

2023

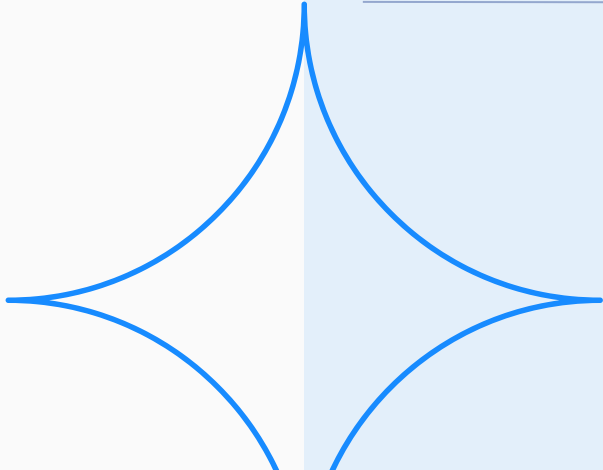
Mission Minded Church Marketing



Gospel-centered marketing strategy

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With a few minor changes, you can reach more people with the Gospel than you ever thought possible.

This is not a comprehensive guide; it's meant to be the spark that you need to think about marketing differently.

Introduction

A Little About Me

Over the last decade, I've worked in marketing in different capacities across several industries. Developing marketing strategies and campaigns is my passion, and I am fortunate to do it for work every day. I consume as much material as I can regarding marketing because my job depends on properly executing high-level campaigns across the country.

As I write this in 2023, I work as the Director of Marketing Strategy & Development at a multi-billion dollar conglomerate, and I can honestly say that God made it so I could be there. I'm a graduate of IBC and currently hold my general license in the Florida District.

Why I Made This

Creativity in the church world has exploded in the last ten years. I have not seen another industry pushing the envelope of creativity more than churches. That said, I believe that churches are missing out on effectively utilizing the creativity their volunteers and staff are pushing out every week.

Creative content is excellent, but content that leads to conversions is better. Businesses are great at developing campaigns that get prospects to become customers and creating experiences that those customers want to share with others. I believe churches should be better at this because they have a **Mission** that no business can compete with.



Chris Knight, CMO at Church Marketing Pro

One-Liner

The one-liner is the foundation of all your marketing. It is 1-2 sentences that define your church's purpose in a way that anyone, regardless of their religious background, can easily understand. It needs to be easy to remember and should be repeated over and over again. This equips not only the marketer but also the members.



When someone is searching for a church online, we want to make it as easy as possible to decide to do that. The one-liner provides clarity for them. For members, it empowers them to clearly explain to those they want to reach what the church is and why it's for them.

Create a one-liner that defines the church's purpose in the community.

Avoid any "church jargon," even the simple kind. Reach, teach, and serve doesn't translate to a non-believer.

This should be repeated regularly in person, social media, merch, etc.

Every member of your church should know it by heart.

One-Liner

Your one-liner needs to answer the following questions **from the perspective of the person you're trying to reach.**

Who are you?

What do you do?

Do you help people like me?

How do you help people like me?

If you try to help me how will my life be different?

Template: **[Insert church name] exists to[action] [target demographic] do [positive outcome] by [process].**

Coming up with the one-liner is a collaborative process with the church's leaders, especially the pastor. This is especially true: the larger your church is, the more departments you have. Why? Because everyone needs to be on the same page. The root of all your communication will come from this one source and will determine how messaging is shaped for years to come.

Remember, this is not about sounding cool, clever, or cute. It's about being as clear as possible.

Branding

Before we get further, it's crucial that you think about the priorities of your marketing department.

Your church's brand is not the logo, colors, graphics, or videos. Those can influence the brand. Your brand is your reputation. Let's look at Peter Gasca's marketing, advertising, and branding definitions for clarity.

1

"Marketing is how you see yourself."

In other words, this is the message you are trying to promote. You may promote that you are friendly, welcoming, dynamic, and growing. All of those are fine, but it's important to remember that the marketing must match the actual experience that a guest has when they walk in.

2

"Advertising is how you act in public."

Your actual service and other events are your advertising within the church context. This is how the people you're trying to reach are experiencing you. For example, if you market yourself as "the friendliest church in town," but no one talks to a guest when they walk in, your advertising is disconnected from your marketing.

3

"Branding is how others see you."

Your reputation is everything in marketing. Once that starts to suffer, it is arduous to regain the ground you've lost! You may not have been trying to "trick" anyone, but they may perceive it differently if your marketing and advertising don't align. Here's a quick example: All of the pictures on social media are of people smiling, but when the guest arrives, no one is smiling, and everyone seems upset. There may have been bad news, and everyone has good reason to be upset today, but the guest will not do a deep dive to find out the reasons. From their perspective, "everyone is mean."

Branding

The things that will impact your brand, more than anything, will be system-related. Consider these questions:

1

How do we manage online inquiries about our church?

Do you check the email listed on your church website? Do you check your church's DMs? Are you responding within 24 hours?

2

What is the experience like for guests when they get here?

Do the pictures on our website make it easy for guests to recognize the church when they're attending for the first time? Do guests know where to go? Do we have enough signage?

3

What is our system for follow-up like?

Have we sent an email, text, or letter to every guest who has come to our church this year? Can we automate this? How long are we following up with our guests?

4

Are we too dependent on one person to manage social media, our website, or our follow-up?

Do we need to get other people involved? Should we hire someone to help us with this? Can we make this easier to manage so our volunteers have more time?

5

Do we offer any value to guests or non-believers beyond our services or events?

Can we offer a weekly devotional? Can we send a "how to overcome [insert common issue] guide? Can we send inspirational emails or texts?

6

Are we clear about who our church is and what we do?

Do we communicate the pastor's vision for the church consistently? Can most members of the church articulate it? Are we connecting with our members regularly throughout the week to help them gain this vision?

7

Are we actively tracking our community's perception of our church to see if it matches our own perception?

Is there something that we're known for, positive or negative? Can we enhance this or change it? Are we checking our reviews? Are we getting enough reviews?

Website

I think social media is excellent, but most churches have forgotten how important their websites are.

Great social without an excellent website is like having the best fishing boat money can buy but forgetting to upgrade your net. You'll still get fish, but more are getting out than you could ever realize.

The 5 Things Your Website Needs Right Now

Header Background: The First Thing They See

- A high-quality photo of the people in your church smiling and interacting with each other.

OR

- A video that highlights the whole experience and focuses on the people. A worship/preaching recap is great, but that's only part of the full experience. Show what the welcome is like. Show the coffee shop. Show the check-in for Sunday School. Show happy families talking. Show the worship. Show the preaching. Show everything!

I highly recommend hiring someone from your local district to take photos/videos and edit this if you don't have someone from your church. It is 100% worth it and will help guests more easily decide to come to your church. Yes, you can also use your smartphone to get someone to help you edit.

Website

Call to Action: Plan Your Visit

Most people will only take action if you ask them to. So ask them! I think a clear call to action is crucial in your efforts to convert online searchers into first-time guests.

- Create a button that is placed on the header and navigation bar.
 - This should lead to a video or series of photos that walks a guest through the experience of visiting for the first time.
 - For example, your pastor says, "Thank you for your interest in attending [insert church]. If you're coming from this direction, then..." Then b-roll, or photo, of the outside of the church. "When you walk into this entrance..." Then b-roll, or photo, of someone walking in and being greeted.
- The guest should be able to put their name, phone number, or email, whether or not they have children and the date they plan on coming.
- This should send a notification or email to someone on staff who needs to follow up as soon as possible.
 - Tell them by text or email: "Hey, [Guest Name]! This is Chris from [Church Name]. We're excited to see you on Sunday. When you enter the church, I'll be at the check-in booth with your gift at the giant orange wall on your right. Please let me know if you need anything before then!"

This is where most churches drop the ball. But guess what? This is your opportunity to change things for your church and start getting more people to visit for the first time than ever before.

Website

Podcast/Sermon Library with Summary

- The largest content source is Sunday Worship Service, typically the gateway for most new guests. Create additional opportunities for prospects to walk through the gate.
- Getting your sermons on your website presents a vast opportunity.
- I recommend using a tool like Spotify for Podcasters (formerly Anchor). That's one of the most accessible tools to distribute sermons as a podcast.
- Next, I would add the sermons and blog posts to your website.
 - For each post, create a summary of the sermon.
 - As this library builds, your search engine optimization, or SEO, will improve and lead to more people finding you!

Testimonies

- Testimonials are a massive boost to the reputation and credibility of businesses.
- Churches have the best kind of testimonials! Testimonies of real-life impact and change.
- Add videos of people from your church in short and long forms.
 - They need to be real stories with context but feel free to edit these down. Most people aren't professional speakers and may ramble. That's okay when you're recording, but the actual videos need to be pretty tight.
 - You can use your one-liner as the structure for directing the videos and editing.

Website

Issue Focused Landing Pages and PDFs

- Create pages and videos that target specific issues that people struggle with
- Create 1-2 page PDFs that are available for download
- Example: 5 Ways to Overcome Grief, What the Bible Says About Forgiving, 3 Keys to Being Free from Addiction, etc.

The goal here is to provide as much value upfront as possible. When you do this, you have impacted someone's life, and now you have materials that can minister for you at scale.

As people begin watching videos and downloading materials, you'll learn what your city is struggling with. You'll gain insight like never before, and you can double down on the content they need.

Can you imagine someone coming to your church for the first time and telling you that your church has already helped them get free from unforgiveness?

Can you imagine someone driving from another city because they "had to be here" at least once?

It can happen.

Running Ads

If you work on creating the issue/needs-focused materials from the last section, then you'll be set to run effective ads.

To create an effective funnel, you must establish a target demographic. Like any business, people will choose to attend based on the problem they believe you can solve.

Use video testimonies.

The majority should be need-based and not event-based. Focus on serving, and the people will come.

Examples



5 Ways to Overcome Grief

HOW JOHN OVERCAME GRIEF AFTER HIS WIFE PASSED AWAY

John shares an incredible story about his journey...

ABC Church's mission is to...



Join Us this Sunday...

People who are already in the church get excited about Pentecost Sunday or special speakers. Save your marketing dollars for community-focused events like a Back to School Drive.

Running Ads

Does this mean you can never post or run general ads about your service? It doesn't mean that at all, but the ads about the people you're trying to reach should outweigh those about you.



By the way, it doesn't have to be perfectly polished. You want your ads to be clear and clean primarily. Sometimes, being overly creative can lead to clutter. That means that your ads don't convert. Too much text or too many creative elements can ruin a campaign and cost your church money. Simplicity is key.

Automation

Automation is the key to successful marketing. The more you can remove the need for an individual to monitor and update a process, the more you can scale.

Whenever someone submits a message responding to a CTA, a customizable pre-written response with their name should automatically go out.

There is enough content that they should be able to receive an email or text message every week.

For example, if your pastor preaches a sermon on forgiveness, we would take the three main points/takeaways from that message and make them emails on which anyone on the team can write a paragraph.

This adds value to the person receiving it and will only take a few minutes to write.

Pastor does the difficult part of coming up with the content...so maximize it. Before knowing it, you'll have a year-long automation sequence that every new prospect can enter into.

Use tools like High Level, Wix Automations, Klayvio, etc.

Automation

SMS

- Text messages have a 97% open rate!
 - That's nearly 5x the open rate for most churches.
- Utilizing this marketing channel will help to reduce the number of posts you need to make about events.
 - Announcements are made during the service, and these can serve as reminders.
- SMS is also beneficial for connecting with guests for the first time.
 - With text message automation, guests receive instant confirmation that they are seen!
- It's essential to segment your audiences to keep the impact
 - Only some people need every message. Remembering this will reduce the number of opt-outs you have over time.

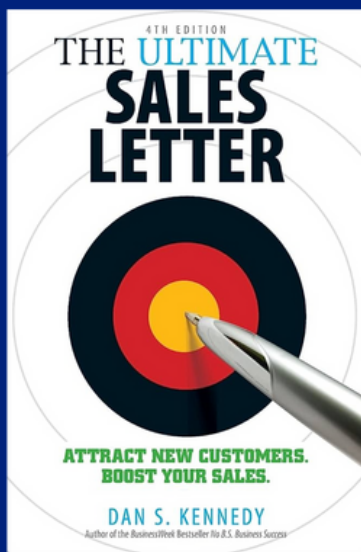
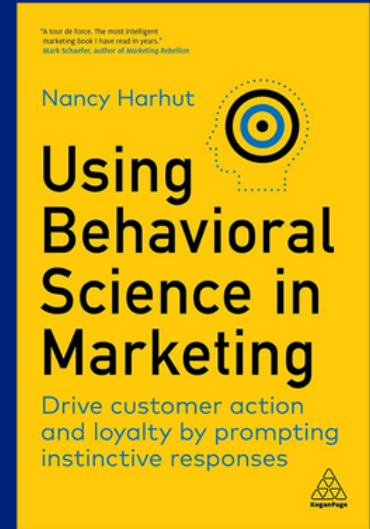
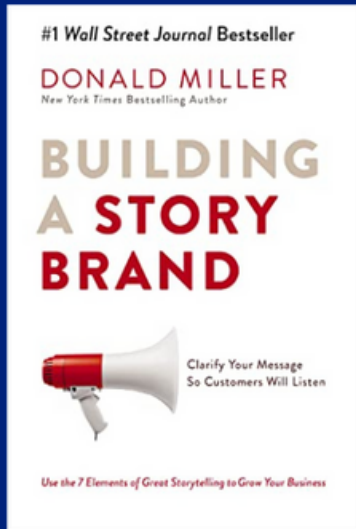
Email

- Emails can be golden when used correctly.
- The frequency of emails is vital to agree on staff-wide
 - If each department sends an email every week, it can lose its effect FAST!
- Segmentation is critical in email.

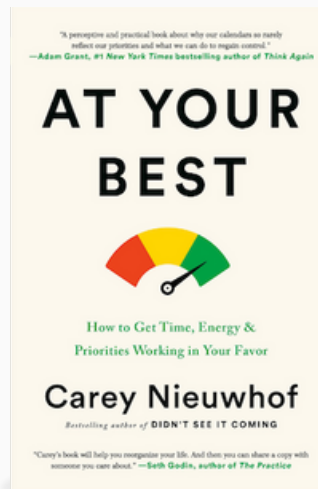
Consider focusing on making your emails value-add first. For example, send out a weekly devotional every Monday. Perhaps it's a summary of the pastor's sermon from the day before with steps to apply the message each day of the week.

After the paragraph and bullet points, you can go ahead and add a reminder about your next event **OR** add a button that links to your calendar.

Marketer Reading List



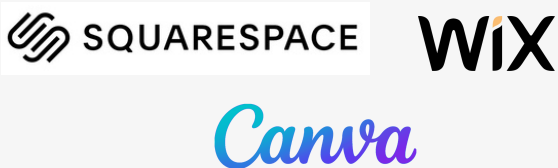
Marketing can be a grind. Keep your heart healthy and avoid burnout.



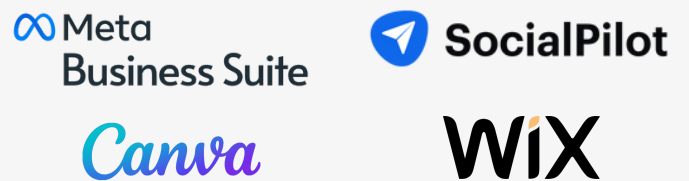
Reset for Men
Refresh for Women

My Favorite Marketing Tools

Websites



Social Media Management



Running Ads



Automation



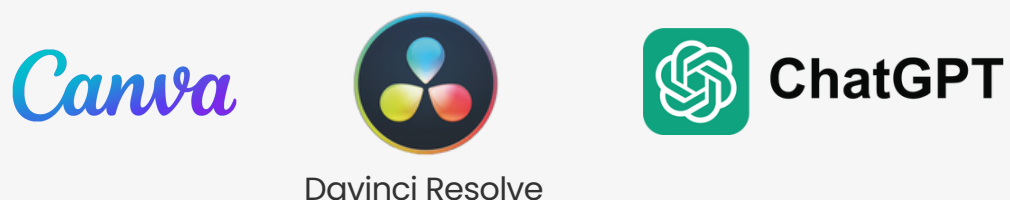
Email



SMS (Text Messaging)



Content Creation




Give your feedback


It would be great to get your thoughts on this guide. Are there areas you need more information on? Did something not make sense? Let me know!


I'll be working on more education that's 100% free every month through courses, newsletters, and more guides like this one. Let me know what info you would like first.

Thanks for taking the time to read this guide. I am excited to hear how you implement what you've learned in the years to come. God Bless.

Get in touch!

 I'm in the Tampa area. Let's connect!

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