

## Postcard Power

By Maria Marsala

Have you considered adding postcards to your marketing plan? In this do-it-quick, get-it-over, techy world, postcards will set you apart. They are an easy, inexpensive way to differentiate yourself from the competition, and to keep in touch with clients, prospects, and your network.

Post cards are small enough to fit everywhere — in your briefcase, your car's glove compartment, or in a pocket. Keep a few prestamped so you can dash off a note and drop them in a mailbox. Have others ready to hand out any time someone needs a place to jot a note.

Here are a few of the many ways you can use post cards in your marketing.

**Announcements.** Announce a new product or service using postcards. Have you changed your address or updated your website? Say it with a postcard. Send announcements of upcoming seminars, teleclasses, conferences where you'll be speaking, or books and articles you're publishing. Turn your postcard into a coupon, free offer, special sale, or gift certificate. Consider swapping gift certificates with a complementary business to promote each other's businesses in your mailings.

**Reminders.** Send a "Looking forward to seeing you on \_\_\_\_" meeting reminder message to a client or associate. Just before the event, remind people of things you announced earlier, or send the agenda for the meeting. Remind folks of events that might be of interest to them, just as a service to your network.

**Keep your name in front of prospects.** How about placing your logo on a yearly calendar postcard? Try carrying a few un-stamped postcards that contain your contact information, and use them instead of business cards. The next time you are somewhere and someone is in need of paper, hand them one of your postcards. Do you have business tips for your clients? Send it to them on a postcard!

**Do research.** Place a business survey on prestamped returnable cards. Or send a single research question to a group of clients, with an email address for their response.

**Friendly greetings.** Postcards are a simple way to say "thank you." Drop one in the mail right after a meeting. Ask clients for birth dates and anniversary date on your coaching intake forms, and send a birthday



postcard. Send your clients postcards from places you're visiting — make it easy by printing address labels before you leave.

You can make your postcards as businesslike or as personal as you like. You may want your basic cards printed with your business logo and information, but you can be creative too. Include a picture — of yourself, of your book, of the place where your conference will be held.

Take the cover off holiday cards and use them as postcards next year! Save duplicates of scenic pictures you've taken and use them as post cards. According to Jay Levinson and Seth Godin in *The Guerrilla Marketing Handbook*, "color increases readership by 41% and raises a buyers inclination to buy by 26%" ...so say it

with color.

Postcards are an easy and effective way of staying in touch with your clients and your network. They'll pay back your effort many times over. It's so easy to "say it with a postcard." ☞

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### What's a post card?

According to the US Postal Service website [<http://www.usps.gov>] the smallest mailable size is 3 1/2 inches high, 5 inches long and must be rectangular in shape. The largest mailable size is 4 1/4 inches high, 6 inches long.

Postcards exceeding these dimensions are charged the letter rate, while the postcard rate is considerably less [22 cents versus 34 cents in early 2002]. You can spend even less if you use a mailing service with a bulk mail permit.

Purchase postcards (printed or plain) from a local or online printer, design and print them yourself using index cards or template sheets of postcards from an office supply company. Or you can make them using photos and other creative materials. ☞