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Using Social Media for Evangelism

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Using social media for evangelism

All major organizations now use social media for customer service, brand awareness, marketing, sales, research, and more. The level of influence and engagement that an organization can have through social media is infinite. Therefore, your own church’s social media platform needs to be timely and relevant. There are many of these kinds of media, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Each of these sites has several opportunities for witnessing and evangelism.

What is social media?
Social media creates highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content.

Consider social media not only as a two-way engagement but as something that can include millions of people. You can easily have one video on YouTube and soon have over one million people commenting on that video. Most people in the world can upload a video.

Why is this important?
- If Facebook were a country, it would be the third-largest country in the world. There are more than 500 million users on Facebook.
- YouTube is the second-largest search engine in the world. More than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month.

The mission of Christ is to evangelize the world. An effective way to do this is through social media when you do it professionally and with a loving heart.

Tips to get you started
You cannot do all the things suggested below. Choose what works best for you.

1. Create a social media committee. There should be representatives from each church group: youth, parents, worship, among others.
2. Find out whether there are any active bloggers/tweeters/Facebookers already in the church. They will be your best resource.
3. Define your goals. Is it to increase the numbers in the youth group, increase Sabbath attendance, start a small group ministry, promote an event, or attract more seekers to the church? Then build your social media accordingly.
4. Create a Web site. Your Web site could be focused on healthy living, prayer, or evangelism. If you have no Website building skills, there are various Web sites that you can use to help you build one, or they will do it for you. Weebly.com is a good free resource.
5. Take the time to update the church calendar online with links to events (such as Vacation Bible School, special concerts, community outreach) and the weekly bulletin. Have something that will grab the attention of both seekers and non-seekers, such as local interest items that are relevant to your church and the community. Just listing the worship times and directions to the church is not enough. People want to be part of an active church. Be sure to stay away from using denominational jargon. Always be up-to-date and learn from what others are doing.
6. Create a Facebook fan page—the perfect place to evangelize. Post pictures of all kinds of activities your church has become engaged in.
7. Create a Twitter account. Many youth leaders told me that Twitter is the best way to communicate with the youth and young adults. It also can direct traffic to your blog and Web sites.
8. Create Flickr and Instagram accounts. This allows everyone to upload pictures and video of church-related activities. It will show the true life of the church. Anyone can take pictures/videos to be uploaded onto Flickr and Instagram.
9. Create a YouTube channel. Record the sermons and then upload them. An interesting way of using the channel is to ask members for testimonies. Many will be inspired by how God is acting in the everyday lives of church members.
10. Start live-streaming. You can begin a radio station on the air or the Internet. It is very effective with minimal costs. I was preaching in a church with about 200 people in attendance and was told that there were another 400 computers streaming the event. Get some computer savvy people and start expanding your ministry.

Social media is all about relationships, community, and content. The church has a great opportunity to tell others that “God is near; in Christ there is salvation, hope, and new life.”