

# Your Business Card as a Strategic Marketing Tool

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## Location! Location! Location!

If you sell product, consider including your card with the product when it is delivered to your customer. Same goes for services. For example, if you are an auto mechanic, consider slipping your business card in your customer's car visor, or create a sticker business card that will adhere to a discrete area of the customer's car windshield. If you provide regular on-site services, consider a business card magnet to be prominently placed on a refrigerator, or filing cabinet. Keep in mind, you don't need to actually sell product, or deliver service to ensure your business card gets and stays in the hands of others. Include your business card with every piece of correspondence: quotes, RFP's, letters, even photocopy your business card and include it in fax transmissions. When mailing out information, include it in the mailing by stapling your card (if possible) to the bottom or top corner of your letterhead.

## Easy Access

The best thing you can do with your business card is not only carry it around with you, but have other people carry it around and pass it around for you. Having other people carry your card allows them to provide it to their friends or associates when they are looking for a product or service. It is a proven and inexpensive marketing technique.

Keep a small stack of business cards everywhere you can store and access them: in your car, your jacket pocket, your briefcase, your purse or wallet, in your day planner, at home, etc. You'll always want to have some on hand when you meet a prospective customer and you never know who might be your next prospect.

## Getting creative with your business card distribution

If you look at your daily routine, don't overlook the opportunities which lie in front of you to distribute your business card and be pro-active in your business marketing. Nothing is over the top. If you conduct or attend seminars, or trade shows, make sure to drop your card in a "fish bowl" or card collection box. Tack your business card to bulletin boards at supermarkets, restaurants, retail stores, schools, libraries and other public spots that have a well placed bulletin board. With in-person distribution, consider giving out two cards at a time, one for your customer prospect and one for her/him to give away, or at the very least, reduce their chances of losing the only business card you gave them.

Finally, ask businesses in your neighborhood if they will display your business card near their cash register, or checkout (reassure them there is no conflict of interest). If you start to build relationships with business that offer complimentary products or services, even in your immediate neighbourhood, you will realize there is strength in numbers. Many larger organizations will form strategic alliances to further accelerate business development and mutually benefit from each others sales channels. Based on the same methodology, small businesses can adopt a similar, and certainly less political approach. Jointly agree to mail the business cards for other companies in the same position as you. If you agree to include them in your mailings or other promotional activities, they will do the same for you. A small business network, or circle of businesses can quickly grow to become a large and high effective business co-operative.

Doing business is about finding opportunities and capitalizing on those opportunities. The catch is that many opportunities can arise when you least expect them to. You are certain to cover your bases by having your business card as part of a well defined marketing strategy whether you are involved directly in executing the strategy, or a network of people jointly execute the same strategy for mutual gain.

Josh Barkin is the Director of Marketing for Professor Print, a leader in online business printing and design. Professor Print provides thousands of free business card templates so you can create your own business cards online, as well as articles and tutorials on how to get the most out of your business card design. For more information, visit Professor Print at <http://www.professorprint.com>

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