CONTEST INFORMATION FOR ADVERTISING DESIGN

This document has been provided to help competitors understand the process of how the contest works. It contains answers to commonly asked questions, what a competitor can expect to happen during the contest, and the process. The tool list and contest information is also included in this list.

If there are any updates, this document will be updated and notification of the document being updated will be posted on the State Technology College's website: *https://www.statetechmo.edu/skillsusa/index.php*

Supplied by the Contestant (Tool List)

❏ **Computer System**
   Mac or PC with **USB port** (including: CPU, keyboard, mouse and monitor) with graphic layout software (i.e. Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, etc.). *Contestants should bring software in which they are familiar.*

❏ **Required Art Supplies Needed:**
   ➔ Drawing pencils
   ➔ Eraser
   ➔ Colored pencils and/or artist markers
   ➔ Ruler (used for drawing straight lines AND measuring)
   ➔ Sketch book (minimum size 8x10, maximum size 9x12)

   Suggested/Optional Supplies to Consider:
   ➔ Artist markers
   ➔ Proportional wheel
   ➔ E Gauge or Pica Pole (measuring gauge for type, lines, leading, points, picas, etc)
   ➔ Drawing tablet (i.e. Wacom)
   ➔ Pencil sharpener (small, manual, handheld one)
   ➔ Extra batteries if using a wireless mouse/keyboard

❏ **Power Strip/Surge Suppressor**
❏ **Flash Drive** (1 GB or larger) that is USB… if you have a USB-C drive, you will also need to supply the adapter to convert it to a USB for judges to use to print your final designs.
❏ **Pencil** (for ad design knowledge test)
❏ **Resume** (uploaded by March 18th)

Ad Design Contest Location and Time

Date: Friday, April 8
Time: 8:00 A.M.–Completion *(estimated time is 3:00 p.m., but could go until 4 p.m.)*

Contest Location:
Information Tech Center, Rooms 103 & 104 - STC (1)
Room 103 = Computer setup and the actual contest will take place here
Room 104 = Contest introduction and presentation, lunch served

Estimated Timeline:

8:00–8:20	Room 103	Computer setup; attendance taken
8:25–9:25	Room 104	Contest introduction/presentation
9:30–11:30	Room 103	Mechanical portion is given first; then, begin sketching for creative
11:30–12:00	Room 104	Lunch Break (no students allowed in Room 103)
12:00–4:00	Room 103	Contest resumes; written advertising design test

Most students are completed by 3:00 p.m., however, the contest will officially end at 4:00 p.m. and if there are any students still working at 4:00 p.m., they will be forced to stop and submit their work at that point.

Out of respect to other contestants, if a contestant finishes the contest early, they may stay seated quietly or leave the contest area but they may NOT pack their computer/supplies until the majority of the students have completed the contest. In the past this has typically been at 3:00 p.m. (The packing of the computer and supplies is noisy and disruptive, therefore nobody is allowed to pack up early.)

What to Expect During the Contest

There are THREE components to the actual contest:
- ➔ Mechanical
- ➔ Creative
- ➔ Advertising Design general knowledge test

The Mechanical component of the contest shows the student has the technical skills to re-create an advertisement to specification and by accurately measuring the hard copy of the ad. This portion of the contest will begin immediately after the introduction/presentation. Students will be provided a hard-copy of the ad, along with instructions of what fonts are used and point size and are to show their mechanical/technical skills to recreate the ad exactly as shown. The original file is copy and pasted over the student's file to determine alignment.

The Creative component of the contest is where the student creates a design from imagination using the creative process of conceptual thinking, sketching and designing. Sketches must be signed off PRIOR to advancing to the computer to ensure the sketches were completed first and not after the final design. Students should combine the process of thumbnail sketches and a rough sketch to create "thumbnail-rough" sketches. These are the type of sketches that students at Nationals are instructed to create. They are typically at least 3" (no larger than 4") at the widest/tallest point, and are proportional to the final design shape or requirements. It is strongly suggested the sketches should be rendered in color. Remember, color sells!

The Advertising Design General Knowledge Test is simply a written test that covers general knowledge of the industry. The written test will be given to contestants AFTER they have successfully printed their creative portion of the contest. Students are given a similar test at the National contest.

A few quick responses to common questions during the contest:

➔ Internet usage during contest = No
➔ Listening to music with headphones = Yes, with one ear open for instructions/announcements
➔ Advisor takes pictures during contest = Yes
➔ Forgot supplies = Some loaner supplies available with a loss of points
➔ Forgot computer components = Call advisor. Quick!
➔ Print resume at contest = No
➔ Seating chart = Yes. Seating will be assigned by contestant number.

See the complete list of commonly asked questions from previous contest years on pages 5–6.

Your opinion, please…. Before students are allowed to "officially" leave the contest area, they are asked to submit a survey about their experience during the State conference. This is noted because in the past students have gone up until the end of the time for the contest and people from their school would come into the contest room to help them pack up their computer and "rush them" to leave because "the bus is waiting!" If it continues to happen, we will be forced to not allow anyone to pack up until the survey is turned in.

General Info • Helpful Things You Need to Know

★ **Just <u>BEFORE</u> Packing Your Computer to leave your town to come to SLSC…**
It is STRONGLY suggested that <u>every</u> contestant do the following steps:

1. Completely unhook ALL cables AND unplug the computer from all outlets at your school, just as you are doing to pack it up.

2. Connect ONLY the monitor, keyboard and mouse to the computer.

3. Plug in the power cord to the computer and directly into an outlet for power.

4. Do NOT plug in any network cables.

5. Log on to the computer.

6. Be sure the Internet/wifi connection is <u>disconnected</u> when logging on. This will ensure that the computer can be logged on locally without any school network/server connection whatsoever.

7. Launch <u>ALL</u> your design software. Once launched, create a new document (just to be sure it works!).

8. Shut down your computer and pack EVERYTHING in the box! *(Power cable, keyboard, mouse, power strip, etc)*

★ **Contestants need to verify their computer will load <u>and</u> <u>run</u> their software when disconnected from their school network.** Some software licensing credentials are validated over a school network. It is a disappointment when a student gets to contest and their computer won't load the software because of it searching for their school's server to validate the licensing on the software. *(FYI: This has happened every year at state and nationals!)*

★ **Contestants need to be sure there is contact information (phone number) of who they can call if they cannot get the computer to log in.** It is a disappointment when a student gets to contest and the computer they are using requires administrator credentials to log on as a local user and the advisor that is accompanying them on the trip is NOT a graphics teacher and they are clueless about computers. *(FYI: This has happened every year at state and nationals!)*

★ **Contestants need to be sure that ALL peripherals (keyboard, mouse, power cords) are packed in their box with their computer.** It is a disappointment when a student gets to contest and unpacks their computer to discover the keyboard or the power cord is not in the box. THERE ARE NO EXTRA KEYBOARDS, MICE, OR POWER CORDS AVAILABLE at contest for your computer. Pack extra if you have the room in your box! This will ensure you are prepared if the one you packed doesn't work -- or if you *think* you packed it and didn't. *(FYI: Believe it or not, this has happened every year at state and nationals!)*

★ **Contestants are encouraged to ask any questions about the contest they are unsure or unclear.** If you are unsure, "When in doubt, just ask!" If you ask a question that cannot be answered, the Contest Coordinators will simply say, "I'm sorry, I cannot answer that." Basically, Contest Coordinators are not allowed to answer "How do I…" questions. Contestants are expected to know how to use the software to create a design from imagination to completion (output). However, Contest Coordinators can assist students with troubleshooting of error codes on their computer or ~weird~ (uncommon) printing issues. *(FYI: This has happened every year at state and nationals!)*

★ **Contestants need to know how to save a file as a PDF.** All designs that will be judged must be printed on the same printer (used during the contest). Those files are supplied to a Contest Coordinator on the contestant's flash drive as a PDF file to be opened and printed by a Contest Coordinator. The Contest Coordinator cannot instruct contestants how to save their file as a PDF. *(FYI: This has happened every year at state and nationals!)*

★ **Contestants need to put contestant number on all pieces turned in.** Contestants will need to write their number on all hand-written test scoring sheets and sketches. Contestants are required to TYPE their contestant number on their designs submitted. It is sad when the judges are going through stacks of contestant submissions and there is a sheet of sketches or a printout that has fallen out of the stack and is missing the number and nobody knows which contestant's entries it belongs with for judging purposes. *(FYI: This has happened every year at state and nationals!)*

★ **Contestants are required to have all sketches signed off PRIOR to using computer and recommended to use color on sketches.** During the Creative portion of the contest, contestants will need to create "thumbnail-rough" sketches and have them signed prior to advancing to designing on the computer. Due to time constraints, it is suggested students combine the process of thumbnail sketches and a rough sketch to create "thumbnail-rough" sketches. These are the type of sketches that students at Nationals are instructed to create and it is suggested to do the same at state. This means the sketches are usually at least 3" and are proportional to the final design shape or requirements. It is strongly suggested the sketches should be rendered in color. Remember, color sells! *(FYI: This has happened every year at state and nationals!)*

★ **When designing an ad, the file should be set up as the size of the final ad.** During National contest a few years ago, it was announced that the majority of the students were creating ads on "letter-size" documents. All ads should be created the actual size of the ad. This is how they are created in industry; it allows for a bleed to go in the bleed area; it allows for crop/trim marks and any registration marks to print just outside of the ad (rather than along the edges of the letter-size paper). *(FYI: This has happened every year at state and nationals!)*

Clothing Requirement

Students must follow the State Contest clothing requirement. Please see the State Association Update or contact your Lead Advisor or District Coordinator for specific instructions. This uniform will be enforced.

(NOTE: For the National contest, contestants are required to wear the official white SkillsUSA logo polo, black pants, black socks and black shoes as stated on the technical standards. SkillsUSA official dress with the red jacket is <u>not</u> an option at Nationals.)

Commonly Asked Questions from Previous Years

Q: *What time do we need to arrive on Friday?*

A: Arrive promptly at 8:00 a.m. for setup **with** your computer and tools. Failure to do so may result in disqualification. If you arrive early, you may wait in the hallway until the contest coordinators are ready to open the doors.

Q: *Can I bring my computer on Thursday and get it set up in the room?*

A: No, because seating will be assigned on Friday morning. Also, there may be leadership contests being held in the contest room on Thursday and therefore, your computer could be in the way. Another issue is the security of the computer and supplies being left overnight in that room. STC, SkillsUSA and the technical advertising design committee cannot be responsible for computers or supplies left overnight.

Q: *My computer has wifi and is picking up the Internet access here on campus. Can we use the Internet during the contest?*

A: Internet access will **<u>NOT</u>** be allowed during the contest. Any contestant caught using online during the contest will be disqualified. Contestants are allowed to use the Internet <u>AFTER</u> the contest (when they have turned in all designs, sketches and printouts) and are waiting to be released to pack up their computer and officially leave.

Q: *Can I listen to music on my phone with headphones/earbuds during the contest?*

A: Listening to music can really help jump start your creative juices and get your ideas flowing. Therefore, listening to music with earbuds during the working time in the contest IS acceptable. <u>However</u>, one ear must be exposed for instructions/announcements AND the volume must be low enough that others won't hear any sounds from the earbuds. If your music is heard, you will be required to turn it off permanently during the rest of the contest. Please be respectful to others. *(Note: At Nationals, contestants are NOT allowed to listen to music.)*

Q: *Can I print my resume when I arrive to contest on Friday morning?*

A: No. You are expected to upload your resume no later than March 18th.

Q: *Can my advisor (or another representative from my school) come into the contest room during the contest to take my photograph?*

A: Yes, of course! Photographs are always welcome. The contest door will be closed to keep out the noise from the hallway. Advisors are welcome to open the door quietly to enter. *(And, at Nationals, your advisor can give their camera to a member of the National Education Team to take your picture. At Nationals, the contest area is roped off and it is sometimes hard for an advisor to get a good closeup photograph if you happen to be sitting in the middle of the contest area.)*

Q: *Is there a written test?*

A: Yes! Contestants need to be prepared to take a written advertising design general knowledge test. The advertising design knowledge test is a written test that covers general knowledge of the graphic design industry. Students are given a similar test at the National contest.

Q: *What if I arrive to contest and realize I forgot to pack one of my supplies?*

A: Some of the common supplies can be borrowed from the contest coordinator but the contestant will receive a point deduction **per item** loaned. Yikes! Check-and-double-check before you leave the hotel!

Q: *Why do I need to bring a surge protector/power strip?*

A: The room the contest is held has rows with tables and an aisle in the center. The power cord to your computer needs to reach the outlet in the wall at the end of the row of tables. Sometimes we don't need to use all the power strips, however, everyone is required to bring one.

Q: *Why do I need to bring a 1-gigabyte Flash drive?*

A: The contest assets will be copied to your flash drive. These assets will be images and resources for you to use to create your designs. No other images will be allowed to be used. (Note: You can create designs/images from imagination by hand, but the use of illustrations and photography images that you have pre-loaded on your computer are not allowed.) You will also use the flash drive to supply your file of the mechanical portion of the contest. USB flash drives only, please. (No, USB-C drives, please)

Q: *I can't draw very well. Will my sketches be judged against my drawing skills?*

A: The key to doing sketches is to get the ideas out of your head and onto paper in a layout to see if the idea/layout is even possible. If you don't draw well, it's okay, as long as you execute the idea clearly. *(Remember: drawing is a skill and will improve the more you practice.)*