

# Making a QR Code



QR codes are easy to make and a great way to engage your audience. You may be wondering what are QR codes. QR codes are images that you scan with a smartphone app and it takes you to a URL (a website) that is in the image. They are basically a visual link that your phone can scan (infact the one at the left will take you to our home page). Think of it as almost a barcode, the URL is in the image using a serials of squares. So why use QR codes? They are a quick and easy image to make and are great way to engage your audience. The image tells the audience nothing. This peaks the curiosity and person scans the image and is taken to the URL to find out more.

QR codes are very easy to make and actually very customizable. Most of the time when you see a QR code they are just black and white. This is because the camera uses the contrast between the black and white to read the image. This also allows for you to do other combinations, like black and yellow. The yellow is light enough so it still works as white. The black can be any dark color. You can have multiple colors for the black or the white. In the end you just have to have that contrast between the colors like before. We'll go over more of coloration towards the end.

The first step you need to do when making a QR code is go to a website and make your QR code.

Here are a few sites you could use.

<http://goqr.me/>

Paste your URL in the field and drag the slider to the size you want and click download.

<http://www.qrstuff.com/>

Paste the URL you want to take your audience to. Then if you want just one color you can use this site to change the

foreground color to what you like. Once you have your QR code the way you want click the link under the code to download it or drag the code (image) to your desktop.

<http://www.visualead.com/>

This site allows you to put an image behind your QR code. This isn't fully recommended since it makes the image very complex and you may have to pay for the code.

When picking a site you should know that you can make QR codes for free so don't pay for one. Make sure they work, you can scan the image on the screen to make sure they work.

Next thing you probably want to do is get on your smart phone and download a scanner app. All you need to do is get on your phone's store such as the App Store or Google Play and search for QR reader. There are several out there so just pick one with good ratings and looks easy to use. I use QRReader for iPhone. There are a couple that also create QR codes which you may want to consider. The free apps work just fine. You should not have to pay for a QR reader app.

After making your QR code and downloading the app to test the QR code we can move on to the final steps. When you download the QR code it is just an image. This means you cannot make it bigger than what it is because it will stretch it. This is why I recommend using the first website because it allows you to make different sizes easily. You can always start out big and make it small but you can never make something small big. The smallest you can make a code and it be scanned is 1/2" by 1/2". That is the actual square of color not the white border around the image as a whole. Once you get it to the size you want, you can use it on various things. Just keep in mind that if the URL was for something specific like a sale or an event and it isn't just to your home page that you may want to make QR code just for that event and use it in special areas. You don't want to lead your audience to the wrong place.

Places you can put QR codes:

Business cards

Promo Products

Ads

Banners

Anything printed.