

What to Put on Your Business Card

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SPEAKERS

Monica Pitts

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Hello again, and welcome back to marketing with purpose. My name is Monica Pitts, and today I'm gonna talk all about business cards, which I know is kind of like a left turn from my normal focus on websites. But there's all kinds of different ways that people market their businesses, and I find in some communities that the business card is still an essential marketing tool. It's really cost effective to print, but you need to make sure that you have the right stuff on it and that it's designed the right way so people can actually read it and use it effectively. Because what good is a beautiful piece of marketing if you can't use it, it has to be a marriage of form and function. So really, in that way, your business card isn't any different from your website. It has to work. It has to do its job, and it should also be beautiful, right, all at the same time representing you authentically as you want to be represented. Now, two episodes ago, I did a solo episode about what to blog about, and had a whole laundry list of ideas, and shared my framework on how I decide a topic is viable, right? And so I actually came up with this idea while at a trade show. I was at a trade show, and I was gathering all these business cards, and then when I went to contact people. Once I got back to my office, I they didn't even have their contact information on their business cards. Some of them didn't, and others it was hard to find the contact information or read, which is kind of crazy, like it isn't crazy that it can get difficult to read because business cards are small, right? They're just three and a half by two inches, normally, but the fact that I was having a difficult time locating the information that I wanted on something that small was nuts to me, right? And so I thought to myself, geez, I probably need to do a public service announcement about what to put on your business card and give people tips to design it so that way no one has this problem with your business card. Okay? Because we want your prospects and your clients to have a streamlined, easy interaction with you all the time, whenever possible, right? Anytime that you can control it, you want to be able to control it right and give them the best possible experience working with your company. And so the very first thing that you can do is make sure that they have an easy time using your business card, yeah, and an easy time using your website, because those are the first times that they're going to interact with your company unless it's like with an individual calling them on the phone or maybe meeting them at a trade show. So we've talked so much about how to make that website an amazing user experience, and now I think we're going to just extend it over to the business card and talk about making it easy to use and beautiful and representative of you. Okay, so there you have it. Let's get to business. You're on a mission, and you just need

more people to know about it. And whether you're brand new to marketing or a seasoned pro, we are all looking for answers to make marketing decisions with purpose. I'm Monica Pitts, a techie, crafty business owner, mom and aerial dancer who solves communication challenges through technology. This podcast is all about digging in and going digital. I'll share my marketing know how and business experience from almost 20 years of misadventures. I'll be your backup dancer so you can stop doubting and get moving towards marketing with purpose. I just want to give a quick thank you before we get started to our featured resource sponsor, what to put on your website? This is a page by page website content checklist, and it's one of Mayecreate's most popular free resources. It has more than 7000 downloads. It outlines suggestions of what content to put on each page of your website in an easy to understand checklist format. And my nonprofit friends, we've got a special one for you. Just check the nonprofit box and it will deliver a nonprofit specific checklist right to your inbox, so you can download it for free at resources.mayecreate.com that's m, a, y, E, C, R, E, A, T, e.com, or you can just click on the Resources tab at the top, or you can click on the link and the show notes. Okay, so let's plan out that business card. First and foremost, you know that just like any other time that I give you a checklist, you can go out and read all the things that I'm going to talk about on the mayecreate website. And for this particular episode, I actually have a Google Doc that you can download for your very own so you don't have to take notes unless you really, really want to. But you can, you can. I'm a note taker. I get it. I get. First we're going to go through a checklist of mandatory items and optional items to include on your business card. And then I'm going to talk you through some design tips, because after like, designing these things for the last 25 years, I have some ideas. I have some ideas of what I think is good and what isn't good. Okay,

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Monica Pitts 05:19

so first with that checklist mandatory items. So I want you to think about this business card as an invitation. We need to give people what they need to contact you and take some type of action, all right. So the things that I feel like you should have the mandatory items on your business card would be your name, your name, how you want to be referenced, right? So if you want to be called by your nickname, you're going to use your nickname and then your title. So if you have extra certifications that you want to add after your name, if you have doctorate and you want to have people call you Dr so and so, then you would put doctor in front of your name, right? And if you just want people to call you, you know your name, but you still want them to know that you're a doctor, you might put MD at the end, right? So it's really up to you how you list your name and your certifications, but just make sure that you're clear and how you want to be referenced. So along the line with those certifications, is your title, right? So I am Chief Creative Officer, I put that underneath my name on my business card. Now, if you are an MD, or you have doctor, then maybe this is your specialty, right? So your title or specialty comes next, and then you have your contact information, so your email, office phone, direct line cell phone, your website address, your mailing address, maybe your physical address for your office. Those are all different ways that people are going to use to contact you, right? So let me list those off really quickly one more time, your email, your office phone, your direct line cell phone, website address, mailing address. Now I'm not saying that you have to have your cell phone on there if you want people to be able to contact you via your cell then put it on there. Note that if you put your cell phone on your business card, it's probably going to be the number one way that they contact you, because they know they're going to get a hold of you. I don't put my cell phone on my business card because I don't use my cell phone for business that much. So I give it out individually to people. If I need them to have it, I physically write it on the card for them. So just consider how you want to communicate with people. Now I have

an app on my phone that the office phone actually rings through to my cell phone, so it does allow me to speak back and forth with them. They don't know I'm on my cell phone, right? They just call the normal office line. So just think about how you communicate with people, or maybe there's email addresses that people use all the time and are always asking you about. And so if you have a billing email address or an info email address, then maybe you want to include those on your business card. Remember, you're giving people what they need to contact you, and it can look different for different businesses. The other two things that you need to have on there, I feel, are your logo, because you want people to recognize you right as your business. And if you don't have a logo, that's perfectly fine. You don't have to have a logo, but if you have one, you should put it on your business card. And then last but not least, if there are legally required items. So if you are a mortgage broker or a real estate agent, you have items that you are legally required to put on your business card. You want to make sure that you have them there. Okay, so those are your mandatory items that I think everyone needs to have on a business card. Now there's also optional items that you might put on your card, like a photo. So if you need people to recognize you, if you are part of your brand, then a photo never hurts. Okay, I you know that you see photos in advertising all the time. And then when you see those people in real life, you're like, Oh my gosh. It's like, I know you. It's because it works. Okay, so if you are your brand, if you're a real estate agent or, like, a mortgage broker, or like, maybe you're a fitness consultant or personal trainer, and you are your brand, then I think you could put your photo on there as well as your logo, because you're part of your brand. Now, some people include their pronouns on their business cards. It just depends on what part of the United States you're in. To see you know, if that is common practice, look around really. So many of these optional items are there to help you overcome commonly asked questions. So if you have a name that could either be a boy's name or a girl's name, like if you're Terry, and you spell it, maybe the opposite way that someone would normally spell it for your gender, then you might want to put your pronouns on there. So. Way people know I am contacting this gendered human right, or maybe it's just important to you that you put pronouns on your business card. It's up to you. I just feel like, if it would help people have a conversation with you, it's worth putting on the business card. Other things that people commonly ask questions about are hours of operation. This is especially normal practice for companies that take a lot of appointments or have a physical storefront that they want people to come in. If your name of your company doesn't exactly say what you do, then you might have a service list, like a very brief, high level service list, that you provide to people, or you might have a tagline that helps people understand what you do if you have a lot of appointments with people, like if you're a hair salon or a chiropractor, you might have an appointment time slot on the back of your business card. You might also put social icons or handles on your business card. And last but not least, you might put a QR code to send them over to your website easily. And that QR code doesn't just have to link to the homepage of your website. It could be that it links to new client intake information or frequently asked questions. It can link to any page on your website, and that is my complete list of things I ask people if they want on their business cards. Right now, when it comes to designing the business card, you're going to design it based on the information that you're putting on the business card. So let's talk through a couple of tips. The first thing that I would always do when I'm going to design a card is just list out the stuff that I need to put on it, because if there's a whole bunch of stuff that needs to be put on it, I need to be real with myself about a, whether or not it's actually going to fit on the card, or B, how I'm going to organize that information so that it makes sense and is grouped logically for people. Now the design layout is really up to the content and the shape of the logo. So a horizontal or vertical business card, it doesn't matter. Both are perfectly acceptable. When I first started designing business cards, like 25 years ago, they were almost all horizontal, and people were annoyed with the vertical ones because they didn't fit in their rolodexes very well, and now most people aren't using rolodexes, so I feel like you can use either a horizontal or vertical

card. It doesn't matter, just pick the layout that allows you to showcase your information the best. Now, if you're on a budget and wondering about what size card to get, you'll want to get the most normal size card, which is two inches by three and a half inches. That is going to be the most cost effective size card to print. And you can get them printed so affordably professionally, like it's not expensive. Oftentimes it's like \$100 or less to get 1000 business cards. Okay? And that's one of the things that makes them so cool, and why? Sometimes, when people just need a quick little giveaway, we design them a really general like card that is business card side. It's it's nice because it can fit in somebody's pocket. They can put it in their purse. It's not super bulky. They're more likely to keep it in that instance. And it doesn't necessarily just have to be a business card for a person. It could be a general card for your business, right? So it's really cost effective. Now, if you have a ton to say, like, if you need your business card to be, like, double as a brochure for your business, and you need more room, you could print a four by six postcard, and they are also very cost effective to print. Or you could have a folded business card. I've designed, actually, quite a few of those over the years, just a card. It's the same size as a business card. It's two by three and a half when it's folded. One that I remember, in particular my client, who's a travel agent, we designed her card to look like a passport, and so the front looks like a passport cover, and then you open it up and it talks about her business and the types of travel that she specializes in, and then the back was her contact information. So it turned out really, really cute, and it is cheaper than designing a huge brochure and having it printed, but it still got the point across and got a lot of really good information for people in that nice, small format. Now here's another opinion that you can take or leave because, you know, I'm full of them.

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Monica Pitts 14:36

I feel like a well designed business card has a design on the front and the back of the business card. I obviously you don't have to have a design on the back. If you have a super plain card and it's very, very traditional, then you can leave the back blank. That's perfectly fine. But if you have a super designed front of your card and there's nothing on the back, it just kind of feels empty and it costs. Same, usually to print front and back in four colors, so you can have fun, and you can use up all that space. So consider the back of your card kind of like letterhead. Even if you don't have anything to put on it, you could put a little logo in the corner, or put a little color over the top of it, and just make it feel consistent with the front of your card, so that way it's not just forgotten about, and people recognize it when it's sitting on a table amongst other cards, regardless of whether it's face up or face down. Okay, so talking about the back of your card, right? One of the things that you need to decide before you start designing your business card is if you want to be able to write on the card itself. So if you do want to be able to write on your card, you're going to need to print it on an uncoated stock, at least on one side with a white or a light color, so you can write whatever your heart desires on the card. But shiny cards are super durable, and I love them, especially for contractors and people who have their cards in their car all the time, and they need something maybe a little tougher that's not going to just crumple when it's facing difficult times, but a really shiny card is difficult to write on with anything other than a permanent marker, and even then, you have to let it dry before you handle it, or you're going to have permanent marker all over your fingers, which is not ideal in any networking situation. Okay, so if you do want to be able to write on your business card, make sure you leave space for it. Make sure it's has a light color background so people can read it and you can write on it with a normal pen, and make sure that you print at least one side of your card without that UV coding on it that's so pretty and shiny and slick looking. So I started off this episode with a list of things that have to be on your card right, and they're all typed on the card in a font. You know, that's what we call the way words look. And since your

business card text will likely be really small, you need to choose a font that's really easy to read at a small size, so steer clear of really thin fonts are ones that go from very thick to very thin in their letters, because they are not easy to read when they're printed. They just they're really, really not even if they look good on your screen. I can tell you from experience, they are difficult to read when you print them, and especially if you're going to put the font on a dark background, like you're going to reverse it out and have white letters on a dark background, you just It can't be that thin, and it can't go from super thick to super thin, because it just it gets lost, and people's eyes can't See it. So pick a font that's simple, that's easy to read when it gets small. Don't use fancy fonts that are small. Okay, just don't do it. No, no. Script fonts, most handwriting fonts don't work when they get super tiny, nothing with curly cues on it, like it, just it. No. You can use that for something bigger. Maybe use that for your name or or for your business name, but don't use it for all your contact information if it's going to be small, because people can't read it. And that's not the experience that we want them to have. Okay, you don't want them to be like, holding your card out, like, like, you know, there's some menus. This is it like, we've all lived through this. You're at a restaurant, the lighting is low, the menu has super tiny words on it, and you're like, moving it further away from your face. Yes, I'm gay. I'm aging myself right now. I'm 44 you're moving it further away. You're like, looking down the tip of your nose. You have to, you're to take your phone out and, like, look at it through your camera, or turn your your flashlight on this it sucks. Don't make people feel old and yucky, which Okay, so this leads me to my next tip, which is that your text needs to be eight or larger. On it, eight point is small. It's really small. I feel like everything on your card needs to be eight point or larger, or people are going to have to break out a magnifying glass to read what's on it, and that is not what we want them to do. Now, the way that you can keep things in perspective as you're designing it is to zoom out. So when you are designing something small, you have a tendency to zoom in on your screen right. So you want to make it bigger, so that way, you can see everything and align it just right. And I love that. I do I do it myself. But then you need to zoom out. I cannot tell you the number of designs I've gotten from professional designers where I'm like that it is one inch tall. Like this design was one inch tall, and you put like four sentences on here, like, in one inch, it just does not work. You can't read it, okay? So just zoom out. Okay, because otherwise you'll end up making your brochures worth of content on a teeny, tiny card, and nobody's going to be able to read it. And they're and it just that's not the experience you want them to have. Now, as you are putting things on your card and choosing colors for it, make sure that you're picking a real. Easy to read, color combination of the text on top of the background color, and make sure it's ADA compliant. Now I talk about ADA compliancy for websites all the time, and the same actually applies to anything that you're making in your marketing. If you want everyone to be able to see it and read it, it has to be ADA compliant, or else some people won't be able to because they're colorblind and they can't see it okay. Now, if you have super small words on your business card, you are going to have to have fatter text to make it ADA compliant. So that was part of that comment I made up above about how you need to have, you know, fonts that are easy to read. It's also to meet compliancy, right? So my web designers often use web aim, web aim contrast checker to make sure that the colors on the websites we build are ADA compliant. And you can use that exact same contrast checker to make sure that the colors in your business card are ADA compliant. You're just going to paste the color of the foreground and the background, and it'll tell you how big the text has to be on top of it in order for it to be seen. And it will tell you if those colors will ever be compliant. And you can kind of adjust the colors to get a better contrast between the foreground and the background of the information that you're putting on your business card. Now we we have had some color hiccups in the past, and I find that color hiccups when printing actually happen most often with Maroon, Navy and purple, and it's just because the value of those colors is different when it's printed than when you see it on your screen. Each screen is calibrated differently, so the colors are going to come through differently. And then when you

print them, depending upon how they're being printed, each printer could be printing them, and they could end up looking different. So if you have a very specific color of Maroon, navy or purple, that's part of your brand and you will not be happy with even the slightest variation. You need to go to a local printer. Do not order it online and spend just a little bit more. Ask them about using a Pantone color. So that way you get the exact color that you want. You're going to have to pay for an extra color in your printing, but you will get it just right, and you don't want to waste money ordering something that isn't going to be what you want, right? So that's okay. That's okay. So print locally, if you have a color that you are very concerned about, because they just turn out a little different sometimes than we expect, and if it turns out way different, I have sent them back to printers before, like online printers, and been like, hey, this didn't turn out like the right color. And they're like, sure enough, it didn't. We're sorry, because sometimes, from the beginning of the run of business cards to the end of the run of business cards, they will be running out of ink, and so they'll be one color at the beginning and one color at the end of the run. And you look at the first and the last card in the stack, and you're like, Oh, these don't even really look alike and in that case, you just go back to the printer and they'll make it right for you, if they care, and most of them do. But if you need a really specific color, you're gonna go local, and you're gonna tell them that you want a specific color, and you will pick it out, and they will use literally that color ink when they are printing your things for you. Okay, so

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Monica Pitts 23:19

I have three more tips for you. Three. The first one is grouping your information so when you put the information on your card, you don't just want to, like, fill it up from top to bottom, like a huge paragraph, because it's difficult to pick out what you want out of the list of information that way, instead, I usually group name and title together, and then generally close to the name and title, I'm going to place the personal contact information so my business email, my direct line, they're going to go really close to my name and title, and then if I want to on the other side of the card, or in a separate column, or just nicely spaced out underneath my personal contact information, I would put the general contact information, like the physical address, the general phone line, the web address. Those are all things that don't get you in contact with me directly, but do get you in contact with the company. Now I don't always group information exactly like this on a business card. Sometimes, if there's four different phone numbers, I would group the phone numbers together. If there's two email addresses, I would group them together. So just try to group the information logically, and don't shove it all together in one paragraph, like box of content. You just want people to be able to look at the card and pick out the information that they need at a glance without having to think too hard. And you can also add emphasis to key pieces of information on your business card. So by adjusting font sizes and colors or adding icons, you can add emphasis to the key information that you want people to pick out. Now most. Most of the time I make the name on the business card the biggest piece of information, the title would be the second largest, and then the contact information would all be the same size, but it would be grouped together whichever way makes the most sense for the content that you're displaying. My actual favorite trick to add emphasis is to change up the background color. So on my personal business card, at the bottom of the card, there's like this green bar, and then there's white text on it that has our general contact information, like the web address and the mailing address on it. So you can try that trick too. Okay, so my last piece of advice, my last one is about QR codes. And I am actually going to do another episode in a few weeks, all about QR codes in print. So if you want to know how to make one and the things to think about when you're making them, then I'm going to cover you. Okay now, but right now, we're talking about design, and if you do want to

include a QR code on your business card, you just know that it doesn't have to be enormous, okay? It doesn't need to cover the entire back of your card. It does not need to scream at people. It does have to be big enough to work, though, so you can't make it microscopic. So my advice to you and what I do, is I take and make my QR code, and then I place it on the card at the size that I want it to be, and then I zoom out, and I make sure that I'm looking at it at 100% and then I'm going to test it with my phone. And I'm also going to print the card using my personal printer, and I am going to test the QR code. Once they get to a certain size, they don't work anymore. So it just needs to be big enough to work. And you can change the color on your QR code too and make it pretty and match your brand. So it doesn't have to be this enormous black thing with a white background that takes up the entire back of your card. Doesn't need to be like that friends. You can make it pretty and fit in. It can, but it has to be big enough to work, so test it. Okay? Test it, alrighty. So now you, you know, pretty much went to design school for business cards. I hope that you enjoyed this episode. Remember, you can go out to [mayecreate.com](https://www.mayecreate.com) all of this information is actually in a Google Doc. There's a link out on the blog, where you can download it and get your checklist to use for yourself. So you don't have to write all this down. And be sure to meet me back here for our next episode where I get to interview Andrea Johnson. She's going to talk about marketing from your own magnetism. So her big thing is core values. Okay, she is really good at explaining how you define them and what they mean to you and how you can use them to guide your marketing decisions, and she's just a ray of sunshine. I'm telling you like i The second that I started reading about her, I thought I got it. I have to meet this lady. She's going to be my new BFF, and you guys are going to understand why you're going to want her to be your BFF too, because she is really, really incredible. So meet me back for our next episode, because I would love to introduce you to her and geek out about core values and their place in marketing. I just want to give one more quick thank you to our mayecreate resource sponsor, what to put on your website. Now in this checklist, you'll find the must haves for every page of your site, tips on how to make the most of your content, and practical advice to help guide you through creating your website. You can download your copy for free at resources.mayecreate.com that's m, a, y, E, C, R, E, A, T, e.com, or you can click on the link in the show notes. So thank you so much for joining me today. Make sure to subscribe wherever you're listening so you don't miss out on our next episode. And don't be afraid to use that link in the show notes to go over and enjoy the fully formatted blog post with all the pictures broken down, covering every single thing that we talked about today, because your next step is to put this information to action, and until next time, go forth and market with purpose.