

How to Have the Most Powerful Business Card in Town

Nearly every business card contains the same, predictable type of information – company name, logo, tag line, address, phone numbers, web address, etc. Most of the effort associated with the presentation goes into creating a clever, eye-catching design.

About the best you can expect from a business card like this is a comment like, “Gee, what a neat card.” The proper response to this kind of thing is, “So what.” The real issue is this: Is your business card an effective sales agent for you? Is it actually bringing in new business?

Have you ever heard anyone say something like this? “We selected your company over all the others because your business card is really cool.” Of course you haven’t. And that pretty much says everything you need to know about the sales value of a cleverly-designed card.

When it comes to advertising (and your business card *is* an advertisement) it’s the content – the message itself – that motivates your audience to react, not the eye-catching design. In fact, an engaging design may actually distract your audience from your main goal, which is to deliver a compelling sales message.

Luckily, converting a conventional business card from a miniature piece of artwork into the most powerful business card in town requires the addition of only one more element: *a compelling call to action*. Somewhere on your card, you need to place a short invitation that *triggers curiosity* and offers a clear, zero-risk path for *satisfying that curiosity*.

Ideally, this curiosity-inducing call to action should offer something of real and immediate value.

For example, let’s say a remodeling contractor has an ordinary business card with all usual contact information. But, it also has one more thing... it has a short statement that says something like this: “Lots of before-and-after photos at SmithContracting.com.”

Now, this is pretty good. You get to learn a lot more about this guy without having to speak directly with him. And, who doesn’t like looking at before-and-after photographs? It offers a convenient opportunity to get more information about this contractor and to see if he’s a good fit for your project.

But, we can make this work even better. Let’s add this, too: “PLUS free report, *How to Avoid the Three Most Costly Remodeling Mistakes Contractors Won’t Tell You About*.” Now, he’s further differentiating himself from his competition. In just a few words he’s also building trust.

The person holding the card must now thinking, “This is really good. I can see the kind of work he does. Even if I don’t use him, at least I’ll have this free information which could keep me from making a mistake with any other contractor. I think I’ll take a look. Maybe I’ll get some good ideas.”

Did you notice what just happened? The before-and-after photographs created instant curiosity – and a curious person always wants to know more – and the free report established an emotional connection (trust). Now, the contractor’s business card is really pulling its weight. It *created curiosity* where a minute before there was none and it *provided a clear, zero-risk path to satisfying that curiosity...* the web page.

With the addition of just a few words, we’ve converted a ho-hum business card into a *curiosity-building, direct response advertisement.*

The only goal of his business card is to get people to his web pages, where he has the opportunity to impress them with photographs, tips, advice, testimonials from satisfied customers, etc. They can get familiar with this contractor and the quality of work he does before they even pick up the phone. All this was possible because he added a couple lines of text to his humble business card. It’s now a free ticket to learn more about this contractor without any hassle whatsoever. *Now, he has the most powerful business card in town.*

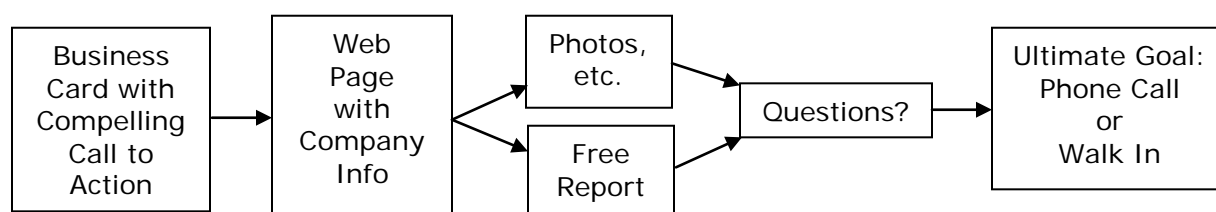


Diagram of Smith Contracting’s Business Card Strategy
(Keep them moving toward your front door!)

(Each element in the diagram above is designed to move prospective customers to the next step until they call or walk in. The most critical point in the entire process is *the first few seconds*. If your business card fails to elicit curiosity and get them to your web page, then all bets are off. The web page and accompanying pages are designed to both satisfy their initial curiosity and generate questions that can only be answered by taking the final step and contacting the business directly. As this diagram illustrates, a productive business card is not a stand-alone item; it is part of a system that’s designed to cast a wide net for creating lots of new customers.)

You can add even more sales value to your new business card by having an easy-to-remember domain name for your web page. It can be in addition a domain name you may already have. It can take responders to your existing website or to a new, stand alone web page dedicated to handling the curious people coming from your business card.

Remember, clear communication of the immediate benefits (What’s in this for me... right now?) is the primary goal. A business card with a benefit-packed, call to action and a clear and convenient means for following through is a great way to get maximum possible results from the most important part of your entire sales process... *the first few seconds*.

Note: PDF pages are ideal for the purpose described in this article and illustrated in the diagram above. A PDF, connected directly to a domain name, can contain one or more pages. Also, separate PDF files can be linked from the opening or home page with a list of links that function just like a menu system on a conventional website. The main difference is that PDF pages are easy to create, can be saved on the visitors’ local hard drives and/or printed exactly as they appear online.

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