Designing a Professional Business Card

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In this chapter, we will learn the following to World Class CAD standards:

- **Designing a Professional Business Card**
- **Laying Out the Card in a Graphics Program**

Designing a Professional Business Card

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When we meet another professional like ourselves or a potential customer, we want them to have their own copy our card with our name, title, mailing or address, phone numbers and emails. We will lose our business like image, if we do not have a small clean looking document to give them holding this basic yet critical information. In this lesson, we will learn the basic skills needed to design a tasteful and useful card that we will carry throughout our career.

Figure 1.1 – A Sample Business Card

Before beginning the business card project, sketch out a simple design. In our illustration, we will need to decide what name, title, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, logos and taglines we want to use. We need to determine whether this information should be just on the front of the card or on both sides.

Some cards contain a logo from our organization, so that solves the image dilemma. Some individuals like to place a small sized high-resolution picture of them on the document. If we decide to use a random graphic, this image will essentially become our logo after we distribute hundreds or even thousands of cards. That illustration becomes a trademark of us, so we should chose wisely when picking our business card image.

The address on our 2 by 3.5 inch paper should be correct and we should be at that location regularly to check for mail and packages sent to us. Some cards have a neighborhood office address including the main office location printed on the small rectangular paper.

The phone number should be much more than a voice mail service, but should be your actual phone or an administrative assistant to take and give messages. For small home and family businesses, we can train a family member to receive calls and act as our agent. Then we can place their number on the card and we can have our representative who knows our daily schedule give real information to people inquiring about our schedule and services.

The email address should contain our business web address whenever possible, like the example jsmith@worldclasscad.com. For individuals with Gmail, Yahoo and Aol

accounts, make sure the web address reflects our professional nature. We do not want a web address, such as Deathman14@email.com when we try to portray a professional image to the customer or potential employer.

For personal cards, we use our legal name as the main text instead of the organization name. In addition, every professional has a title whether given by degree or position, so use the designation earned or given to us on the card.

Taglines are useful in giving that critical additional information to the customer or potential employer. If we have won a prize for our latest college report in a regional contest, we could have a tagline of "2009 Award Winning Author". If our specialty is in graphics, we can say on the card "Maker of Remarkable Illustrations". We utilize taglines when people do not know our specialties and the short phrase helps communicate our strengths to them.

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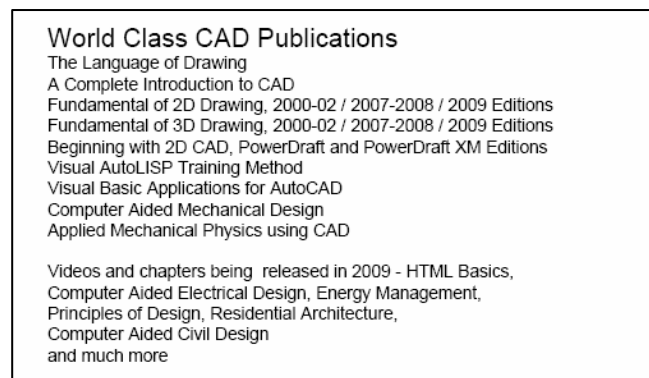Computer Aided Civil Design
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Figure 1.2 – A Sample of the Back of a Business Card

If a tagline is not enough and we wish to promote a few of our products, we can list them on the back of our card as shown in figure 1.2.

Laying Out the Card in a Graphics Program

When laying out the business card, we want to use a graphics program to move text and images around easily and the Microsoft Power Point program does that for us. We need to open the Power Point application and select File on the Menu Bar and pick Page Setup. When the Page Setup window appears on our display, change the orientation to portrait as shown in figure 1.3. Press OK to exit the window.
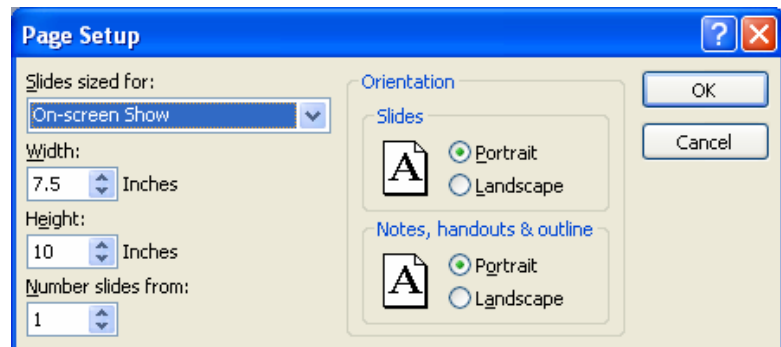

Figure 1.3 – Page Setup in the Power Point Program

On the Zoom list box on the Standard toolbar, we want to set the magnification to 200%. Then we will scroll to the upper left corner of the layout slide.
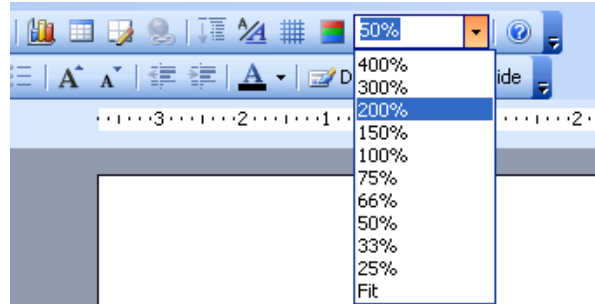

Figure 1.4 – Changing Zoom Setting to 200%

Select the Rectangle tool on the Drawing toolbar at the bottom of the slide and draw a box shape in the upper left corner of the slide as shown in figure 1.5. The rectangle can be any shape right now since we will resize the boundaries of the business card in the next few steps.
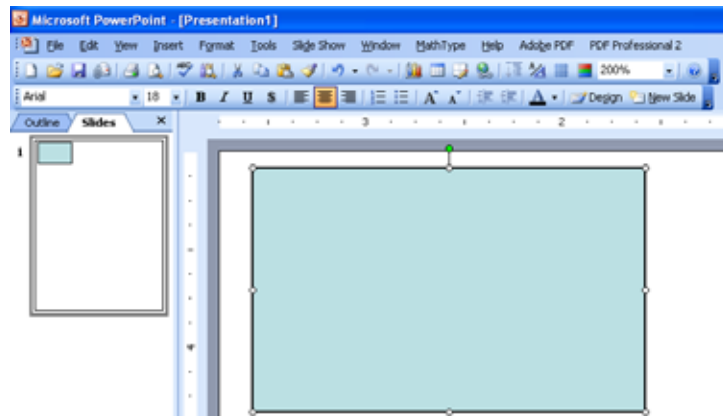

Figure 1.5 – Drawing a Rectangle

On the same Drawing toolbar, we want to change the fill color to white for this project. If we are going to make a colored card, we will select a colored card stock instead of printing the background color. We will select the "No Fill" option to get a white background.
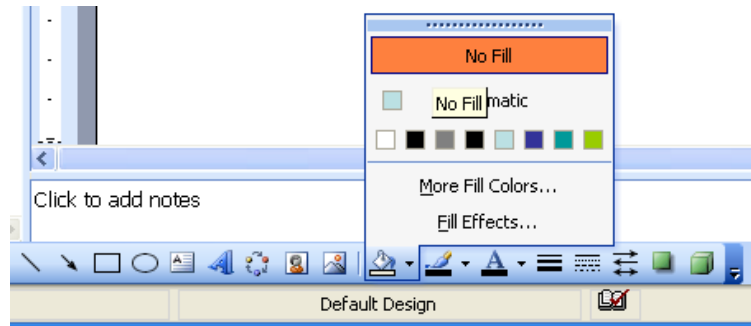

Figure 1.6 – Changing the Fill Color to No Fill

Right click on any edge of the card's boundary line and the menu shown in figure 1.7 will appear. We want to select Format AutoShape to open the window with that name. We can see other important options on this menu such as Order so we can place text in front of a picture.
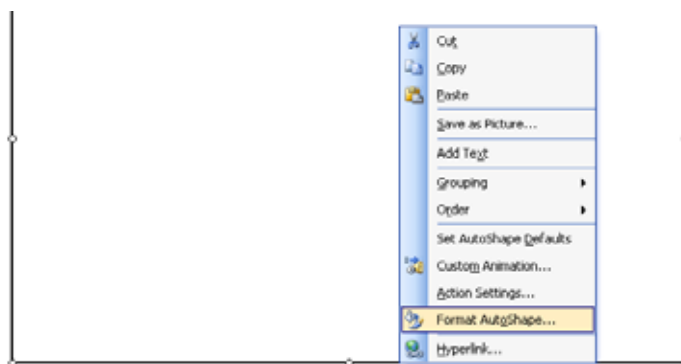

Figure 1.7 – Format an AutoShape

When the Format AutoShape window materializes on our monitor, we will select the Size tab. For business cards made in the United States, the standard size is 3.5 inches wide by 2.0 inches tall. Check an online reference for standard sizes in other parts of the world. Make the changes as shown in figure 1.8 and press the OK command button to exit the dialogue box. The boundary of the business card will be 3.5 by 2.0 inches.
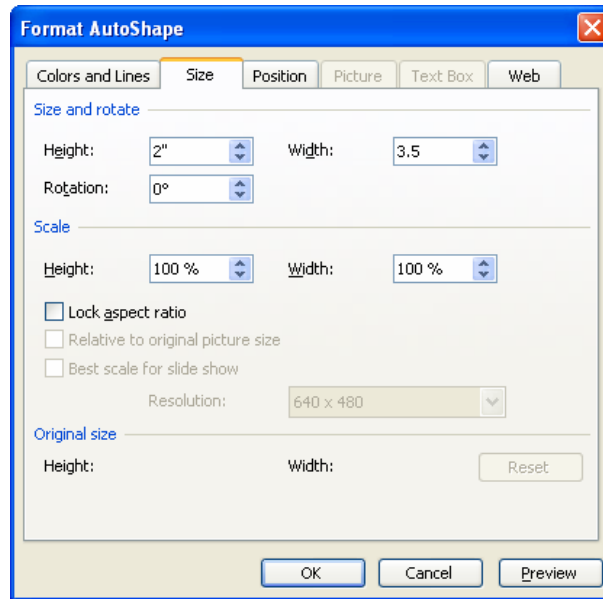

Figure 1.8 – Changing the Fill Color to No Fill

Most people know their basic information that they wish to see on their business card even when they are still deciding on what graphic to select. We can use the Text Box tool on the Drawing toolbar and place our name, title, and contact data on the card. We made our text Arial size 9, but we could have used any of the fonts available.
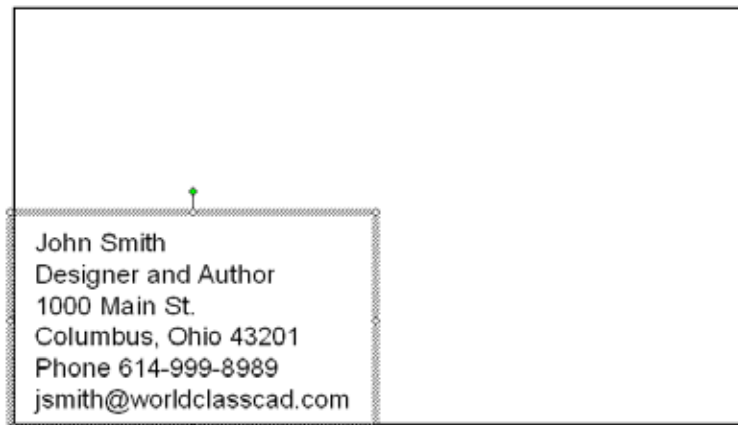

Figure 1.9 – Filling in Contact Information

Next, we use the Text Box tool on the Drawing toolbar to type in the shipping address of the main office. Some people design a card with mailing information on one side and phone and email data on the other. The text on the right is right justified so the text lines up evenly with the edge of the card. A good design should have balance.

Figure 1.10 – Filling in the Corporate Address

When deciding what image or picture to use, we have a harder choice to make. Organizations just use their trademarked image, where some people use their photograph, which is their official trademark. We need to be sure that we own the graphic that we place on the card so we can avoid any legal entanglements.

Figure 1.11 – Inserting the Logo or Other Graphic

The name of the organization or the division of that group should go by the logo. Again, when we are doing personal business cards, this can be our name. Without a doubt, this text is larger than any other characters on document. In the example in figure 1.12, we balance the name with the logo. By the time we have this much data within the boundary lines, we need to achieve a good balance to make a pleasant looking presentation.
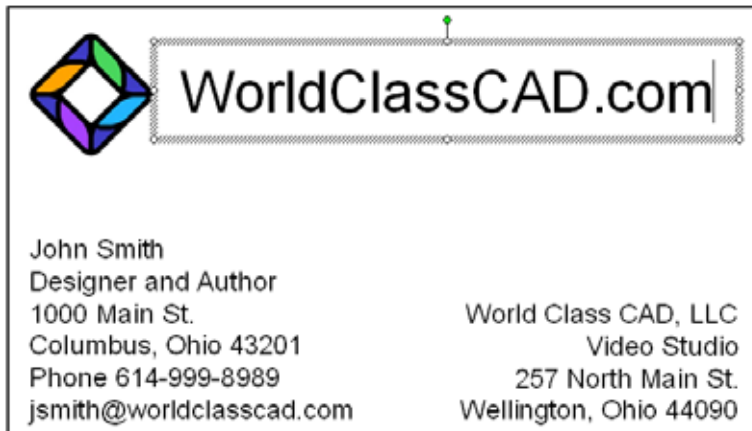

Figure 1.12 – Inserting the Main Text

We write the tagline below the main text to help the cardholder to understand what we do best. In every stage of this design, we use a different Text Box from the Drawing toolbar, so we can move the information around on the card independently of the other groupings. Once we achieve equilibrium, we can show the card to others seeking their feedback.

Figure 1.13 – Inserting the Tagline

If we have more to say than what we can list in a tagline, we need to make another Rectangular box on the slide layout and write the names of our products, services and specialties. We will print these multiples phrases on the back of the business card. For the majority of us, we will not have text on the back of our 3.5 by 2.0 inch cards.

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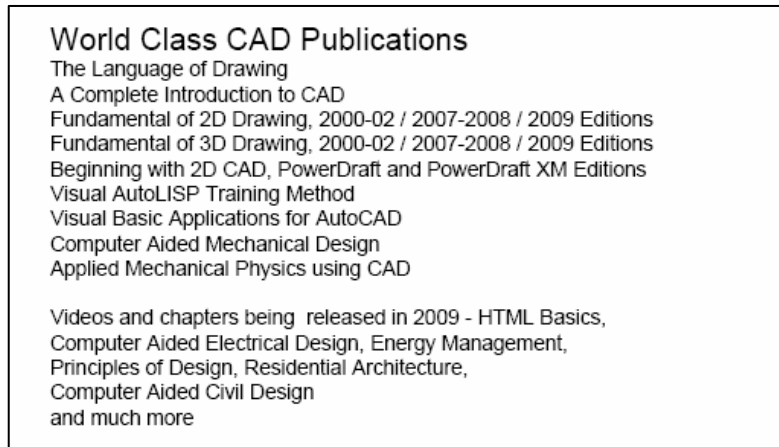Computer Aided Civil Design
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Figure 1.14 – Optional Text on the Back of the Card

We can perform this lesson in a Word Processing program, or any Graphics application. For computer novices not trained in graphic design, Power Point is an excellent choice to achieve a workable design without having to learn a more difficult program.

* World Class CAD Challenge 16-1 * - Create a business card using Microsoft Power Point or other similar software application. The business card should contain no errors. Complete this task in less than 60 minutes to maintain your World Class ranking.

Send your best time and a copy of your webpage for verification to the authors of these problems to have your name, location and time posted. See the web site for instructions.

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