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Toronto, ON – According to a new Ipsos poll conducted for MOO.com among Americans who own a business card, small business owners are more likely to consider business cards 'very impactful' compared to general Americans. One-third (34%) of Americans who own a small business say that using business cards to network is 'very impactful', compared to one-quarter (24%) of Americans who use business cards and don't own a small business.

Americans who own a small business are also more likely to distribute more business cards every month. The average American small business owner distributes approximately 40 business cards in a given month, compared to an average of 24 business cards given out monthly by Americans. Within both groups, those who see business cards a 'very impactful' for networking are more likely to distribute approximately 13 more business cards per month compared to those who see business cards as 'less impactful'.

An important aspect of networking is making as many contacts as possible at a number of different events. Six in ten Americans (59%) and Americans who own a small business (55%) typically distribute business cards at conferences, although small business owners tend to distribute them at a wider variety of locations and situations. The table below fully illustrates

what kinds of events/situations that Americans and Americans who own a small business tend to distribute business cards:

Event/Situation	Americans	American SBOs
Conferences (Overall)	59%	55%
Local conferences	48%	47%
National conferences	36%	29%
International conferences	14%	15%
Parties and other social events	45%	58%
Industry functions	45%	50%
Community functions	41%	56%
Volunteer functions	33%	36%
Bars or restaurants	28%	39%
My daily commute	16%	29%
Airplane	13%	19%
The gym	11%	18%

Other	10%	11%

Three in ten (31%) small business owners 'always give out their card when they meet someone new in either a business or personal setting', while less than two in ten (18%) Americans do the same. Four in ten Americans (37%) and Americans who own a small business (38%) give out their card 'most of the time' in similar situations. Four in ten Americans (41%) and three in ten (29%) Americans who own a small business 'sometimes' give out their card when meeting new people in a business or personal setting, while only 4% of Americans and 2% of American small business owners only 'give out contact information digitally or verbally'. Americans and Americans who own small business who believe that business cards are a 'very impactful' networking tool are more likely to frequently distribute them compared to those who find them 'less impactful'.

Business card distribution appears to have increased over the past five years, especially among American who own small businesses. Six in ten (60%) American small business owners 'currently give out more business cards than they did five years ago', while more than four in ten (43%) Americans say they do the same. Four in ten (37%) Americans and one-quarter (26%) of American small business owners say they give out the same number of cards as they did five years ago. Two in ten (20%) Americans and one in ten (14%) of those who are small business owners say they give out fewer business cards than five years ago. Among both groups, seeing business cards as 'very impactful' for networking attributes to about a twenty percentage point difference (+20 pts) in saying they give out more business

cards now compared to five years ago, compared to those who see them as 'less impactful' for networking.

For many, their business card says something about themselves or has helped them in some way. More small business owners (40%) strongly agree that their business card 'is critically important for successfully networking', compared to only 30% of Americans. Small business owners are also more likely to strongly agree that their business card 'reflects who they are/what they represent (46%, +17 pts compared to Americans), 'has helped them get more work' (42% +19 pts), 'showcases their personal style/brand (44%, +22 pts), and 'has helped them get their foot in the door' (38%, +16 pts.)

Three-quarters (75%) of Americans and Americans who are small business owners keep contacts' business cards at their desk to reference at a later time. One-quarter of Americans (25%) and Americans who own a small business (27%) scan their contacts' business cards to have them electronically or collect them digitally. One in five Americans (17%) and Americans who are small business owners (22%) pin their contacts' business cards to their bulletin board in their cube or office, while another two in ten (17% Americans/20% Small business owners) use contacts' cards to connect with them on LinkedIn.

Among Americans, in general, who have business cards, just under half (46%) are able to design or personalize their own business cards, while more than half (54%) use a standard template for business cards provided by their employer. Nearly half (47%) of Americans who own a small business say they have a standard template for their employees to use, while less than a quarter (23%) allow their employees to design and personalize their own business cards. Three in ten (30%) small business owners say they are the only employee for their business.

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The traditional paper business card is not the only method people use to keep in touch with contacts these days. Americans who own a small business (37%) are more likely to use digital business card applications (such as Neat Desk Scanner, my facecard, and Cardcloud) than Americans (23%), in general. Most business professionals, however, have not adopted such applications. Three-quarters (77%) of Americans and nearly two-thirds (63%) of Americans who own a small business have never used any digital business card application.

Networking

More than half of Americans (55%) and Americans who own small business (52%) mention using the Internet for networking, primarily via social media (38% Americans/35% Americans who own small businesses). The main social media tool for Americans is LinkedIn (19%, compared to 10% of small business owners), while Americans who own a small business prefer Facebook (21%). Using business cards to network received relatively few mentions as only 5% of Americans who own a small business and 3% of Americans say this is how they typically network. The list of how Americans and Americans who own small businesses typically network can be seen below:

Network	Americans	American SBOs
Internet	55%	52%
Social Media	38% (19% LinkedIn)	35% (21% Facebook)
Meetings	33%	27%
Face-to-Face	27% (3% business cards)	26% (5% business cards)

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Devices	10% (9% phone)	10% (8% phone)
Miscellaneous	14%	16%

Seven in ten Americans (65%) and those who own small businesses (70%) network online, while half of these groups network at parties and other social events (48% Americans/51% American SBOs) and at conferences (47% Americans/49% SBOs). American small business owners are more likely to network in physical settings like community functions (+10 pts), bars or restaurants (+10 pts), their daily commute (+11 pts), or on an airplane (+6 pts) compared to the average American.

American small business owners (31%) are more likely to believe that the effect of their networking 'has brought a lot of new business to their company', compared to only two in ten (15%) Americans who respond similarly. Six in ten of both groups (55% Americans/59% American SBOs) believe the effect of their networking 'has brought some new business to my company'. Many more Americans (30%) are likely to say that their networking 'has not brought any new business to my company' compared to those who own a small business (10%).

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These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between July 30th and August 8th, 2012, on behalf of MOO.com. For this survey a sample of 1,007 American respondents, 702 respondents were general business card users and 305 were small business owners who use business cards, were interviewed online. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of +/- 3.5 percentage points for managers and supervisors. For more information on credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website at http://ipsos-na.com/dl/pdf/research/public-affairs/IpsosPA_CredibilityIntervals.pdf

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How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter $\theta\backslash$, i.e., $Y|\theta \sim Bin(n,\theta)$, where n is the size of our sample. In this setting, Y counts the number of "yes", or "1", observed in the sample, so that the sample mean ($\bar{y}$) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion θ. This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the Classical framework. The Bayesian[1] statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for θ adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one's knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution ($\pi(\theta/y) \sim \beta(y+a,n-y+b)$), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for θ is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for θ given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on $\pi(\theta/y)$. Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that a=1 and b=1 and $y = n/2$. Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately:

$$\bar{y} \mp \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}$$

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[1] *Bayesian Data Analysis, Second Edition, Andrew Gelman, John B. Carlin, Hal S. Stern, Donald B. Rubin, Chapman & Hall/CRC | ISBN: 158488388X | 2003*

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For this poll, the Bayesian Credibility Interval was adjusted using standard weighting design effect 1+L=1.3 to account for complex weighting[2]

Examples of credibility intervals for different base sizes are below.

Sample size	Credibility intervals
2,000	2.5
1,500	2.9
1,000	3.5
750	4.1
500	5.0
350	6.0
200	7.9
100	11.2

[2] *Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi . Journal of Official, Statistics, 8, 2, 183200.*

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