LOW-HANGING FRUIT

6 THINGS YOU CAN EASILY ACCOMPLISH

IN THE NEXT

3 MONTHS

churchjuice

energizing church
communications

website audit ☐

Take a look at your website. Have friends do it, too. Look for simple ways you can make little changes right away. Keep a list of bigger things that may require more work or a complete redesign.

> **Do It Now**
> - Is the information up to date?
> - Do all the links work?
> - Are the service times on the front page?
> - Is the front page full of too much information? Can you consolidate that information or organize it into categories that can be navigation menu items?
> - Are there newer pictures you could use?

> **Plan For The Future**
> - Are there new features you want to add like sermon videos or audio?
> - Is the overall design representative of who you are as a church?
> - Does the layout and navigation work in a logical way?

spring cleaning ☐

Just like at home, junk can start to pile up in your church. Walk around and take an assessment of how your church building, inside and out, looks. Is there clutter around the atrium? Is there a ratty old fake plant that needs to go? Is it time to go through the children's area to give it a good cleaning including getting rid of the old, worn out, germ-infested stuffed elephant? Are some of the plants outside dead?

The cleanliness of your church communicates something to people. Can your members be proud of your building a feel comfortable inviting guests to come? Are visitors going to be grossed out when they see their child gnawing on that stuffed elephant?

follow your own signs ☐

Start at the street and follow the signs you have. Pretend like you don't know where anything is at. From the parking lot, is it clear which doors you're supposed to use to enter the church? Once inside, follow the signs. Can you get where you want to go? Think of all the different people that may walk into your building the first time. Are there signs leading first timers to the sanctuary, parents to the children's area, sleepy folks to the free coffee, visitors to the welcome center, etcetera?

Also try coming in through a side door. New folks may not always know which entrance is the main one. Is there at least signage there to get people to the sanctuary? Maybe there needs to be a map at each enterance.

If you ever get stuck in your walk through or realize there's no signs, have some made up. If there's an area where it's hard to see a sign because it's obstructed or faded, try to fix that, too.

train volunteers to be welcoming

This doesn't have to be a big event, but it's good to give volunteers a reminder of what your expectations are. Emphasize the importance of being a welcoming church and what that means. It requires being attentive to your role, being friendly and always being willing to serve. Greeters shouldn't be talking with friends and ignoring other people coming in. Ushers shouldn't be gossiping about the church while handing out worship folders.

As an example, I remember my church was going through a name change and the congregation was asked to vote to give their opinion on the finalists. As I was walking out of the sanctuary I heard two ushers bashing the voting process and the potential names. They may have that opinion, which is fine, but there's a right time, place and way to express those opinions. Airing those issues while being a front line volunteer is not one of those times.

On the church side, you need to make sure you're equipping volunteers with the tools and resources they need to best do their jobs. So ask them. Maybe there are outdated brochures in the welcome center you didn't know about that need replacing. Or is it possible that the ushers are talking bad about the church because the process in place for them to do their job doesn't work?

It can be hard for some to set rules for volunteers. Many churches are already shorthanded in terms of help or there are people who have been doing a certain role for decades and no one wants to offend anybody. But research shows volunteers actually want some sort of structure in what they're doing. They can function better within guidelines and expectations than without any. Plus if the reasoning for the rules are framed around the importance of the church's mission of reaching out to new people, it will make more sense.

If there's resistance to working within the church's expectations, then a volunteer needs to be reassigned to something else or let go. It's tough, but it's crucial that volunteers are welcoming and willing to work towards a church's mission.
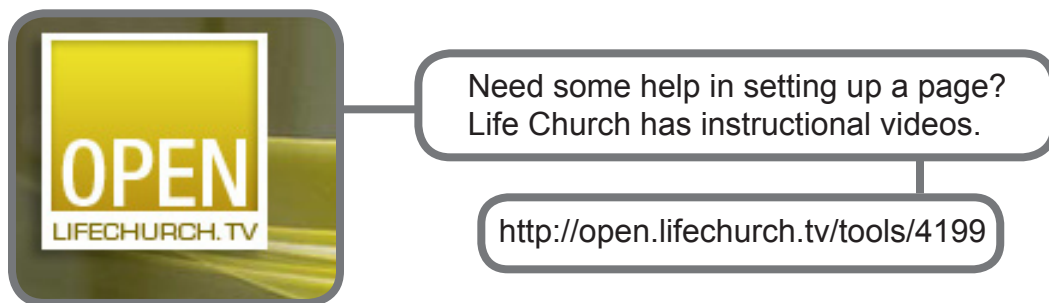
create a facebook page ☐

It's easy. It's free. It will help you stay better connected with your members and make it easier for them to share your church with their friends.

Bobby Gruenewald, the Innovation Leader for LifeChurch.tv, gives these reasons for using Facebook:

- Instead of forcing people to come to us (our site), Facebook allows us to go where they're already active online. Instead of trying to be a separate destination, we get to integrate with their lives.
- The outreach potential is huge. Example: we post a baptism photo and tag the person in the photo who is getting baptized. The photo shows up on that person's Facebook wall, as well as in their friends' feeds, giving them a simple way to share their new life in Christ with their Facebook friends.
- In addition to conveying information about events, classes, etc., Facebook creates the opportunity for community and connection. It serves as an online representation of the campus, where people can get to know each other, ask questions, and keep up with what's happening in people's lives and the life of the campus.
- It reduces bloat on our LifeChurch.tv site and allows us to be laser-focused with our content there.
- We don't have to re-create the wheel. Facebook is already accomplishing many of the goals we have for our campus communication. By leaning on their tools, it frees up time and development resources in the long run.
- It's free!

Yes, it does take a time commitment to set up and facilitate a Facebook fan page, but social media is not just a fad, but a new normal for communicating.

Need some help in setting up a page? Life Church has instructional videos.

http://open.lifechurch.tv/tools/4199

limit service announcements to three items ☐

It can be easy for church announcements to go on and on within a service. Try limiting it to three things. It will help you focus on what's the most important things going on that

week in the church. What are the things most in line with your goals and mission as a church? You can always tell people to check out more inside their worship folder or on the church website. Beyond helping you gain focus, this will also let you establish a hierarchy of communication techniques. Not every event needs pulpit promotion. For some, an announcement in the bulletin or on the website is enough.

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SEEING GOD'S STORY IN YOUR LIFE