



The Power of a Business Card

Joel Harris, CEO of ADA Intelligent Dental Marketing, outlines six methods to get the most mileage out of your business card.

For years I have been given business cards from dentists all over the country. Being in the marketing and graphic design industry, I collect business cards like some fans collect baseball cards. I developed that habit because I get design ideas from them, or in some cases I use them as examples of “what not to do”. I’ll bet I have collected thousands of cards. Unfortunately, most of the business cards I’ve been given are pretty similar. Plain colors, plain logo, no special message, predictable fonts and pretty much generic in every way. Occasionally, I actually get a card that makes me stop and smile. A card that has that effect on me is different, bright, catchy, impactful and in a word—“memorable”.

Our business cards for our dental marketing company are so different, almost everyone remarks on how good the card looks. They are printed on great paper and the design is very striking. I have even had comments about our cards being the most professional and great looking card they have ever come across. You should make sure that your business card is the same. Spend time with a graphic designer, and spend the extra money to buy good paper stock for printing. Such attention to detail may seem overkill for a dental practice, but never forget that many of your patients or prospective patients come from walks of life where image is everything and they’ll appreciate excellence when they see it.



Business cards aren’t just a convenient way for consumers to remember your name and phone number. Business cards are tiny billboards that can tell a story and communicate a message just like a magazine ad or an Internet site should. I don’t know a dentist who would run a television ad in black and white with no sound and just black text on a white background, but some of those same dentists wouldn’t think twice about printing a white business card with black ink.

Here are a few other tips and tricks that I think are critical to making the most out of your business cards:

1. Never leave home without your cards

If you don’t want people to discredit you as a dental professional and successful businessperson, don’t ever make the mistake of saying, “Oh sorry I forgot my cards today.” You have not only lost an immedi-

ate opportunity to promote your practice, but you look like an amateur who doesn't deserve the business.

2. Is the information accurate and up-to-date?

The reality is that sometimes we change our contact information. If you know that there will be changes in the near future, then limit the number of cards you have printed. Never scribble out and hand write information on your card – “Can anyone say amateur?” I remember a dentist using an excuse that he didn't have any cards because they were too expensive to re-print until he moved into his new practice.” That says two things to me: First, he didn't shop around for a good price and second, it told me that he had no idea how important small opportunities can be.

3. Does the card say what you want it to say?

What message are you trying to communicate? When designing a business card, think about the placement of information on the card. Is the key information in a prominent place on the card? Does the design work with the rest of your company image? Your business card must be an extension of your company just like your, stationery, checks, signage, website and more. Consistency and simple clear communication of your most important message is critical to the success of your business card.

4. Can prospective clients contact you easily?

Is your website up to date? Do you check your email at least once a day? Is your email address profes-

sional? (not mycompany@genericfreeemail.com) Is your voice mail message clear, concise and professional? There can never be too many ways to contact you or your practice.

5. Are you marketing with your business card?

Keeping them in your pocket is a waste of time and money. Don't be afraid to use them even if you haven't been asked if you have a card. Do not be rude and pushy, but confident that the person could benefit from your dental services.

6. Use all your cards

Don't print 1,000 cards and throw away half of them because they were left in your office drawer. Get them out. Carry them everywhere and make it a goal to actually re-order more cards because you gave them all away.

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Joel Harris is a co-founder and President of ADA Intelligent Dental Marketing located in Salt Lake City, Utah. His company provides powerful marketing tools to help dentists grow their patient base, increase the profit and improve their image. Joel is also the author of the book, Breakthrough Dental Marketing.