Church Marketing
Tech Guide

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This Marketing Tech Guide is designed to give you an easy-to-use step-by-step guide for how to set up some of the most common marketing technologies. Hopefully you have had the chance to see the free Church Marketing Pro webinar, which is all about building a functional marketing Plan for your church.

If you have not seen the webinar, click here.

1. Defining Your Target Using Facebook

You will find the most success in defining your Target Audience is narrowly as possible. It's temping to say "everyone" but broad messaging is generally bland and doesn't appeal to anyone. On the other hand, when you make it very specific, say for "familes with parents under 35 with school aged children" you will have a better change at attracting their attention. And - those that don't match that demographic will still see your information. The better you identify the audience you wish to reach, the more success you are likely to have.

My assumption is that your priority is young families with grade school-age children. This is based on the fact that families with children engaged in church activitiesare more likely to stay for the long-term. Also if kids are active in the church before becoming confirmation age, they are likely to stay engaged throughout their school years.

Given that Facebook has, arguably, the best targeting algorithms in the world, I base my Target Market of their approach. And it's not because I want to only attract young families, but it's because they are the most likely audience that will see paid Facebook Ads.

And while Facebook paid ads are not the only method we use to find our new members, it is the method that will specifically target these folks for us.

Once we have created a custom Facebook custom audience, we can use many of those same descriptors to use in other mediums.

The first step is to set up your Facebook custom audience. This will require having a Facebook Business Account. If you don't have one, follow these steps:

1. Go to the Facebook Business homepage at business.facebook.com and click on the "Create Account" button.
2. Enter your business name, your name, and your business email address. If you don't have a business email address, you can use your personal email.
3. Follow the prompts to provide additional information about your business, such as your business category, address, and phone number. This information will help Facebook optimize your account and provide relevant features.
4. Set up your business profile by adding a profile picture and cover photo that represent your brand. Make sure to choose images that are high-quality and visually appealing.
5. Customize your business page by adding a description, contact information, and any other relevant details about your business. This will help visitors understand what your business is all about.
6. Start building your audience by inviting people to like your page. You can invite your friends, family, and existing customers to get the ball rolling.
7. Create engaging content to share with your audience. This can include posts, photos, videos, and links that are relevant to your business and provide value to your followers.

8. Explore Facebook's advertising options to reach a wider audience and promote your business. You can create targeted ads based on demographics, interests, and behaviors to maximize your reach.

Now that you have a facebook Business Account, you will need to set up your Custom Audinece. Here are the steps:

1. Log in to your Facebook Ads Manager account.
2. Navigate to the Ads Manager dashboard and click on the "Audiences" tab located in the top menu.
3. On the Audiences page, click the blue "Create Audience" button and select "Custom Audience" from the dropdown menu.
4. You'll be presented with several options to create your custom audience. Choose the relevant option based on your requirements:
   a. Customer File: This option allows you to upload a customer list containing email addresses, phone numbers, or Facebook user IDs. Facebook matches the provided data with its user database to create a custom audience.
   b. Website Traffic: Here, you can create a custom audience based on people who have visited your website or specific web pages. Facebook provides a code snippet (the Facebook Pixel) that you need to install on your website to track visitor data.
   c. App Activity: If you have a mobile app, this option enables you to target users based on their interactions within your app. You need to integrate the Facebook SDK into your app to track user behavior.
   d. Offline Activity: This option allows you to create a custom audience based on interactions with your business in the offline world, such as purchases made in a physical store. You can upload offline event sets or use Facebook's offline event API.
   e. Engagement: With this option, you can target people who have engaged with your Facebook Page, videos, lead forms, or Instagram business profile.
   f. Special Ad Category: If you're running ads related to housing, employment, or credit, you must comply with Facebook's special ad category requirements. Choose this option if it applies to you.
5. Depending on the option you select, follow the instructions to set up your custom audience. This may involve uploading files, configuring tracking pixels, or connecting your app.
6. After creating your custom audience, you can further refine it by applying additional filters. Facebook provides options to include or exclude people based on demographics, interests, behaviors, and more.
7. Once you've finalized your custom audience settings, give it a relevant name and click the "Create Audience" button.

That's it! Follow these stepsand you will end up with something like the sample below, which also works well as a general guide description for who your trying to attract.

Also, just because you are targeting young families, you will still get your message in front of other audiences.

Here is a sample Facebook Custon Audience for a church in Western Nebraska:

Estimated Audience Size:

24,500 - 28,800 ⓘ

〰️ Estimates may vary significantly over time based on your targeting selections and available data.

Audience details:
Location:
United States: Scotts Bluff County Nebraska, Goshen County Wyoming, Banner County Nebraska, Morrill County Nebraska, Sioux County Nebraska, Dawes County Nebraska
Age:
25 - 65+
People who match:
Interests: Family, Homeschooling, Parents (magazine), Homeschooling in the United States, Infant, Child care, Parenting, Diaper, Baby bottle, Baby shower, Homemaking, Babyshop, Pampers, Johnson's Baby, Mamas & Papas, Children's clothing, Child, Kindergarten, Primary school, Primary education, Early childhood education, Child development, Middle school, School, Toddler, Secondary education, Pre-kindergarten or Early Learning Centre
School: Home Schooling, YMCA, Stay-at-home parent or Housewife
Employers: Homeschool Mom, Homeschooling, Stay-at-home parent, Mommy, Stay at home mom or Housewife
Job title: Stay at home mom, Full-Time Mother & Housewife, House mom, Full Time Mother, Wife, Mother, Homemaker, Stay-at-home parent, Being a Full time Mommy!, Mommy CEO, Housewife, Mama 24H/7, Stay-At-Home Mommy, Mommy/Housewife, Mommy Extraordinaire, Homemaker/Mommy or Mother/Homemaker
Parents: Parents with early school-age children (06-08 years) , Parents with teenagers (13-17 years), Parents with preteens (09-12 years), Parents with toddlers (01-02 years) , Parents with preschoolers (03-05 years) or Parents (up to 12 months)

2. Local Search

Google Business Listing

If I had only one tool to market my church, it would be Google Local Serach, also known as Google My Business or Google Business Listing. This is at the top of my list because it is free and it is the most effective method for total strangers to find there way to your church.

When someone searches using Google with a term like "church near me", three listings show up. Your goal is to be one of these top three spots. You can click and see more listings, but most people go with one of the top three.

In order to "rank" in the top three, your Google listing needs to be optimized. And it's pretty easy to do, but it's important.

Optimizing a Google Business listing for a church is an effective way to improve its visibility and attract more people to attend services and events. Here is a brief description of how to optimize a Google Business listing for a church:

1. Claim and verify your listing: Begin by claiming your church's listing on Google My Business (GMB) if it hasn't been done already. Verify your ownership to gain control over the listing and access additional features.
2. Provide accurate information: Ensure that all the information provided on your GMB listing is accurate and up to date. This includes the church's name, address, phone number, website URL, and hours of operation. Be meticulous in entering the details to avoid any confusion.
3. Choose the appropriate categories: Select relevant categories for your church listing to help Google understand what your church offers. Primary categories like "Church" or "Religious Organization" should be included, along with secondary categories that describe specific aspects such as "Youth Group" or "Community Outreach."
4. Write a compelling description: Craft a concise and engaging description that effectively highlights the unique aspects of your church. Describe the religious denomination, core beliefs, community involvement, and any distinctive programs or ministries. Make sure to incorporate relevant keywords naturally.
5. Add high-quality photos: Include high-resolution photos that showcase the interior and exterior of your church. Images of worship services, events, and community activities can help people get a sense of the atmosphere and encourage them to visit.
6. Encourage reviews and respond to them: Positive reviews can significantly influence people's decision to visit your church. Encourage your congregation to leave reviews on your GMB listing. Respond to reviews, both positive and negative, to demonstrate your engagement and care for the community.

7. Post regular updates and events: Utilize the "Posts" feature on GMB to share updates, events, and relevant announcements with your audience. These posts appear directly on your listing and help keep your church community informed and engaged.
8. Monitor and respond to messages: Enable messaging on your GMB listing to allow potential visitors to reach out with inquiries. Regularly monitor and promptly respond to messages to provide helpful information and foster a sense of welcoming.
9. Utilize attributes and amenities: Take advantage of the available attributes and amenities to provide additional details about your church. This may include features like accessible entrances, parking availability, childcare services, or multilingual services.
10. Monitor and analyze insights: Utilize the insights provided by GMB to monitor the performance of your listing. Understand how people are finding your church, what actions they take, and leverage this data to make informed decisions to further optimize your online presence.
11. Invest in citations: citations are third party business listings that enhance your ranking. Yellowpages.com is a good example.These can be done by you but are quite cumbersome and time consuming. As such, I suggest purchasing bulk citations as it's inexpensive and far more time and cost effective.

Remember, optimizing your Google Business listing for a church is an ongoing process. Regularly update information, engage with your community, and adapt your strategies based on the insights you gather.

BING Business Listing

Optimizing a Bing Business listing for a church is a valuable way to enhance its visibility and attract more individuals to engage with its services and activities. Here is a brief description of how to optimize a Bing Business listing for a church:

1. Claim and verify your listing: Start by claiming your church's listing on Bing Places for Business. If it hasn't been claimed already, go through the verification process to confirm ownership and gain control over the listing.
2. Provide accurate information: Ensure that all the details provided on your Bing Business listing are accurate, consistent, and up to date. This includes your church's name, address, phone number, website URL, and hours of operation. Pay attention to precision while entering the information.
3. Choose relevant categories: Select appropriate categories that accurately describe your church's nature and offerings. Primary categories like "Church" or "Religious Organization" should be chosen, along with any secondary categories that highlight specific aspects like "Youth Group" or "Community Outreach."
4. Craft an engaging description: Write a compelling and concise description that effectively portrays the unique qualities and values of your church. Describe the religious denomination, core beliefs, community involvement, and any notable programs or ministries. Naturally incorporate relevant keywords in the description.

5. Add high-quality photos: Enhance your Bing Business listing by including high-resolution photos that showcase the interior and exterior of your church. Feature images of worship services, events, and community activities to give potential visitors an enticing glimpse into your church environment.
6. Encourage reviews and respond to them: Positive reviews play a crucial role in influencing people's decisions. Encourage your congregation and community members to leave reviews on your Bing Business listing. Respond to reviews, both positive and negative, demonstrating your engagement and commitment to serving the community.
7. Highlight events and updates: Utilize the "Posts" feature on Bing Places for Business to share regular updates, events, and relevant announcements. This helps keep your audience informed and engaged with the happenings at your church.
8. Monitor messages and respond promptly: Enable messaging on your Bing Business listing, allowing interested individuals to reach out with inquiries or requests for information. Regularly check and promptly respond to messages to provide assistance and foster a sense of inclusivity.
9. Utilize additional features and attributes: Take advantage of any additional features or attributes offered by Bing Places for Business to provide more information about your church. This may include highlighting special amenities, accessibility features, multilingual services, or any other unique aspects.
10. Analyze insights and adapt: Utilize the insights provided by Bing Places for Business to monitor the performance of your listing. Understand how people are discovering your church, the actions they take, and leverage this data to refine your optimization strategies and improve your online presence.
11. Invest in citations: citations are third party business listings that enhance your ranking. These can be done by you but are quite cumbersome and time consuming. As such, I suggest purchasing bulk citations as it's inexpensive and far more time and cost effective.

Remember to periodically update your Bing Business listing with any changes in information or events. Regularly engage with your community, monitor feedback, and adapt your optimization efforts based on the insights you gather.

3. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

To provide effective SEO (Search Engine Optimization) for a church website and improve its visibility in search engine results, consider the following 6 steps:

1. Keyword research: Start by conducting keyword research to identify relevant search terms that people might use when looking for a church or related topics. Focus on keywords that align with your church's mission, location, and core values. Tools like Google Keyword Planner or SEMrush can assist in identifying popular keywords.
2. On-page optimization: Optimize the on-page elements of your website, including titles, headings, meta descriptions, and URL structures. Incorporate the identified keywords naturally throughout your content while ensuring it remains engaging and informative for visitors. Optimize images with descriptive alt text and consider internal linking to improve site structure.
3. High-quality content creation: Create valuable and informative content that addresses the needs and interests of your target audience. Develop blog posts, articles, sermon transcripts, or other forms of content that align with your church's message and the questions or challenges people in your community may have. Ensure the content is well-written, engaging, and shareable.
4. Backlink building: Seek opportunities to build quality backlinks to your church website. This can be done by partnering with other churches or organizations, reaching out to local news outlets or community websites for coverage, or sharing your content on social media platforms. Engaging with other church websites or relevant blogs through comments or guest posting can also be beneficial.
5. Mobile optimization and site speed: Ensure that your church website is mobile-friendly and responsive, as a significant portion of web traffic comes from mobile devices. Optimize your website's loading speed by minimizing file sizes, enabling browser caching, and utilizing content delivery networks (CDNs). Fast-loading and mobile-friendly websites tend to rank higher in search results.

Remember that SEO is an ongoing process, and it may take time to see noticeable results. Continuously monitor your website's performance, track keyword rankings, and make necessary adjustments to improve your church's online visibility. Additionally, staying updated with SEO trends and best practices is essential for long-term success.
church community.

4. Email Marketing

Email marketing is one of the most effective tools to both communicate with existing members, and for reaching out to potential new members. Here are the basics:

1. Build an email list: Start by building an email list of church members, regular attendees, and individuals who have expressed interest in staying connected. Utilize sign-up forms on your church website, during in-person events, and through social media to gather email addresses.
2. Choose an email marketing platform: Select a reliable email marketing platform that suits your church's needs. Popular options include Mailchimp, Constant Contact, or Sendinblue. These platforms provide tools for managing contacts, creating visually appealing emails, and tracking campaign performance.
3. Segment your email list: Divide your email list into segments based on demographics, interests, or engagement levels. This allows you to tailor your messages and ensure they are relevant to each group.
4. Craft engaging and personalized content: Create compelling content for your emails that aligns with your church's values and resonates with your audience. Share updates, announcements, inspiring messages, relevant resources, and stories of impact. Personalize emails by using recipients' names and addressing their specific interests or needs.
5. Design visually appealing emails: Use professional and visually appealing email templates provided by your email marketing platform or customize them to match your church's branding. Incorporate images, videos, and relevant graphics to make your emails visually engaging.
6. Incorporate a clear call-to-action (CTA): Include a clear and compelling CTA in each email to encourage recipients to take the desired action. Whether it's registering for an event, joining a small group, donating, or simply engaging with the content, make the CTA prominent and easy to follow.
7. Maintain consistency and frequency: Establish a consistent email schedule to stay connected with your audience without overwhelming them. Determine the optimal frequency for sending emails based on the preferences of your subscribers and the type of content you're sharing.
8. Personalize and automate when possible: Utilize automation features offered by your email marketing platform to send personalized messages based on specific triggers or actions, such as welcoming new subscribers or following up with event attendees.
9. Monitor and analyze email performance: Regularly monitor the performance of your email campaigns using analytics provided by your email marketing platform. Pay attention to open rates, click-through rates, and conversion rates. Analyzing these metrics helps you understand what content resonates with your audience and identify areas for improvement.

10. Continuously improve and optimize: Based on your analytics and feedback from recipients, continuously refine your email marketing strategy. Experiment with different subject lines, content formats, and CTAs to optimize engagement and achieve your church's goals.

By following these steps, you can effectively leverage email marketing to communicate with your church community, share important information, nurture relationships, and encourage engagement and participation in church activities.

5. Paid Facebook Ads

Here are 10 steps to effectively promote your church using paid Facebook ads:

1. Define your goals: Determine the specific goals you want to achieve with your Facebook ad campaign. It could be increasing church attendance, attracting new members, promoting an event, or driving engagement with your content.
2. Identify your target audience: Clearly define your target audience based on demographics, interests, location, or other relevant criteria. This ensures that your ads reach the right people who are most likely to be interested in your church.
3. Set a budget: Determine the budget you are willing to allocate to your Facebook ad campaign. Consider how much you can comfortably spend and how long you want the campaign to run.
4. Create compelling ad content: Develop engaging ad content that captures attention and resonates with your target audience. Use high-quality visuals, compelling headlines, and concise, persuasive copy that communicates the unique value your church offers.
5. Choose the right ad format: Select the appropriate ad format based on your goals and the content you want to promote. Facebook offers various options, such as image ads, video ads, carousel ads, or lead generation ads. Choose the format that best showcases your message.
6. Set up Facebook Ads Manager: Set up a Facebook Ads Manager account to manage and track your ad campaigns effectively. This platform allows you to create, monitor, and optimize your ads, as well as access valuable insights and metrics.
7. Define targeting and ad placement: Use the targeting options provided by Facebook Ads Manager to narrow down your audience based on demographics, interests, behaviors, or custom audiences. Additionally, select the ad placements where you want your ads to appear, such as in the Facebook news feed, Instagram, or Messenger.
8. Monitor and optimize: Regularly monitor the performance of your ads using Facebook Ads Manager. Track metrics such as reach, engagement, click-through rates, and conversions. Based on the data, optimize your ad campaign by adjusting targeting, budget, ad creative, or placement to maximize results.
9. A/B test your ads: Conduct A/B testing by running different variations of your ads to see which performs best. Test different visuals, headlines, or ad formats to identify the most effective elements and refine your campaign accordingly.
10. Track conversions and follow up: Set up conversion tracking on your website or landing pages to measure the actions taken by users who interact with your ads. This allows you to track conversions, such as event registrations or form submissions. Follow up with leads promptly to nurture their interest and engagement with your church.

By following these steps, you can effectively leverage paid Facebook ads to promote your church, reach your target audience, and achieve your specific goals.

[Note: These are the steps needed to run Facebook ads, but the reality is that it is fairly complicated to develop effective ads, targeting and tracking. As such, we suggest getting professional help with this, at least to get started.]

6. Media Master List

Here is a list of most of the options you can use to promote your church to prospective new members. Think of this as the Master List of options. These are not in order of priority.

Digital
- **Email Marketing** - this includes a drip campaign (automated emails that go out to folks who opt in to the church website) and broadcast emails (newsletters, special announcements, etc.)
- **Editorial (Digital)** - This is where the church is mentioned in online publications such as blogs.
- **Instagram** - social media platform focusing on photos.
- **Instant Messaging** - This can be used as a way to deliver sermon excerpts, and special timely messaging.
- **Local Search** - When people search locally for "a church near me", its the Google local search "3-pack" that shows up. This is the best and most cost effective way to help people find you.
- **Pay-Per-Click -** This is a Google feature allow you to purchase clicks.
- **SEO** - Search Engine Optimization allows your website to be found by folks searching the web.

Social Media
- **Facebook – Free -** basic posting and boosting posts
- **Facebook – Paid** - Paid ads that are specifically targeted
- **LinkedIn - Free** - Business profiles
- **LinkedIn Paid** - Paid ads
- **YouTube** - Highly searchable video
- **Webinars** - online trainings

Traditional
- **Community Events** - This includes any number of community events that are used to promote the church.
- **Cross Promotions** - This includes any promotions dome together with another organization such as a hospital, womans shelter, charaties, Welcome Wagon, etc.
- **Direct Mail** - Mail that goes to non-members
- **Personal Invitations** - develop campaigns to support current members to invite friends and family to church.
- **Print Editorial** - getting mentions in the local media
- **Print Paid -** running newspaper ads
- **Radio Paid** - running radio spots
- **Trade Shows** - having a booth at local tradeshows
- **TV** - running TV ads
- **Workshops** - Offering workshops to the general public.

Congratulations! I hope this introduction to marketing tech has been useful. If you would lik esome help implementing some of these ideas, and are not comfortable diving in yourself, please feel free to give us a call.

With that, I wish you much success in expanding your ability to spread the word and expand your Church, and the Church in general.

God Bless!

Don Osborn