

# SkillsUSA Virginia

## Advertising Design Technical Update: 2025

In accordance with current Advertising Design industry technical standards, the contest will be composed of two parts.

In the first section is the Computer mechanical. The student will be required to re-create a given advertisement on the computer, using contestant supplied software. The industry standard software packages that are acceptable are as follows: InDesign, PhotoShop, or Illustrator.

**NOTE: Students and advisors should be aware that their Adobe Creative Cloud subscription will require internet access to activate. We have been advised that we will have internet access in the competition area. The internet access will ONLY be used for software license activation. Competitors are prohibited from using the internet for design inspiration or images. These materials will be supplied to you for use during the competition. If the internet access works as promised, you will be able to access fonts from Adobe, however, it would be good practice to have any fonts you think you may need downloaded before the competition.**

The second part of the competition is the Creative Section. The majority of points will be awarded in the Creative Section. The students will be presented with a design challenge, which they will have to complete in the time allotted. They must follow and complete only 2 of the 3 steps to the creative process, (thumbnails, roughs and the comprehensive stage). Due to time constraints, the competitors will only provide Thumbnails and a final Comprehensive. The final comprehensive step is to be created on the computer; however, students must complete the thumbnails by hand.

Contestants will be required to create an Adobe Acrobat PDF file of both their Creative and Mechanical portions of the contest. Acrobat is an industry standard program, and many page layout programs support the exporting of files in this format. Please consult <http://www.adobe.com/> for specific information regarding Acrobat and Acrobat files, or contact the contest chairman with questions.

### Computer Mechanical:

In addition to the computer requirements listed above, students MUST bring a USB removable memory “jump-drive” to save their work to. These will be returned to the student.

### Creative:

As mentioned above, students will be creating thumbnails and roughs BY HAND. Therefore, it is critical that the student bring the proper art supplies with them, as they will not be supplied by the committee. There will also be NO sharing of supplies during the competition. (Unless a school has multiple competitors and needs them to share a scanner, for example.) **THE ONLY ALLOWABLE AND USABLE CLIP ART WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE COMMITTEE.** For the creation of other artwork to be used, students must rely on themselves and their talent. As such, students should bring:

- An assortment of graphite pencils and erasers and pencil sharpener
- Either colored pencils or markers or both
- Fine point black markers (i.e. Sharpie)
- Paper that is appropriate to the medium in which the student will be working, (i.e. marker paper or visualizer pad)
- A ruler that is at least 12”
- T-square, Triangle, compass or french curve **IF NEEDED** by student for drawing purposes
- Tape for securing paper to table if the student will be using a t-square
- A scanner is suggested and permitted but not required
- A digital camera is permitted but not required
- A digitizing tablet, (ie. Wacom tablet) is permitted but not required
- An iPad or similar tablet is permitted but not required
- **Above all, the student MUST bring with them whatever they feel they need to visually express the creative ideas in their heads.**
- **NOTE: There will be NO USE of AI related materials or techniques. NO generative fill etc. Use of AI will result in the competitor being disqualified from the competition.**

## Other REQUIRED Materials:

- A small extension cord
- A power strip

## Tips:

### **MECHANICAL:**

Students will re-create with exacting precision and existing ad. This means that they must be able to properly read a ruler and transfer the measurements to their computer layout program. Technical proficiency and time management skills are paramount for this section of the competition. The placement of an item on the computer mechanical is either correct OR incorrect. There is no room for error in size, placement, or spelling. Be precise.

### **CREATIVE:**

Contestants must be familiar with the creative process. That means starting with thumbnails, moving to roughs (which will not be required) then creating a final comprehensive. Proportion is extremely important. They must be able to determine the correct proportional thumbnail size from a given final product dimension. In addition, their thumbnails must be clear and communicative, as well as use color, and value properly. For the comprehensive students are judged on the strength of their ideas as well as the technical proficiency of their execution. Proper use of typography, color theory and the elements and principles of design are a must. Above all, be creative and appropriate to the subject matter.

## For more information:

If you have any further questions please contact Lee Troxell at [leetroxell2@gmail.com](mailto:leetroxell2@gmail.com) as soon as possible.