

The Business Connector

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Tiny Little Billboards

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Networking, in a sense, is about getting people to remember us. As the first element of effective networking is “know,” we cannot be networked unless we are first remembered.

When we are meeting someone for the first time, there are certain things that we can do to ensure that they remember us. We can do something memorable, so we stay in their thoughts. We can follow up with them, which serves as a reminder.

However, one of the simplest, most effective means of getting others to remember us is ensuring that they get our business card. According to Susan RoAne, author of *How To Work A Room*, “The purpose of business cards is to give people a tangible, physical way to remember you.”

We need to think of our business cards as not just convenient little notes with our contact information. Rather, we should view our business cards as tiny little billboards we can employ to emblazon our brand on those we meet.

After all, what is a billboard? Generally, it is a sign that serves as a means of gaining exposure for a business.

What is a business card? It is a means of gaining exposure for us,

and we just happen to be in business in some form or fashion, right?

With this understanding of the purpose of business cards, we should ask ourselves: Do we always have clean, crisp business cards to distribute? In our pocket? In our portfolio? In our car? We should always have them.

Rather, we should view our business cards as tiny little billboards we can employ to emblazon our brand on those we meet.

Further, as our business cards are much like billboards, we should ensure that they communicate more than just our business name and contact information. They should also include a tag line or statement that explains what our business does.

Moreover, as our business card will be the first impression our prospects receive of our business or us, it should convey the best possible one – reflecting an image consistent with the business we have.

Additionally, our business card is an integral part of our brand or business identity. Therefore, we should ensure that our mini-billboards follow the same graphics standards as the rest of

our communication materials, such as stationery, brochures, and even real billboards, if we have them.

As for distributing our business cards, so as not to be perceived as too pushy, before we hand them out we should establish a conversation with the prospect first. Once engaged in conversation, the situation will be more comfortable for us to offer our business card.

Once we get an opportunity to hand out our tiny little billboards, we should consider following the business practice of those from Far Eastern countries: We should hand out our business cards with both hands. This gives the impression that our business card is something very important.

Along those same lines, when someone gives us a business card, we should not put it away immediately. Rather, we should keep it in our hands for a while and study it carefully. Then we should talk to them about it or use it to segue into a conversation. Such as, “How did you come up with that business name?”

If we take an interest in their card, they are more likely to take an interest in ours. And, if they take more of an interest in our card, then they will probably remember us that much more. And, this is the point of our business cards – our tiny little billboards – in the first place, is it not? ▼