

# Face to face networking nets UK small businesses a projected £9.45 bn a year

*Survey Highlights Traditional Networking With Business Cards Is Still Valuable in an Increasingly Digital World*

**London, UK; 19 October 2012** - Dealing with contacts in person, rather than via email or social networking, is helping the UK's successful entrepreneurs and business owners generate a potential £9.45bn revenue a year, says new research from [moo.com](http://moo.com).

Small businessmen and women may use a variety of online and offline ways to deal with clients, customers and suppliers, but many feel they do better when they can 'see the whites of their eyes', the study shows.

In particular, they are better able to judge a person by how they look or dress or the firmness of a handshake than anything they provide via Facebook or Twitter, according to business card experts MOO.

The firm interviewed 152 owners of small businesses in the UK about how they networked to help their ventures grow. They found 42 per cent believe if they were to hand out 100 business cards, it would generate £5,000 a year or more in revenue.

Spread across the UK's 4.5 million small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs)\* it adds up to a staggering £9.45 billion a year netted through personal contact in business.

Modern business leaders do however combine this with social networking on sites like Facebook and LinkedIn to stay in touch with a wider audience, and use these tools and others, like Twitter, to maintain a business presence online.

But when it comes to marketing, old-fashioned methods work best. While one in four (25 per cent) consider their website to be their most important tool, 32 per cent say word of mouth/referrals and 21 per cent believe their business cards are their most important marketing tool.

Out of the 152 small business owners, good places to network show that some traditions remain unchanged, with 47 per cent naming the pub and 61 per cent suggesting conferences. For those looking after their figures, 29 per cent said they network at the gym, according to the survey.

Richard Moross, Founder & CEO of MOO, said: "Physical contact works better because it can often reveal more about the person they are dealing with than anything revealed on social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter.

"Social media and other technology is incredibly helpful for keeping in touch, building relationships and just reminding people you are around and what you are up to. But if you want to win business and develop new contacts then nothing quite beats a face-to-face meeting it seems. Judging by the number of business owners who do business over a drink, at a social function or even on the daily commute, the informal atmosphere seems to encourage better networking."

Coinciding with the findings, MOO has recently launched a new facility on its website [moo.com/pickup](http://moo.com/pickup) offering event organisers **free** business cards for their attendees/delegates (excluding shipping). Business card orders are sent to organisers to distribute at their event registration. With many organisers already taking advantage of the new service at high-profile events like SXSW and Startup Weekend, it reinforces the importance of face-to-face networking and business cards as the definitive personal marketing tool.

#### **Additional MOO survey statistics:**

- Reasons for networking include developing new contacts (74 per cent), getting new business (72 per cent) and keeping in touch with current trends and developments (66 per cent)
- Just over half (53 per cent) admit it also helps them when they come to look for a new job
- Almost half (49 per cent) say networking has brought 'a lot of new business' for their company
- When it comes to having a strong business identity, nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) said their business card made an important impact when networking, and 72 per cent said it was important to have a presence on social media sites
- Seven in ten (72 per cent) admitted they were influenced by what a person looks like and 72 per cent by a firm handshake; while others admitted they were put off by a person's bad breath or unkempt physical appearance.

The survey was conducted by Ipsos Observer between 30 July and 8 August 2012 on behalf of MOO. A sample of 152 small business owners out of 510 UK respondents was interviewed online.

\* Statistics on UK small businesses can be found: <http://www.fsb.org.uk/stat>

#### **Notes To Editors:**

For the full survey results, please send your request to [moo@sparkpr.com](mailto:moo@sparkpr.com).

Please visit <http://www.moo.com/pickup> for more information on MOO's new event pick-up service.

#### **About [MOO.COM](http://www.moo.com)**

MOO is an award-winning online print business that is passionate about great design and the difference it can make to its customers and the world.

Launched in 2006, MOO aims to disrupt the \$640 billion global print industry by combining the values of professional design with accessibility and reach of the web; making great design available to all. By applying Web 2.0 principles

to a 500 year-old market, MOO has become one of the fastest growing print businesses in the world, with triple digit annual growth and a global reach since launch. MOO prints millions of cards a month and has served customers in over 200 countries. MOO also empowers companies of 10 or more employees with MOO for Business, offering volume discounts and easy order management for entire organisations. For more information, visit [www.moo.com](http://www.moo.com).