

The Simplest Business Card Ideas are Usually The Best

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By Josh Barkin

Innovative business card ideas are often misunderstood. The key message intended for

prospective customers becomes lost in radical attempts at originality. These attempts at originality can in fact have an inverse effect on prospective customers, invoking a deeper discussion about the actual design and presentation of your business card, rather than how your business can actually help others succeed. The last thing you want to encourage when handing out your business card are more questions about what your business does, or why you chose such an idea for your business card in the first place. Many design and communication firms will attempt to awe and inspire others with radical and non traditional business card designs. Ironically, these companies exist to help you better communicate a clear message.

To develop your business card ideas, start by creating a simple business tag line. Grab a piece of paper and pen and start to develop a tag line that either captures the essence of your business, or at the very least, is a broad statement of your business vision, your goal, or something which convinces people that you are a leader in your industry. Sometimes called a "motto", or in more professional circles, a "competency statement", your tag line should be short, to the point, sometimes catchy, but always memorable. As an example, this tag line, belonging to an enormously successful Canadian mattress manufacturer, "Why Buy a Mattress Anywhere Else", is clear and to the point and the tag line is an integral part of their larger marketing campaign, used across mediums including print, television, radio and the Internet. Other tag lines are more abstract, but memorable, such as the McDonald's campaign, "I'm Loving It!". A tag line can be simple, as long as it can be used to help build trust in the customer. For example, Jim Smith, Certified Programmer, or, Eric Gibson, Professional Photographer. There is no rule for the tag line, just keep it tasteful, positive, clear, and to the point.

Photo images are gaining momentum among business card designs, because people have a tendency to remember visuals over text. For example, if you are a wedding planner, even subtle, full color imagery can be effective to communicate a message without words and can create a lasting first impression. You may utilize a background image of a couple in love at the alter, a detailed and elaborate wedding hall, or a bride in reflection decked in her bridal gown. The right image selection can visually communicate your industry, or area of expertise, and then encourage the card holder to read the details.

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Professor Print's free online business card maker can help you develop your business card ideas and experiment with language and presentation using simple, point and click, web-based tools. Before you commit to going to print, you can forward your ideas to friends and colleagues in order to solicit their feedback and ensure your business card is one that will not be thrown away.

To develop your business card ideas, visit

<http://www.professorprint.com>

When you're ready to go to print, choose a type of business card for printing at

<http://www.professorprint.com/business-cards.html>

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Small Cards, Big Ideas: Alternative Uses for Business Cards

By Linda Elizabeth Alexander

Aggressive business card marketing isn't about handing your business cards out to everyone you see. The card itself must have a new use, an innovative design, or something other than the usual contact information printed on it. To make your little card stand out, try these other ideas.

Print something other than a business card on biz card-sized cardstock.

You have seen loyalty cards for "buy 10 get one free" offers; why not print one of your own? Print a frequent buyer card or other promotional offer on a card. The whole card can be a coupon for a free consultation, a discount, or a free gift with purchase. Remember include an expiration date on them! Then hand them out to all your customers.

Print a short survey on a card.

Offer an incentive for people to return the card to you with the survey answered—they can get a free gift or a discount just for answering a few simple questions. Then give them a new card with your contact information on it.

Other things you might print on this size cardstock include: Hangtags Nametags Tickets to an event; or Tiny greeting cards you might attach to a gift basket or other gift.

It's always nice to handwrite a personal note when using them as greeting cards. A quick "thank you" or "best wishes" goes a long way. Or, announce a special event and enclose the cards with all your outgoing correspondence.

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Make your business card a referral card for your organization or club.

That will make it easy to invite a prospect to your next meeting or to introduce the organization to them. On the front, print a form to fill in the date, time and location. On the back, include a brief overview of the club. Let members hand them out to potential recruits.

Turn them into appointment cards.

On one side, you can print your name, address, phone, fax and email plus your business name and logo. On the other side, leave room to fill in the date and time of your customer's next appointment. They will keep it in their wallet or planner and always have your information at their fingertips. You could also print a map of your location on the back or directions on how to reach your store or office.

Whatever you choose to do, remember that a little card can have a big impact on your marketing if you employ some creativity. Once you are finished with your designs, upload them to a professional business card printer who will print the cards for you.

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Linda Elizabeth Alexander of GreatFX Business Cards helps business people get great business results through effective business card marketing. You can get more free articles and order business cards online at the company website,

<http://www.greatfxbusinesscards.com>

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