



Smart Marketing with QR Codes

Ramp Up Your Marketing for Next to Nothing

By Jean Van Rensselar

What is a QR code?

A QR code is a 2-D barcode that can be scanned by a smart phone for transferring information.

How do users read QR codes?

Most smart phones can read QR codes. Some phones, like the iPhone require users to download a free app. However Androids and newer Blackberries have a QR scanner built in.

What happens when users scan a QR code?

Depending on how you set up your QR code, the code can take users to your website, it can create an automatic text, it can dial a phone number, and many other things.

How do I get a QR code?

You can generate a QR code free of charge at a number of sites, including this one:

<http://qrcode.kaywa.com/>

How are they used in marketing and PR?

QR codes act as physical hyperlinks; they link offline to online, and print to mobile. QR Codes can be placed on almost anything.

On a Product or Print Marketing Materials

For example, you can print brochures with a QR Code that links visitors to a web page containing product demonstrations, video testimonials, FAQs, and more.

In Print Ads

Not everyone is at their desk, or in front of a computer when reading a magazine or newspaper, but by placing a QR Code in your ad, readers can simply take a picture or scan the barcode to receive more information, a special offer, or a coupon.

On Business Cards

It's a much more efficient way for people to find your website and/or dial your phone number than the traditional way of adding a web address and phone number to your card.

On Promotional Items

You can add QR codes to promotional items such as T-shirts and coffee mugs.

To Build an Email Subscriber List

Use your QR code to send people to your email signup page. Just make sure you give them a compelling reason to subscribe.

To Get the Phone Ringing

QR codes can also make a phone call. You can create a code that will dial a predetermined number. QR codes can also generate SMS text messages.

Storefront Displays

Few retail businesses are open 24/7. Don't turn away potential customers after you've closed for the day. Create a *Shop Online Now!* QR code and put it in your storefront window. One quick scan and you've turned a potential lost sale into an online customer.

On Company Vehicles

This allows someone at a stoplight or a passenger in traffic to scan the code.

The idea is to get in the habit of adding the QR code to everything—everywhere your logo appears, add your QR code. You can make your QR codes as small or as large as you like. For example you can add a 1 inch x 1 inch version to marketing materials and a 3 foot x 3 foot version to company vehicles. It's a no-brainer that costs either nothing or just about nothing.

About the Author

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