

Why Should Your Church Invest in Social Media?

<http://www.ministrybestpractices.com/2009/02/why-should-your-church-invest-in-social.html>

Sure Social Media and Networks, like Facebook, Youtube and Twitter etc., have a big "gee-whiz" factor. Everybody is hopping on the bandwagon. People are telling you that if you and your church don't get connected to this new media that you're going to get left behind and miss out.

But there has got to be a more compelling reason for a church, ministry or non-profit to sign on to these social media applications than "everybody else is doing it."

The question you have to ask concerning your organization is, "**Why get on board and get involved with Social Media?**"

The answer to that question comes from business -they call it **ROI**, Return On Investment. What is the ROI of Social Media for ministry and your church? In this post, I don't want to address the quantitative aspect of ROI, but rather the **qualitative**.

How does social media improve the quality of ministry and help move the church's objectives forward?

I believe there needs to be 3 ROI Quality Goals and Objectives for Social Media

- 1. Communication**
- 2. Connecting**
- 3. Call to Action**

Let me break these down:

1. Communication - Social Media must help the church effectively and efficiently communicate it's message. Certainly Social Media isn't the only medium. A church can communicate to it's people on the Sunday morning platform, bulletins, mailings, phone calls, emails, face-to-face conversations, television, radio etc... Social Media, though, becomes just another effective tool to add to the church's communication mosaic. But Social Media has some unique benefits all it's own in effectively communicating:

- **it's easy and effortless**, it doesn't take much money or manpower to implement or use it.
- **it's ubiquitous**, since it is so available and pervasive it isn't hard for people to miss the message.
- **it's variety**, social media takes many different forms, words, audio and image.
- **it's viral**, the beauty of social media is that your message can expand well beyond it's intended audience - therefore exposing and introducing new people to your cause and community.

2. Connecting - Social Media must connect your community. Unlike communication which most often pushes information in a "one-way" direction, **connecting must create a conversation**. You must ask, Will Social Media create conversation within the community? Are people able to talk to you the minister/ministry team leader? Can they talk to one another? Also, part of the conversation involves other key elements:

- **contribute**, can others contribute in helpful and meaningful ways to the conversation? Are they even able to shape the conversation?
- **collaborate**, does your social media allow the benefits from the collective hive of experience, skills and knowledge from your community?

3. Call to Action - Social Media must prompt people to do something. It can't be passive. Some of the calls to **ACTION** might include:

- **Go**, are you asking someone to go and serve others in some way?
- **Give**, are you asking someone to give either of their time or financially to the cause?
- **Pray**, are you calling people to act in concerted and persevering prayer?
- **Mobilize**, are you asking people to spread the message of the cause to their friends and networks?

So as you think about Social Media for your church, ministry or non-profit, you must ask yourself....**How will this new Social Media "thing" help our church, ministry or organization Communicate, Connect our Community, and Call People to Action?**

If you have a clear answer to that question, then most definitely your church should invest in Social Media.