

# Business cards

## 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 in Adobe InDesign, 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 this project align to the Adobe Certified Associate objectives. Within the instruction steps and technical guides, the specific learning objectives for the exam(s) are referenced with the following format: <sup>1.1</sup>

## Project Objectives

The objectives for this project are met by using all of the associated activities along with the specific project guidelines.

### 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
- Creating an original work
- Applying principles of print design
- Designing for audience(s)

### 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*

- Retouching photos by using selection tools
- Sharpening photos
- Adjusting brightness and contrast
- Adjusting levels and colors
- Cropping, resizing, straightening and transforming images

### *Illustrator*

- Creating vector artwork
- Modifying and transforming graphics

### *InDesign*

- Understanding the InDesign interface
- Setting document properties, including dimensions and margins
- Creating a basic layout
- Adding and modifying text
- Using alignment tools, ruler, guides, and grid
- Add graphic and image content
- Working with colors
- Preparing files for print

### *Acrobat Pro*

- Creating PDF slideshows

## Background preparation resources

[Technical and content information](#)

[Keywords](#)

[ISTE NETS\\*S Standards for Students](#)

[Adobe Certified Associate objectives](#)

## Project Activities

- *Activity:* Design principles
- *Activity:* Editing images and graphics
- *Activity:* Getting started with Adobe InDesign
- *Activity:* How to create layouts in InDesign
- *Activity:* Design project review and redesign
- *Activity:* Publishing with InDesign
- *Activity:* Presenting design projects

## Project Steps

1. Introduce students to the goals of the project:
  - Design and create a business card, using their logo from Project 2.
  - Understand typography and layout design.
  - Identify aspects of redesign and its importance in the design process

2. *Activity: Design principles*  
(Suggested time: 50–100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 2.3, 2.2, 2.3, 2.3, 2.2, 2.1, 2.3, 2.2, 2.3

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. This activity introduces the concept of using design principles and typography to evaluate and inform design. Topics include color theory, layout, tone, and sustainable design.
- b. Share examples of business cards, or ask students to bring in their parents' business cards, and focus the discussion on typography concepts, layout, and design principles. Encourage students to take notes on the design, tone, audience, and purpose of the business card.
- c. To help students begin planning their business cards, discuss how tone, audience, and purpose impact design and readability. Questions to propose and discuss include: <sup>1.1</sup>
  - What information needs to be on the card?
  - What do you want to communicate about yourself or the organization?
  - How will you incorporate your logo from Project 2? Does it need to change?
  - 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?
- d. Applying what they know about design principles, 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.
- e. 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* worksheet from the *Review and redesign* activity.

3. *Activity: Editing images and graphics*  
(Suggested time: 100-150 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 5.4, 2.1, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.1, 2.5, 3.4, 4.4, 4.6

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. Use this activity to teach your students how to edit images and create graphic elements using Photoshop and Illustrator by discussing the difference between vector and bitmap images and demonstrating how to create vector artwork, how to adjust colors, and how to crop, rotate, resize, and transform images and graphics.
- b. Explain that students will gather and build or edit the images and graphics they plan to use and then bring them into InDesign to assemble the business card.
- c. Explain that they might need to resize and enhance their logo from Project 2 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.
- d. Allow students time to do some or all of the following to prepare the images and graphics in Photoshop and/or Illustrator:
  - Further enhance their logo if necessary
  - Resize, resample, or crop their logo if necessary
  - Create or gather any additional image or graphic elements.
- e. Remind student to use proper citation for their images and graphics. If necessary, review the *Copyright and fair use* activity.

4. *Activity: Getting started with Adobe InDesign*  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.4

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. This activity introduces the basics of the InDesign interface, including how to set up a new document, work with text, use alignment tools, use master pages, and manage document colors.
- b. Demonstrate how to set up a new document and prepare students to begin work on create a basic layout for their business card.

5. *Activity: How to create layouts in InDesign*  
(Suggested time: 100-150 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. This activity introduces how to create page layouts in InDesign, including working with text and graphics frames, adding and transforming text and graphic/image content, and using object styles. For the purposes of this business card project, focus on using basic graphics and text frames to create a layout and adding text and image content.
- b. Ask students to create the basic layout of their business card from their earlier sketch and incorporate the text content they planned.

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

**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 *Publishing with InDesign* activity.

6. *Activity:* Design project review and redesign  
(Suggested time: 50 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 1.1, 2.6, 1.1, 1.4, 1.1, 2.6, 1.1, 1.6, 1.1, 1.4, 1.1, 1.4

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. This activity introduces students to conducting a review and redesign cycle to help them improve and expand their communication and design skills.
- b. Ask students to take notes on the *Review and redesign* worksheet to assess the goals and gather feedback.
- c. After the review, allow students time to redesign their business cards if needed.

7. *Activity:* Publishing with InDesign  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 2.1, 3.5, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. This activity introduces students to publishing options in InDesign, preparing files for print, exporting to multiple screens, and using adaptive layouts for viewing on different devices. In this project, students will focus on publishing a print version of their business cards.
- b. Once students have implemented any changes, they can prepare to export and print their cards.

**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).

8. 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

9. *Activity*: Presenting design projects  
(Suggested time: 50-100 minutes)

ACA Exam Objectives: 2.6, 1.4, 2.6, 1.6, 1.4, 1.4

Follow these steps to utilize this activity for this project:

- a. This activity introduces your students to presenting their design projects to a variety of audiences, including clients. Use the tips in this activity to help your students learn how to communicate their ideas clearly.
- b. 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.
- c. Allow each group time to prepare a PDF slideshow with the original business card design and the three new designs.
- d. Ask groups to present their PDF slideshows and explain the following:
  - What design principles they used.
  - Decisions they made to change the tone of their business cards.
  - Explanation of the one key concept they learned in this project and what they would like to learn next.

## 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.

## Assessment

This is a high level view of what student should create during this project. Refer to the assessment rubrics in each activity for more detailed/specific assessment rubrics for each part of the project.

	0 - Does not meet expectations	3 - Meets expectations	5 - Exceeds expectations
<b>Business card - content</b>	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.
<b>Business card - design</b>	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.

## Background preparation resources

- To view video tutorials aligned with the skills required to complete this project, Adobe TV: <http://tv.adobe.com>.
- For more teaching and learning resources on topics in this project, search for resources from the community on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of *Adobe Photoshop*, see *Photoshop Help*.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of *Adobe Illustrator*, see *Illustrator Help*.
- For an overview of the interface and for more information on the technical aspects of *Adobe InDesign*, see *InDesign Help*.

## Business cards

- You might want to gather sample business cards from the following kinds of organizations:
  - Nonprofit organizations
  - Large businesses
  - Small local businesses
  - Sports teams
  - Media organizations
  - Web-based companies

## Keywords

- alignment
- balance
- bitmap
- brightness
- chroma
- CMYK
- color gamut
- color management
- color profiles
- color wheel
- file format
- harmony/proportion
- hue
- optimize
- page layout
- pixels
- proximity/groupings
- redesign
- repetition
- resolution
- review
- RGB
- saturation
- shade
- tint
- tone
- vector
- white space

## ISTE NETS\*S Standards 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.

### ISTE NETS\*S: Curriculum and Content Area Standards – NETS for Students

#### 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.
- d. identify trends and forecast possibilities.

#### 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

#### 3. Research and Information Retrieval

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

- a. plan strategies to guide inquiry.
- b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
- c. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks

#### 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:

- a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
- b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.
- d. use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions

#### 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 a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.
- c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

## 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.
- d. transfer current knowledge to learning of new technologies.

## Adobe Certified Associate Exam Objectives

### Adobe Certified Associate, Web Authoring objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for a website.
- 2.3 Demonstrate knowledge of page layout design concepts and principles.
- 2.6 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design and content plans.
- 5.4 Modify images and image properties.

### Adobe Certified Associate, Visual Communication objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing image(s).
- 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 graphic composition.
- 2.3 Demonstrate knowledge of typography.
- 2.6 Understanding key terminology of digital images.
- 3.1 Identify elements of the Photoshop user interface and demonstrate knowledge of their functions.
- 3.2 Demonstrate knowledge of layers and masks.
- 3.3 Demonstrate knowledge of importing, exporting, organizing, and saving.
- 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge of working with selections.
- 4.3 Transform images.
- 4.4 Adjust or correct the tonal range, color, or distortions of an image.
- 4.5 Demonstrate knowledge of retouching and blending images.
- 5.1 Demonstrate knowledge of preparing images for web, print, and video.

## Adobe Certified Associate, Video Communication objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing video.
- 2.3 Demonstrate knowledge of visual techniques for enhancing video content.
- 2.6 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design and content plans.

## Adobe Certified Associate, Interactive Media Communication objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for interactive media content.
- 1.6 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design and content plans.
- 2.2 Demonstrate knowledge of design elements and principles.

## Adobe Certified Associate, Graphic Design & Illustration objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing graphics.
- 1.4 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design plans.
- 2.1 Demonstrate knowledge of design principles, elements, and graphic composition.
- 2.3 Demonstrate knowledge of typography.
- 2.5 Understand key terminology of graphics.
- 3.4 Demonstrate an understanding of vector drawing concepts.
- 4.4 Demonstrate knowledge of how to use scanned or photographic images.
- 4.6 Demonstrate knowledge of how to modify and transform objects.

## Adobe Certified Associate, Print & Digital Media Publication objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing page layouts.
- 1.4 Communicate with others (such as peers and clients) about design plans.
- 2.1 Demonstrate knowledge of the appropriate properties of page layouts for print, web and digital publishing.
- 2.2 Demonstrate knowledge of design principles, elements, and graphic composition.
- 2.3 Demonstrate knowledge of typography.
- 2.5 Understand key terminology of page layouts.
- 3.1 Identify elements of the InDesign interface and demonstrate knowledge of their functions.
- 3.2 Use non-printing design tools in the interface.
- 3.3 Demonstrate an understanding of and select the appropriate features and options required to manage colors.
- 3.4 Demonstrate knowledge of layers.
- 3.5 Demonstrate knowledge of exporting, packaging, saving, and organizing files.
- 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge of how to create multiple-page documents.
- 4.3 Demonstrate knowledge of how to use frames in a page layout.

4.4 Add text to a page layout.

4.5 Add graphic, image, and video content to a page layout.

5.1 Demonstrate knowledge of how to prepare page layouts for publishing to print.

5.2 Demonstrate knowledge of how to prepare page layouts for export to multiscreen devices.

## For more information

Find more teaching materials for using Adobe software in your classroom on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>.



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