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THE LIST



Designed for business

GRAPHICS FIRMS PURSUE MORE OPTIONS THAN LAYING OUT BROCHURES, LOGOS

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Phoenix's top design firms focus on a lot more than logos and brochures.

Aric Zion, CEO of Zion and Zion, said firms that don't expand beyond typical design work are "a dime a dozen."

"The design services are just part of it," Zion said. "Typically the clients who hire us are looking for true integration, and not just 'Give me a logo. Give me a brochure.'"

Zion and Zion offers services ranging from design to branding and strategy, and from social media campaigns to Web design.

For the past four years, Zion and Zion has been part of Barro's Pizza's design and branding strategy, including everything from Barro's logo to emails to social media campaigns. Zion said every 24 months, his company will do a complete overhaul of Barro's website to make sure it meets users' needs.

The firm was built not by creative people, but by people who had been successful in business and understood that good design comes from good strategy and



PROVIDED BY ZION & ZION

Zion and Zion handles all design and branding strategies for Barro's Pizza, including its website.

brand position, Zion said.

PS Studios, another of Phoenix's top design firms, has its designs taken to extreme heights. The firm worked on the complete rebranding of Frontier Airlines, unveiled in September. The company worked on every element of Frontier's branding, including airplane art.

Peter Shikany, PS Studios' president, said the airplane graphic design is important because it serves as a giant flying billboard for the company.

Shikany said his firm has created

designs from almost anything people can think of.

"There are always things that are parameters - what you can and can't do," he said. "The designer's job is being able to work within those constraints and still come up with great solutions."

Shikany said it is a good time to be in design, with plenty to keep firms busy.

"People pay more attention to (design) today," he said. "It is more important to businesses today."

Over the years, a lot of design work has shifted toward creating and designing websites and mobile apps, Zion said. The top design companies usually embrace new technology before their clients do.

Not only has his business grown dramatically in the past few years, but he has noticed changes in his staff as well, Zion said.

"The level of talent keeps climbing," he said. "We pretty much have no turnover."

Zion said it is easier to get graphic designers to move to Arizona now. With greater revenue and client bases, both Zion and Shikany are optimistic about what is happening in Phoenix's design market.



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GRAPHICS JOBS BRING HIGHER PAY

Getting a good graphic designer will require a fairly large outlay for businesses, according to the 2014 national median total cash compensation for different graphic design-related positions:

- \$120,000: Owner, partner or principal
- \$104,500: Chief design officer
- \$100,000: Strategy director or design strategist
- \$85,000: Information architect
- \$80,000: User experience designer
- \$75,000: In-house creative or design director
- \$75,000: Head of production
- \$72,000: Marketing or new business manager/director
- \$70,000: Mobile app developer
- \$67,500: Art director
- \$65,000: Web programmer/developer
- \$65,000: Mobile interface designer
- \$60,000: Self-employed (with no employees)
- \$60,000: Motion graphics designer/animator
- \$58,700: Writer/copywriter
- \$58,000: Web developer
- \$55,000: Web content strategist
- \$55,000: Producer
- \$54,800: Freelance contractor working through a staffing agency
- \$51,300: Motion/video editor
- \$46,000: Designer (print and/or Web/interactive)
- \$40,000: Social media or online community manager

SOURCE: AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GRAPHIC ARTS

THE INDUSTRY AT A GLANCE

\$44,150

Median annual wage for graphic designers

\$26,250

The lowest 10 percent earned less than this

\$77,490

The top 10 percent earned more than this

24%

Percentage of graphic designers described as self-employed

SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR STATISTICS, 2013 MOST RECENT FIGURES AVAILABLE