

# How Do QR Codes Work?



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## OVERVIEW OF QR CODES

QR codes have become a common sight almost overnight — from cereal boxes and billboards to even employee uniforms. With a 94% increase in interactions from 2018 to 2021, there's no denying QR codes are seeing an epic revival in a new touch-free world.

### What is a QR Code?

In short, QR codes are scannable bar codes that store data. In the marketing sphere, they're commonly used to redirect users to landing pages, websites, social media profiles, or store coupons.

For instance, someone can place a QR code on the back of their business card to direct you to their LinkedIn profile. A QR code on a billboard may send you to a landing page.

QR codes vary in design and function, and primarily fall into one of the following categories — static or dynamic.

### How does a QR Code work?

A QR code works similarly to bar codes at the supermarket. Each QR code consists of black squares and dots which represent different pieces of information. When scanned, the unique pattern on the bar code translates into human-readable data. This transaction happens in seconds.

Users must scan the code with a QR reader or scanner, although nowadays most people scan QR codes with smartphones. On the off chance that your phone doesn't have the capability, there are plenty of free apps for QR scanning like:

- Kaspersky's QR Scanner
- NeoReader
- QuickMark

## QR CODES FOR MARKETING

### **1. Stand out from your competition.**

Differentiating your business from your competitors is definitely a marketing 101 lesson. If used correctly, QR codes can spike the curiosity of your customers and prospects alike. Use this opportunity to link QR codes to exclusive offers or valuable content to carry that curiosity through to a sale.

For example, you can run a giveaway where users could enter by scanning a QR code.

### **2. Target consumers on the go.**

Retailers, don't you wish there were a way to interact with customers on the go? Integrate QR codes into your store signage and other print advertising. Whether you're providing coupons for shopping in-store or an easy way to sign up for your newsletter, QR codes make it super easy for customers and prospects to access your information fast on their phones.

For example, use signage on the front door of your store to pique interest about a program you offer. Instead of calling out the program, focus on the program benefits and provide a QR code linked to a page to explore your program.

### **3. Use a QR Code as a call-to-action.**

Many businesses are shifting their time and budgets to digital advertising, which is more interactive and easier to track than traditional advertising.

QR codes add an interactive component by turning static content into dynamic call-to-action buttons. From asking customers to leave a Google review to redirecting them to a branded Facebook page, you have many options to engage customers.

Even museums, libraries, and parks are leveraging QR codes to breathe life into displays and park benches.

### **4. QR Codes are FREE and easy to setup.**

There are multiple resources businesses can access that will allow them to insert a landing page URL and create a QR code that will direct users to that URL with the click of a button.

Sites like Qr Code Monkey and Flowcode allow you to set up QR codes in a matter of minutes and provide you with proper image formats to use in your designs.

QR codes are certainly having a moment in the marketing sphere. If you're thinking about adding them to your strategy, remember that the best practice is to create value. Make sure each code leads to a source of value — such as a coupon or promotion — and requires as few clicks as possible.

## GENERATE LEADS WITH QR CODES

### 1. Create a Landing Page

First and foremost, you'll need to create a mobile-optimized landing page. That means a landing page that is designed to be viewed on a smartphone screen. Keep things simple – for example, on a mobile landing page, forms should be kept to a few fields only. Most people don't have the patience to fill out lengthy forms from a smartphone.

### 2. Create Your QR Code

Once you've created your landing page, copy the URL into a QR code generator. There are plenty of QR code generators on the web, so just do a search for one. Paste your landing page URL into the QR code generator and, like magic, your QR code will be generated on the spot. This QR code is unique to you, so nobody in the world has another one just like it.

### 3. Add Your QR Code to Your Promotional Materials

Grab your QR code from the generator. On a PC, that means right-clicking it and saving it to your computer. (On a Mac, you can drag and drop.) Now that you have the QR code handy, add it to your promotional materials, which should include any printed materials or websites that are going to be part of the promotion.

### 4. Product Packaging

If you sell a physical product, adding a QR code that informs the buyer more about your brand or the product itself can build connections and trust. If you sell food, consider using a QR code for the ingredient list, or maybe easy recipes to use the item in. For cosmetics, have QR codes that give more information on how the products were made, tested, and where ingredients were sourced.

### 5. "Hello, My Name Is" Tags

You know those big red and white tags people wear at events with their names on them? If you put a QR code in place of your name, you'll engage people and easily be able to strike up conversations.

### 6. Event Posters

Advertising an event? Upgrade your posters and fliers with a QR code that a passerby can easily scan. Have the code direct them to your event page where they will view all pertinent details and buy tickets.

### 7. LinkedIn and Facebook Pages

Want another way to stand out from everyone else? Add a QR code to your LinkedIn and Facebook pages to pull people into your website. It's one of the best ways you can position yourself as a forward, innovative thinker.

## CONCLUSION

There's no real mystery to using QR codes to grow your business. All you have to do is generate the code, and drop it into your promotion. Be sure you test the campaign before you go public with it – people who scan your code expect things to work relatively smoothly the first time out of the gate. But other than that, running a QR code promotion is a snap.

A key point to remember about QR codes is that they're simply a mechanism to engage prospects and customers. In other words, they're not the end-game, so it's up to you to figure out how to use them to capture the visitors you drive to your website as leads using landing pages.

Once your strategy is in place, using QR codes to grow your business is relatively simple. Give them an experience that delights them and keeps them coming back for more.

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