

Making The Most Of QR Codes

A QR code is an acronym for 'quick response' code. The QR code itself is actually quite old, starting in Japan in 1994, but their use has risen with the increasing adoption of smart phones. A QR code, once scanned can deliver:

- A web page or video
- A text message, email or phone call
- A vCard with your contact details
- A calendar appointment
- A geo-location

Everyone using iPhones, Blackberry's and Androids has the functionality to read QR codes.



App Store



ANDROID



Why use QR codes?

Google recently revealed results of a study they conducted regarding people who use the Internet on their smart phones. The research found that these consumers are extremely action-oriented and as many as 90 percent will act on their search by calling or visiting the business they were searching for. By utilising the low-cost potential (both financial and time) of the QR code as a marketing tool, you are able to quickly engage these consumers and increase your website's conversions.

- QR code scanning has increased 1200 percent from July-December 2010
- 63 percent of people scan QR codes to access more information if they are interested in purchasing a service or product
- 52 percent of people know what to do when they see a QR code
- 64 percent of QR scans are made by women

A QR code or other 2-D tag can link to just about anything. But whatever content you send back to the user must be something worthwhile. This could include:

- More product/service information
- The ability to get exclusive access to information/news
- Product/service discounts
- Competition entry
- Making a PURCHASE

How/Where to you use them?

Any promotion without a QR code is a missed opportunity. Here are just a few of the many ways you can start utilizing QR codes to promote your business and attract new customers:

- Business cards
- Event banners and signage
- Menu's and product lists
- Marketing collateral (flyers, mail shots, magazine ads etc.)
- 'Bricks and mortar' venue
- Website
- T-shirts, stationary and other merchandise



How can I measure success?

To truly measure the success of your QR code campaign, Approved Business recommends the following best practice guidelines:

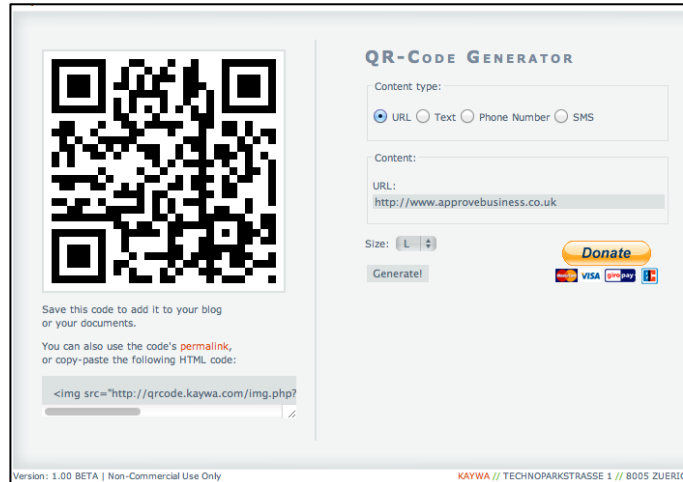
- First of all, before printing your literature and including the QR code on your website, make sure your QR code works as intended before you produce a wealth of material
- Use UTM tagging or URL shortening services such as bit.ly or ow.ly to **track** the number of times your QR code is scanned and where they came from (i.e. from the mailshots, an event board). You could also implement a bespoke QR code landing page. This will give you the ability to track and optimise your campaign and if you're using a CMS you could even make updates specific to the QR code
- Ideally you should link to a **mobile optimised website**, or at the very least a site that is free of Adobe Flash. As the majority of mobile devices (a la iOS devices) will not display Flash content, best practice would be to avoid it altogether
- Don't forget to include a prominent call-to-action (e.g. "Scan for a free quote") near the QR code so that your site visitors know why they should scan your QR code
- Don't use **proprietary** code formats that are not in mass use (Microsoft Tag & JagTag). There is a variety of QR formats so make sure you use the most widely used one

Where can I get a QR code:

There are a number of resources online where you can go and generate a QR code. Here are two of the best:

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

The Kaywa site is extremely easy to use and best of all, free. It offers a variety of QR. It also offers a number of inspirational ideas that you too could use QR codes.



www.qrstuff.com

Another site is QR Stuff, a site that has a lot more than just a QR Code generator. At QR Stuff you have access to various customisation options as well as high-resolution artwork files. You'll need a high resolution file if you're going to use your QR Code anywhere else other than on the web.



Other Sites:

<http://zxing.appspot.com/generator/>

<http://goqr.me/>

<http://delivr.com/qr-code-generator>

How to add QR code to Approved Business :

Step 1:

Log-in to the client area.

Step 2:

Click on 'properties' to begin modifying your company profile.

Step 3:

Navigate to the images tab where you will see three options to upload an image file. A company logo, a company details image and a QR code. Please see screenshot.

Select the file on your computer by selecting 'Choose file'. The QR code image will automatically upload to your company profile.

As QR code we would suggest your company name followed by 'QR Code'.

We recommend ticking the 'Autoresize QR Code' option. This ensures that your image is scaled down to a size where all users can scan it with their smart phones.

The screenshot shows a web interface with a navigation bar at the top containing tabs: Details, Subscription Info, Images (selected), and Tracking. Below the navigation bar, there are three main sections for image uploads:

- Company Logo (150x80):** Includes a text input for 'Logo Alternative Text:', an unchecked checkbox for 'Autoresize logo image', a 'Choose file' button, and a 'Remove' button.
- Company Details Image (530x200):** Includes a text input for 'Image Alternative Text:', an unchecked checkbox for 'Autoresize details image', a 'Choose file' button, and a 'Remove' button.
- Company QR Code (160x160):** Includes a text input for 'QR Code Alternative Text:', an unchecked checkbox for 'Autoresize QR Code', a 'Choose file' button, a 'Preview' link, and a 'Remove' button.

A 'Back' button is located at the bottom left of the form area.

Step 4:

You can then visit your newly updated Approved Business profile complete with QR code functionality.

