

# TRACKING QR CODES

The complete guide  
to QR code analytics  
and optimization,  
from the inventors  
of dynamic QR codes.

# Why a QR code scan is just the beginning

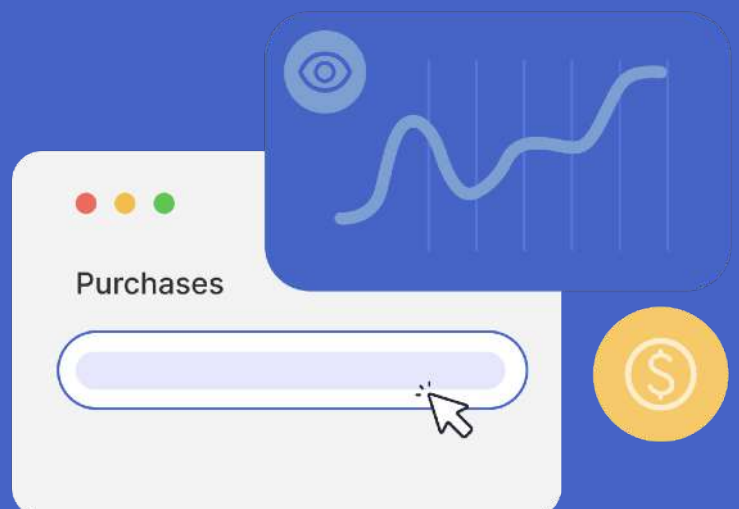
*QR codes are deceptively simple. You print one, someone scans it, and that's that, right? Not quite.*

*Every scan tells a story. It doesn't just mean someone saw your code, it means they took action. They noticed it, were curious enough to open their phone, and followed through. That moment of intent is valuable. And if you know how to track it, interpret it, and act on it, you can make every campaign smarter than the last.*

*This guide is about exactly that.*

*Not about the mechanics of generating QR codes. Not about platform features or analytics dashboards. It's about what performance really looks like, what metrics matter, and how to go from raw scan data to real marketing decisions.*

*If you're using QR codes for marketing, packaging, events, or anything in between, and you want them to do more than just sit there, this one's for you.*



# Why tracking QR codes matters

A QR code is one of the only marketing tools that lives in the physical world and tracks in the digital one. You can't tell how many people looked at your flyer or billboard. But if there's a QR code on it, you can tell **exactly how many people engaged with it**, when, where, and how.

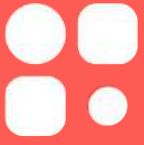
But here's the catch: a lot of people stop at the surface. They see "500 scans" and call it a success (or a failure). That's like measuring a website by pageviews without ever looking at bounce rate, session time, or conversions.

What tracking gives you isn't just confirmation that someone scanned your code. It tells you whether your design works. Whether your CTA is compelling. Whether people are acting on the message behind the code or bouncing right off it. And that's powerful. Because when you know how your QR codes are performing, you can:

- **Improve** your creative
- **Adjust** your messaging
- **Test** different placements or CTAs
- And **iterate** faster with every campaign

Whether it's a product label or a printed invitation, tracking helps you see what's really working, not just what you hoped would work.





# READING THE NUMBERS

Not all scans are equal. Understanding the *when*, *where*, and *how* behind every scan is the first step toward optimizing performance.

# What QR metrics actually mean

Tracking a QR code isn't about vanity metrics. It's about identifying behavior.

When someone scans your code, they're doing more than tapping a screen. They're giving you a small but meaningful signal: "I'm interested." Your job is to understand that signal and respond to it.

Let's break down what QR performance metrics actually tell you.

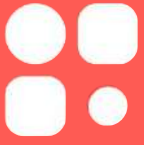
- **Scan volume** is the most obvious one. It tells you how many times your code has been scanned over a given time period. But it's more useful when you track trends, not just totals. A spike on a Saturday? That might point to your event traffic. A steady climb over two weeks? That could mean your campaign is gaining momentum.
- **Unique scans** help you understand reach versus repetition. If 200 scans come from 180 users, you're reaching a wide audience. If those same 200 scans come from 40 people, it's likely a tighter, more engaged group, possibly testing or revisiting your content.
- **Time of day and day of week** give you a sense of your audience's behavior. Are people scanning during their commute? During lunch? After hours? This can inform not just QR placement, but the timing of your content updates or even your follow-ups.
- **Geolocation** is one of the most powerful QR data points, especially in retail or regional campaigns. It tells you where people are when they scan. If you're testing a flyer in multiple cities, or a pop-up store with QR signage, this data shows what's performing best, where.
- **Device and OS type?** It's often overlooked, but it matters. Are your scans mostly coming from iPhones? Androids? Tablets? Knowing this helps you optimize your destination content.

Some pages may load slower or break on certain devices. If your experience fails after the scan, you're wasting traffic.

The big shift here is mindset. QR tracking is about behavioral patterns. A scan tells you what happened. These deeper metrics start to reveal why.

And that's the difference between counting traffic and understanding it.





# POST-SCAN PROOF

A scan is just the start. With proper tracking in place, you can follow the user journey and connect QR activity to actual results.

# Using UTM parameters with QRs

It's easy to assume that a scan means success. But unless you know what happens next—what people do after scanning—you're only seeing half the story. That's where UTM tracking comes in.

A **UTM parameter** is a small bit of code you add to the end of a URL. It doesn't change the page itself, it just adds extra information that platforms like Google Analytics can read.

And when used correctly, it can show you not only that a scan happened, but what it led to.

Here's a simple example. Instead of linking to:

<https://yourwebsite.com/offer>

You link to:

[https://yourwebsite.com/offer?  
utm\\_source=flyer&utm\\_medium=qr&utm\\_campaign=su  
mmer2025](https://yourwebsite.com/offer?utm_source=flyer&utm_medium=qr&utm_campaign=summer2025)

Those extra pieces—**source, medium, campaign**—tell you exactly where the visitor came from and why.

Now when someone scans your QR code and visits your site, you can see their session in Google Analytics.

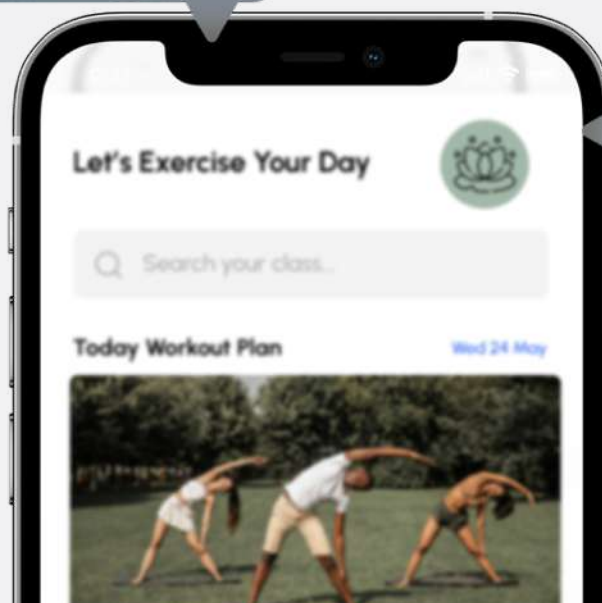
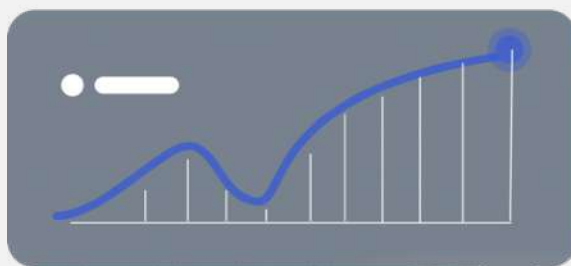
You'll know they came from the flyer, not your homepage or Instagram bio. And if they signed up, purchased, or bounced: you'll know that too.

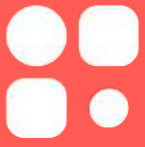
This is what ties your offline materials to digital conversions. A poster on a wall suddenly becomes traceable. A coffee cup giveaway becomes measurable. You're not guessing which channel worked, you have the proof.

There are plenty of tools that can help build UTM links, but you don't need anything fancy. What matters is consistency. Always use parameters you can filter and analyze later. Stick to **lowercase**. **No spaces**. Keep your naming clean and intentional.

And here's something often overlooked: make sure your QR destination page is ready for mobile. If you've tracked everything perfectly but your landing page takes eight seconds to load or breaks on half of Android phones, the data won't save you.

Adding UTM tracking to your QR campaigns is a small step that unlocks a much bigger picture. It helps you stop asking "Did this work?" and start answering "Here's exactly how it worked and where we can improve."





# CAMPAIGN VS. CODE

Not all QR codes serve the same purpose, and they shouldn't be measured the same way. Learn how to group, compare, and make smarter decisions based on your QR campaigns.

# Segment, compare, and improve

Let's say you're running the same promotion across three cities. Or maybe you've got three versions of a product label, each with a different headline or visual design. If you're using QR codes correctly, each of those variants should have its own code. Why? Because **segmentation is how you figure out** what's actually working.

When you isolate performance by location, layout, or CTA, you can start comparing and learning.

One city getting more scans than another? Maybe it's a design issue. Maybe it's timing. Or maybe it tells you something about that audience. One poster layout consistently underperforms? That's not just a design flaw. it's an **opportunity to optimize**.

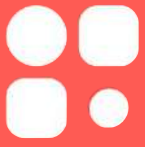
This is also how you **A/B test in the physical world**. You can run two QR codes side-by-side, each with a different CTA and see which one pulls more action. You don't need complex software or a full-blown test framework.

The real value is in the decisions data enables. Should you print more of version A? Change the copy on version B? Reroute underperforming links to stronger offers?

Segmentation helps you get specific. Instead of saying "QR codes work" or "They don't," you can say "This message works in this channel for this audience." That's how good campaigns get better.

And the beauty of dynamic QR codes is that you don't have to reprint if something needs fixing. You can adjust the destination or messaging on the fly, based on what the data is telling you.

Use your campaign structure not just to launch, but to learn. That's what segmentation is for.



# WHAT'S SLOWING YOU DOWN

If your QR code isn't performing, it's not always about the traffic. Sometimes the problem is in the design, the offer, or what happens after the scan.

# The hidden factors

It's easy to blame numbers when things don't go as planned. Low scans? Must be the channel. No conversions? Maybe the offer wasn't strong enough. But when QR codes underperform, the root cause is often more basic than that.

Let's look at a few things that quietly, but consistently, drag performance down.

## Design and scanability

If your code doesn't scan easily, it doesn't matter how good your campaign is. Low contrast, overly artistic layouts, poor quiet zone spacing, or placing a code on a curved surface: these are common issues. And if the camera has to "try" more than once? Most people will give up.

## CTA clarity

People don't scan QR codes just to see what happens. They scan when they expect to get something fast. "Scan to learn more" is vague. "Scan for 10% off" is a reason. Your code needs a clear purpose, and that purpose needs to be obvious at a glance.

## Placement

A QR code hidden in a corner, crammed next to a paragraph of text, or printed too small? That's a barrier. So is putting it in a place where people can't stop and scan, like a moving truck or a blinking screen that doesn't stay visible long enough.

## Post-click experience

You can do everything right on the outside—great design, clear CTA, proper placement—but if someone scans and lands on a slow-loading page, a desktop-only layout, or a form that asks for their life story, that's where you lose them.

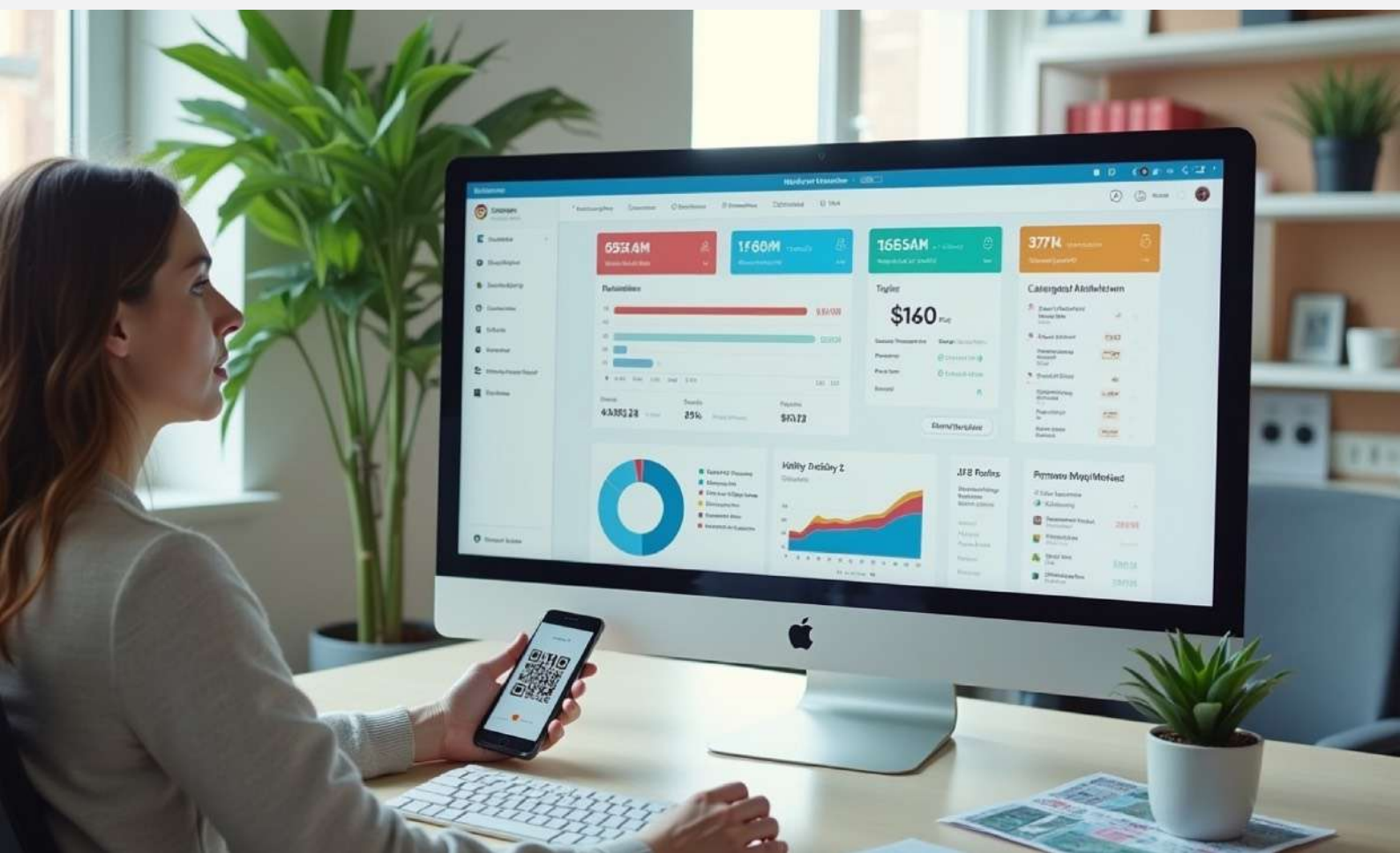
Every part of the experience has to deliver. The scan is only the first half.

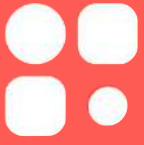
## Audience-specific factors

A QR code in a high-traffic urban café may behave differently than one on a niche product at a trade show. Are people scanning out of interest, or just curiosity? Are they in a rush, or ready to engage?

Your performance data can't answer those questions directly, but it can point to where the friction is.

And once you know that, you're not guessing anymore. You're optimizing.





# MAKE IT COUNT

Tracking data is only valuable if you act on it. Learn how to turn performance insights into meaningful improvements that drive better results.

# How to optimize based on data

Optimization only happens when you **treat data as feedback** and respond.

Let's say you're seeing a spike in scans every Friday. That's not just trivia. That's a signal. Maybe your audience is more active at the end of the week. That could influence when you print, when you promote, even when you update the landing page.

Or maybe you're seeing a drop in engagement after the scan. That tells you the issue isn't visibility: it's the offer, or the experience. You might A/B test two versions of your destination. Or change the CTA entirely. Or add a time-limited benefit to nudge action faster.

Tracking also helps you know when to update, and when to stop. If a QR code's performance starts strong but fizzles out, it may not be the design, it may be fatigue. People have seen it, and they're done. That's when it's time to refresh the message, or reroute to new content.

And the best part of dynamic QR codes is: you can do all of this without reprinting. Change the destination. Change the creative. Change the value. But don't change blindly. Let the **data tell you where to start**.

QR optimization is about iteration. Small changes. Smarter timing. Better alignment with how your audience actually behaves, not how you hoped they would.

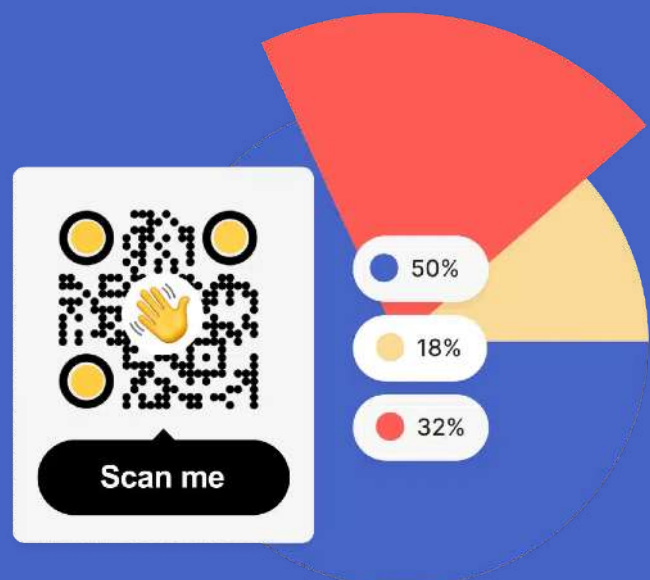
When you treat QR performance data as a conversation, not a scoreboard, that's when things start to click.

# QRs are conversations. Are you listening?

*Every scan is someone raising their hand. Every spike, every quiet period, every repeat user it's all telling you something. And once you start paying attention, the value of a QR code shifts from being a clever access point to becoming a real, ongoing feedback loop.*

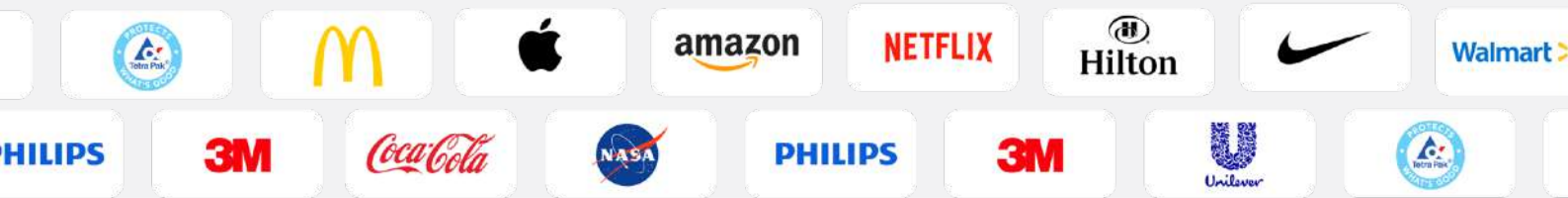
*That's what performance tracking gives you. The ability to make decisions with confidence. To turn curiosity into clicks, and clicks into something more.*

*Whether you're running a national campaign or printing 200 flyers for a local pop-up, the principles are the same: make it easy to scan, give people a reason, and pay attention to what happens next.*





# START USING QR CODES LIKE A PRO



Choose the n° 1 free dynamic QR code solution, safely serving billions of scans to 500,000+ brands worldwide since 2009.

[Get started free](#)

[Request a demo](#)



[qrcodekit.com](https://qrcodekit.com)