

# Getting the Most Out of QR Codes: What Can You Do?

*A few thoughts and suggestions; do give them a try!*



Having fiddled with QR codes on the odd occasion during recent years, I have to confess that until very recently I was more than a little dulled by the whole idea. Those that I had seen being used didn't seem to work especially well and those that did failed to offer any great or illuminating information. The app on the iPhone 3G product that I was using until earlier this year didn't seem that great, and appeared to be over sensitive to issues of light and shade when photographing the code image. Overall: not that impressed!

A quick refresher on QR codes, just in case you're not too familiar, and might need a little more understanding. You need a smart phone, complete with an app that is capable of reading and interpreting a QR (Quick Response) code. I am using QR Reader on the iPhone, for example. Using this app, you need to be able to take a clear photograph of a QR coded image, such as the ones shown on this page (one image at a time I mean; they are all different, and will do different things!). Try not to get in other text; try to take an image that is roughly square on; and try to get a clear shot, not blurred or fuzzy. The app should then do the rest. It will recognise that you have taken a picture of a QR code, and it will follow the instruction embedded within the code.



*Back to my experiences to date:* enter iPhone 4.0, and some work with a new QR code generator, and my enthusiasm is restored, and even surpassed from any previous state! I am now seeing this as some other commentators have enthused: it is where print meets the internet! The reproduction of accurate QR codes can make a big difference to how a company communicates with its public. Firstly, on this test sheet, you will find a fairly simple and straightforward QR code that links to a URL – this particular one will link to our GenesisNews site (phone version!), providing the very latest stories. It gets a little

more fanciful then, with a second code that creates an e-mail for you to send to me (or at least that's what I hope it will do on your phone; it did on mine!).

Getting excited? Try the third one. This connects you to my LinkedIn profile page. You will be able to read my background info, as well as see connections to items such as my blog page (GenesisNews), my e-mail address, and my web site. If you are a LinkedIn member (I urge you to be!), then you can sign in and do all of the other LinkedIn things as well! QR code number four offers you another social media experience by taking you to the GenesisNews home page on Twitter.



Number five is an example of how a QR code can interface with Google Maps. The code I have generated for you will actually give you a map of how to get to Wembley Stadium – that's just what I asked for when I created the code. It could, of course, have been a map to your business premises; the venue for an open house; or the details of an exhibition location.

Finally, and maybe the most exciting option: a link to a You Tube video. This short film features a Xeikon 3500 being introduced by Xeikon's own Filip Weymans, but it could equally be your company's new product; an introduction to a new member of staff; the technical solution to a tricky operational issue that is quite difficult to express in just words; your latest company advert; or just a monthly video newsletter for your customers.

Imagine a well thought out company brochure that not only details what makes you different from your competition, and explains all about the product or service that you offer, but also carries a QR code to extend the content of each page. That code immediately gives your brochure a totally dynamic appearance. It means that the static



text and images printed within its pages can now be supplemented by up to the minute information delivered via the QR code, your customer's smart phone, and web pages created by you.

It might be, for example, that on the page of dry technical specifications, a QR code links to a video showing a prospect a demonstration of the featured machine. Your standard "introduction" page might be augmented by a code leading to another short video with the chairman explaining the very latest news about the business. A further page might contain a code that links to the latest news items from the company, whether that points to a web page, an RSS feed, or your Twitter or Facebook home. The possibilities must be endless, and the creative opportunities certainly go beyond those mentioned here. Your further thoughts are most welcome. Why not scan the second QR code on this page and send me an e-mail!

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