



Business Card Essentials

Design

It may seem that there aren't many options when it comes to designing a business card. After all, at a minimum, you need to include your name, your business name, and your address, phone number, fax number and e-mail address in a 2-inch by 3 ½-inch space. But there are a variety of ways to stand out from the rest. You can print in multiple colors, for example, have your card embossed for a richer look, or include a photo of yourself. You can even design a card that is twice the standard size and have it folded in half, giving you more room to print your message.

And don't forget about the back of the card. Many companies will use this space to print their mission statements, or to print in another language if they do business internationally. Some even use that space for practical information, such as calendars or measuring tables. This gives people greater incentive to keep the cards.

Paper

Gone are the days when all business cards were black ink on white paper. Business cards can be printed on virtually any color paper, and in a variety of finishes and weights. You can have textured or smooth cards, glossy or flat. The paper you choose depends on a number of factors, including your budget and the type of image you want to project.

Cost

Business cards come in a wide price range. On average, people spend about \$25 per thousand on their business cards, but some spend as much as \$100 per thousand or more. How much your cards cost depends on several things, such as the type of paper, number of ink colors and special printing features such as embossing or thermography (raised printing). The cost will increase if you print on both sides of the card.

Even on a budget, you can have business cards that tell the world your business is a success. There are ways to cut costs, such as printing multi-color blanks and imprinting them in black when a new staff member needs cards.

Getting Started

When designing business cards, you should first think about the type of image you want to project. Are you in an industry that requires your materials to be very serious and formal, such as accounting, or does your business operate in a more casual environment, such as a music store? Do you already have printed materials, such as brochures or letterhead? If so, your business cards should complement those pieces.