

Popular Threads on Solosez

BUSINESS CARDS

I'm getting ready to order my first batch of business cards. But I haven't decided what to get. Should I opt for the most affordable cards, something with raised ink, or top-of-the-line letterpress cards?

There are plenty of places online to get standard business cards for dirt cheap. But those cards don't look very impressive--and sometimes they look downright cheap. Raised ink seems fairly common and, with a decent and basic design, average or above. Letterpress looks amazing, stands out, and I think it projects a very professional image--especially to the small business I hope to have as clients. Unfortunately, letterpress is expensive--between 30 and 50 cents a card.

So what are your thoughts on business-card best practices? Is it worth the price to project perfection? Is the extra cost not worth the gains? Should I go with middle-of-the-road raised ink print?

If you were the client, what would you think receiving each card? Many here disagree but I believe firmly that perception and impression are a big part in being retained.

Meyer Silber, New York

I think you're overlooking a great possible choice: Have a designer create an impressive card that is printed on good card stock.

You don't have to just use free online business card templates. I agree that those don't look so good. But you don't have to go straight for letterpress cards.

The answer here depends a lot upon the image you want to create. Your brand. Do you want to appear more traditional or more modern?

Andrew Flusche, Virginia

If a card cost 50 cents each, i think i would be hesitant to hand cards out, or leave them places, like on cork boards at local delis, banks, coffee shops. My cards with raised ink cost about \$30 for 500, so about 6 cents each. I hand them out like crazy.

Michael Blake, Connecticut

Vistaprint is really cheap and their quality is very good.

When I get cards I put the information in my computer's address book and then toss the cards. Within a day or two I won't remember if a card was super-double-fancy or handwritten on the back of a used envelope. I doubt I'm alone in that.

Steve O'Donnell

I agree with Andrew.

I had my webmaster design/print my cards for me. Very sharp, modern business cards which, if possible, reflect my "image," nice stock, double sided. 5000 cards for \$150. I chose not to go with the old fashioned white business card (too "American Psycho" for me). Had I done so, it would have been about \$125 ish for 5000.

Kristian K. Lindo, Arizona

No, you're not alone.

But while you may be too young to remember, we just had this discussion a few weeks or so ago. Some of us, including some who are quite high tech, still swear by our good old fashioned rolodexes. (Of course we have all the info in a computer database as well, but you can pry my rolodex from my cold, dead)

James S. Tyre, California

I had luck with Zazzle.com for my first set of cards (only 200).

I chose a higher weight cardstock, in a linen pattern, in an ecru or eggshell (not a fan of pure white either) with black font. The lettering is slightly raised. I am pretty happy with it.

As I get my solo practice off the ground, an office number, etc, I will get new one's printed. I have priced them at my printers and the price was reasonable. I wouldn't waste money on things like embossing, etc. I just don't think people will care for something like that. Better to save resources.

My biggest dilemma is finding a good graphic. Which may be resolved when I get my website developed. I want something that is both professional and elegant, as a nod to my femininity. No hearts or flowers, but perhaps my initials in a scrolling font? (as the logo, not where my name and contact info will be). Still working all of that out.

Dana K. West, North Carolina

I'm with Steve. After a couple of days, I can't remember if a card was nice or not. However, I do have two "kinds" of cards, a cheaper one that I would use for things like Subway or Marie Callendar bowls, and one for clients or networking.

Dave Hao

Not that you should pay 30 to 50 cents per card, but I don't know why you

would ever skimp on your business card. I say go for the one that will convey the image you are trying to project.

I prefer modern and classy and not too busy.

Jamison Koehler, Washington, D.C.

Thanks everyone for your feedback.

It sounds like the general consensus is, It depends.

I'm still working on a branding theme, so maybe I should hammer that out and then turn to the business cards. I'm trying to design a website now (or design a design for someone else to implement--PHP Wha?!) and I guess I ought to wait 'till that's done--or at least till the color scheme is done--before I order any kind of cards.

But a related question: Should business cards be clean and point to a website, or should they convey info and stand more-or-less on their own?

Mark K. Stansbury. Ohio

NO! Do not wait!

The first week I went into business for myself, I had an alumni event at my law school. I thought it well worth getting cards, even though I had to throw them out when my website went live.

It took 6 months, but someone I met at that event sent me a client last week. Was that worth the \$35 for a few weeks of having cards? You bet.

Ellen Victor, New York

Well this is the first week I'm going into business for myself and I have an alumni event on Weds night and I just picked up my cards this afternoon. Definitely don't wait.

As for what info, I put the basic (name/address/phone/practice area) on the front and on the back I have my logo and web address directing traffic to the web. My email announcement tomorrow will also have url embedded to drive web traffic. So I guess the answer to Mark's question is why not do both?

Julia Park, New York

I recently purchased 2500 business cards from Vistaprint for less than \$40.00. High quality and on pretty good card stock. Print on both sides too.

I am very pleased with them.

Robert M. Louque, Jr.. Louisiana