

Preparation Guide for the 2010 Maryland State SkillsUSA Graphic Communications Competition

Introduction

We are very pleased to be returning to Printing Specialists for the graphic communications competition this year. More about Printing Specialist can be learned by visiting their website at <http://www.printingspecialist.com/index.html>. We feel that holding the competition an industry site will add to the authenticity of the competition. Another advantage of holding the competition at Printing Specialists is that they have the printing press (Heidelberg QM46-2) used at the SkillsUSA national graphic communications competition.

This information packet is designed to introduce the competitors to the contests that they will be facing at the competition as well as help them prepare for the contests.

Contestants are required to bring a resume. Points will be deducted from total score for not supplying a resume.

Safety appropriate dress will be enforced above all (no ripped or torn clothing, no hanging jewelry, no un-tucked clothing, appropriate shoes). Long hair must be tied back. Recommended dress---Khakis or jeans, SkillsUSA polo shirt (or other polo shirt), closed toe shoes appropriate for a shop environment that will adequately protect the contestants foot (no elevated or high heels, no open toed shoes).

Competition Breakdown

As in previous years, the competition will be broken down into the following contests:

1. **SkillsUSA Knowledge Test:** This will be a test consisting of 25 questions drawn from a question bank of 134 questions related to the SkillsUSA organization. The question bank will be provided as a study guide. The results of this test will only be used in the event that a tiebreak is necessary.

See SkillsUSAKnowledgeTestStudyGuide.pdf <http://files.me.com/pfoster3/m1qs6p>

2. **Graphic Communications Technical Knowledge Test:** This will be a computerized test consisting of 50 questions related to competencies in the PrintED skill areas. No study guide is provided for this test. Daily participation in the PrintED certification process prepares the contestant with the necessary knowledge to be successful in this contest.
3. **Oral Assessment:** This contest will take the form of a live interview in which the contestant will interact with a member of industry. A list of questions to be completed before hand will be provided in order to allow the contestant to prepare for the interview. Contestants are expected to bring their resume to the competition.

See 2010OralAssessmentContest.pdf <http://files.me.com/pfoster3/s1vpcy>

4. **Production Planning Contest:** this contest will require the student to use simple math to solve an estimating problem. A breakdown of the problem will be provided to assist the contestant in preparing for the contest.

See 2010SkillsUSAGCProdPlanContestPrep.pdf <http://files.me.com/pfoster3/vhkg9>
2010ProductionPlanningContestTemplate.doc <http://files.me.com/pfoster3/efc2bx>
Appendix D--Estimating Problems.pdf <http://files.me.com/pfoster3/wul5ig>

5. **Electronic Prepress Contest:** This contest will take place on a Macintosh computer running Adobe CS4. Competitors can familiarize themselves with the software by downloading fully functioning trial copies of CS4 (Mac or PC) from Adobe's web site:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/creativesuite/design/trial/?promoid=EBYER>.

The contestant will be expected to create a trifold brochure (with compensation built into the layout for the folds) according to instructions provided. The contest will include should the following knowledge and skills:

Document Setup

- Know the meaning of document trim size, bleed, and margins, how these properties relate to the finished piece, and how they are represented on the screen in InDesign
- Know how to measure the size and position of objects on a finished piece and use the measurements to help construct a new document.
- Know how to use on-screen ruler, guides, and numeric entry to position objects.
- Know what bleed is and when and how to make an object bleed.
- Know the difference between facing and non-facing pages and when to use each.
- Know how to create custom colors.
- Know how to make a new color swatch and the difference between spot colors and process colors.

Graphics and Document Construction

- Know how to use the measurement palette to view and set the position of objects.
- Know how to use the reference point locator and its relation to object position.
- Know how to draw a box, set the fill and stroke color, and set the stroke width.
- Know how to place a picture from a file.
- Know how to position, scale, rotate and crop a picture, both numerically and with the mouse.
- Know the difference between the selection tool and the direct selection tool and when to use each.
- Know how to use the effects palette to set the opacity and transfer mode.
- Know how to arrange the stacking order of objects.

Text

- Know how to draw a text box and type text.
- Know how to import text from a file.
- Know the difference between character and paragraph attributes.
- Know how to set the following type attributes.

Character

Font and style
type size, leading
kerning and tracking
color, transparency

Paragraph

Space before and after
Indent, left, right, first line
Hyphenation

- Know how these attributes are written on a spec sheet.
- Know how to set up and apply character and paragraph style sheets.
- Know how to use the text wrap palette and how text wrap is effected by object layering.
- Know how to use spell check.

See 08_pgsf_careerguide.pdf <http://files.me.com/pfoster3/5b6pr6>

6. **Offset Press Operations Contest:** This contest tests the ability of the contestant to recognize mis-registration and make the adjustments necessary (lateral, circumferential, and skew) to print a 2-color job in register on a Heidelberg QM46-2. Since no classroom has a QM46, and to protect the condition of the press, the judge will assist the contestant in operational matters of the QM46.

Given 200 sheets of paper and 20 minutes the contestant will be expected to:

- load plates for printing units 1 and 2 in 5 minutes.
- Run test sheets as necessary to check the register
- Make lateral adjustments to bring unit 2 in register with unit 1
- Make circumferential adjustments to bring unit 2 in register with unit 1
- Make skew adjustments to both units 1 and 2 to bring units in register
- Run 100 good press sheets

The student will not be expected to:

- Adjust the ink or water balance
- Adjust the feed or delivery (feed problems, if they occur will be fixed by the judge)
- Clean the blanket
- Clear jams (jams, if they occur will be fixed by the judge)

See Heidelberg QM46 Training Video.mp4 <http://files.me.com/pfoster3/6leuue.mov>

7. **Binding and Finishing Contest:** In this contest, the contestant will be expected to set up basic folds on a Baum 714 XLT Air-feed folder. An extensive training video on the Baum 714 XLT Air-feed folder will be provided. There will also be a short 25 question computerized test on general binding and finishing knowledge.

See 714 XLT Airfeed Video.m4v <http://files.me.com/pfoster3/cu88ex.mov>