



The Power of the Business Card

Your business card is more than just a tool to introduce you, it can be turned into a valuable communication when you consider some basic principles.

Colour or black and white – colour cards stand out much faster in a card index because our whole visual appearance and perception is looking at colour through our eyes.

Horizontal or vertical – horizontal cards fit into card indexes better, and are easily more visually seen because we look at brand names that are rectangular in style, and recognise them faster and for longer than vertical impressions. A vertical business card, while graphically impressive, is too hard to read the telephone numbers when you're driving along the Southern Motorway and searching for that cellphone number.

Photographs or not – recent research has shown that business cards with photographs on the face of them are remembered 40% faster because 'people do business with people' - a photograph shows what a friendly person you are. Of course as you age you have to change the photograph, however it grabs attention quickly to the business card. An alternative to a photograph is a very strong visual graphic or photograph of one of your products or services being performed as a good second option to putting a photograph of a person.

Contacts should include the normal phone, fax, mobile phone, and any freephones, however you might also like to indicate whether your cellphone is capable of receiving text and email, you could also indicate your email addresses both to your business and also to your cellphone, as well as your normal mailing box and/or street address. Make sure that if your cellphone is your after hours contact that it is switched on after hours. Problem customers never ring during normal business hours.

Websites – make sure that you list all of your company websites on the face of the card because this is a place where people can get information about your company or your products or services.

Unique selling proposition – a simple one line statement such as 'Creating opportunities for marketing success', that describes the benefit of your services or products or your company. This one liner is very important to enable the person looking at your card at a glance to tell what it is that is different about you from the other suppliers in the same market.

Printing on the back of your card – this is a must. You can print of course a list of your products, services, agencies, or more importantly print some detail of what could be found on your website. Here list things on your website such as your personal profile, your people profiles, client examples of your success, testimonials and references, any downloads/tips/news, any products or services that can be purchased over the web, any photographs of customers or clients, how you can register online to get a regular enews, and many other things that are going to be particularly important to your business. Put the key things, on and make sure your website is on every page.

4-part business card versus 2-part business card – while many businesses have a 2-part business card, you might like to consider a 4-part business card, this is the same size as a 2-part, but enables you to have another 2 pages on which you can detail additional information such as services about your company, customer testimonials, and offerings that you can make to clients. Make sure on the bottom of each page is your website and if you have a freephone number, your freephone address, and if you can fit it in, a logo or cartoon or coloured photo of the people involved in your team.

Business cards are vital sales tool in the sales and marketing activity of promoting your business, and you should always make sure that you carry a plentiful supply, never less than 20 business cards at any one time.

Males are particularly lucky, they have a pocket on their shirt designed for carrying the business cards, and females have a handbag for carrying their business cards. But most of all, make sure you give out the business cards and collect the detail and put it on your database.

You can use your business card at networking functions, to give to customers, and also for your staff to present to potential customers.

Staff business cards – a very important marketing strategy technique is to give business cards to every member of your staff, from your management, supervisors, team leaders, right through to the workers on your factory floor and your store people. You will be most surprised to find that the leads generated for new customers don't come from your management and supervisors of your business, they come from your team members, who will bring a name and contact details to the sales team to follow up.

Business card titles – it doesn't really matter what the title or the description of your position is, because what people are most of all interested in is your name and secondly they'll look at the role you play within the organisation. Be careful of giving too many people manager titles because you actually need to have some workers in the organisation that actually do the work rather than try to manage the people to do the tasks.

The business card, therefore, is a valuable marketing strategic tool that you can use in your business quickly, simply, and it is effective.

This article contributed by Richard P. Gee, marketing strategy consultant,
www.geewiz.co.nz.