iAddress™ Newsletter

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QR Codes – Linking Print and Digital Marketing

QR codes have been around since 1994 but evolved and became of interest to marketers around 2010. Their popularity was short-lived however; smartphones weren't yet ubiquitous and QR codes were plagued by the need to download a variety of specialized app readers to be useful. However, they are now becoming much more popular in marketing. A great article by David Pierce in Wired (July 18, 2017), reviews at how the QR code is now coming of age as a result of the spread of smartphones and improved technology.

QR is short for "Quick Response" and is a 2D barcode readable by smartphones and camera-enabled computers and tablets. The barcode can encode over 4,000 characters and can offer immense value when used effectively in marketing. QR codes unite the physical and digital worlds, providing an attractive and engaging experience to users. They add new opportunities to communicate with users and translate into actionable information.

For mailers, QR codes are easy to print on items such as postcards, mailers, and brochures. They are also common on brochures, business cards, conference and event displays. However, their use doesn't stop there. From t-shirts to tattoos (permanent or temporary!), embedded in artwork or displayed on a tombstone, QR codes are a versatile way to communicate information with a smartphone.

In addition to being versatile, QR codes have a number of advantages. They are cost-effective, convenient for users and device independent - not requiring any specialized equipment other than the smartphone itself. Results are measurable in real-time and companies can differentiate their code to reflect their branding and improve engagement. They permit direct contact with users without an intermediary. Tracking can provide you with when and where the user accessed the code as well as the type of device used.

So what can you do with a QR code? The options are many:

Link users to a landing page, website, or social media sites

- Provide coupons, promotional offers, contest entries, or loyalty program rewards
- Offer product details, ability to purchase, and mobile payment options
- Call your company or pull up a map of your location
- Send your company a text message or e-mail
- Download an app, access a newsletter, provide event dates or listings

Smartphones are everywhere. According to Statistics, by the end of this year, there will be more than 2.5 billion smartphone users globally, or more than one third of the world's population. Almost 50% of web page views worldwide were from mobile devices by February 2017. Smartphone users expect instant engagement and fast results. QR codes promotes this interaction by driving users to content in real-time. With that in mind, one of the biggest mistakes in QR code campaigns is ineffective content or landing pages, especially ones not optimized for mobile users. As well, a poor call to action won't engage users enough to pull out their phone and scan.

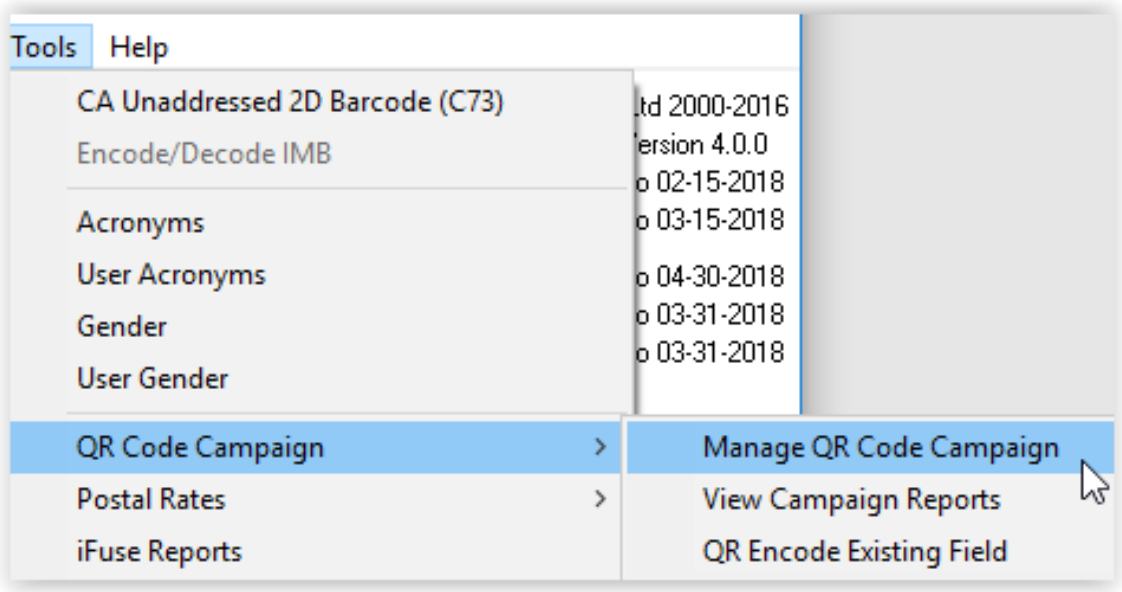
Using QR codes does take some planning and creativity. You want to make sure your code is eye-catching and attractive. It should match your branding and supporting text or images should pique their interest and encourage them to scan. The code should be thoroughly tested to ensure it is readable even after its journey through the postal system. Your content or offer needs to be mobile-enabled because this is how they are almost always scanned. With that in mind, ensure your link doesn't have big data demands for the user. And be sure to use tools to track your QR code use so you can measure success and tweak future campaigns.

From applications like SnapChat to grocery store coupons to an augmented reality experience, QR codes are offering customers the true "Quick Response" for which the code is named. Once a technology ahead of its time, QR codes have re-emerged as an inexpensive option to link physical and digital marketing campaigns. Real-time interaction and measurable results make QR codes an important consideration in your next print campaign.

QR Code Module in iAddress™

In our January newsletter, we promised more information on the QR Code module.
Here are the steps on how the 2D barcode is created for the QR Code.

Simply create your job and process through correction / validation as usual.
From the Tools menu, select **QR Code Campaign**, **Manage QR Code Campaign**

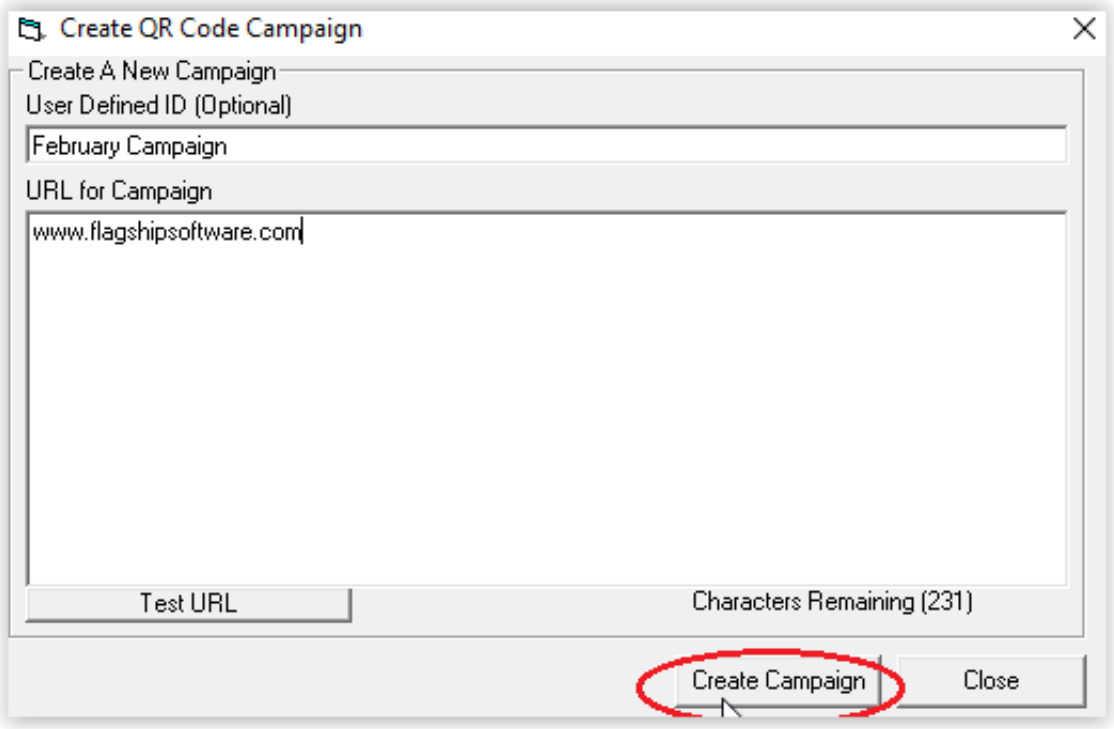


You have the option to name your campaign ex. "February Campaign"

Next, enter the URL for the campaign as in the example below.

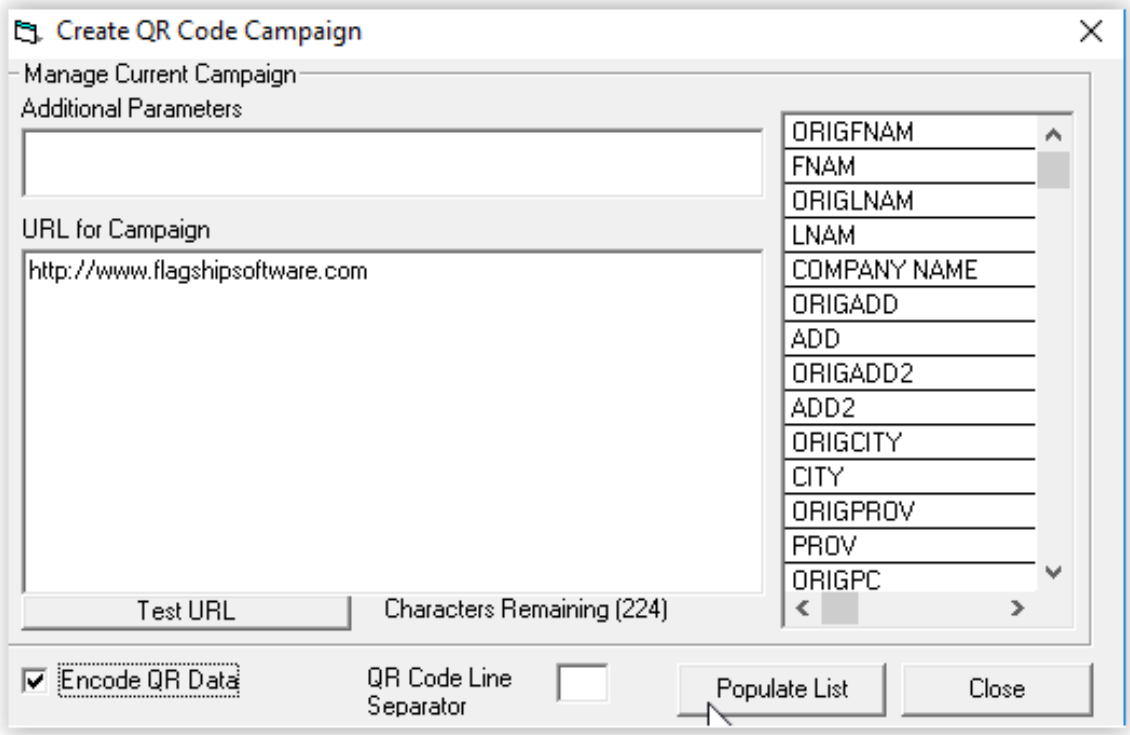
Click on the **Test URL** button to ensure it goes to the web site specified.

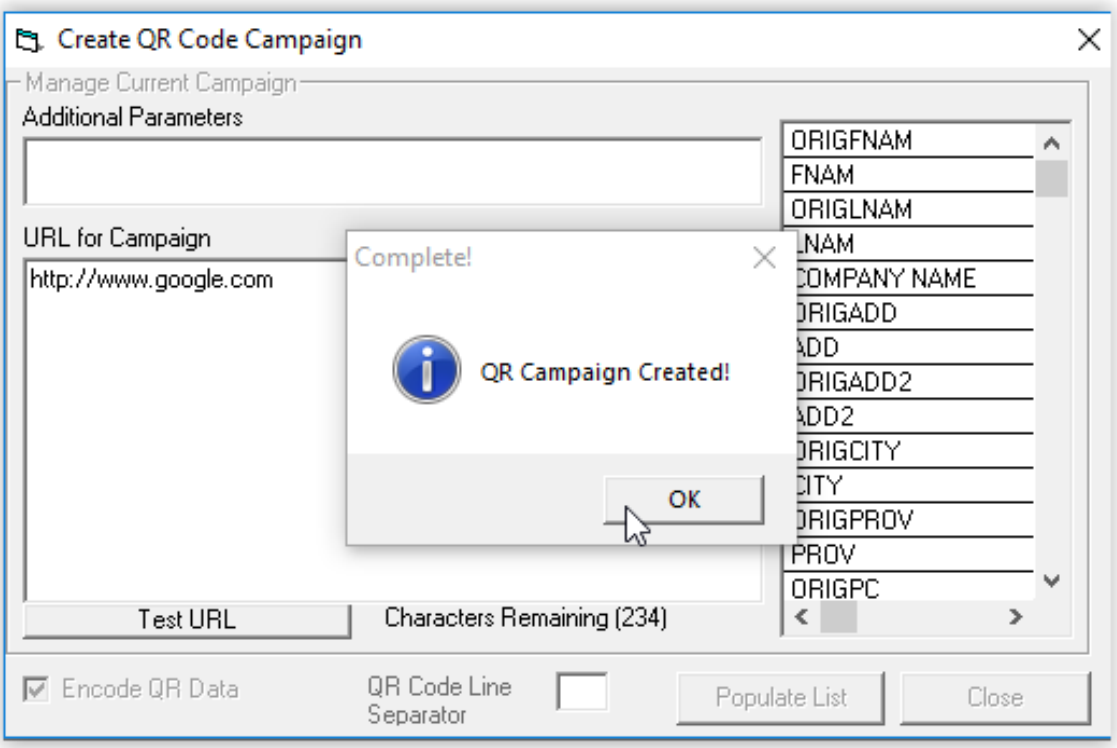
Then, select **Create Campaign.**



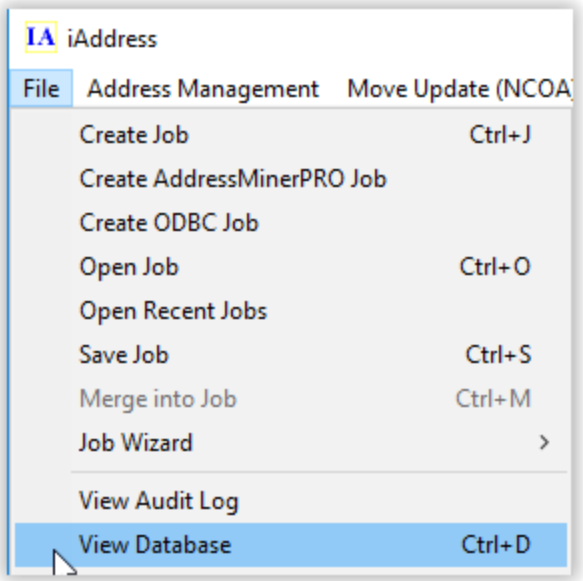
If you have any additional parametres for the URL as in the example below, enter them in the Additional Parametres section.

Note: The QR code is a 2D barcode and as such contains multiple lines of encoded data. If you'd like to separate these lines with something other than a carriage return/line feed then enter it in the **QR Code Line Separator** box. Next, select **Encode QR Data**, and **Populate List** and the job will process, and you will be notified when it is complete.





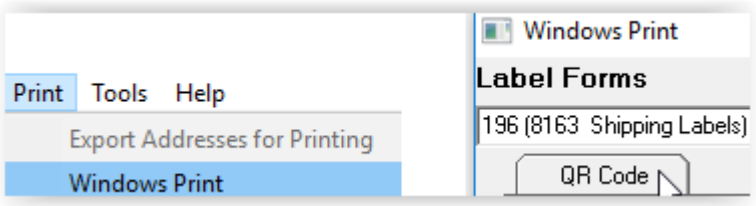
After processing, go to **File, View Database** and scroll to the far right.



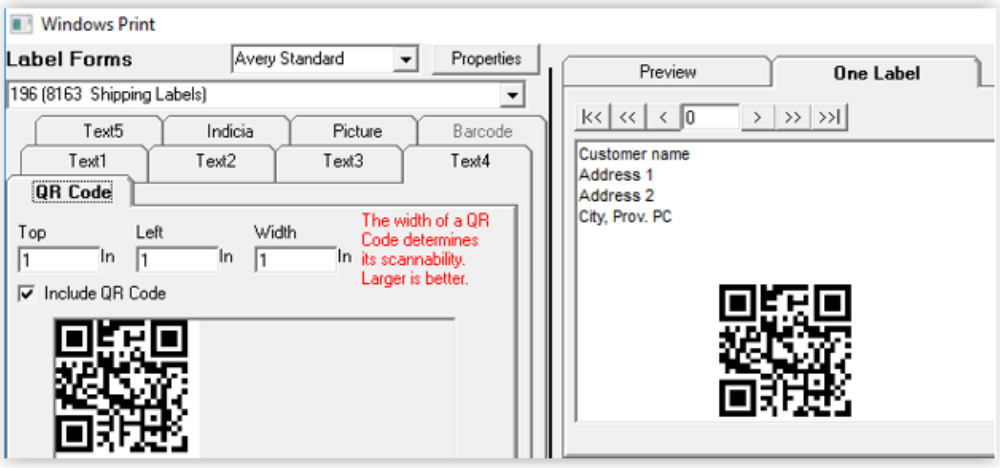
You will see the string of numbers that are assigned to each record that will then be translated into a QR Code.

QR_Code
7335DF3317335
7335707317335
73357C3317335
7335D5B317335
7335D9F317335

To print the QR Code on your mail piece, select **Print**, then **Windows Print** and click **QR Code**.

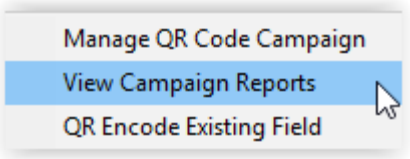


Using the tools in Windows Print, the QR Code can then be placed on your mail piece.



When the customer receives the piece, they will scan the QR Code which will be directed back to your URL, and the response rate will be recorded.

To see the results of your campaign, select **View Campaign Reports**.



If you would like to add this to your account or obtain more information on this module, please contact sales@flagshipsoftware.com.

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iAddress™ Web Demonstrations!

Flagship Software continues to offer Web Training!

If you are a new customer, would like a refresher course on ***iAddress™*** or if you have new hires, please contact Carolyn at 1-866-672-0007 ext. 1 or carolyn@flagshipsoftware.com to schedule a web session.

Request Now

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203-60 King Road
PO Box 2625
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