

Bombshell Business Cards

By Heather Robson

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Business cards can be an invaluable marketing tool. They're quick and easy to give out, people love to accept them, and they keep all your contact information organized in a neat little package to give prospects. The problem is so many people use them, how do you get your business card noticed? Well, below are five ideas that you can put to use getting your business cards noticed by the right people.

1) Direct them to a free report or something else of value.

Include a web site address where they can download a free report or something else of value. If you run an exclusive fashion boutique, you might have a guide to selecting the right styles to flatter different body shapes or you might have a free online consultation that will help them decide which colors and styles will be most complimentary on them. If you run a dentists office, you might offer a report on the latest, safe x-ray techniques and why it's important to have an x-ray performed once a year. The possibilities are endless. And giving them a free report will do two things. It will get them to your web site where you can get their information and add them to your mailing list. And it will convey value, making them more likely to become an active client.

2) Use Color/Graphics

Branding your business is a great way to build trust and credibility with your clients. When you brand your business you use a consistent look and feel and message. Eventually, when a prospect comes across the look and feel and message you use, they immediately think of your business. Branding gives your potential clients the feeling that they already know you, and that goes a long way toward converting them from a potential client to an active client.

So don't overlook your business cards in this strategy. If you've already begun to brand your business, make sure you use the same colors and message on your business cards. If you haven't, give some thought to what colors best convey your business image. Think about the graphics that you could use. And then incorporate those into your business card design.

3) Pick a different shape

One of the most memorable business cards I've ever received was circular. A different shape can really get your card noticed. There are three things to consider when deciding if you should use an unconventional shape—what is your business, who is your target market, and what will your different shape cost you.

Think about what it is you do and what kind of shapes would fit your business. If you're a plumber, a business card shaped like a bathtub might really get you noticed. For a florist a flower shaped business card would be fitting. A card shaped like a dog bone would work great for someone who specializes in pampering pets.

Also consider who you're market is. People shopping for an accountant might not be impressed with a business card shaped like a dollar sign. A card with rounded or cropped corners might work better than a fancy shape.

Also take into account that shaped cards are specialty items—they'll cost more than a standard size card. Shop around for printers that can do specialty shapes. Compare prices and minimum orders. And then think about when and where you'll be using the cards. Is there an upcoming trade show where a specialty card would really set you apart...that might be the time to splurge on a specialty card.

4) Make it redeemable

Hand out cards that are redeemable. Have a handwritten note on the back giving them a special deal—a free gift with a purchase, a discount on a purchase, a chance to buy a limited stock item before you go public with it. Make sure you have a regular business card to give them when the redeem their business card/coupon.

5) Use Both Sides

Most business cards are printed only on one side. Why waste that valuable space? Use the back side of your card to list a couple of client testimonials. Testimonials go a long way toward building your credibility. Whenever a prospect considers working with you, there is a perceived risk in their minds. What if things don't go well? What if the project comes in late? What if it exceeds budget? What if you can't deliver what you promise?

Quality client testimonials—and by quality, I mean statements that are specific and hopefully have a first and last name attached to them—can quickly and effectively put your prospects mind at ease. They help the prospect see that you have come through for other people in similar situations.

Printing something on the back of your business card may not be for everyone. If you do a lot of face-to-face networking at large events, leaving the back of your card blank may be better. Many networkers jot notes about the person they received the card from on the back. Try printing some cards with testimonials on the back and leaving others blank. Keep track of who gets what card and see which card brings in more follow up.

There are all sorts of ways to make your business cards work harder for you. For the most part they are inexpensive and take only a little more effort than you are probably already using. So, put your business cards to work today.

Heather Robson (mailto:heather@dfcreative.com) is a founding partner of DragonFly Creative Media. DragonFly builds marketing tools and provides business consulting for businesses struggling to make the most of their marketing budget. Visit DragonFly Creative Media at <http://www.dfcreative.com> .

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