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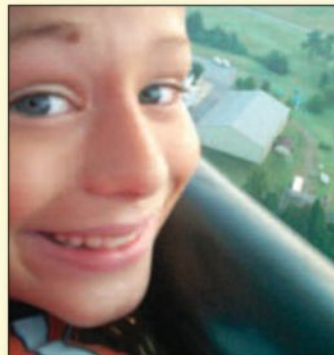
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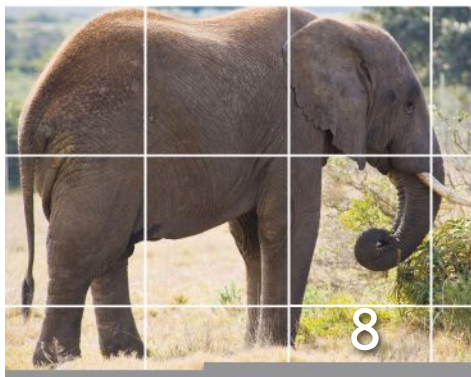
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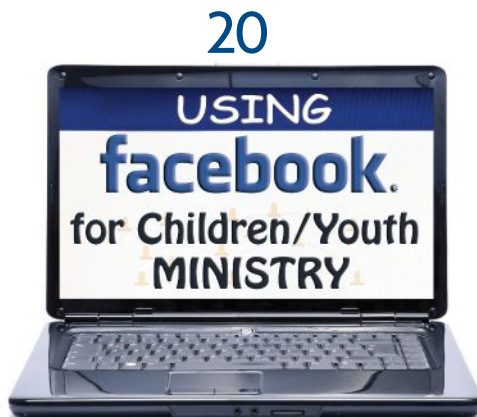
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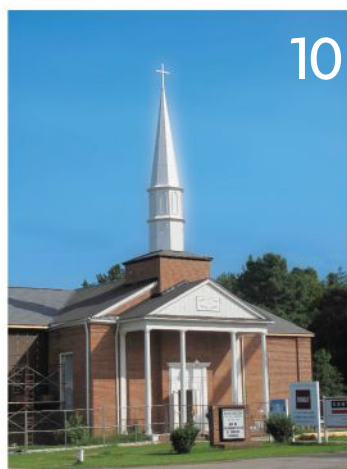
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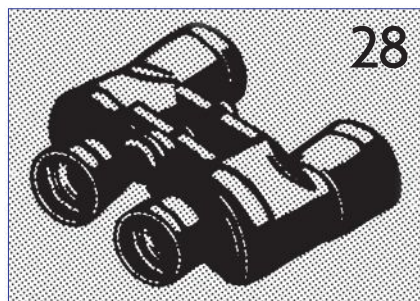
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Commercial Grade Gas Appliances for multiple church related uses

fellowship kitchens, soup kitchens, outdoor fund raising events, etc.



model F330



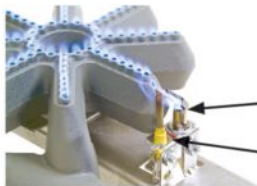
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FROM THE EDITOR



February 2014
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Much has been made of youth “flight” from churches once they reach adulthood...and how churches can reverse this trend.

Research from Barna Group shows nearly six in ten (59%) of young people who grow up in Christian churches end up walking away from either their faith or from the institutional church at some point in their first decade of adult life.

“Millennials are rethinking most of the institutions that arbitrate life, from marriage and media, to government and church,” said David Kinnaman, president of Barna Group. “And life feels accelerated compared with 15 years ago—the ubiquity of information makes it harder for many to find meaning in institutions that feel out of step with the times. Millennials often describe church, for instance, as ‘not relevant’ or say that attending worship services ‘feels like a boring duty.’”

However, this is also a sign of hope, according to Kinnaman, since it means Millennials are craving depth, a need the church is uniquely poised to meet. In this respect, the research points to five ways faith communities can build deeper, more lasting connections with Millennials:

1. *Make room for meaningful relationships.*
2. *Teach cultural discernment.*
3. *Make reverse mentoring a priority.*
4. *Embrace the potency of vocational discipleship.*
5. *Facilitate connection with Jesus.*

How are you keeping youth engaged with church after high school graduation? I'm always interested in hearing from you. You can reach me at jill@rpnmag.com.

God Bless,

Jill Hasty
Managing Editor

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Religious Product News is published twelve times a year on a monthly basis by Valor Media Concepts, Inc., P.O. Box 36577, Birmingham, Alabama, 35236, USA. Religious Product News is distributed free to qualified subscribers. Non-qualified subscription rates are \$57.00 per year in the U.S. and Canada and \$84.00 per year for foreign subscribers (surface mail). U.S. Postage paid at Birmingham, Alabama and additional mailing offices.

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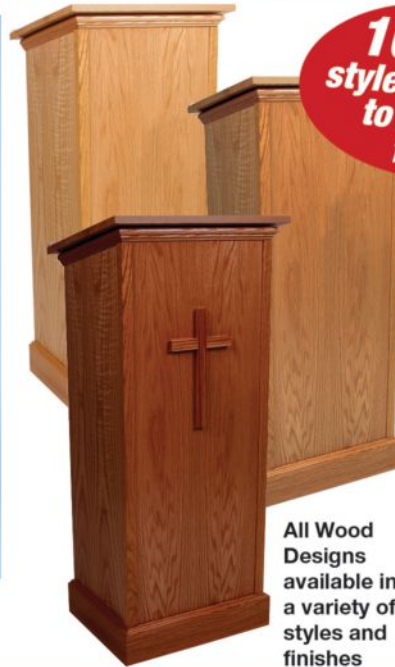
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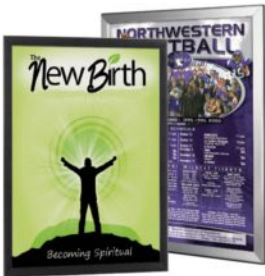
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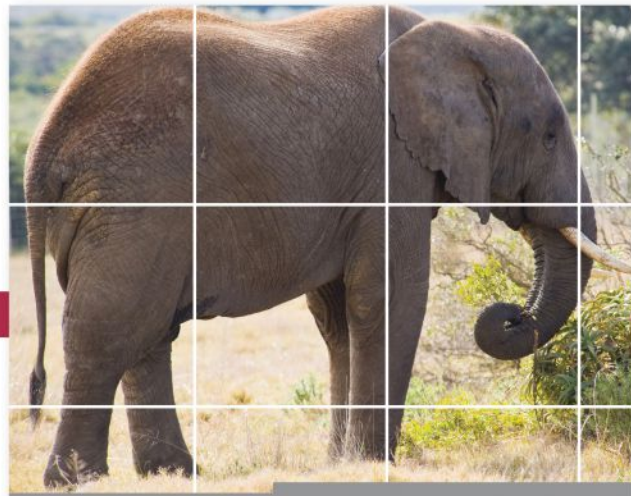
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Strategic Mapping: Grabbing Hold of the Elephant

Part II

By Bill Easum



Strategic mapping is replacing strategic planning. What's the difference?

Strategic planning is concrete and static. Once the plan is in effect, it is usually followed to the letter. Also, it is usually over a five-year period with an additional year added each year so that the plan remains five years into the future. Most strategic plans go on a shelf never to be seen again.

Strategic mapping is fluid and open-ended. Think of it as a topographical map that explorers fill in as they traverse new terrain. They know where they started, where they are at the moment, and where they want to go.

Strategic mapping is not forecasting the future; rather, it is making certain today's decisions cause the future to happen the way you want it to. Also, keep in mind that topographical maps change as explorers develop more sophisticated equipment like the present Global Positioning System.

Strategic mapping is like grabbing hold of an elephant. Where you grab hold is very important. All sorts of bad things can happen if you grab hold of an elephant in the wrong place or start strategic mapping without understanding the rules. Making this comparison results in the discovery of several rules used by successful strategic mappers.

Last month, I shared the first five rules...here are the remaining five.

Rule #6: Once on board, hold tightly to the elephant and do not attempt to discount while moving.

In the early years of my ministry, our research showed that the main need of our area was quality Christian child care, so we started

a kindergarten class. Only four children enrolled the first two years. Some members wanted to end the ministry, but the leaders refused to blink. They knew the church had grabbed hold of the right part of the elephant, and they were insistent that everyone hold on one more year. The next year we replaced directors and 78 children enrolled. When I left the church 20+ years later, 700+ children were enrolled in our weekday child care.

Strategic mappers institute their plan on the basis of solid research rather than feelings or hunches. Therefore, they don't give up or change direction at the first sign of trouble. Instead, they give their ideas a chance to develop.

Has your strategic mapping team done its research? Does it know the needs of the community? Is it willing to see it through?

Rule #7: Only a few people can ride the elephant at the same time.

Seven people is the most productive strategic mapping team. The best combination of people is: two who have most recently joined the church, preferably for the first time in their life; two who are under 40; two who are over 50 and have been members of the church for some time; and the pastor. But, in all cases, they should exemplify solid character and wisdom.

How large is your strategic mapping team and what is the makeup of the members?

Rule #8: Do not ride the elephant too long.

The best strategic mapping today is done in much shorter intervals than a few years ago. Because of today's fast pace of change, three years into the future is considered long-term planning. Anything longer than that is often a waste of time. Of course, a vision of the future must be longer term. Even though your specific objectives are developed over a shorter time period, your overall vision goes well beyond a three year period.

Regular evaluation is essential to successful strategic mapping.

Churches that nominate and elect strategic mapping groups the same way they do other committees are usually disappointed with the lack of results.

Is your church able to begin working on its strategic map Monday morning?

Rule #9: Ignoring these simple rules can result in a camel ride.

"Camels are the work of a committee!" We've heard this joke so many times, it may not register anymore. But it's still true. Churches that nominate and elect strategic mapping groups the same way they do other committees are usually disappointed with the lack of results. The best way to establish such a group is to select a leader and let that person put together a team of people who have the complementary visionary skills. Now you have the potential of having a team rather than a committee.

How strategic is your strategic map?

Rule #10: Regularly return to the elephant for another ride.

Regular evaluation is essential to successful strategic mapping. Detours are always experienced and new routes need to be discovered. Neither does it matter how well something is working; it can always be improved so that it works better. The constant improvement of quality is essential in a fast-changing world. Without evaluation, things can quite working so fast that, by the time we realize it, they are out of control.

Does your planning team regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their work and are they willing to make the necessary changes even if the map is still working well?

Pastors interested in helping a stagnant church make radical change will find the book *Teaching The Elephant To Dance* by James A. Belasco helpful if they apply the principles to the church environment. [RPN](#)

Bill Easum is president of 21st Century Strategies, Inc. a full-service church consulting group since 1987 whose mission is to equip Christian for global impact, www.churchconsultations.com.

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Second Mount Zion Baptist Church

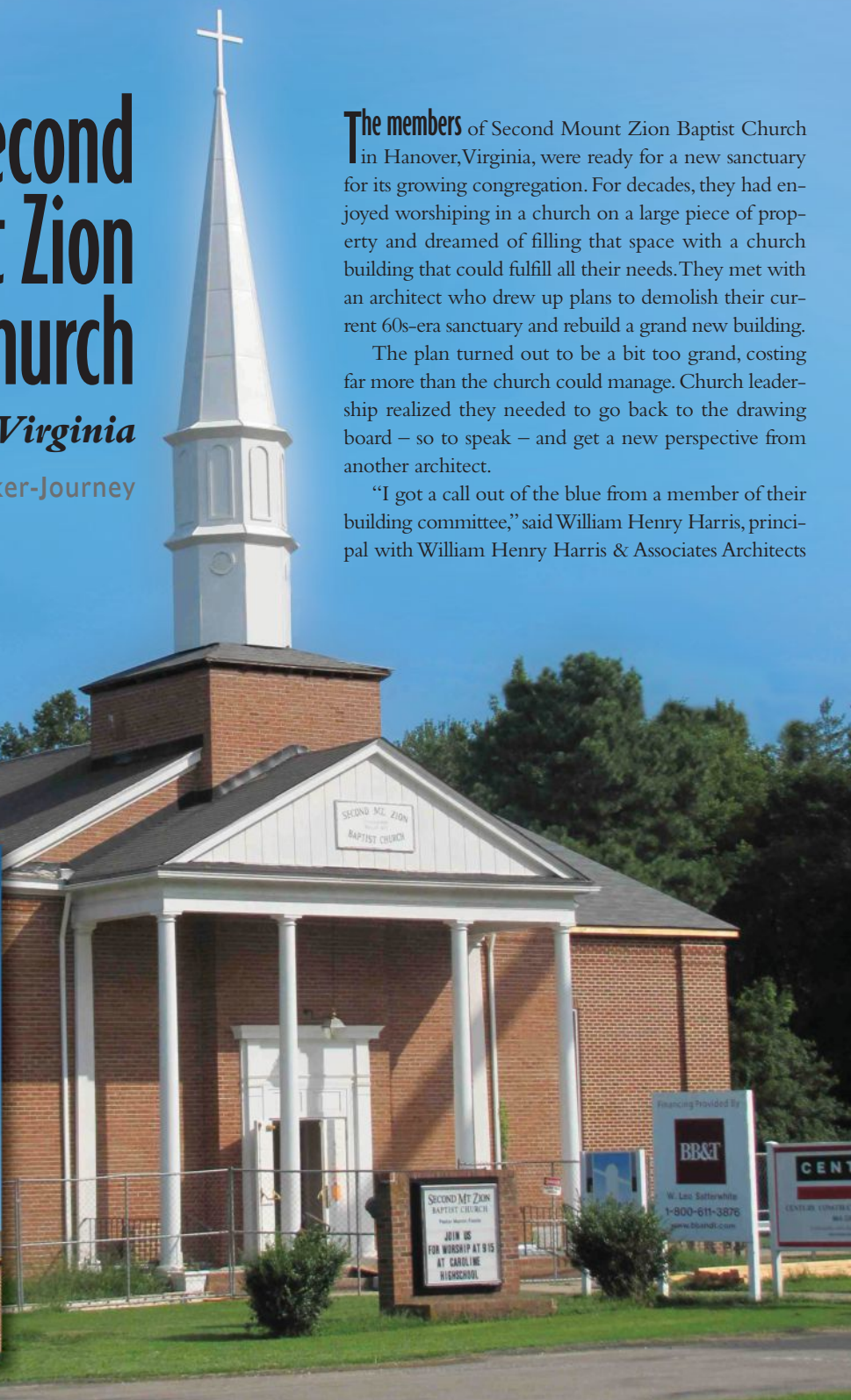
Hanover, Virginia

By Jennifer Walker-Journey

The members of Second Mount Zion Baptist Church in Hanover, Virginia, were ready for a new sanctuary for its growing congregation. For decades, they had enjoyed worshiping in a church on a large piece of property and dreamed of filling that space with a church building that could fulfill all their needs. They met with an architect who drew up plans to demolish their current 60s-era sanctuary and rebuild a grand new building.

The plan turned out to be a bit too grand, costing far more than the church could manage. Church leadership realized they needed to go back to the drawing board – so to speak – and get a new perspective from another architect.

“I got a call out of the blue from a member of their building committee,” said William Henry Harris, principal with William Henry Harris & Associates Architects



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& Planners. “They asked me to come over and give a presentation. I looked at the drawings they had done up to that point. It was much more than they could manage. I suggested to them they might want to revisit their ideas and come up with something a little easier for them to take on.”

This isn’t the first time churches have run into situations where they have plans drawn for the church of their dreams, but it turns out to be far out of reach financially.

Harris suggests that churches considering a major building project first with a financial institution that deals in church mortgages. They can help church leadership determine just what they can afford.

“A lot of people don’t understand construction and what it costs. They hear there’s a recession and that it is less expensive to build, but that’s not really the case because it costs what it costs,” Harris said. “I think you just have to be realistic about what you can afford.”

It was determined that Second Mount Zion Baptist Church needed to scale back on its plans, but that didn’t mean they couldn’t get everything they wanted – in time, Harris says.

He worked with leadership to develop a master plan that first determined how much of the church’s vast property could be built on, and then worked off the idea of a phased plan, one that would allow them to build their project in smaller, more affordable chunks. He also broached the idea of adding onto and renovating the current sanctuary



rather than tearing it down. Church leadership was open to all the ideas.

The buildable space on the property turned out to be the first challenge. A cemetery on the property prevented growth in one area. Wetlands prevented growth in another area. And a substantial setback required by the county dictated the space on which the church could sit.

“We basically worked within that framework,” Harris said.

For the first phase, Harris suggested opening up the current sanctuary by adding on two transepts, or wings, on either side of the rectangular building, nearly doubling seating by adding about 220 seats. Steel beams were put in place opening up the space so views would not be obstructed.

The pulpit was also pulled out to allow a more panoramic view for the pastor. This also opened up more space on the stage, giving more room for musical instruments and allowing choir seating to increase from about

15 to 40.

The narthex and the church’s kitchen were also updated as part of the renovation.

The church was a traditional Georgian-style building like most Baptist churches from that era with red brick and white columns. To keep costs down, the front of the building remained red brick, but the sides received a complementary white stucco finish.

The second phase would add a multipurpose space for fellowship, stage productions or large dinners. It could also be used for recreational activities. The exterior would be made with matching stucco with brick accents.

It took a few years to get the project off the ground, but once ground was broken, the process moved swiftly. Services were moved into a local high school while renovations on the sanctuary were underway. In November 2013, the church opened its doors for a grand dedication ceremony.

“Planning is key to a project like this. And understanding what you can afford to do vs. what you think you can afford to do,” Harris said. “But it also takes a lot of prayer to determine what the right direction to go in is.”

RPN

William Henry Harris & Associates Architects & Planners, based in Richmond, Virginia, specializes only in church-related design projects. Established in 1983, the firm offers complete design services for your planning requirements, ranging from programming and master planning through complete project design and construction contract administration, www.harrisarchitects.org.



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CREATING A **COMMUNICATION PLAN**

By Jill Bailey

Words are foundational to our faith. We use them to communicate the gospel, to disciple believers, to connect the disconnected and to reach out in our communities. And although most churches see communication as an important part to their success, they do not necessarily view it as a strength within their organization. Church communication, like anything else, can be improved with a simple plan and the establishment of basic guidelines.

Communications planning is commonly used in the business world. It is a method used to direct an organization to reach their target market most effectively. It is concerned with who to target, when to contact them, with what message, and how messages will be disseminated. In the past, many churches have thought this strategy was too worldly and have been apprehensive adapting it. Today, with an overabundance of communication channels, churches realize the necessity of communicating more effectively. For the church, a strategic communications plan serves as a guide to spread a church's vision and live out their values.

A good plan will help evaluate current communication and guide in creating a more effective communications approach. The most successful strategy will address six elements: receiver/decoder (who), message/content (what), time frame (when), desired outcome/feedback mechanism (why), communication channel (how), and sender/encoder (by whom).

WHO

When church leaders are asked who their church is targeting, they almost always answer "everyone." The church is absolutely called to bring the 'Good News' to everyone; however, whether we realize it or not, most churches draw from one group of people more than others. In the marketing world, we call this a target market. Defining a target market is a process of describing a particular demographic that an organization will focus their marketing efforts. The point of defining a target market is to focus your efforts clearly at one point of a community so you use your resources as wisely as possible and to

their maximum capacity. It is imperative you know who you are talking to before you know what to say and how to say it.

Once you establish your target market, it is equally important to learn as much about them as possible. When researching your target audience, consider demographic, psychographic, geographic, and behavioral attributes. This will help you understand more intimately what makes your target audience tick. Who are they? What is going on in their lives? Where are they spending their free time? The more you know about them, the better you will be able to communicate.

WHAT

The next step in a strategic communications plan is one that many churches skip – determining the key message. What is the PURPOSE? Articulate it – write it down. In addition, when writing content for your communication, following the 4Cs will help you create the most effective message.

• BE CLEAR

Think about who is listening and write for them. Don't speak "Christianese." Insider language excludes people and often causes confusion. Choose your words carefully.

• BE CONCISE

Start with the basics: who, what, when where, why and how? Make sure all the details are included, but get to the point. Simplicity is best. Excessive and overly done communication will cause people to disengage and tune out.

• BE CONSISTENT

When communication between the church and the congregation/visitors/community is unpredictable or confusing, the church loses an opportunity to touch those people in a meaningful way. This confusion can lead to a lack of interest and commitment. Having a consistent message will help people know what your church values and gives the church a sense of unified direction.

• BE COMPELLING

To be compelling is to encourage, persuade or convince. How will you succeed in encouraging someone to do something if the mes-



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MINISTRY OF THE MONTH

SPOTLIGHTING YOUR GROUP

sage communicated is boring? When writing content, whether it's for a newsletter or verbal announcements, remember to write with the target audience in mind.

Your message should also influence people to do something. In the marketing world, this is called our "call to action." Does your key message have a strong call to action? Every message should compel

the audience to "Go, Give, Pray, Come..."

WHEN

Another important aspect of a good church communications plan is creating a timeline showing when all communication is expected to occur. Specify the appropriate time frame of delivery for each message. Are you giving the recipients adequate time to pro-

duce the best response? Consider the value and effectiveness of each piece.

WHY

What do you hope to achieve with your message? When planning, it is important to start with the end in mind. Put the desired outcome into words. What is the goal? For instance, you promote a new adult ministry. Do you want adults in the congregation to attend an event, invite their unchurched friends or just be aware it exists? This step will also assist with feedback. Did your message accomplish what you hoped it would?

HOW

How will this message be sent? What medium should be used? This is not as simple as it sounds. Consider the best way to communicate this specific message to this specific audience. Many churches attempt to stay trendy and try a little of everything – email, bulletins, posters, newsletters/e-newsletters, Facebook, Twitter – and the result is that you inundate your congregation and nothing gets read! Evaluate what has worked best for you.

BY WHOM

Who delivers a message, whether spoken or written, is as important as how the message is communicated. Nothing puts an audience to sleep more than a monotone lackluster speaker. Someone with passion for what they are writing will usually make up for a lack of technical writing skill. After they impart excitement and create interest, you can always have a more experienced writer read and edit the message. It is always a good rule of thumb for any writer to have someone else read and edit your material. Another pair of eyes and a different perspective often helps catch mistakes and fill in whatever was missed.

Finally, it isn't difficult to establish basic guidelines and create a church communications plan. The time invested will be invaluable, as you use resources to their maximum capacity while spreading your vision for the church more efficiently and effectively. [RPN](#)

Jill Bailey is a senior marketing specialist at PhoneTree, www.phonetree.com.

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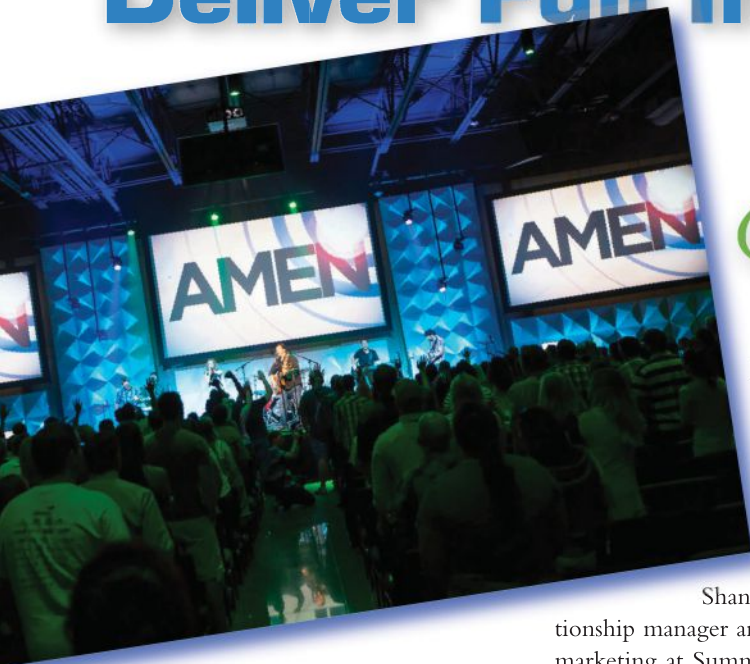
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LOUDSPEAKERS Deliver Full Impact of Band

and Convey Spoken Word



With weekly attendance topping 46,000, LifeChurch.tv is, by many counts, the largest church in the country. It has 18 physical campuses stretching from New York to Florida and back to its headquarters in Oklahoma. As one might guess from its embrace of the “.tv” suffix, LifeChurch.tv also has a vibrant online presence, including a weekly online service and a virtual church in the online virtual world – Second Life.

Its Jenks, Oklahoma, location recently opened its doors and welcomed new members (or in LifeChurch.tv’s parlance, “partners”) to a progressive church experience anchored by a dynamic live band. As in many of the more recent LifeChurch.tv locations, stereo clusters of Danley Sound Labs SH-50 full-range loudspeakers deliver the full impact of the band and convey spoken word and video playback with crystalline intelligibility.

Summit Integrated Systems of Lafayette, Colorado, began working with LifeChurch.tv six years ago and has designed and installed the A/V systems at most of the campus locations.

“The fact that LifeChurch.tv continues to build new campuses has given us the opportunity to critique and grow with each design/build project,” explained

Shane Beeson, church relationship manager and director of sales and marketing at Summit Integrated Systems. “After every project, we meet with the LifeChurch.tv technical staff to evaluate the systems and discuss what we can improve upon. Danley Sound Lab products have been a part of Summit’s product line since Danley launched in 2005, and Danley became a part of the LifeChurch.tv conversation five years ago. We were exploring ways to improve the audio quality of their multi-site campuses while still being mindful of budget and to meet their request for a stereo system using point-source boxes.”

Although LifeChurch.tv requests stereo coverage of the worship auditorium at most sites, it also typically compromises on the architecture such that the ceiling height is lower than would be optimal.

“Like every church, LifeChurch.tv operates within a budget,” said Beeson. “The ceiling height makes it challenging to get the right coverage and impact. Moreover, acoustic treatment is usually the minimum needed to get the space up and running. That was the case at Jenks, so we designed two 3-box clusters of Danley SH-50s. The supreme pattern control and smooth phase response of the Danley SH-50 gave us the

control we needed for excellent coverage of the seats and minimal coverage of the walls. Danley’s innovative solution allowed us to increase performance and offset budget challenges by using a loudspeaker product with maximum pattern control to keep the sound in the seating areas without overexciting the room reflections. Because the Danley SH-50 is passive, it required a minimum number of processor and amplifier channels, which helped the project stay on budget.”

The Jenks system begins with a Yamaha CL5 paired with RIO stage boxes, which act as a digital snake and patch bay to collect inputs from the stage. The output from the CL5 feeds a Biamp Audia Flex, which handles loudspeaker management and processing. Lab.gruppen C-Series amplifiers power the system.

Mounted at the 17-foot ceiling, three close-packed Danley SH-50s per side provide the main stereo coverage for the room with 40 feet between them. Four subs provide low-frequency extension from below the stage. Six Danley SH-Mini loudspeakers complete the system by providing side-fill at the edge of each cluster and front-fill from the edge of a portable stage when needed. [RPN](#)

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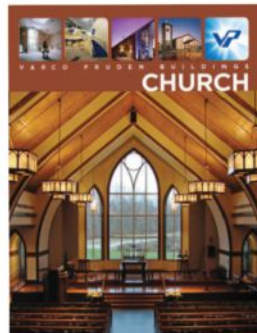
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By Mimi Bullock

You have a good promotion idea—one that you are sure families will love, but the day comes and goes and nada. Nobody or only a few people show up. You feel disappointed (and rightly so) but you quietly tuck away 200 goodie bags and keep going. After the event, families are disappointed and amazed that they didn't know about it (despite the many bulletin and newsletter postings).

So, where did your promotion go wrong? Perhaps you should widen the net! Social networking sites like Facebook allow kids ministries to create events, build excitement, and enjoy a harvest.

No matter what size church you belong to, you can get noticed with an effective Facebook promotion. (You don't even have to spend money!) Start by creating your event page if needed or post on your current Facebook ministry page. Work out the details and add them, too.

Some of these ideas could help bring the results you want:

TRY A COUNTDOWN

Every day, post a number graphic on the event page. For example, when it's seven days away, post a photo of the number seven and write a blurb underneath. You can find tons of free graphics on Google. A blurb can sound something like: "Seven more days and Pastor Jack can't sleep, he's so excited!"

POST UPDATES ON AN OUTREACH

If you have a goal to gather 20 Christmas gifts for local seniors, post a daily status report. Post pictures of the items you have received or

would like to receive. Post photos of the seniors your children's ministry could help.

SHOW INTERVIEWS WITH KIDS

We use a fake mic and an iPhone, but it works! Catch kids after an event and ask them for an interview. It's a good idea to get on your knees to get both of you in the picture. Also, ask pointed questions like, "Wow! You looked like you were having fun. Did you have a blast?" Post the interviews and share them on your Facebook and parents page.

PASS THE KITTEN

"Who wants to pet sit this VIRTUAL kitten for me today?" That was the post, along with a photo of an irresistible kitten. We passed the kitten around from page to page. Every pet sitter got to give the "kitten" a name. It was a pointless promotion that built our Facebook presence. I highly recommend it!

Getting Families Connected on Facebook

Everyone has a Facebook page. I knew when my Dad, retired Navy Seal and lovable curmudgeon, created a personal Facebook account that social networking could work miracles (not literally, of course).

In a practical sense, connecting to families through a social networking site just makes sense when you operate a children's ministry. You can send reminders, make announcements and interact with families with just a few clicks. That's helpful when you want to build stronger ties and higher attendance.

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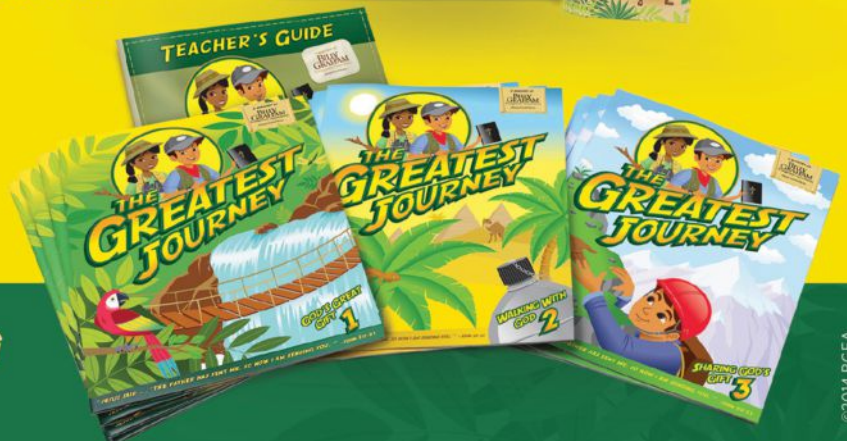
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USING facebook for Children/Youth Ministry

These creative ideas are working for me:

THE KID OF THE WEEK

This is a program I use to reward children for demonstrating the Golden Rule. I snap a photo of the winner during kids church and poof! The child's photo appears on the kids church Facebook page and the parents'

pages. I've never had parents fuss about that and they always share the picture with others.


TAKE GOOFY POLLS

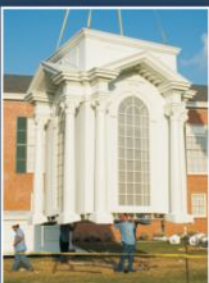

Post a fun poll question like: "What's your favorite ice cream topping?" It's an online icebreaker that can help you build relationships with parents and grandparents.

PET COSTUME CONTESTS

You'd think it would be just seasonal but nope. People love putting their pets in costumes and posting pictures. We're always soliciting for pet pictures. Pets are a big part of a child's life and we want to get to know them.




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FUN FRIDAYS

Each Friday, I post a funny YouTube clip like three-minute sketch from an old Muppet Show or a Pixar Short. Always review the clip before you post it though. You can't trust everyone. On Fridays, I post a funny clip for the kids to watch their family.

SATURDAY PREVIEWS

Once the room is decorated and the weekly "minute to win it" games are on display, I snap a photo with my iPhone. That goes right to the Facebook page. Kids love getting a sneak peek of what's going to happen on Sunday.

Put those Facebook kids min pages to work! **RPN**

Mimi Bullock writes for www.Ministry-To-Children.com, a resource started by Tony Kummer to solve children's ministry problems.

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The Ins and Outs of FOLDING WALLS & DOORS

By Gary A. Barranger

One important thing to know about folding walls and doors is that certain products are appropriate for certain applications.

1. CLASSROOMS

For most classrooms, the traditional divider of choice is the accordion door. These are easy to move, not too heavy for support, and more fitted to church budgets. And, if you hear some sound (and you likely will), the sound you hear is most often a hymn being sung in a nearby classroom. In a church setting, you don't find too many people who would object.

(Caveat – if you want markerboards or tackboards in the classroom and the divider goes between exterior and interior glass walls, you may need to use the flat paneled operable wall to have the benefit of built-in markerboards or tackable surfaces.)

Accordion doors are, in my opinion, the only “goof-proof” dividers. Manufacturers typically have longer warranties for these, as things seldom go wrong.

2. FELLOWSHIP HALL

For most fellowship halls, we still recommend accordions...but two conditions often weigh in favor of the more expensive operable walls.

It is very difficult, but not impossible, to have doorways with accordions, and, as you push the accordion back to be stored, it will project a good deal back into the room unless you have had the foresight to build long narrow storage closets (most are at about 2" per lineal foot). But be aware that 3.0 – 4.5 lbs.



psf accordions are much lighter than operable walls, which weigh from 4.5 lbs. to more than 12 lbs. (We don't recommend these high STC, heavy weight products.)

3. GYMNASIUM/ MULTIPURPOSE ROOMS

For use in gymnasiums or to divide the sanctuary from the fellowship hall, operable wall panels, which can tower to heights of more than 30 feet (you're not going to need something that tall), often work better than accordions that have height restrictions of less than 20'-0" and become increasingly difficult to move with increased height and length.

While individual or paired panels can be used to divide a gym, some have found it beneficial to electrify the opening. If that is your decision, and you have the budget for it, here's a word of caution. Electric partitions can be dangerous, and, on occasion, people (often children) have been injured or worse by them. The industry took steps years ago

to try and prevent accidents by requiring two control stations – opposite ends and opposite side so that no one is hidden in a closet or standing in the path.

They also offer lead edge sensors, pressure sensitive floor mats, and motion sensors to stop the panels from hitting someone. All add on expensive expenses.

Despite these, we have seen more than one instance where panels have been retracted into closets with table, carts, chairs, trash cans stored, and the results were never good for what was stored and seldom good for the divider.

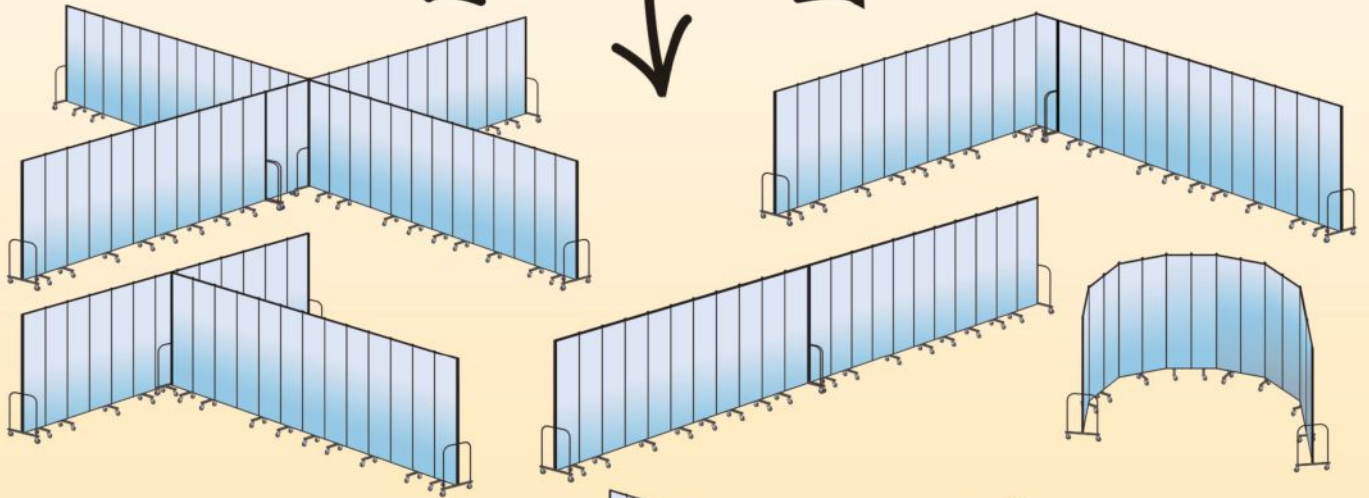
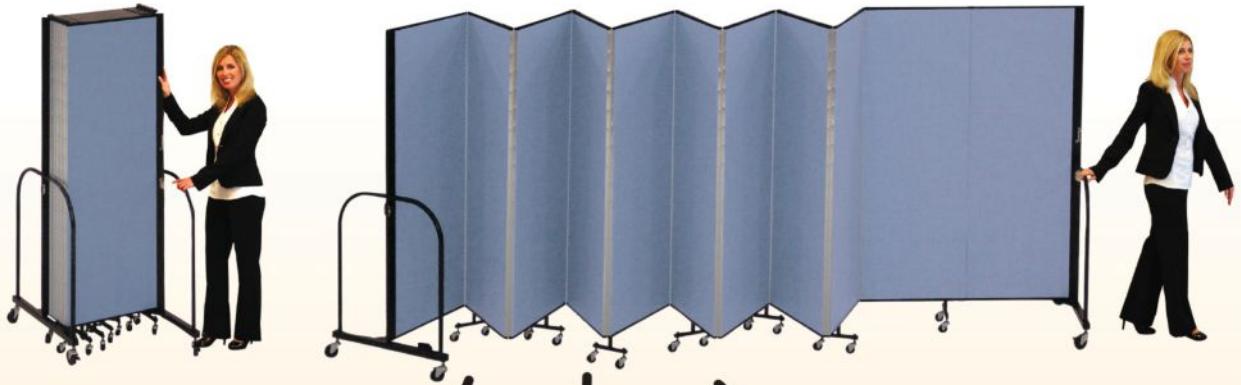


4. FINISHES

The industry is based around providing products in textured vinyls of one sort or another. Modern vinyls are inexpensive, easy to clean (most of the time), and generally Class A fire-rated (which means they will not help a fire along should the unthinkable ever happen). But, depending on finish selection, the sky is the limit.

Because of the way in which they move and their relatively narrow faces, not all fin-

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The Ins and Outs of **FOLDING WALLS & DOORS**

ishes can be successfully applied to accordions – vinyl, cloth fabrics, vertical ribbed carpets, acoustical fabric, and for some wood veneers are available.

Since operable walls are drywall partitions with wheels above, you can do almost anything – from what is on the face of the accordions to mirrored glass, to wallpaper, to markerboards (from standard heights of 48" to full-height), to laminates or all types. I once had a project where the laminating (which was a hand-etched stainless steel) cost more than the panels themselves).

5. TRACKS

All partitions require an overhead track through which its carriers run. Partitions with floor tracks (available from many in decades past) are now dinosaurs. There are too many problems with floor settling, foreign objects getting into the track, and cost.

Tracks will either "recess" or "surface mount." They must be attached to something.

Both accordions and lighter weight operable walls can have their track attached via

screws to wood headers – typically a double 2 x 8 or 2 x 10 laid flat that is, in turn, attached by all-threads, or other means, to the building structure. Both types of partitions can also have rods go directly from the track to support steel (beams, angles, channels, etc.) above.

Two manufacturers are now offering complete self-supporting systems that incorporate track. In one instance, the construction is a truss that is capable of coming with a 24" high acoustical baffle – which is better than 50% of the openings we encounter. Its columns are sized so they do not offensively project into the room or, most importantly, they can be hidden inside your stud wall. Where your building is such that support can not be provided, this is a cost-effective, quick and clean way to get the structure in place that you need.

6. REPARABILITY

Find out how easy or difficult it might be to repair a product in the event of an accident or change in taste. Some manufacturers have



accordion sections that can be replaced in the field, while others require that the door be taken down, crated, shipped back and forth from the factory. In a word – expensive.

Some manufacturers' operable walls panels have field replaceable faces, which is a plus if a hole gets knocked into one and a troublesome flaw if not. Ask this question and listen carefully for an answer. **RPN**

Gary A. Barranger is president and co-founder of Barranger & Company, Inc., a Building Specialties supplier located in Richmond, Virginia, where he works with his brother and sister in their family's business, www.barranger.com.

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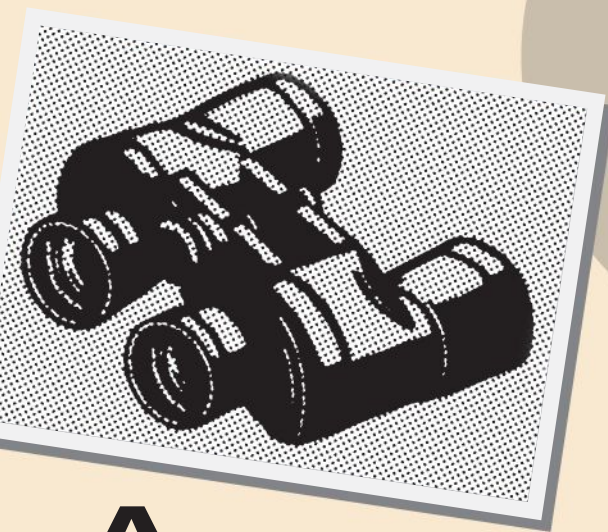
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THE HUNT

for Stadium Seating

By Taylor Moson



As worship facilities expand, renovate, and relocate, incorporation of stadium seating is a trend that has gained traction and popularity in the last several years. Stadium seating is no longer just reserved for “megachurches.” As worship facilities today incorporate more live entertainment, including music and theater into their messages, the revolution of having stadium seating has become extremely popular. The addition and incorporation of stadium seating:

- **Enhances sight lines to the stage or pulpit**
- **Allows more usable space on the floor due to elevated seating platforms in rear or balcony**
- **Captures usable space underneath the platforms for classrooms, restrooms, storage use, etc.**
- **Provides the design team additional options and design creativity.**

Many churches inquire about stadium seating not because they are categorized as the “megachurch,” those with attendee numbers in the thousands, but instead, because these churches have outgrown their current facili-

ties, and, as they have experienced the growth, they have come to need a different in a worship building facility.

Sometimes this is the addition of a multi-level balcony to the existing sanctuary to accommodate an extra 500 congregants on a Sunday. It can also be the need for a main sanctuary that seats 5,000 with stadium seating and the ability to broadcast services live to a dozen or more remote locations simultaneously. No matter how large or small anymore, more worship facilities today are examining the idea of utilizing stadium seating in their next renovation, addition, or new construction project.

Eastside Christian Church in Anaheim, California, is an excellent example. When their congregation outgrew their current facility, they decided to purchase and repurpose an old Boeing Aerospace manufacturing plant in town and relocate their main campus. The top floor was converted to classrooms and their onsite offices. The main sanctuary includes stadium seating, as well as the balcony area on the second floor to provide additional seating if required during busier services.

Another great example is Skyline Wesleyan Church in Las Mesa, California. It was founded in 1954 with a simple 350-seat sanctuary on a flat floor. By 1995, the church had an average Sunday attendance of more than 3,000. This led to the need for expansion of their current facility, which became a multi-phase project over several years.

Up until 2012, four weekend services were held in the Family Center, a 1,000-seat



flat floor auditorium and phase 1 of the expansion. In November 2010, ground was broken for a new Worship Center to include a 2,500-seat auditorium with stadium seating, a multipurpose room/gymnasium, a 200-seat traditional chapel, and a café. The new 60,000-square-foot sanctuary opened in March 2012.

One of the main benefits that stadium seating provides to a worship facility is the line of sight from each individual seat. The stadium seating will raise each seat and provide better sightlines to the congregants. It is typical for a worship facility’s architect to design the stadium seating with a 36”- 40” platform depth and a 7”- 14” riser height, depending on the type of seat chosen and the facility’s use. This usually provides the sightlines necessary to view the stage/pulpit from anywhere in the facility.

Another large benefit that stadium seating provides to worship facilities is space. The inclusion of stadium-style seating platforms provides the maximum utilization of existing or planned floor space. This means that, in



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SO, NOW WHAT?

The search now begins for the design team (the pastor and church development team, the architect and the contractor) to determine what the benefits and costs will be to build this stadium seating. Today's design includes several ways of constructing stadium seating in a worship facility environment.

The fastest and easiest method consists of stacking large blocks of expanded polystyrene, or Geofoam, and encapsulating the stacked foam in a concrete topping. This method has been proven to cut time and money from a construction project due to its efficiency and ease of installing when compared to the traditional methods of using light gauge metal or wood framing. In addition to the stadium riser platforms being constructed out of Geofoam, the material is commonly used to raise an elevation, construct stages or other platforms, in addition to accommodate ramps and walkways.

The EPS block is stacked up in a tiered

fashion similar to stacking Legos and encapsulated with a concrete topping slab to attach your seating. There are even U.S.-based companies that specialize in this type of system and will design, pre-cut each individual block and label all components for delivery and installation. What you receive is similar to a puzzle of large foam blocks for assembly by others on a construction site whenever needed.

The EPS Geofoam is a 100% recyclable material and normally incorporates a percentage of recycled material. It can usually be manufactured within a close radius of the jobsite and can assist projects in obtaining LEED credits. EPS Geofoam is one of the lightest and easiest materials to move and manipulate on a construction site.

So, as you consider and explore the idea of stadium seating, remember the benefits it provides and the experience it can create for your members. **RPN**

Taylor B. Moson is project manager for Stadium Seating Enterprises, Inc., www.stadiumseating.com.

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RECRUITING ADULTS

for Youth Mission Travel

For some adults, going on the mission trip is a highlight of the year. Far from the routine of the typical workday, they discover how to make a lasting, positive impact on the lives of their crewmembers and in the community where they serve. Encourage adults who have a heart for God, a love for youth, and a desire to make a difference to submit their names for adult leadership consideration.

Adults are crucial to the success of the mission trip; in fact, you'll need one adult leader for every five youth attending. So, how do you get adults as excited about the camp experience as the youth who are already looking forward to the week? See below for ideas to catch adults' interest.



PERSONALLY SELECT GREAT ADULTS

One of the best ways to recruit adult leaders is to hand-select those people you think would be great for the job. Single out the adults in your church who might qualify to be leaders, and take them out for coffee or ice cream. Share the vision of the program and the powerful, positive impact it can have on youth (and adults, too). There's no

better way to recruit a great team than to go after the people on your "top ten" list, one at a time.

A well-crafted announcement by youth or a light-hearted skit during a church service can have a major, positive impact on potential adult leaders. Work with youth to create announcements, skits, and advertisements that briefly outline the need but also shows how much the youth really appreciate the adults who'll join them on the trip.

Been on a mission trip before? Allow the past good experiences sell adults on the idea of being sponsors. Have previous adult leaders who've had a good experience share a

brief "testimony" with the congregation to let other adults know of the great benefits in signing up.

QUALIFY INTERESTED ADULTS

Simply getting adults interested in becoming leaders isn't enough. You'll want to review the qualifications of each interested adult to make sure you're choosing the best possible adult leaders for your youth. Here's how:



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As you begin recruiting, pray that God will lead just the right adults your way. As you screen adults, pray that God will reveal any concerns before you sign them up. And as you embark on the trip, pray that God will bless those who have committed their time and talent to serve and support your youth. Let adults know from the beginning what they'll be getting into if they're chosen to be leaders.



The mission trip experience is extremely rewarding, but far from a stay at a five-star hotel. Ask potential volunteers how they feel about sleeping on hard floors (apart from spouse...with teenagers!), keeping long hours, working in the hot sun, and generally finding little time to be alone. If those questions don't scare them away, ask the really tough question: How much do you love teenagers?

Discover their relational ability. Anyone who has ever worked with volunteers knows that a "warm body" is often less desirable than no volunteer at all. One of the most important qualities of a great volunteer is the ability to relate well to youth. That's why it's easier to find qualified adult leaders in your list of adults who already are successfully working with youth.

But don't neglect adults who have yet to stand up and participate

in your youth program. Some of these people relate extremely well to youth—but just can't commit to ongoing service. They may be your best candidates for adult leader roles.

TRAINING YOUR ADULT LEADERS

Now that you have qualified adult leaders signed up, here are a few ideas for training and encouraging them. Take care of these people as you would your own youth—your adult leaders are an integral part of your team.

Invite adult leaders to attend any fundraising events, team meetings, and the meeting in the spring to complete forms. Ask leaders who don't normally attend youth group meetings to visit during a regular meeting or two before the event. This will help them become familiar with the youth they'll be traveling with. Also make sure you have some training meetings for adults only.

Have adults learn about trip location. Encourage adult leaders to research on the community you'll be visiting. Assign them the task of planning something fun to do there during your free time! RPN

This information is courtesy of Group Mission Trips, www.groupmissiontrips.com.



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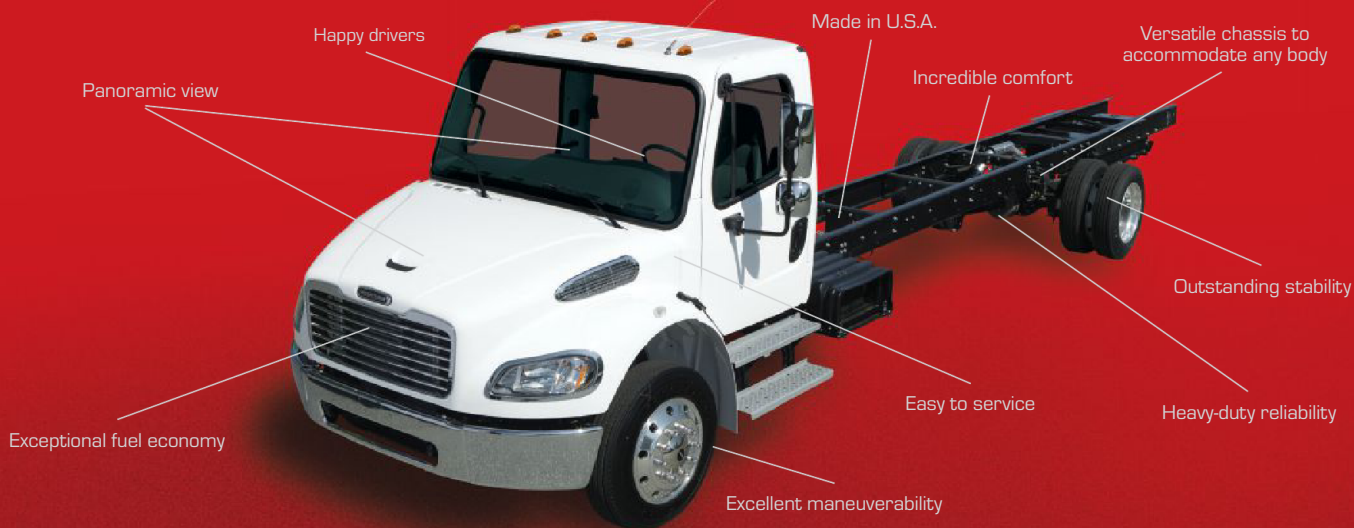
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