

MERCHANDISING

by Keith Evans, Director of Communications and Public Relations

Don't Get Caught Without Your Business Cards

Business cards are a vital part of doing business these days. Even people who aren't in business have them, and for good reason. They serve important functions.

First, the cards allow individuals and business people to make a more lasting impression on the people they meet and do business with. It is difficult for us to remember an individual's name, let alone the address, telephone number and business name. But when a considerate person hands us a card when we meet, it is no problem. Nearly everything we need to know is printed out on a piece of paper.

Business cards are handy. I keep important business cards in a file folder. When I need to look up a person in another town who does printing, or paints signs or whatever, all I need to do is check my folder. I have two folders, in fact, one with business cards for U.S. businesses and another for breeders and association executives in other countries. Just recently I received an advertisement for a sticky tab to attach to the bottom of a business card which makes it fit into a Rolodex. I have also received business cards that are made to fit a Rolodex without any conversion.

Business cards make so much sense and are so well used that you are missing a bet if you don't have one for your Angus business. This is especially true since they don't have to cost very much. A well designed card can look great yet be very inexpensive to produce.

Start by finding a business card design that you like. If you don't already have some, get cards from your banker, insurance sales person, the feed or ag chemical representative. Most of these people will have cards designed by professionals. When you find one that looks right for you, take it to your local printer and have them print a card for you, using the same basic design.

Incorporate in your business card your herd logo, or a simple version of it. If you want to use a drawing of an Angus bull, cow, heifer or calf, contact the American Angus Association public relations department. We have a variety of stock pieces of artwork that will add to the design.

You know what information should be on the card — your

name and maybe your spouse's name, the name of your operation along with address, and telephone number. Keep it neat and simple. If you have a short slogan or positioning statement that sums up the kind of operation you have, then use it. Resist the temptation to add more.

Many costly business cards are printed on very expensive paper using time consuming, expensive printing processes. Don't let your printer sell you on one of these methods if you want to save money. The only kind of paper you need is a nice white or colored 100- or 150-pound cover stock. The printer's regular offset press and ink is fine. Most printers do these kinds of cards all the time, so they will know exactly what you want, and will turn it out for you fast and at a fair price.

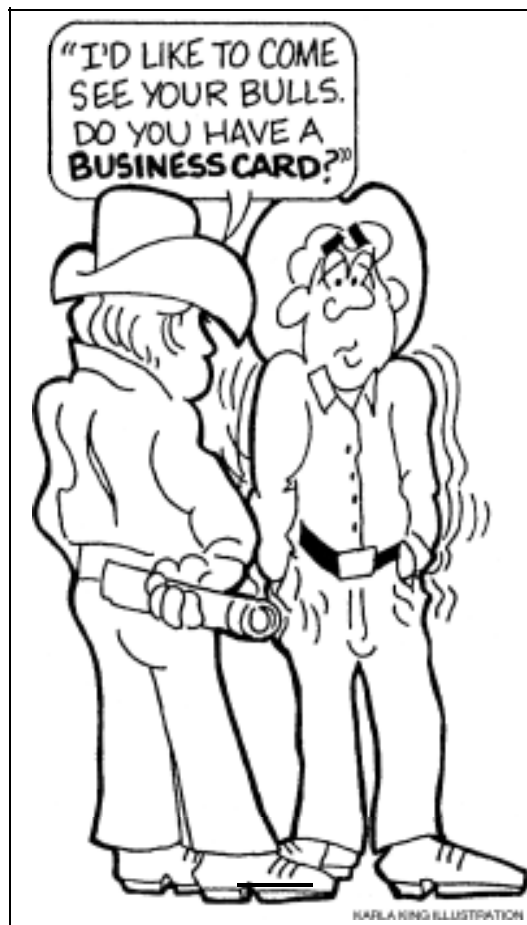
Don't be tempted to reduce the price by ordering only a couple of hundred cards. The cost of printing comes mainly from type setting, proofing, getting the press ready to print, and cleanup afterwards. There won't be a great deal of difference in the cost of 200 or 2,000 cards, so get plenty.

Once you have your new business cards in hand use them. Make sure every banker, Extension livestock specialist, 4-H leader and FFA advisor in your market area gets one. Hand them out to people you meet at cattle meetings and other farm-related events. Post them on community bulletin boards and at sale barn bulletin boards. Include a business card with most of your correspondence. People often tend to file or at least

save business cards while letters and envelopes tend to get lost or tossed.

Carry a few cards with you all the time. Keep more in the glove compartment of the car and pickup. If you have a farm office, get a card holder and display a few on your desk where they are handy for people to pick up.

Keeping your name, address and telephone number in front of the buying public is as essential in the Angus business as it is in any other business. Business cards are one relatively inexpensive way to help you do this.



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