

Graphic Design: Ad Preparation

Introduction

Graphic designers work in a variety of environments. When you open a magazine or newspaper, you will find many **advertising layouts** designed to attract your attention and sell you a product or service. These layouts were created in an advertising agency, and graphic designers did much of the work required to complete the design.

In order to produce an advertising layout or **mechanical**, designers must have a variety of specialized skills and knowledge. They must have a good understanding of the basic design concepts, technical skills of layout and paste-up, commercial art techniques, as well as a knowledge of typography and computer applications.

Very often a designer will begin an advertising layout by sketching ideas based on a **product description** provided by the client. One of the decisions made by the advertising agency will be how to "position" the product, which will determine how the product will be described to a certain type of **consumer**. One example might be for a new car to be "positioned" as a sports car, with a **target audience**, or group of potential customers, described as "young professionals between the ages of 26 and 35."

There are many different **formats** that an ad can take. An ad might be done in black and white for a newspaper or in color for a magazine, and it may contain line illustrations or photographs. The format will also describe the physical size and shape of the layout. It might be a full page ad, or a smaller 1/4 page layout designed to "fit" a single column layout. A graphic designer needs to be familiar with all these "trade" terms and vocabulary.

Job Description

In this activity, you are going to design an advertising **mechanical** for a magazine format for a new soft drink. The managers of a national soft drink company have developed a new product and have asked your firm to create advertising for this new product. They wish to place a full page ad in magazines to introduce their new product to prospective customers. Your firm will create the format for this new product, identify what type of people will buy the product, position the product for sale, and create a "brand image" for this new product. You are going to develop an **advertising format**, then write **copy**, design a **logo** and **logotype**, create illustrations, and prepare a layout. You will then assemble the **elements** of the design, including copy, headlines, photographs or line illustrations, captions, and subheads using a technique called **paste-up**. The completed **comprehensive** will then be used to present your ideas to your client for approval. If you have done a good job, the client may award you the account.

Materials and Supplies

To complete this activity you will need the following materials:

- illustration board, 9" x 12"
- non-repro blue pencil
- rubber cement
- technical pen with black India ink
- X-acto knife
- cutting surface
- pressure sensitive (rub-on) type
- border tape
- masking tape
- tracing paper, 9" x 12"

Optional Materials

Polaroid Pro Pak camera
Black & White Polaroid film
Macintosh computer with type generating application (*Typestyler*) and a word processing program
laser printer
Zap Shot camera

Determining the Format

1. Read carefully the "How to Create Advertising" sheet included in this package.
2. Read the following product description that has been given to your firm by the manufacturer:
 - It is a soft drink that is citrus flavored.
 - It is light green in color, similar to a lemon/lime soda.
 - It is low in calories.
 - It is high in Vitamin C.
 - It will be sold in 12 oz & 16 oz recyclable containers.
3. Before continuing, you should complete the "Determining Format" handout.

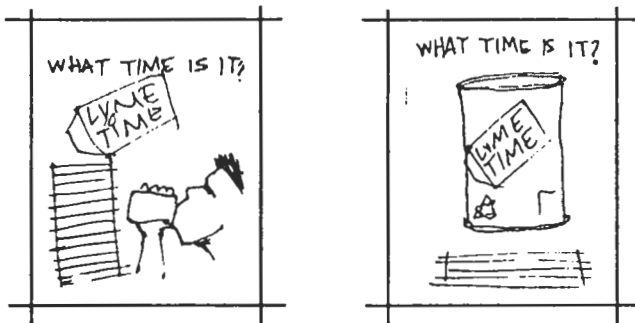


Figure 1 - Sample Thumbnail Sketches

Creating Thumbnail Sketches

1. Designers often begin a project by creating **thumbnail sketches** (See Figure 1). These are small "ideas" based on the format of what the ad might look like. Thumbnails are not very detailed; rather, they are simple drawings that show the content arrangement. You will need the following content items in your ad:
 - A headline of not more than five words containing the "big idea" that will "tele-

graph" your message;

- A photograph or line illustration related to the targeted audience or the activity for which the product would be used;
- A paragraph of copy that contains the "promise" and a list of things you want to tell the customer about your product;
- A caption, under the illustration, that helps explain what is going on in the illustration;
- Subheads, or bold face type, that telegraph the important things you want to say.

2. Study the thumbnail sketches included in this package. Begin your design by completing several thumbnail sketches of your own.



Figure 2 - Sample Rough Sketch

Creating a Rough Sketch

1. Figure 2 is a rough sketch of the thumbnail that was selected. Notice that it contains the headline, illustration, a caption, and the copy for the ad, indicated by greeking. **Greeking** is a simple series of letters that are used to indicate copy on a rough layout.
2. The **rough** is done full size, so that you will know how big the type will need to be (type size), the size the illustration will need to be, and how much space you will have to fit the copy into.
3. Use a sheet of 8 1/2" x 11" paper to do your **rough layout**. Pencil in the headline, illustration, and caption, and greek in the copy.

Writing and Composing Copy

1. Use the information you have written down about your product in the format section to prepare your copy for the ad. What is your "big idea", the "promise", and the information you want to tell your customer about your product?
2. You might want to look at some advertisements in magazines to see how copy "sounds". Read it aloud to yourself to get some ideas of how to put your own words together.
3. Begin by writing down your headline. Is it five words or less? Does it give your big idea?
4. Now use the list of items you want to tell the customer about the product. You can start by giving the "promise"; then add the other items in order.
5. After the ad has been written, you will need to **compose** the type. This can be done several ways. The easiest way is to use a graphic layout or composition application on a computer. First you will need to know the following information:
 - The **type size** and **type face** for the headline;
 - The amount of space for the copy and the size type and style type face. (How long is the space in **picas**?)
6. Ask your teacher for help in setting type on your computer. If you have a graphics layout



Figure 3 - Sample Mechanical

program like *Ready-Set-Go* or *Pagemaker*, you can do the entire layout on the computer.

7. Set type for your ad for the headline, captions, and copy, using the laser printer to print it.

Obtaining Illustrations

Next you will need the illustration for your ad. Illustrations can be obtained in a variety of ways. Here are some ways you might obtain the illustration for your layout.

- Cut out a photograph or line drawing from a magazine or newspaper that suits your ad. It should be like the things you have described in establishing the format.
- Using a Polaroid B & W camera and one of the students in your class as a "model", make your own photograph. A **halftone screen** can be used in the camera to create a pre-screened photograph called a **velox**.
- Draw your illustration in blue pencil first, then use the ink pen to "ink" the line illustration so it will be "reproducible".
- Use a computer application like *MacDraw* or *Illustrator* to create your illustration.
- If you have a scanner available, you can scan the photograph you cut out or select an illustration from a clip art book, using the computer to alter the illustration to suit your needs.
- If you have a Zap Shot camera that will capture the image for your computer, this is a great way to create and then manipulate the image to create your own image.

Sizing the Illustration

1. You will have to size the illustration to "fit" the **window** on your layout. This can be done several ways. First measure the original. Then measure the window, or reproduction size. Determine how big or small you need to make the reproduction illustration.

2. Confer with your teacher. There are many ways an original image can be reduced or enlarged.
 - A copy machine that reduces or enlarges can be used.
 - The original can be reduced or enlarged in a process camera using PMT materials.
 - A computer image can be reduced or en-

larged on the computer.

3. Make a copy of your illustration to **size**, so that it will fit the window on your layout.

Creating a Mechanical Layout

1. Tape down the illustration board to your drawing board so that the 9" side is horizontal and the 12" side vertical. (See Figure 4.)

2. Use a T-Square and triangle to find the center of the sheet; this is called **squaring**. Make a light mark at the center with the blue pencil.

3. Draw a blue line horizontally and vertically through the center.

4. From the center, measure along the horizontal line $4\frac{1}{4}$ " to the left and place a small blue mark. Repeat this procedure to the right.

5. From the center, measure vertically $5\frac{1}{2}$ " up and down. Mark these locations in blue.

6. Draw a rectangle $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11" using these points on the horizontal and vertical lines as the center of each side.

7. Place **corner marks** at each corner of the layout.

8. With your blue pencil, draw light windows for the illustration and the copy.

9. Use rubber cement to coat the back of your copy elements.

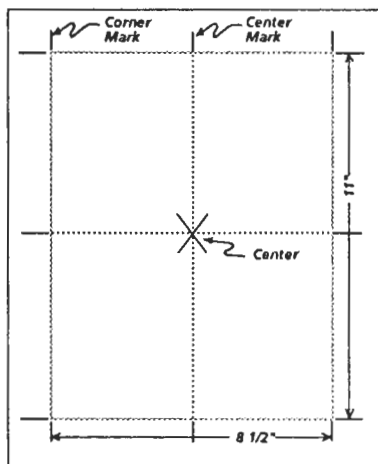


Figure 4 - Sample Layout for Mechanical

10. Place the copy elements in the windows. Use your T-square to make sure they are straight before you **burnish** into place.

11. Place your headline, illustration, and caption into place in the same manner.

12. Complete the mechanical by inking any ruled lines with your technical pen. Ink the corner marks as well.

13. Place a sheet of tracing paper over your layout with a piece of masking tape across the top, above the image area. This will keep your mechanical clean.



If you are using an X-acto knife, be careful, as these are very sharp blades. Cut away from hands and fingers. Do not cut on your drawing board or desk; always use a cutting surface.

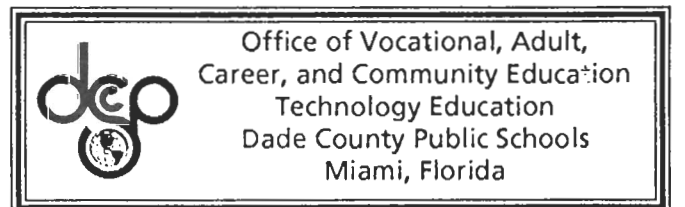
Vocabulary

mechanical	position	format
target audience	copyfit	halftone
line illustration	velox	logo
thumbnail	logotype	paste-up
rough	overlay	window
comprehensive	greeking	layout
corner mark	compose	squaring

On Your Own

1. Select several leading national magazines. Write to their publishers and ask for a copy of the **demographics** of each magazine's subscribers. Use the demographics to make a list of the type of people who read that magazine.

2. Collect as many examples of "soft drink" advertisements as you can. Identify the big idea, the promise, and the list of things the ad tells you about the soft drink.



TEACHER GUIDE

GRAPHIC DESIGN: AD PREPARATION

Objectives: Upon completion of this assignment, students will be able to:

- Describe the design process, including the use of thumbnail, rough, and comprehensive designs.
- Prepare a mechanical layout for an advertising design.
- Describe the creative process of establishing a format.
- Write copy based on an established format and then compose the copy for paste-up.
- Paste up the elements created for a camera-ready mechanical.
- Use computer applications for composition, page layout, and illustrative creation.

Helpful Hints:

1. Start a collection of soft drink bottles and cans; these will be helpful in stimulating the design process.
2. Collect advertising materials on soft drinks from magazines and newspapers or assign students to do so. Use these materials to create a bulletin board prior to this assignment.
3. Contact your local soft drink bottler or distributor. Its representatives will be very helpful in giving you illustrative materials such as posters and ad copy. Television commercials on video tape can be used to introduce this activity and will definitely stimulate student interest.
4. Check your school library for books on advertising design and layout. Also, the local public library has a large collection of materials you can use as resource materials.
5. When students begin to write copy, have them work with their language arts teachers. This makes a great interdisciplinary activity.
6. If you don't have computers to do the word processing, check with your business education or computer teacher; they might allow you to use the computer lab. This is a good lesson to introduce word processing.
7. If you can get a Polaroid Pro Pak Camera (they are about \$250.00), it will take great black-and-white photos. Students love to create their own illustrations, and this is an easy way to do so. They can be pre-screened right in the camera. The pre-screened photos will copy on a photocopy machine, so they can be reduced or enlarged at no cost!

TEACHER GUIDE
GRAPHIC DESIGN: AD PREPARATION (Cont'd.)

8. A Zap Shot camera will capture images on a computer disk and can then be transported to a computer application. This makes easy manipulation possible.
9. The entire design process can be done by computer if you have a word processing program, page layout program, and illustration program. A type creation application is helpful as well. Some suggestions are:
 - *MacWrite* or *Microsoft Word* for word processing
 - *Pagemaker* or *Ready-Set-Go* for page layout
 - *Illustrator* or *MacDraw* for illustration design
 - *Typestyler* for type design
10. A lot of discussion and presentation can be developed along the lines of consumer research, product development, and the creative process. Another way to approach this assignment is to videotape a full tape of television commercials. Then have students analyze the "big idea", "promise", and content of the commercials.
11. For effective closure for this activity, make overhead transparencies from the completed layouts. You will have to make photocopies first; then thermal transparencies can be made from the copies, or you can buy transparency film that goes directly into the photocopy machine. Have students "present" their ideas to the class, just as the agency would do for the client in the real world. Projecting the images on a large screen really increases their impact.

**MATH APPLICATION
GRAPHIC DESIGN: AD PREPARATION**

Student Name

In all types of jobs and occupations, you need the ability to apply mathematics effectively. Here are a few examples of how math skills are used in relation to this activity.

The packaging industry uses weights and measures to tell consumers the amount a package contains. Standard units of measure in the United States are the pound and ounce for weight, and the pint, quart, and gallon for liquid measures.

Generally, when buying food or other commodities that are packaged and sold in different sizes, you as the consumer will want to determine which size is the better buy. To determine the better buy, first find the unit price, or cost per unit, for the item at each rate. Then select the lower unit price as the better buy.

Example: Which is the better buy: 10 oranges for 85¢ or 12 oranges for 99¢?

Oranges at the rate of 10 for 85¢ cost 8.5¢ each, while oranges at 12 for 99¢ cost 8.25¢ each. Therefore, 12 oranges for 99¢ is the better buy.

Solve the following comparison shopping problems:

1. Mary can buy a 13-ounce can of peas for 39¢ or a 12-ounce can of a different brand for 48¢. If she wants to buy the brand which costs the least per ounce, which can should she buy?

Answer: _____

2. Sue can buy a 15-ounce can of beans for 45¢ or a 17-ounce can of the same kind of beans for 68¢. Which can is the better buy?

Answer: _____

3. Bill can buy a 13 oz. box of cereal for \$2.39 or a 12 oz. box of the same kind of cereal for 2.19? If he wants to buy the box that costs the least amount per ounce, which box should he buy?

Answer: _____

MATH APPLICATION
GRAPHIC DESIGN: AD PREPARATION (Cont'd.)

4. Tomato juice is priced at 3 cans for 90¢. A comparable brand is priced at 5 cans for \$1.25. What is the difference in price between the two brands for a single can of juice?

Answer: _____

5. Which is the better buy : 7 ounces for \$7.49 or 10 ounces for \$9.50?

Answer: _____

6. If a 14 ounce bottle of catsup sells for \$1.59, what is the cost per ounce?

Answer: _____

7. What is the unit price of an item if the cost for 8 ounces is \$4.40?

Answer: _____

8. Which is the better buy: 2 boxes of cookies for \$1.68 or 3 boxes for \$2.49?

Answer: _____

9. Fried chicken is priced at 3 pieces for \$2.38. An order of 5 pieces is priced at \$4.00. Which is the better offer?

Answer: _____

10. Rod sells grapes at 2 pounds for \$1.39. What is the unit price?

Answer: _____

QUIZ
GRAPHIC DESIGN: AD PREPARATION

Student Name

True or False:

- _____ 1. Graphic designers use research on consumers when creating designs for products.
- _____ 2. Format refers to the size, shape, and content of the design.
- _____ 3. A mechanical is camera ready, which means it is ready for reproduction.
- _____ 4. Comprehensives are used to show the client an artist's ideas or solution to the design problem.
- _____ 5. Greeking is a way of indicating copy on a mechanical.
- _____ 6. Headlines should contain at least five words.
- _____ 7. A caption is used to explain an illustration.
- _____ 8. Type is measured in points.
- _____ 9. A velox is a pre-screened photograph that is camera ready.
- _____ 10. Windows are used on mechanical layouts to indicate the position for an illustration.

Graphic Design in Advertising

How to Create Advertising

1. Position the Product.
First decide what position the product should take on the market. Will it be positioned best as a refreshing drink, a health food, or a diet drink?
2. Promise the Consumer.
Next decide what you can promise the consumer about the product. This is what benefit the product will be to the customer if they buy it.
3. Create a Brand Image.
Decide how your product and the advertising will create a brand image. This image represents the ideas a consumer has about the product, such as the type of people who use it, the kind of stores that will sell it, and the personality of the company that makes it.
4. Use a Big Idea.
A big idea captures the interest of the consumers. It makes them notice your advertisement and remember what you told them, causing them to take action. A big idea is like the "Fly the Friendly Skies" ad of United Airlines or the "Real Thing" of Coca Cola.
5. Tell Them the News.
It is easy to create interest in a product that is new. It is always better to start a new product with the news. What's so new about it, or why is it different?
6. Keep It Simple.
Create a simple approach, use the big idea, and give consumers a promise. Don't try to tell them too many things.
7. Headlines Are Important.
Most people read headlines five times more than body copy. Use the headline to include the brand name and the promise.
8. Give Them Something.
A headline that tells the consumers why they benefit from using a product sells that product.
9. Use the Newness.
Many times you can use the newness in the headline. Tell the consumer what and why it is new.
10. Telegraph the Headline.
Keep your headline simple. It should send your message in simple language. A reader does not want to stop to figure out what you have said.
11. How Many Words?
It has been found that headlines of ten words or less sell more goods. The recall of a headline is between 8 and 10 words.
12. Tell It to Them!
If your product is consumed by a special group, tell them about it. Identify the group. Flag the group in your headline. "Active People Drink . . ."
13. Use a Picture Story.
Use a photograph to suggest a story. The reader will look, wonder what is going on, and then read the copy to find out.
14. Photographs Work.
Photographs attract more attention, cause more people to read, and are more believable than drawings.
15. Use a Caption.
After your readers see the picture, make them read your message. Use a caption under the photograph, complete with brand name and promise.

Graphic Design in Advertising

Determining Format

To do this handout, you should have previously read the handout titled "How To Create Advertising." Refer to that handout as you complete your format determinations.

You are creating an advertisement for a specific product. Use the following product description which has been given to your firm by the manufacturer:

This product is a citrus flavored soft drink. It is light green in color, similar to a lemon/lime soda. It is low in calories. It is high in vitamin C. It will be sold in 12 ounce and 16 ounce recyclable containers.

Answer the following questions to "position" your product.

1. Who are the prospective consumers for this product? _____

2. What magazines do these people read? _____

3. In what types of human activity are these people likely to be involved? _____

4. What will this drink be sold as: A diet drink? A thirst quencher? An energy replenisher? _____

5. What can you promise the customer they will get when they buy or use the product? _____

6. What are you going to tell the customer about the product in priority order? _____

7. What is your "big idea"? _____

8. What is new about this product? _____

9. What is different about this product from others like it on the market? _____

Consider what messages you might use in your ad by completing the following:

1. The headline on your ad might say: _____

2. The ad could contain a photograph of: _____

3. A caption under the photograph could say: _____