

## Quick Response (QR) Codes: What are they and why should I care?

A QR (Quick Response) code is a two-dimensional barcode readable on smartphones through the camera feature. The code consists of black modules arranged in a square pattern on a white background. The information encoded can be text, URL, or other data<sup>1</sup>.



QR codes have been around since 1994 and were used primarily in tracking automotive parts through production. Now QR codes are seen in advertisements, webpages and apparel. People can now easily create their own QR code by visiting one of several free QR code generating sites.

A good example of an innovative use of a QR code is with Real Estate agents. QR codes are often seen hanging from the 'For Sale' sign in the front yard so that prospective clients can quickly upload all of the information of the property and take it with them on their smartphone. Businesses are using them in print advertisements to quickly direct customers to their website or to a particular page such as a coupon. Others are adding a QR code complete with all of their contact information on the back of their business cards so people do not have to manually input the information to their phone.

Here is a step-by-step outline on how to create your own QR code for the two most popular functions; Webpage links and Text messages:

### Webpage (URL) Link

1. Navigate to the desired page you want to link to
2. Copy the URL or web address from the top of the screen (right-click and copy)
3. Google one of several QR code generators such as: [Kaywa](#), [Qurify](#) and [Delivr](#)
4. Paste the URL in the appropriate field and click generate
5. The QR code should now appear on the screen. Right click the image and copy or save the image to your computer
6. Now that you have the QR code saved, you can paste it to the desired media such as: Email signature, print advertisement, facebook status, or print it as a poster for your store window.

### Text

1. Go directly to the QR code generator of choice: [Kaywa](#), [Qurify](#) and [Delivr](#) are good examples
2. Select the Text option and type in the text you want to appear
3. Click generate to produce a QR code. The QR code should now appear on the screen. Right click the image and copy or save the image to your computer
4. Now that you have the QR code saved, you can paste it to the desired media such as: Email signature, print advertisement, facebook status, or print it as a poster for your store window or another desired location.

## **Other applications for the QR code**

Tourism assets in the community can be highlighted with QR codes for people to download and learn more about that particular location. Picture having a series of QR codes spread throughout the community leading people to different points of interest. This can be a very interactive and fun experience for people of all ages.

Special discounts can be offered to customers that utilize this technology. A QR code can be placed in a print ad or store window offering a 15% discount at the store. This can be a great way to measure how many people that viewed your ad translated into a customer. It also makes your business look a few steps ahead of your competition.

A QR code can be great for home-based businesses with limited exposure. They can print a QR code to be displayed in their car window, front yard, or other appropriate locations.

Creating QR codes is fast and easy and can be a great way to raise the profile of your business.



### **How do I read or download the QR code?**

Smartphones typically do not come with the QR Code scan application built in. You will have to find a QR scanner through your phone's app store which should be free. Apple's iPhone supports an array of readers; read the customer reviews before selecting the one that's right for you.

Once you have the scanner in your phone, open the application to the scan setting, move the camera over the QR code and, if the code is readable by your phone, the URL, text or other data will appear on the screen.

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<sup>i</sup> Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/QR\\_code](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/QR_code)