



Turn That Secret Stash of Business Cards into New Business

Michael C. Bitter

Do you have a “secret” stash of business cards of contacts that you’ve met, but never followed up with? Here’s how to reactivate some of them to produce new customers or referral sources...

I’ve seen lots of them... Nicely bundled and rubber banded stacks of business cards, collected over the course of 20 cocktail networking events, tucked neatly away in drawers. Just sitting there doing nothing.

There’s probably a good reason. Lack of time is always a good excuse. Or, maybe, you’ve reconsidered the value of the contact. You know the thinking—“that’s not really a very good contact anyway.”

Whatever the reason, it’s not too late to begin doing a little mining. But, how do you reactivate and reintroduce your self? And, how do you do it without spending too much time in the process?

I recommend the letter, letter (email), letter (email), phone call method. Begin by developing a letter to reintroduce your self. This letter is designed to “break the ice” in a fun, friendly, non-threatening way, and to remind the contact about what you do, your value proposition, and your core differentiation, and it lets them know you intend to call—sometime soon.

If you are one of those people who write notes on the back of your business cards about where you met and what you discussed, you can make some reference to that information.

If you have no clue where or when you met, simply tell them in a light, fun way. For example, “This must have been a great networking event. I got your card, and presume you got mine. We must have had a great reason for exchanging cards, but I’ll be darned if I know why! So, let me reintroduce myself...”

The second letter (or email) builds on the first letter—providing a little more detail about your products, services, how you are different than everyone else in your business and how that matters to your customer. It is sent 5 to 7 days after the first letter. Again, keep it light, and again, let the contact know you will be calling soon to learn if there is any way the two of you can work together to help one another with contacts, referrals, or direct business.

The third letter (or email) provides a restatement of your key points and maybe a short testimonial or example of how you helped a customer solve a problem, or save a fortune, etc. In this letter, you announce that you will be calling in a few days to follow up. This letter is sent 5 to 7 days after the second letter.

On the third day after the last letter is sent. Make your first call. If you reach a voice mail, leave a light, fun message—i.e., “Joe, this is Bill Smith. We met some time ago at some event. I’ve sent you a couple of letters. I got tired of licking stamps so I thought I’d dun



you with voice mail. Could we have a quick 60 second phone call to see what we found so fascinating and interesting, we exchanged business cards?"

The key to this whole approach is to always keep it light and fun. It's great because there really is no risk, and from time to time, new business comes out of the process.

There is one other point to consider. You only have so much time in a day. So, you don't want to work your whole stack of cards at once. Work them slowly, a few cards a day, over a period of time.

But, you're probably thinking, this sounds like an awful lot work. And, you would be right. Unless...

Unless, you had a very efficient and low cost way of doing this. And, that is where Business Results Unlimited can help.

This is a great example of a marketing process that can be easily automated using a combination of contact management and work flow automation software, and a process we can help you design and implement.

Business Results Unlimited can help you improve the effectiveness and efficiency of all of your sales and marketing processes. We can help you automate and streamline your sales and marketing efforts to ensure nothing "falls through the cracks" and ensure more consistent, more predictable, more positive results.

Whether you are a small business owner, or a professional service provider (attorney, CPA, mortgage loan officer, banker, medical specialist, dentist), we can help you design and build automated sales and marketing processes to generate more new leads, generate more referrals from old or existing customers, and generate more sales from both.

We can help you develop sales letters, phone scripts, presentations, and proposals that get the job done with a minimum of time and effort.

And, we can provide you with expertise and products to help you create a strong, powerful marketing message that nearly eliminates competition—a message that positions your company as the best choice your customers could make when comparing you to your competition.

If you'd like to find out how to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and output of your sales and marketing efforts, or learn how you can put your marketing on "autopilot", call today at **636.207.1227** or visit our web site: **www.bizresults.net**

About the Author

Michael Bitter is a writer, public speaker, and small business coach, mentor, and consultant. A 25 year sales and marketing veteran, and small business owner for over 10 years, Bitter is a principal partner in the firm Business Results Unlimited (bizresults.net), a small business consulting firm that helps small business owners create new businesses or redesign existing businesses in order to dramatically increase sales, profits, and cash flow— while simultaneously increasing their personal freedom.