

## QR Codes: Questions & Answers

With the growing popularity of QR codes in advertising, we are receiving more requests from our distributors regarding our capabilities for printing QR codes on promotional products. Below are some questions & answers related to the subject.

What is a QR Code?

A QR Code (or Quick Response Code) is a two-dimensional barcode, often used for adding web links to a printed page such as an advertisement or a catalog. When you scan a QR Code using a smartphone, the QR reader application takes you to a Web site, a YouTube video or some other web content. QR codes are an easy way to send people to a site without having to type a URL. QR codes can also contain other types of information, such as text, phone numbers or an e-mail address. A QR code on a business card can, for instance, provide an electronic version of the contact information.

How do you scan a QR Code with a smartphone?

In order to read a QR code, you must first download a QR Code reader to your smartphone (though some devices come with this already installed). Start the QR Code Reader and point the camera at the QR Code. The QR Code will be scanned and you will be directed to the destination.

Are we able to print QR Codes on our products?

Yes, we are able to print QR Codes on select products, however we cannot guarantee that the codes will work. QR Codes are intended to be digitally printed on paper, so methods such as silkscreen using ink on various substrates will not always produce the precise image definition needed by a QR Code Reader. We have performed extensive testing on various product types, materials and decorating methods and have established recommendations for printing QR codes. Note: we cannot guarantee that all QR codes within a production run will be readable by smartphones.

What products work the best?

Products with flat decorating areas, and materials free of texture are recommended. These include products such as totes, stationery and some drinkware. The smallest size that a code should be printed is 1.25" x 1.25" so printing on pens or other small items is not possible.

What methods work the best?

A two-color Transfer or Digital Imprint can be used on cut-and-sew products (such as bags and stationery) and only where a Digital and Transfer is currently an available method. All other non-white products will require two-color Silkscreen, Color Print, or Digital Imprint. White, non-cut-and-sew items can be printed with a black QR Code as a one-color Silkscreen, Color Print, or Digital Imprint directly on the piece.

What advice can we offer in creating QR Code artwork?

When creating a QR Code, you should not encode more than 60 characters. While a QR Code can store up to 4,296 characters, average phones in the market will not be able to scan very detailed codes.

There should be adequate white space on all four sides of the code – a minimum of 0.25" on all sides. All QR codes must be printed in 2 colors, unless the item being imprinted is white (see diagram).



It is recommended to print a QR code no smaller than 1.25" x 1.25" and no larger than 4" x 4" with no more than 60 characters embedded, provided that the decorating area permits a 4" x 4" size. We do not permit 4" x 4" on drinkware or any other curved item.

Can we guarantee that a QR Code printed on a promotional product will work (i.e. be readable by a smartphone)?

No we cannot. We recommend ordering a pre-production sample in order to test the QR Code, however we cannot guarantee that the codes will work on every product in a production run.

Can we create QR Codes for distributors?

We will not create QR Code artwork for distributors. There are multiple sites and barcode generators available on the internet that distributors can choose from to create QR Codes. Just like any other piece of art submitted for productions, QR code art must be submitted in vector (.eps) format.