

## Postcard Layout Ideas That Clients Love

A postcard is a quick and easy way to share important information. They're popular because they're simple to create and inexpensive to print. In addition, unlike other forms of direct marketing mail, postcards almost always get read.

Here are a few ideas on creating postcard layouts that make the information eye catching and easier to consume:



### ***Use the golden section***

The golden section is a mathematical ratio developed by the ancient Greeks. The ratio is responsible for creating eye-pleasing layouts and designs, because it's a ratio that is found so often in nature. The golden section can be found in famous pieces of architecture such as the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris and in art such as Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper."

Without getting too technical, here's the simple way to create the golden section:

Construct a unit square.

Draw a line from the midpoint of one side to an opposite corner.

Use that line as the radius to draw an arc that defines the long dimension of the rectangle.

Once you've done this, you have the perfect proportions every time for creating a solid, eye-pleasing layout.

### ***Graphics and illustrations***

Most people prefer to use photographs in their postcard layouts, because readers identify so well with them. To be sure, there are many times when a photograph is the most appropriate image to use, especially when dealing with sensitive issues. But, if you really want to grab attention, consider using illustrations or other high-impact graphics.

Say you're pitching a lawn care business. Using a photograph of a lawn or a guy mowing would totally be appropriate, if not expected. Instead, you might try using a cartoon illustration or piece of clip art. This works well because it's unexpected and creates visual interest.

If you're still set on using a photograph but want to create visual impact, consider manipulating your image so that it no longer looks like a picture. There are plenty of filters in Photoshop that can transform humdrum images into powerful graphic pieces. Applying a halftone effect gives your image a comic book look, while posterizing makes your picture look like it came out of a photocopier.

### ***All type***

People are naturally attracted to words. We see words everyday and are curious to know what they're saying, which makes an all text layout ideal. Using a layout that is nothing but type is risky, but if pulled off correctly, can be impossible to resist.

The same design rules - such as creating balance - still apply to an all type layout. Make sure that there is a dominant point of focus either by using a large, bold typeface or by using color.

Another way to create a unique layout using all type is to flow your type into a shape. If you're an electrician, for instance, who wants to get the word out about your new services, you could lay out your postcard with a bold headline and then flow the rest of your words into the shape of a light bulb or wall socket.



### ***Bleed and crop your images***

Interesting layouts always offer something different and unexpected to the reader. Award-winning designs don't require million-dollar budgets if you're creative. In fact, some of the most inspiring designs are the simplest.

Take your images - whether clip art or photographs - and bleed them off the page for an eye-grabbing effect. Continuing with the electrician example, consider taking an image of a light bulb and enlarging it so that it appears to be bursting off the page.

You could also take a photograph and crop it so that the reader only sees a small fraction of it. Crop it down to an eye or a mouth (if you're using a face) to make a more compelling layout. Just be cautious when using this technique. Make sure the reader can still make out what your image is. The idea is to please them, not confuse them.

No matter what your budget, a postcard can be as exciting and eye pleasing as a full-color magazine, but the beauty is that the postcard will most likely be read from beginning to end.

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