CGC Comic Book Authentication
To Certify or not to Certify?

By: Dave Gieber
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**Introduction: What Is CGC?**

CGC comics authentication, to slab or not to slab! Is this the question? It appears to me that there has been an onslaught of controversy over the whole concept of slabbing comic books by Comics Guarantee Corporation. CGC has been in operation now since 1999 and has developed quite a position for themselves in the comic book industry.

Although I don’t personally own any CGC comics yet, there are definitely pros and cons to the entire concept. Comics Guarantee will take your priceless gems and give them close scrutiny. They will then give them a grade and enclose each comic in a hard protective case with a seal on it. Of course this is done for a fee.

Many consider that CGC comics authentication may increase the market value of your comic book by two to three times the estimated value in the Overstreet Guide. And thus comes part of the controversy. One major drawback is now you can’t read your comic without breaking the seal. Once the seal is broken, re-certification is needed.

One very positive factor is if you decide to purchase a CGC graded comic book, you know exactly what you are getting. So this will give you a strong piece of mind when bidding at an auction or dealing with others selling you comics.

**CGC Comics Certified Benefits**

According to CGC, certification offers many benefits for comic book collectors, dealers and retailers:

- **CGC Graded Comics Establish a Grading Standard:** Their expert grading team has been able to establish a consistent market standard that can be widely trusted.

- **Expert Restoration Check:** Part of the CGC expert grading team's review of your comic book is to perform a thorough restoration check.

- **Increase Confidence Among Buyers and Sellers:** With a CGC comics graded book, buyers will know what they're getting and may become more confident and aggressive bidders. Sellers can be more confident they're getting paid a fair price for their book's condition.
• Holder Can Be Safely Opened: Their holder is designed to allow optimal visibility of the comic book and can be safely opened for comic book removal. The comic will then need re-certification at a reduced price.

• Better Protection for Comic Books: The CGC comics holder is made of state-of-the-art materials and is designed to meet the needs and demands of comic book collectors.

**Now there is a new kid on the block**

Well, it appears there is another third-party comic book grading company trying to establish credibility in the comic book industry. PGX Comics currently provides the same services as CGC, but their slabbing and grading prices and turn around times are advertised to be better.

PGX was created to meet the ever-growing demand for professional comic book grading. They advertise providing the best value available for comic book enthusiasts eager to have their comics graded and certified. Comics can be bought and sold with far greater confidence than comics that are not certified. This makes it far easier to buy and sell comics over the Internet, at conventions, in comic book stores, and so on. If you are looking to have your comics certified by an experienced grading company, then PGX may be worthwhile to consider.

Quite probably, many comic book collectors have yet to hear of PGX Comics. They are not yet the household word CGC Comics is. It may be worth your time to consider them for your slabbing and grading needs. PGX may become a force to reckon with in the future. Only time will tell.

**To Certify or Not to Certify!**

Well for those of you who think CGC Comics is not worth the price or is a scam, I have found some excerpts of an article by Michael Berlowe who tends to agree with you. The article was entitled “Infinite Comic Crisis”:

“Currently, there is a very sad, malevolent presence in the comic collecting world, and once again, the comic collector will pay the price. To get right to the point, it is this writer’s opinion that the C.G.C. is a S.C.A.M.!”
I always believed that half of the fun in comic collecting is evaluating and grading your comics, and the other half was reading them. When the CGC slabs a comic you can no longer do either...

...I refuse to send books or even buy books that have been slabbed. I recently saw a copy of Spawn #1 with a CGC grade of 10.0 get a winning bid on an ebay auction of $900. I just don’t get it. I envision a bidder at home who has had one too many beers, thinking.... "what can I waste my money on today?"...

I truly understand that the market is supply and demand, and in an auction, the market determines the price. But the fundamental problem here is, who is the winner and who is the loser? Obviously the CGC is making some good money from this service (and I am not faulting them for that, they are being paid for a legitimate service that does take skill and time). The loser however, is definitely the consumer. They are paying way too much money for books that are not worth the value (an over inflated market). Did we not learn anything from the Valiant era? Remember that? A bunch of books that were "Hot" and everybody wanted them, and the price was so over inflated, that when the market dropped, you could here the thud in the arctic regions of the planet. With CGC graded books, we are no longer comic collectors, just investors in wall art!"

Toons and Beyond ComicStore
http://myweb.cableone.net/tbeyond/cgc.html
Michael Berlowe

Final Thoughts
Regardless of the controversy of CCG comics, it appears that they are here to stay. I would recommend that every serious comic book collector have at least a few in their collection. I guess I will have to look into acquiring a few myself. I may then have to go down to my local bank and check into the possibility of getting a security box. Ha ha, I can only dream.

The rest of this special report contains information that I have researched out. My hope is to give you enough info to help you formulate your own opinions on CGC Authenticated comic books. And always feel free to visit and bookmark my comic book site. I am compiling some of the best comic book information on the Net.
Dave Gieber
Webmaster and Operator of
Comments by Chuck Rozanski of Mile High Comics-
Part 1

www.milehighcomics.com/tales/cbg02.html

CGC Comics, Part I

During my 32 years in the world of collecting comics, I don't think I've ever witnessed a phenomena that has ignited as much controversy as "slabbing" comics. Ever since Comics Guarantee Corporation first appeared on the scene a little over two years ago, there has been an ongoing heated debate as to the propriety of having comics graded by this ostensibly disinterested third-party company. Of particularly intensity has been the debate as to their policy of sealing graded comics in hardcase plastic holders, which cannot be opened without voiding the grading guarantee.

I have to admit that my first reaction to CGC's proposal for endorsement at the 1999 Overstreet Advisor's Conference was immediate hostility. I have always been an advocate of reading the comics you buy, even if you've purchased them as an investment. The idea of sealing rare comics in a hardcase holder (as had previously been done by private individuals using commercially available products) was an anathema me. What swung me around to accepting, but not endorsing, CGC's participation in the comics market, was their agreement (under pressure from conference attendees) to make their hardcases reasonably easy to open, and their willingness to reseal and certify those cases for a reduced fee. To me, that seemed like a reasonable compromise.

Since that first meeting at the Overstreet Advisor's Conference, I have gradually become an advocate of CGC. So much so that I have now had over 1,000 comics slabbed for Mile High Comics. My reasons for changing my position are as follows:

1. Purchasing books graded by CGC allows consumers a reasonable expectation of condition when they buy a comic online, or through the mail. Given that online sales, especially through eBay, are the largest single source of growth in the current surge in the back issue comics market, it is quite nice that there is a generally accepted method that allows purchasers to have confidence that what they are buying, or bidding on, is actually as represented.
2. While I don't always agree with CGC grading, I find that I do agree over 90% of the time. That is a vastly higher percentage than what I found when dealing with certain comics dealers in the past. Sadly, I've seen instances where some dealers have made a living by inflating grades. A few particularly odious dealers could never use CGC, as they would diminish the value of their inventory (assuming no CGC premium) by half, or more, if they had them professionally graded.

3. Along those same lines, the CGC staff is especially vigilant for restoration. I've been selling comics for three decades, but I still am sometimes fooled by the tricks people use to upgrade comics. Knowing that the comic that you're shelling out big bucks for hasn't been tampered with takes a lot of anxiety out of the transaction.

4. CGC can more accurately certify "pedigree" collections. As the source of the original "Mile High" collection, I have been appalled at the number of times I have been asked to validate books that were supposed to be from the "Mile High" collection, but clearly were not. Given the amazing price multiples that books from certain pedigree collections command, the temptation to misrepresent the origin of other top condition comics is very high.

5. On the flip side of the "pedigree" issue, I believe that there has been an unreasonable disparity in the market as regards those same pricing multiples. Why should a Golden Age comic found in an attic in New Jersey that is in 9.4 sell for less than the same "Mile High" book in 8.0? I'll grant you that there is a certain cachet and mystique attached to any comic book originally collected by Edgar Church, but does the same hold true for all pedigree collections? Why should only dealers who have the resources to hype a given pedigree collection reap the rewards of those multiples over Guide? In this regard, I see CGC somewhat leveling the playing field for private individuals, and smaller dealers, to sell high grade comics at a premium. I think that is just dandy.

6. To my great surprise, collecting CGC comics has become a subset of the entire comics collecting field. There are now collectors and/or investors who avidly seek out CGC graded comics, and for a few, CGC graded comics are the only ones that they will purchase. I find this rather odd, as the premiums being paid for CGC graded comics are currently running far above the cost of having them graded. I am presuming that this implied premium reflects a current under supply in the number of CGC graded comics on the market. I
also presume that this premium will diminish over time. In any event, some comics collectors very much like "slabbed" comics, so that market appears to be here to stay.

7. While the current CGC population report information covers only two years of certification, I still find it fascinating reading. I would have thought that by now that there would have been a number of examples of every early high grade Silver and Golden Age comic certified. Especially considering the premiums over Guide currently being paid. What I find, instead, is that for the majority of Silver and Golden Age comics, there has not been even a single copy graded, much less one in 8.0 or above. To some extent, I'm sure this reflects an unwillingness by many owners to pay the cost of certification. It also occurs to me, however, that this may also reflect a far greater scarcity of high grade older comics than most of us had previously perceived. Only time will tell on this one...

8. As a dealer, I have been cheated more times than I can remember over the years by consumers ordering a comic from us in a given grade, and then returning to us a different comic in lower grade for a refund. Sending out "slabbed" books on our more expensive product protects us from that one element of fraud.

Well, those are all the reasons I have room for in this column. Suffice it to say, I now believe that CGC has become a viable and integral part of the overall market for back issue comics. I am clearly aware that many of you are vehemently opposed to slabbing, and that some of you even think that the entire concept is just a scam. That's fine with me, and I certainly grant you the right to your opinion. I was once of the same mind. These days, however, I have embraced third-party grading as a concept, and actively participate in that market. Hardly a day goes by that I don't sell at least one CGC graded issue. This is a new and evolving trend, and I welcome this change as an improvement to the world of comics collecting.

Next week I'll give yet another group of you a chance to become peeved with me, as I tackle the issue of Marvel's decision to restrict their print runs to orders on hand.

Please send your e-mails to chuck@milehighcomics.com, and your letters to:

Mile High Comics, Inc.
Attn: Chuck Rozanski
"Slabbed" Books Are Here To Stay....

Returning to the topic of the current debate about the propriety of having comics "slabbed" by Comics Guarantee LLC, I have a couple of observations that expand on my comments from my second column. In that particular essay I provided seven reasons for why I now participate in the market for CGC graded comics, and why I think having third-party grading of comics is here to stay. Since I wrote that column, however, some new events have transpired in this rapidly-evolving area of comics collecting.

The first event that transpired was that I reluctantly sold a CGC 10.0 ORIGINS #1 for $1,000 last week. Most certainly, this is a record selling price for any comic printed within the same year. This book was listed on eBay for a 10-day auction, and drew over 1,000 visitors, including 10 different buyers willing to pay more than my $500.00 starting price. The final winning bid was $759.90, which I refused. I held firm to my $1,000 reserve price, as I simply didn't want to sell the book. Why? Because to me the publicity value of having the only 10.0 copy of this book far exceeded the cash value of the sale price. To be specific, any item that makes 1,000 potential buyers aware of the fact that you handle CGC graded comics is worth listing multiple times on eBay. If, after several listings on eBay, it had never made the reserve, then I would probably have lowered the reserve price. But, at the end of the first listing on eBay, I had two different buyers who wanted to purchase the book at the $1,000 price. One went home hungry...

I'm writing about this transaction because I see this sale as a very clear example of the upper end of CGC demand. Recently I read some an analysis in CBG #1463 by my esteemed editor, John Jackson Miller, that indicated that demand for modern CGC 10.0's seemed to be waning. Well, not so that I can notice. Certainly there has been some measure of recognition that the print runs of some comics printed
during the 1990's were so large that the potential for additional 10.0's being discovered is quite high. SPAWN #1, in particular, had a print run well over a million copies, so I don't doubt that many more 10.0's of that issue will be discovered. I need to point out, however, that ORIGINS #1 is a far cry from SPAWN #1 in terms of scarcity. Not only was the print run of ORIGINS #1 only approximately 10% of SPAWN #1, but I've heard from a few dealers that all of their copies arrived from Diamond with a printing flaw that marred the cover. I'm not sure how widespread this problem may have been, but I do know it reduces, in some measure, the potential pool of 10.0 candidates within the already small ORIGINS #1 print run.

Before you think that I made out like a bandit on this sale at $1,000, I need to point out that only time will tell if I made a great deal, or sold too cheaply. Bear in mind, I've been around for a while, and have made many past sales that appeared insanely high at the time, but have in the end turned out to be incredible bargains. For example, I sold the "Mile High" ACTION COMICS #1 for $25,000 in 1982. OVERSTREET PRICE GUIDE #11 (1981/1982) NM/M was $11,500, so getting 2.2 times Guide (cash) seemed outrageous at that time. Soon afterwards, however, a frenzy began for books from the "Mile High" collection, as collectors finally figured out that Golden Age books in extremely high grades were far scarcer than had originally been believed. Suddenly MH books started selling for multiples up to 10X Guide. This has progressed to the point that I've heard rumors that the current owner of the MH ACTION COMICS #1 has recently refused an offer of $1,000,000, cash. Now, instead of being admired for selling ACTION #1 for over double Guide, I have any number of people who think I was a fool to let the book go in the first place. If no other copy of ORIGINS #1 IN 10.0 ever surfaces, there might also be those who think I was a fool to sell it so cheaply in a few years hence. Only time will tell...

Speaking of increases in value, I just returned from Mid-Ohio Con in Columbus, and I saw there a strong trend toward dealers factoring estimated CGC premiums into the prices of their unslabbed Silver Age comics. In one case, I wanted to buy an unslabbed copy of FANTASTIC FOUR #1 in NM (9.4?), but couldn't afford it at the $2,000 asking price. The dealer apologized for the high asking price, but explained that he thought he could get at least $2,500 if he had the book slabbed. In another instance, I was with a fellow dealer looking at a private collection where the seller wanted 75% of NM Guide for his AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1. My friend agreed to go to that high a percentage only because he firmly believed that he could mark the
book up to at least 50% over Guide, if it were slabbed. Clearly, the potential for premium pricing based on CGC certification is changing the way that dealers think about the pricing of high-grade Silver Age.

Based on those observations, if I could give just one bit of cogent advice to comics collectors right now, it would be to buy up all the high-grade Silver Age you can find at current Guide. The rush to slab these books is rapidly eating away at the available supply, and I see significant shortages looming in the near future. No one can ever make absolute predictions, but I see the prices of high-grade Silver Age comics rising very rapidly over the next year. Even if the current trend toward slabbing comics goes away, the fact that people are now actively looking for them has highlighted their scarcity. In any collectibles field, scarcity, combined with high demand, almost inevitably leads to increases in asking prices.

I think this trend toward higher prices has already begun, but will probably not be reflected in the Price Guides for at least another six months. I've gone to nearly a dozen conventions this year as a wholesale buyer, and I've seen a steady increase in the level of activity in all aspects of the comics collecting hobby. Collectors are not only seeking out CGC comics, but also comics in just about every back issue genre imaginable. There was a chill on the comics market after September 11th, but the recovery of the National Comics Show (promoted by Big Apple Conventions in Manhattan three weeks ago), and strong attendance at last week's Mid-Ohio Con, lead me to believe that 2002 may well be the biggest year in history for back issue comics demand. Already we're setting new back issue sales records almost every week at Mile High Comics, so I can easily foresee next year starting off with a strong surge in consumer demand for old comics. Let's keep our fingers crossed, but it sure looks like the good times are back! This is great news not only for comics dealers, but also for anyone with a personal comics collection. There's nothing like a vibrant and growing market to ease the anxiety of investing in a collectibles field.

Next week I'll cover pricing trends I'm seeing on low-grade Silver Age and Golden Age comics.

Please send your e-mails to chuck@milehighcomics.com, and your letters to:

Mile High Comics, Inc.
Attn: Chuck Rozanski
Introducing Comics Guaranty

www.cgccomics.com/about

Graded Comics

Comics Guaranty, LLC (CGC) is an independent member of the Certified Collectibles Group of companies.

The Certified Collectibles Group is an umbrella organization consisting of Numismatic Guaranty Corporation of America (NGC) the leading grading service in rare coins, Sportscard Guaranty, LLC (SGC) the fastest growing grading service in sportscards, and now CGC the first independent, impartial, expert third party grading service in comics.

Our certification companies have a proven and respected commitment to integrity, accuracy, consistency and impartiality in grading collectibles that has made them leaders in their fields. This proven model of success is ideally suited to adapt to the unique challenges of grading comic books.

Grading Benefits

www.cgccomics.com/about/grading_benefits.asp

Certification offers many benefits for comic book collectors, dealers and retailers:

- CGC Graded Comics Establish a Grading Standard
CGC's top grading experts have traveled the country to have the leading comic book collectors, retailers, and dealers review a grading set of comic books. Using the average of their opinions as a guide, our expert grading team has been able to establish a consistent market standard that can be widely trusted.

- Expert Restoration Check
Part of the CGC expert grading team's review of your comic book is to perform a thorough restoration check. When detected, restoration is specifically noted on the grading label, or visible through a different colored label.

- Increase Confidence Among Buyers and Sellers
With a consistent grading standard and a tamper-evident protective holder, buyers and sellers will be able to trade with more confidence by mail, phone, or on the Internet, because they'll know what to expect of a CGC graded book. Buyers that know what they're getting are more likely to be confident and aggressive bidders. Sellers can be more confident they're getting paid a fair price for their book's condition.

- **Holder Can Be Safely Opened**
  Our holder is designed to allow optimal visibility of the comic book. We have designed our holder so that it can be opened carefully, allowing safe removal. Due to the fragile nature of comic books, once our holder is opened, we then recommend the immediate re-certification of the comic book. When Re-Certifying the comic book, the inner label should be returned to CGC for a $5 re-certification credit ($10 off WalkThru Service).

- **Better Protection for Comic Books**
  The CGC holder is made of state-of-the-art materials and is designed to meet the needs and demands of comic book collectors. There is no other holder which protects comic books as well as the CGC holder.

**History-Why Are We Here?**
[www.cgccomics.com/about/history.asp](http://www.cgccomics.com/about/history.asp)

**A Proven Standard of Integrity**
To best serve the needs of the comics hobby, CGC has made a commitment to meeting or exceeding the market's unique requirements while also applying its management's experience and reputation for integrity in certification. CGC employees are not allowed to engage in the commercial buying or selling of comics. In this way, CGC can remain completely impartial, having no vested interest other than a commitment to serving clients through accurate and consistent grading.

Each comic book will be graded by expert graders according to CGC standards, in a way that preserves the integrity, quality, and confidentiality of the grading process.

CGC's attractive and durable tamper-evident holder utilizes cutting-edge technologies to provide the best protection for your books. The holder is slim and lightweight making for easy storage and transportation. Its front and top labels display comprehensive information about the book and its grade. The holder allows clear
viewing from the outside as well as a safe opening mechanism for easy access to the book if the owner decides to break the seals and invalidate the certification.

**A Commitment to Hobby Enrichment**

Our commitment is to enhance the experience of an expanding number of comics collectors for decades to come. To accomplish this, CGC will work diligently toward these goals:

1. **To Build Trust...** by increasing the confidence of collectors and new market participants in the integrity, impartiality, expertise and consistency of CGC certification.

2. **To Build the Advantage of Expertise...** by establishing a grading standard the knowledgeable collector or dealer can continue to trade and submit books for certification successfully while the novice can purchase their favorite books with confidence. The implicit advantages in hobby knowledge will encourage collectors of all levels to explore the hobby and increase their expertise.

3. **To Build Consensus...** around a CGC grading standard that reflects broad market standards based on wide research and input from collectors and dealers nationwide, so that confidence in trading comic books of all types and values is greatly increased.

4. **Collector with Comic To Build Advantages for the Collector...** by revealing the unique characteristics of each book we grade, so that a more informed buyer can confidently pay as much as he believes the book to be worth to his collection.

5. **To Build Interest...** in the collecting public whose novice interest can be expanded safely and enjoyably by purchasing certified comics for their collection.

6. **CGC is committed to...**
   Listening to professionals, collectors and industry experts throughout the company's initial stages and growth and into the future...
   Remain consistent to our market standard for grading...
   Remain committed to expert restoration detection...
   Offer all of these services at a reasonable price that represents an exceptional opportunity for the collector and dealer...
   Offer all of these services with the brand of CCG professionalism that breeds trust and respect throughout the comics hobby.
When your comics are graded by CGC, you can trust that the highest level of expertise, impartiality, and consistency will be applied to every comic, every day.

Who Is Grading Your Comics? Meet CGC's Grading Team!
www.cgccomics.com/about/the_graders.asp

Mark Haspel, Senior Grader, Restoration Detection Expert
Mark is formerly a comics dealer with a nationwide clientele in southern Florida and a graduate of the University of Florida. As a dealer, he was involved in the discovery of the now famous Spokane collection and held numerous auctions under the company name Comics on Parade, Inc. He is a grading advisor to the Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide and has consulted on grading for Sotheby's. Mark is one of the top experts on Pedigree comics in the business. With a national reputation, built in part through being a fixture at most national comics conventions, his broad experience ranging from Gold and Silver all the way to Modern books gives him the type of in-depth market knowledge perfectly suited for the CGC grading team.

Paul Litch, Senior Grader, Modern Age Specialist, Restoration Detection Expert
A lifelong collector and comic aficionado, Paul has been actively involved in many aspects of the hobby. A graduate of Rutgers University, he founded the Cartoonists Association of Rutgers, which produced a weekly all-comics newspaper, as well as a tri-annual full-color book edition. His eye for comics has been sharpened by years of working with Steve and Mark and his previous work in photojournalism. His extensive knowledge of the modern age of comics and all their variants is why he is CGC's Modern Age specialist. He was drawn to CGC by his enthusiasm for comics, especially Silver and Modern Age.

West Stephan, Grader
West's start into the world of comics actually began in Toys R Us at the age of 12. At 15 he attended his first comic book convention. Shortly after this he got his first booth at a convention and sold as a dealer. West started collecting high-grade Golden Age books specializing mostly in Edgar Church/Mile Highs and other Pedigree copies such as San Franciscos and Larsons. Over the years he has owned many runs of Mile Highs, including titles such as Action Comics, All-Flash, Boy Commandos, Green Lantern, Leading Comics, More Fun Comics, Star Spangled Comics and Suspense Comics to name a few. West brings his
experience of grading books, his knowledge and study of Pedigrees, his trust and entrenchment within the collecting community, as well as training in restoration detection for the last 15 years.

**Dave Couillou, Grader**

Dave has been a collector of modern and Silver Age comics since 1981. As a completist, Dave has put together some impressive runs on well-known comics books. While attending the Joe Kubert School of Art in 1982-83, he was turned from a casual reader into an avid collector very quickly by his love for the art and fantasy of comic books. His knowledge and attention to detail has been an asset in helping CGC distinguish the many variant comic books on the modern market today.

**Shawn Caffrey, Grader, Modern Age Specialist**

Shawn has been a collector and fan of comics since 1985. Surrounded by fellow collectors throughout his adult life, he has expanded his knowledge and love for comics from Silver through Modern Age books of all genres and has amassed an impressive collection. Shawn’s love for comics can be seen in his column in the monthly CGC e-newsletter. With guidance from his fellow collectors, along with the invaluable tutelage from the CGC grading team, he has developed a keen eye for grading and an in-depth knowledge of the Modern Age market. Working alongside Paul Litch for the last four years, Shawn has gained extensive knowledge in distinguishing variants which has helped make him the backbone of CGC's Modern Age department.

**John Slater, Grader, Comic Magazine Specialist**

An avid collector for over 30 years, John has been involved in a wide variety of comic-related activities, including running a successful mail order business dealing in everything from comics and comic magazines to vintage paperbacks. For the last two years, John has studied with and has been a pre-grader for Steve Borock and Mark Haspel. John has been collecting (and reading) comics and comic magazines since the late 1960's and has in-depth knowledge of comic magazines and comic books from the Silver and Bronze Age. Although John is a specialist in all comic magazines, he is most interested in Warren magazines such as Famous Monsters and Vampirella. Bringing his extensive understanding, experience, and enthusiasm for comic books and comic magazines John has become an integral part of the CGC grading team.

**CGC Grading**

[www.cgccomics.com/grading](http://www.cgccomics.com/grading)
There is an easy to understand label placed on the interior of the holder on certified comic books. The label displays the title, issue #, publisher and grade of a comic book. It can also display the importance (for Key Issues) or the artist (if by an important artist). There are four different colored labels that represent:

- **Universal (blue)** — This label is applied to comic books that are simply the grade as marked with no qualifiers or special considerations.

- **Signature Series (yellow)** — This label is applied to comic books that have been signed by someone of significance to the comic, under the direct observation of a CGC employee, and are thus certified as an authentic signature by CGC.

- **Qualified (green)** — A Qualified label is used by CGC for certified books that have a significant defect that needs specific description. For example, it is would be a disservice to the seller and buyer to call a VF/NM book with a 4-inch back cover tear a VG, so CGC will give this book a Qualified grade of "VF/NM 9.0, back cover 4-inch tear."

- **Restored (purple)** — This label is applied to any comic book that has evidence of repair so it will appear as it did when it was in its original condition. Restoration can come in a variety of degrees, slight professional restoration (SP) to extensive amateur restoration (EA).

- **Modern (red)** — An outdated label used originally to distinguish modern comics. (these books can be sent in for our New Holder service and receive a blue, universal label at the same grade)

**Services And Fees**

[www.cgccomics.com/services](http://www.cgccomics.com/services)

The following charts are CGC's current prices for grading tiers. Comics Services and Fees and Magazine Size Comic Services and Fees are separated into their own charts. Please remember that the turnaround times are estimates only and CGC does not guarantee them!

Please read the Shipping Your Books section before sending us your submissions and contact us at 1(877) NMCOMIC if you have any further questions.
Comics Services and Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Service</th>
<th>New Shipping Books Received on?</th>
<th>Estimated Turnaround</th>
<th>Maximum Value per Book</th>
<th>Minimum Quantity</th>
<th>Retail Price per Book</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>5/12/05</td>
<td>40 business days</td>
<td>up to $250</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$29.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>On-Time</td>
<td>15 business days</td>
<td>up to $1000</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$49.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>On-Time</td>
<td>5 business days</td>
<td>up to $4000</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$79.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Day Express</td>
<td>On-Time</td>
<td>20 business days</td>
<td>up to $4000</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$49.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coupon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Col $oc</td>
<td>Coupon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkthru</td>
<td>Same-Day</td>
<td>Same day</td>
<td>no limit</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2.5% F.M.V.†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern*</td>
<td>7/9/05</td>
<td>20 business days</td>
<td>up to $200</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$16.00 per book. $15.00 per book for submissions of 10 or more books.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reholder**</td>
<td>10 Days</td>
<td>10 business days</td>
<td>no limit</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recert.***</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Service selected</td>
<td>Service selected</td>
<td>Service selected</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Modern service is limited to books published from 1975 to the present.
**Re-Holder Service is for a chipped, scratched or cracked holder that has not been opened or had its seals broken. We will place your comic in a new holder.
***Comics that have been removed from the CGC holder can receive a $5 discount ($10 for Walkthru) if sent in for Re-Certification with its original CGC holder label. Label is for discount only. Comics submitted for Re-Certification with their original label ARE NOT GUARANTEED TO RECEIVE THE SAME GRADE.
†Please allow time for postal delivery for books being shipped out today.
††F.M.V. (Fair Market Value). Minimum Charge $110.00, Maximum charge $1080.00

Please remember, that CGC does not return mylars or backing boards sent in with comic books.

About PGX

http://pgxcomics.com

PGX was created to meet the ever-growing demand for professional comic book grading. We provide the best value available for comic book enthusiasts eager to have their comics graded and certified. Comics can be bought and sold with far greater confidence than comics that are not certified. This makes it far easier to buy and sell comics over the Internet, at conventions, in comic book stores, and so on. If you are looking to have your comics certified by an experienced grading company, then PGX is for you.

What makes PGX stand apart from the competition? We offer you:
• Reliability and Consistency - Our graders have a combined 55 years of experience in the field of comic books.

• Low Prices - You don't have to break the bank to have your comics graded, certified and encapsulated.

• Fast Turnaround Time - No need to wait months to get your comics back.

• Durable Book Holder - Once a comic is certified, it is well-protected in the strongest comic book holder on the market. The book can be easily removed from the holder at any time.

• Easy Submission - You deal directly with PGX so there's no need to submit your comics through a dealer.

• Friendly and Personal Service - We are committed to satisfying our customers.

• Insurance - All comic books sent to PGX are fully insured while at the PGX facility.

Our Guarantee
We at PGX we:

Listen to our Customers
From day one we have not only listened to the concerns of our customers, but have acted on what they have told us. We have incorporated their suggestions whenever possible, and will continue to do so. PGX is committed to adapting whenever necessary to fully meet our customers' high expectations.

Are Impartial
By being absolutely impartial in our grading services we can build trust with our customers, with the entire comic book community, and maintain our integrity and reputation as a trusted grading source.

Provide the best Holder
We use the highest quality comic book holder available on the market. Our holder is made from the highest quality materials, offering the best in protection for your comics. The holder offers outstanding visibility, making the viewing of a certified comic book easy and enjoyable.
**Build Trust**  
PGX will grow as a company that buyers and sellers of comic books throughout the United States, and the world, can trust for fair and accurate grading for a reasonable price. This has been, and will continue to be, the main focus of our business.

We at PGX believe that honoring these commitments will propel us to the top of the industry for third-party certification of comics. By incorporating the invaluable feedback we have received from industry professionals, dealers, collectors, and grading experts we believe that what we offer will have only positive effects on the comic book marketplace and on the hobby as a whole. PGX is dedicated to promoting the growth of comic book collecting around the world.

We would like to thank everyone who has shared their thoughts and ideas with us, and we hope you will continue to do so. Your comments are always welcome. Please send us your feedback.

**Current Offerings**

http://pgxcomics.com/services.cfm

When your comic books arrive at PGX, they are carefully unpacked, inspected, digitally imaged, given a tracking number, and then entered into our computer. Every book submitted to PGX undergoes our thorough grading and certification process.

Each book is inspected by our PGX Grading Team, which consists of three people:

[1] The first person is our pre-grader.  
[2] The second is our restoration expert and primary grader.  
[3] The third is our senior and final grader.

After going through the grading process, your comic books are encapsulated in our special holder, given a certification label, and then packaged up and sent on their way back to you. Click here for the submission form to get started.

Need help on how to submit your comics? Click on the red "Submit Books" button to your left for additional information.

Listed below are the services we currently offer:
**Grading Service**  
Modern Age - Comics published from 1978 to present.  
Golden Age - For books published from 1955 and earlier.  
Classic - This is a rush service and is available for all comic books.  
Next Day - This service is also available for Golden Age books.  
Re-certify - For having your books re-graded by PGX.

**Cost**  
This is the cost for grading your comics, and is on a per book basis. Please call us for books with a FMV of over $4000. We like to know when high dollar books are coming in and prefer to speak with the customer about the books before they are sent to us.

**Maximum Fair Market Value**  
This pertains to individual books. For example, if you have an Incredible Hulk #181 that has a FMV of $600, you must use the Classic Service, as the Standard Service has a Maximum FMV of $300. FMV is used to determine return insurance so we advise you not to undervalue your books.

**Return Time**  
Defined as the number of business days between us receiving your comic books and us shipping them back to you. We guarantee our posted return times to within 4 business days, and often books are returned sooner than posted return times. If we keep your books for more than 4 business days over the posted return times, we will provide you with compensation.

**SS**  
This stands for Selected Service, and is mainly used for re-certification.

Books that are sent in to be re-certified will receive a 15% discount when returned with the original Certification Label. Books that are submitted for re-certification undergo the full PGX Grading Process but are not guaranteed to receive their original grade.

**Pre-Screening**  
You no longer need to pay the full cost of encasing a comic book that does not make the grade you want. With our Pre-Screening Service, you only pay for encasing comics at the minimum grade you set. Read the details here.
**Loose Items**
If you would like to have loose items such as 3-D Glasses or Certificates of Authenticity encased with your comic book, please include written authorization and note where in the holder you would like them placed (e.g. in front of or behind the book, inside the front or back cover, etc.), or call us before submitting the book. We are happy to include loose items with your books whenever possible. When sending books with Certificates of Authenticity, please include any bags or stickers that were originally with the book. Also note that we do not verify that any included Certificates of Authenticity are authentic, but as an added measure we will not include any suspicious Certificates of Authenticity with any book.

**Creator Signatures**
If there is a signature on a book we will make a note of the signature and where the signature is. We do not guarantee the signature on any book is authentic.

**Combining Services**
If you are ordering from different services at the same time and would like your books returned together, make sure to include all books when calculating shipping and insurance costs. If you would like your books returned separately according to the particular services you have chosen, please include separate figures for return shipping and insurance according to the number of books from each service.

**Changes in Services**
Turnaround times and prices are subject to change. Any anticipated changes will be posted to our PGX News section as far in advance as possible before any changes would take place.

**Thorough Restoration Check**
A thorough restoration check is done on every book that goes through the PGX Certification process. Books with restoration are assigned a 'Restored' label with restoration being noted below the grade. Books with slight color touch will be assigned the Blue World label with slight color touch being noted below the grade.

**How PGX compares to CGC**
[www.pgxcomics.com/compare.cfm](http://www.pgxcomics.com/compare.cfm)

At Professional Grading eXperts (PGX) we offer you plenty of reasons to go with us. We provide consistent, accurate grading of your comic
books, full restoration checks, excellent customer service, and very fast turnaround times. Furthermore, the cost of our services won't empty your wallet. We also provide you a top quality comic book holder that has a superior holder design. These are the things PGX feels are important to you, our customers.

To be fair, however, there is another comic book grading company named Comics Guaranty (CGC) based in Sarasota, Florida. While we both offer you professional comic book grading, we think a side-by-side comparison will convince you that PGX is the obvious choice!

PGX makes it easy to submit your comic books:
[1] Print the submission form.
[3] Pack up your comics and mail them to PGX.

That's all there is to it!

There is no society to join, no membership fees, and no middlemen involved.

Furthermore, we beat the competition based on price, turnaround time, and fair market value limits. Check out these comparisons:

The prices you pay above are on a per comic book basis.
Infinite Comic Crisis

Michael Berlowe

Currently, there is a very sad, malevolent presence in the comic collecting world, and once again, the comic collector will pay the price. To get right to the point, it is this writer's opinion that the C.G.C. is a S.C.A.M.!

I always believed that half of the fun in comic collecting is evaluating and grading your comics, and the other half was reading them. When the CGC slabs a comic you can no longer do either. Do you think if I called a book CGC 9.5, it would get the same price as one that is an official CGC 9.5 graded book. That would be a very interesting experiment. To list the same book on eBay in and out of the package.
What do you think would happen? Opening a CGC graded book is just like driving a new car off the car lot. How much money can you lose in one meaningless action. I have owned a comic store for 6 years now, and when the CGC grading started, I saw many other dealers sending all there high grade books to cash in on this trend. Personally, I have to stick to my beliefs that this is wrong. And as a dealer with integrity, I refuse to send books or even buy books that have been slayed. I recently saw a copy of Spawn #1 with a CGC grade of 10.0 get a winning bid on an ebay auction of $900. I just don’t get it. I envision a bidder at home who has had one too many beers, thinking.... "what can I waste my money on today?".

If the overstreet guide says that a comic in NM/M is a specific price, how in the world can it be worth 2-5 times that, just because a group of a few guys say it is. Doesnt the word "Mint" mean mint. I guess a CGC books is EXTRA mint, a new catagory. It means that it is so mint, that if you stand next to it, your aging process will reverse, and you will start to accumulate value. There must be about a ba-zillion different comics that are worth more than a spawn #1 and sooo many more that are a better investment for that kind of money. Let me parallel this with someone who is an automobile collector/enthusiast. If you went to a new car dealership and bought a brand new "mint" car and encased it in plastic, would that car suddenly be worth 2-3 times what you paid for it? And what good would it be once it is in plastic, it can no longer function for what it was created to do.

I truely understand that the market is supply and demand, and in an auction, the market determines the price. But the fundamental problem here is, who is the winner and who is the loser? Obviously the CGC is making some good money from this service (and I am not faulting them for that, they are being paid for a legitimate service that does take skill and time). The loser however, is definitely the consumer. They are paying way too much money for books that are not worth the value (an over inflated market). Did we not learn anything from the Valiant era? Remember that? A bunch of books that were "Hot" and everybody wanted them, and the price was so over inflated, that when the market dropped, you could here the thud in the arctic regions of the planet. With CGC graded books, we are no longer comic collectors, just investors in wall art!

Toons and Beyond Comic store
http://myweb.cableone.net/tbeyond/cgc.html
Michael Berlowe
Draw You Own Conclusions

Well, there you have it. Hopefully, this has been enough information to help you draw your own conclusions about the CGC authentication process. Should you use these services? There are pros and cons either way. Totally up to you. Personally, I plan on at least a few CGC comics in my collection. And be sure to visit the various links throughout this special report for more information. Happy comic book collecting.

Dave Gieber
Webmaster and Operator of