Project 3
Business cards

Timing: 5 to 8 hours

Project overview

It can be exciting to get and use a business card, especially the first time. Often, however, people don't have control over the design of the card that represents them. In this project, students create a business card, and in the process, they learn about typography and layout design. Students also investigate how tone, audience, and purpose impact design decisions, whether they're representing themselves or an organization. Finally, students engage in a formal review and redesign process to help them improve and expand their design skills.

Student product: Business cards and PDF slideshow presentation

Note: Portions of the Business cards project align align to the Adobe Certified Associate, Visual Communication objectives. Within the instruction steps and technical guides, the specific learning objectives for the exam are referenced with the following format:[1.1]

Project objectives

At the completion of the project, students will have developed the following skills:

Project management skills

- Planning and managing projects with multiple steps
- Incorporating different types of assets
- Conducting a review workshop
- Identifying audience(s)
- Selecting and using appropriate applications
- Practicing safe, responsible use of copyright information when using outside graphic elements

Design skills

- Understanding the impact of typography
- Understanding the relationship between color, typography, layout, and tone
- Designing for readability
- Redesigning based on feedback
- Understanding different print formats
- Understanding sustainable design techniques
- Applying principles of print design
- Designing for audience(s)
- Creating an original work

Research and communication skills

- Evaluating and analyzing business cards
- Providing insightful critiques and feedback
- Demonstrating personal responsibility by incorporating feedback
- Presenting a design layout to a group
- Planning strategies to guide inquiry
- Communicating business card redesign effectively to peers and instructors

Technical skills

Photoshop

- Exporting to InDesign
- Resizing and cropping images
- Applying filters, such as the Lighting Effect or Lens Flare

InDesign

- Understanding the InDesign interface

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- Setting document properties, including dimensions and margins
- Adding and modifying text
- Using alignment tools, ruler, guides, and grid

Acrobat Pro

- Creating PDF slideshows

Project materials

- Adobe Photoshop CS6 Extended installed on all machines
- Adobe InDesign CS6 installed on all machines
- Adobe Acrobat X Pro installed on all machines
- Guide: Understanding typography concepts
- Presentation: Introduction to typography design
- Worksheet: Analyzing business cards
- Worksheet: Review and redesign of business cards
- Photoshop guide: How to resize, rotate, and crop images
- Photoshop guide: How to use filters
- InDesign guide: Overview of InDesign CS6 workspace
- InDesign guide: How to set up a document
- InDesign guide: How to use text
- InDesign guide: How to use the ruler, grid, guides, and the Align panel
- InDesign guide: How to prepare files for print
- Acrobat guide: How to create a PDF presentation

Background preparation resources

- Technical and content information
- Key terms
- ISTE NETS*S Standard for Students
- Adobe Certified Associate, Visual Communication objectives

Project steps

Planning and designing a business card

(Suggested time: 50–100 minutes)

1. Introduce students to goals of the project.
   - Design and create a business card.
   - Understand typography and layout design.
   - Identify aspects of redesign and its importance in the design process.

2. Share examples of print business cards with students and discuss the following information about typography concepts:[2.3]
   - *Serifs:* Short lines at the end of characters.
   - *Kerning:* Space between two letters; becomes very important with large typeface and might need to be adjusted manually.
   - *Tracking or letter spacing:* Adjusting overall space between all letters, not just pairs of letters.
   - *Leading:* Space between two lines of text; can affect readability.

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- *Baseline shift:* Lowest point of most letters (except those that go below it, such as "y" and "g"); can be used to create interest.

Note: You might want to gather business cards to share with the class or ask students to bring in their parents' business cards for this activity.

Guide: Understanding typography concepts [2.3]

3. Continue to view examples of business cards and turn the discussion toward typography, layout, and design principles.[2.2, 2.3] Encourage students to take notes and complete the *Analyzing business cards* worksheet. In your discussion, you might want to include the following:
   - *Readability:* Be aware of line length, spacing, correct hyphenation, causing reader fatigue by using too much colored text, caps, or curvy, swooshy type.
   - *Visual Hierarchy:* Create an organized system for comprehension and to emphasize certain information.
   - *Fonts:* For readability in print and online, compare sans serif to serif and consider size, font families, and the dangers of using too many font combinations.
   - *Rule of thirds:* Divide the page into thirds and place points of interest in the intersections of the lines such that objects such as images and page layouts are balanced and focused.
   - *Alignment:* Align everything to create cohesion and unity; use grids when possible.
   - *Sustainable design:* Be sensitive to the environmental impact of your design and make an effort to comply with economic, social, and environmental sustainability principles. (For more information on sustainable design, see the *Background preparation resources*.)

   Presentation: Introduction to typography design [2.3]

   Worksheet: Analyzing business cards

4. To help students begin planning their business cards, discuss how tone, audience, and purpose impact design and readability.[1.1] Questions to propose and discuss include:
   - What information needs to be on the card?
   - What do you want to communicate about yourself or the organization?
   - Who is the intended audience?
   - What impact do you want the business cards to have when they are handed out?
   - What is the most important information to be conveyed?
   - How does your audience impact the font family you will use?

5. Applying what they know about graphic design, ask students to sketch their business cards and identify the content for the card (name, address, etc.) and any additional graphics elements they might include. Remind students to use their logos from Project 2 on their business cards. Remind students that if they use any outside graphics elements, they must use appropriate copyright and fair use guidelines.[1.2]

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6. Instruct students to use what they have learned about typography and layout design to identify possible fonts and colors. Remind them to assess how each decision they make will impact the overall tone and goals of their business card. Ask students to write out their goals and design decisions, explaining the design principles they are employing—have them fill out this information on the *Review and redesign of business cards* worksheet (the first questions in the "Meeting initial goals" and "Reflecting good design principles" sections).

   Worksheet: Review and redesign of business cards [1.3]

Building business card elements

(Suggested time: 100–150 minutes)

7. Explain that students will first build the graphics elements they plan to use in Photoshop and then bring them into InDesign to assemble the business card. Explain that they will learn to work with filters in Photoshop to enhance their logos and any other graphics elements they plan to include.

8. To use their logos from the previous project might require resizing and enhancement to fit within the constraints of a printed business card. Describe the common business card size and its implications for the logos or other graphics used on it. Explain that they will be given time to enhance their logos if they so choose.

   Photoshop Guide: How to resize, rotate, and crop images [2.1, 4.3]

9. Using the "I do, we do, you do" method, demonstrate how to use filters in Photoshop.

   Photoshop guide: How to use filters [4.8]

10. Allow students time to do some or all of the following to prepare the graphics elements in Photoshop:
    - Further enhance their logo if necessary
    - Resize, resample, or crop their logo if necessary
    - Create or gather any additional graphics elements

    Note: If students plan to use outside graphics elements, have them consider the copyright or fair use policy the graphics might be under and obtain permission to use them.[1.2]

Building a business card

(Suggested time: 100–150 minutes)

11. Once the graphics elements are prepped and ready to use, students begin to lay out and build the business card in InDesign. Introduce the basics of the InDesign interface.

12. Ask students to create the basic layout from their earlier sketch and incorporate the text content they planned. Using the "I do, we do, you do" method, demonstrate how to set up a document, create text, and use the grids, rulers, and guides in InDesign.

    InDesign guide: Overview of InDesign CS6 workspace

    InDesign guide: How to set up a document

    InDesign guide: How to use text

    InDesign guide: How to use the ruler, grid, guides, and the Align panel

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Note: To ensure that all assets added to an InDesign document have the desired print or export settings, you might introduce and demonstrate continuous preflighting. Detailed instructions on setting up continuous preflighting are available in the *How to prepare files for print* guide.

13. Finally, students import the graphics elements and logo. Using the "I do, we do, you do" method, demonstrate how to import files into InDesign. Instruct students to import their logo and any other graphics elements they created in Photoshop.

14. Allow students time to complete their business card layout and insert graphics elements in InDesign, based on their initial sketches.

15. Ask pairs of student to review their business cards with each other to be sure they met the initial goals. Ask students to take notes on the *Review and redesign* worksheet to assess the goals and gather feedback.

Worksheet: Review and redesign of business cards [1.3, 1.4]

16. Allow students time to redesign their business cards, if needed.

17. Once students have implemented any changes, they can print their cards. Using the "I do, we do, you do" method, demonstrate how to prepare the business cards for print in InDesign and ask students to print their business cards if resources allow.

InDesign guide: How to prepare files for print

Note: Design and cost constraints exist for commercial printing. You might discuss these constraints as they relate to this and future projects (for instance, printing in more than two colors is very costly and will impact color design decisions).

Redesigning and presenting a business card

(Suggested time: 100–150 minutes)

18. Assign students to small groups and instruct them to select one business card design and create three redesign versions of each for the following scenarios:

- Serious
- Creative
- Entertaining

19. Allow student groups time to create the three business cards

20. Instruct each group to prepare a presentation that will include a PDF slideshow of their three business cards in which they explain and identify the design elements they changed to redesign and change the tone of their original cards.

21. Demonstrate how to create a PDF slideshow, and allow each group time to prepare a slideshow with the original business card design and the three new designs.

Acrobat guide: How to create a PDF presentation

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22. Ask groups to present their PDF slideshows and explain what design principles they used and decisions they made to change the tone of their business cards. Ask students to also explain the one key concept they learned in this project and what they would like to learn next.[1.4]

Extension activities

You can extend the project in the following ways:

- *Ancillary materials:* After students have completed their business cards, have them design and create the other materials they might need for the business, such as envelopes and letterheads for when they apply for jobs and provide their business cards. If they designed the business card for an organization, have them create ancillary materials the organization might need.
- *Real world experiences:* Recruit interested local businesses and organizations for which the student groups might create a business card design. Each group could act like its own design firm and create designs for the organization.
- *Reviewing with clients:* When working with clients each group could post their work to the web to conduct client reviews by creating PDF documents in Adobe Acrobat X Pro or uploading content onto a review website such as Acrobat.com.

Assessment

- Project rubric

Background preparation resources

- Review the student step-by-step guides referenced in this project.
- To view video tutorials aligned with the skills required to complete this project, visit the Visual Design CS6 show on Adobe TV: http://tv.adobe.com/show/visual-design-cs6/
- For more teaching and learning resources on business cards and other topics in this project, search for resources from the community on the Adobe Education Exchange: http://edexchange.adobe.com
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of Photoshop, see Photoshop Help.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of InDesign, see InDesign Help.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of Acrobat, see Acrobat Help.
- You might supplement this project with the following design and typography books:
  - Lupton, E. (2010). *Thinking with Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, & Students, Second Edition*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press. Review the companion website: www.thinkingwithtype.com.
  - Lawler, B. (2009). *The Official Adobe Print Publishing Guide, Third Edition.* Berkeley: Adobe Press.
  - Williams, R. (2007). *Robin Williams Design Workshop, Second Edition*. Berkeley: Peachpit Press.

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Typography

- A general introduction to typography on the web: www.wpdfd.com/wpdtypo.htm
- What typography is, featuring type used on letterhead, envelopes, business cards, flyers, and brochures: www.vipprinting.com/typetips.html
- The difference between type on the web and in print and how to bring the two together: www.graphicpush.com/webpage-printing-typography-and-usability-considerations
- Typography for web design: www.markboulton.co.uk/journal/comments/five_simple_steps_to_better_typography/

Business card layout:

- General guidelines for page layout: http://desktoppub.about.com/cs/pagelayout/f/layout_rules.htm
- The 11 parts of a business card: http://desktoppub.about.com/od/businesscards/a/bcard_parts.htm
- Links on business card layout, design, and tone: http://desktoppub.about.com/od/businesscards/Business_Cards.htm
- Cost benefits and design considerations of business cards: http://ezinearticles.com/?Business-Cards-Design-Guidelines&id=462128

Graphic design:

- Review the Introduction to Graphic Design presentation.
- An article on design principles: www.digital-web.com/articles/principles_of_design/
- Before and after formats illustrating design principles: http://desktoppub.about.com/od/designprinciples/l/aa_pod2.htm
- A short introduction to graphic design theory, explaining the aspects of design to consider when composing a piece of fine art or producing a graphic layout: www.usask.ca/education/coursework/skaalid/theory/cgdt/designtheory.htm
- A brief discussion of the main principles of design: http://char.txa.cornell.edu/language/principl/principl.htm
- The design process: www.design-lib.com/guidelines-to-graphic-design-process-gd.php

Sustainable design:

- An independent online toolkit for sustainable graphic design: www.re-nourish.com
- The Living Principles for Design framework: http://www.livingprinciples.org/framework/introduction/
- The Living Principles Resources: http://www.livingprinciples.org/resources/context/overview/
- You might supplement this project with the following sustainable design books:
    - Dougherty, B. (2009). *Green Graphic Design*. New York: Allworth Press. www.greengraphicdesign.net/
    - Jedlicka, W. (2009). *Packaging Sustainability: Tools, Systems and Strategies for Innovative Package Design*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Key terms

- alignment
- baseline shift
- filters
- font families
- grids
- hierarchy
- kerning
- leading
- readability
- rulers
- serifs
- sustainable design
- tracking
- typography

ISTE NETS*S Standard for Students

This project is aligned to the ISTE NETS*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this project aligns to your state requirements.

1. Creativity and Innovation

   Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

   a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.

   b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.

2. Communication and Collaboration

   Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students:

   b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.

   d. contribute to project teams to produce original work and solve problems.

3. Research and Information Retrieval

   Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:

   b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.

   c. evaluate and select information sources and technology tools based on appropriateness of specific task.

4. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

   Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students::

   b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.

5. Digital Citizenship

   Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:

   a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.

   b. exhibit positive attitudes toward technology uses that support collaboration, learning, and productivity.

   c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

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6. Technology Operations and Concepts

   Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations. Students:

   a. understand and use technology systems.
   b. select and use applications effectively and productively.

Adobe Certified Associate, Visual Communication objectives

1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing image(s).

1.2 Demonstrate knowledge of standard copyright rules for images and image use.

1.3 Demonstrate knowleged of project management tasks and responsibilities.

1.4 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design plans.

2.1 Demonstrate knowledge of image resolution, image size, and image file format for web, video, and print.

2.2 Demonstrate knowledge of design principles, elements, and image composition.

2.3 Demonstrate knowledge of typography.

4.3 Transform images.

4.7 Demonstrate knowledge of type.

4.8 Demonstrate knowledge of filters.

5.1 Demonstrate knowledge of preparing images for web, print, and video.

Assessment

	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
Analyzing business cards	Absent or incomplete.	*Analyzing business cards* worksheet is complete and draws examples from the class discussion, typography guide, and presentation on typography.	*Analyzing business cards* worksheet is clearly and thoughtfully completed. Worksheet includes specific and clear examples from the class discussion, typography guide, and presentation on typography. Worksheet also includes specific and clear examples from previous discussions, guides, and presentations on design principles, color theory, and layout.

	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
Review and redesign	Absent or incomplete.	The review and redesign process analyzes and critiques whether the first version of the business card meets the initial goals, requires new goals, and reflects good design principles. The review and redesign process details changes needed for final business card.	The review and redesign process clearly and explicitly analyzes and critiques how the first version of the business meets or does not meet the initial goals, whether the business card requires new goals, and how the business card reflects good design principles. The review and redesign process insightfully analyzes changes for the final business card and identifies new design principles and technological techniques to incorporate.
Business card – content	Absent or incomplete.	Business card incorporates a variety of assets and is designed for and communicates to multiple audiences. Any outside graphics elements are properly cited with copyright or fair use guidelines.	Business card has a clear tone and purpose and effectively communicates information to multiple audiences. Any outside graphics elements are properly cited with copyright or fair use guidelines.
Business card – design	Absent or incomplete.	Business card incorporates the logo and uses appropriate typography design, layout design, and color selection. Business card assets employ use of filters, and graphics elements are properly aligned.	Business card incorporates the logo and clearly and elegantly incorporates typography design, layout design, and color selection. In planning and designing the business card, appropriate technological techniques were employed, such as use of filters on graphics elements, proper alignment of graphics, and appropriate document dimensions, such as margins.

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	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
PDF slideshow presentation	Absent, incomplete, or unfocused.	Slideshow presentation includes an original business card. Slideshow presentation highlights three redesigned business cards with explanations and analysis of the design process, decisions, and implemented changes (typography design, color selection, layout design, technologies used, and so on) made to each card for use in a serious, creative, or entertaining situation.	Slideshow presentation includes an original business card. Slideshow presentation highlights three redesigned business cards with clear and detailed explanations and analysis (including examples such as sketches) of the design process, decisions, and implemented changes (typography design, color selection, layout design, technologies used, and so on) made to each card for use in a serious, creative, or entertaining situation.
Teamwork	Absent or incomplete.	Student collaborates with other students as required to provide feedback or assistance. Contributes equally to project work but makes minimal effort to help others build skills.	Student collaborates freely with other students to provide feedback or assistance. Contributes equally to project work. Consults with other team members on major project decisions and voluntarily helps others build skills to complete the project.

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