



Creating a winning business card

Aside from your website, your business card is probably the one piece of your marketing portfolio that most people see. It makes sense to get it working really hard for you. If you hand someone a business card and it doesn't do part of your sales job, it's a wasted opportunity. So put these 10 top tips into practice now – and you'll get a better return on your cards!

1. Decide your 'most wanted response'

When you hand someone a business card, what would you ideally like them to do afterwards? Visit your website? Call you for a free offer? Download something from your website? Ask for a quote? Whatever it is, your business card must say it explicitly. It must create enough curiosity and grab enough attention to make people act. And when you give someone your business card, you can actually explain the card, there and then, and highlight verbally the specific action you'd like them to take.

2. Make your card exceedingly useful

Include some top tips on the back or inside. Point people to your website for some free tips or for a free download. Suggest that people call you for some free advice. The more useful your card is, the more likely people are to keep it – and use it – and the more likely they are to show it to someone else. In fact, why not suggest they pass your card to someone else who could benefit.

3. Include an offer

Offers can go out of date, so make sure yours is evergreen. It could be a discount in return for the code written on your card. It could be a free gift with every first order. It could be a free consultation. It's another reason for someone to keep your card and make contact – or pass it on. Why not add a small image of the product or service you're offering, too?

4. Use different cards for different people

If your clients are in different markets and the needs of each market are slightly different, consider having different business cards for different prospects. With digital printing it needn't cost any more. You can apply these same practical tips to each type of card. With different cards you can also more easily 'qualify' your prospects. If you have a particularly good offer on one of your cards, you may want to give that card only to people you believe you can convert into paying customers.

5. Build your credibility

If you're giving someone your card, the chances are that person will not have met you before. Trust and credibility are key. Include a short testimonial on your card from one of your clients. It gives people more confidence and reduces the perceived 'risk' for them in dealing with someone new.

6. Use a headline

Just like in any good sales copy, why not create an intriguing and compelling headline for your card? By now you may be wondering how you're going to fit all this on. Each component can be very short – and you can use a folded card, as many people do. Putting a simple question or headline at the top will engage people.

7. Use intrigue

If you've been interviewed on TV, use the phrase "*As seen on.....*" somewhere on your card. It's a great conversation starter. Alternatively, use a cryptic question or puzzle and point people to your website to find the answer.

8. Say if it's new

If there's anything new or improved about your product or service, say so. The simple word 'NEW!' across one corner is enough.

9. Make people feel special

If you have room, leave a blank space on your business card so that you can personally write your mobile number on there when you hand your card to someone. It makes people feel extra special that you're giving them a point of access to you that 'the great unwashed' don't have.

10. Get creative

There are good reasons for using ordinary card/board for your business cards. You can write on them for a start – and many people like to write on cards they receive, too. But if there's scope to use different textures and shapes and even unusual materials, explore the options – but avoid being gimmicky. Unusual colours or textures make your card stand out. And why not add a photo – it makes you instantly more memorable!

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