resourcefulness, your ability to communicate, your ability to be a team player, your ability to schmooze—than on your grade point average.

If this area of visual communication is truly your passion, let the games and work begin. If you find out it's not—then you've learned a valuable piece of information about yourself. Because I can assure you, it is your personal journey. Enjoy the ride. Savor the chase.

