

A brief history of business cards

BY NAVIGATOR BUSINESS OPTIMIZER



15th century China

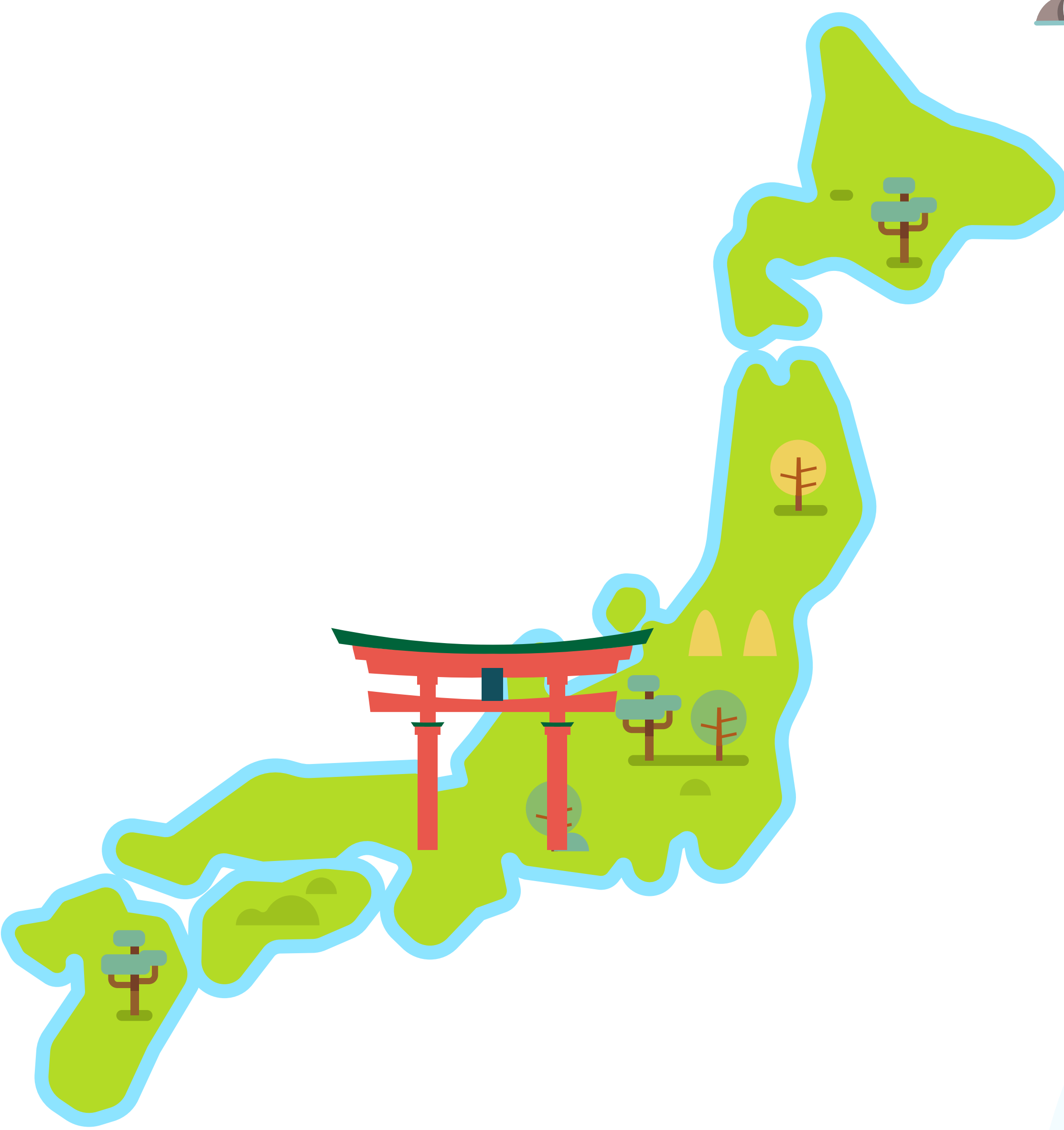
It was common to make small cards from bamboo bearing a person's name. These cards would then be placed in a window or door, as a type of calling card that provided evidence of a visit and signified an intention to return.

17th century Europe

When European aristocracy or social climbers attended a respectable home, they would present a calling card to the household staff. This would be then taken to the family, to announce the arrival of their visitor.

18th century Europe

It became so common for tradespeople to use calling cards by the eighteenth century, that many homes would feature card trays or boxes where people could leave their cards when they came calling.



19th century Japan


When British Commodore Matthew C. Perry's delegation the Black Ships sailed into Tokyo Bay in 1853, they carried business cards with them. The Japanese copied this name card system and, thus, begun meishi. The Japanese custom of exchanging business cards is steeped in custom.

20th century Global

The custom of exchanging business cards is now common around the world. Note that each country has its own etiquette around how to share business cards.



Business Cards By the numbers

 100 billion printed


It is estimated that 100 billion business cards are printed each year globally.

 68% say they have impact

Fifty-seven percent of business leaders say business cards are "impactful" or "very impactful". This number rises to 68% amongst small and mid-size business owners.

 \$1,500 per card

The world's most expensive business card is the Black Astrum signature card. Sold in packs of 25, 50 or 100, each card costs \$1,500.

 2.5% uplift

A study by Adobe found that, for every 2,000 cards that are handed out, businesses experience a 2.5 percent uplift in sales.

Business Card Trivia

The quality of your business card carries a certain cache and can convey messages about your status.

- In the eighteenth century, aristocrats who wished to impress would often add gilt detailing to their cards.
- A survey by Adobe has found that coloured cards are likely to be kept up to ten times longer than a plain business card is kept.

