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Carving Creative Careers in Design

1. Introduction

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Design is the creation of the products and the services that people use. Design is about progress. It is the conceptualization and creation of new things: ideas, interactions, information, objects, typefaces, books, **posters, products, places, signs, systems, services, furniture, websites, and more.**

**Designers imagine and make. They also research and think. Skilled in one or more specialties of the discipline, designers use their abilities in collaboration with others. Designers want to make ideas real and to make a difference.**

A career in design is more than a job. It is a way of seeing; a way of interacting with the world. It is a way of life and is not limited to Fashion!

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For the longest time Design and allied careers have been looked upon as those related to arty types. The technical ones haven't really been seen as equally creative. The perspectives have evolved and the boundaries have softened. Engineering is also equally design-based now. So let us have a look at a few design based career options that have recently gained pace and are here to stay:

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We shall start by talking about GAME DESIGN

Game Designer

Since their invention, video games have never gone out of style. As technology evolves, games are accessible on a myriad of devices including traditional gaming consoles, handheld consoles, mobile phones, desktop computers, laptop computers, tablets, e-readers, and more. Social media plays a huge role in spreading the word on hot new games, and for even the most casual gamer, there seems to be a dozen new options for play released every week.

As a game designer, you would be responsible for creating the core of a game. You would set a theme, create a rulebook, establish characters and plot arcs when applicable, and cater the atmosphere for players. In some instances, you may even get to flex your writing muscles and create the dialogue for characters in the game.

Usually, you are not required to do any actual code writing or programming as a game designer. Instead, you would be responsible for problem solving and thinking quickly on your feet, and predicting potential actions of game players and what the outcomes of those actions would look like in the game. It would flex all of your creative muscles in a fast-paced, challenging environment. Game designers make an average of $60,000 annually, which would be around 35-40 lakh rupees every year. Employment opportunity is predicted to grow about 6 percent in the next decade.

**To do well you will need to be skilled at** Problem solving, writing, multimedia art, storytelling. Undergraduate courses in Game Design, Computer Application, Multimedia will help.

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This reminds me to talk about the next obvious option, that of an Multimedia Artist/Animator

Growing up, I saw tons of features on the Disney Channel about animators working for the media giant. At the time, I thought it would be ridiculously cool to draw cartoons and animate them. I realized very shortly that drawing page after page of the same character doing a slightly different motion in order to animate them later was too tedious for me. Once, we did a school project where we had to create a flipbook and I relied entirely on stick figures. Beyond doubt, I failed at it.

But if you’re a talented artist who’s dedicated the time and attention to practicing that craft, this job is likely an awesome fit for you! You can hook into multimedia art and animation in a variety of ways because the field offers a lot of self-employment opportunity as well as positions in larger corporations such as Pixar, Disney, Dreamworks, Framestore etc

As technology has changed, so has the way multimedia artists and animators work. While traditional art is still very popular in the field, so is graphic art and computer animation. If you’re good at both, you’re even more likely to succeed. Multimedia artists and animators primarily create visual effects for games, movies, television shows, commercials, corporate videos, and more. **As augmented reality becomes more prevalent and technology continues to expand, the market for good multimedia artists will continue to grow. I hope you do  recall Augmented Reality, we spoke about it in our last webinar on Computer Science.** To ace the field you need to be good at Multimedia, digital art, computer animation etc. On the same lines look for undergraduate courses in Animation, Digital art; or else you may also plan to take an undergrad course in Computer Application and a diploma alongside in Multimedia or Animation etc.

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Introducing new avenues, i shall start by talking about **Packaging Design**

Let’s face it: if the packaging on a product is ugly, inconvenient, or targeted at someone who isn’t you, you aren’t going to pick it up off the shelf. With online shopping as pervasive as it is today, it’s hard enough to get consumers to actually go to brick and mortar stores to make purchases. But there are still people (like me) who walk into a store, get distracted by all the cool colors and adorable packaging, and walk out having spent more than they originally planned.

Packaging designers hone their craft into not only enticing consumers but using their designs to get consumers to spend money. This job requires art skill, familiarity with assembly, and familiarity with current trends. You have to have an eye for color, pattern, layout, and be very attentive to detail. Your job as a packaging designer is to make me want whatever you’re selling.

Digital packaging design is also a niche in this job market — since online shopping is so big, both in the sense of popularity and options, how you present a product digitally makes a big difference in sales.

According to reports packaging designers make an average of $45,000 annually. Employment opportunity in the field is predicted to grow only about 4 percent in the next ten years, making it a highly competitive field.

Skills in Multimedia art, typography, marketing and sales, keeping up with current trends, also skill in graphic design will help.

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Product Design

A product designer is someone who designs the look of different types of products, from mobile devices to vehicles. Typically, these individuals receive a host of information about a new product, including its use, target market, and functionality, and they create mock-ups of what the actual product will look like. They also have to work with the ease of use for the product, so it’s not all about the aesthetics. Although many product designers work with a variety of different items, most will specialize in one particular item, especially if they work for a company that specializes in that item. Part of their job in working with the same item is to make improvements and increase the functionality and efficiency of the product. In order to obtain an entry-level position at most organizations and businesses as a product designer, individuals will need at least a bachelor’s degree.  Specialist undergraduate degree in Product are available in India as well as abroad.

Future product designers take sketching, computer-aided design and drafting, manufacturing methods and industrial design courses to help make their resume more dynamic and appealing to potential employers. These courses also create a well-rounded product designer who has the technical skills and knowledge needed to excel at this particular career.

Closely related is Industrial Design

So, I will speak about Industrial Design, in comparison to Product design, since both are very similar. Normally, when comparing two related things, it would be the easiest course to simply look up the definitions between those things and compare that way. When it comes to product design and industrial design, it’s not so easy. Product design is just about as it sounds — design of a product meant to be sold to consumers, whatever that product might be. It’s how we get new things, or new versions of things we already use. Industrial design is the exact same thing, but it more pertains to things that have a functional value, especially things that require industrialization to produce, such as vehicles, buildings, and so forth. Items developed through industrial design are not necessarily designed for the sole benefit of the user – their design goals may make things easier for the manufacturer, as well.

Industrial design can be a part of product design. In fact, it can be product design all on its own. But industrial design generally applies only to industrial products. **So, while a fashion designer or software developer uses product design to develop their concepts, an industrial designer only when the final product is meant to build or produce something of its own.**
Since industrial design is more focused, many colleges have courses and degrees in industrial design, often offering bachelors or masters degrees in the field. Employers often look for industrial designers when they are looking to build something specific. Industrial designers often specialize in something like transportation, architecture, or something similar, further defining the nature of their jobs.

All these options that I have spoken about are right now existing and running, with great scope in the future as well.

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Infact, when i look at the future of Design, I see that the world shall belong to the design brains that can imbibe and implement technical details. Yesterday’s graphic designers are today’s User Experience designers. Will tomorrow’s UX designers be avatar programmers, fusionists, and artificial organ designers? Yes, in all probability.

Design has matured from a largely stylistic endeavor to a field tasked with solving thorny technological and social problems, an evolution that will accelerate as companies enlist designers for increasingly complex opportunities, from self-driving cars to human biology. Over the next few years, design as a profession will continue to evolve into a hybrid industry that is considered as much technical as it is creative. Upcoming designers who would be formally educated in human-centered design—weaving research, interaction, visual and code together, they will solve incredibly gnarly 21st-century problems. They will push the industry to new heights of sophistication.

You will be amazed to know that in near future, Big Data and machine learning can be used to predict the upcoming trends in Fashion , predict consumer behaviour, so that fashion designers can design clothes accordingly.

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To speak about such few upcoming options, i would like to introduce to you,

Augmented Reality Designer

I don't know how many of you remember our last webinar on Computer science, we did speak extensively on Augmented and Virtual reality. I will again suggest that, if you haven't, then watch it. You will get this concept easily. Evolving AR will open up an increasing demand for designers who can deliver intuitive and immersive experiences that are tailored to a wide spectrum of industries, from entertainment to education and health care.

Drone Experience Designer

Nominated by Gavin Kelly, co-founder and principal, Artefact

As companies such as Amazon deploy unmanned drones in their business, there will be an increased demand for the design of the entire service experience. For example, what are the end customer interactions? How are fleets managed and maintained? How are risks to the population mitigated? How are privacy concerns addressed? How do we build trust in these semi-autonomous machines?

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Human Organ Designer

Human organ designers will be experts in bio-engineering and design, fitting newly created organs and artificial limbs to humans. They will be fully capable of executing end-to-end design and implementation process for ready-to-use or custom-fit organs; have deep knowledge of the software and hardware involved in bio-electronics; and work within a team tackling multiple biological sub-systems.

We are very close to being able to reproduce artificial biologically fitted tissues. Some of these tissues will come from genetic-engineering, some will be manufactured in bio-reactors, and some will be merged with micro-electronics. The prospect of artificially made human organs is just around the corner. Who’s going to design and fit these organs to their end user? Designers will be there, sooner or later

Chief Design Officer or Chief Creative Officer

Nominated by Yves Béhar, founder, fuseproject

The CDO or CCO will be a job in every company, overseeing the design of a business’s every touchpoint and solidifying a fluid visual narrative that can maximize efficiency and purpose. Design is more and more central to the success of the modern business; designers are no longer being brought in at the end of the process to make things look pretty, but rather are providing essential insights from the ground up. In the future, I see a role on every executive team for a designer–someone whose role it is to ensure that every element of the business is designed well, and designed holistically. Some other options would well include Creative Technologist

* Customer Experience Designer
* Marketing Automation Manager

With the options that we have discussed today, I am sure that you now must have understood that we must not refer to design as something meant for those who can draw well. Tolls are available, technology is advanced enough. What is needed, is a creative mind and that too a skilled one. With this thought let us move to taking questions from all of you. We still have a few minutes in hand for a couple of questions.

Take Questions

Thank you for the questions students. I know i have been able to answer just a few of them, I will address the rest of them all through mails, so please do wait for my mail. Else you may also choose to write to us at guideme@univariety.com and needless to say, for quicker answers do logon to chat on the Univariety portal at [www.univariety.com](http://www.univariety.com)