

CHURCH  CHURCH

# Communications

Our vision is to 'REACH THE CITY, REACH THE WORLD' with the Gospel of Jesus.

CONNECT to God through trusting in Jesus' death on the cross for your sins, and connect to church.

GROW in your relationship with Jesus and others following him, especially through a Growth Group.

SERVE Jesus and others according to their needs, especially a Ministry Team.

This MINISTRY PAPER is designed to assist you in thinking through the role of communications in your ministry.

## Communicators by design

Humans are communicators, story tellers, social beings. We tell each other stories as a means of getting to know one another. We build relationships through reciprocal story telling

Have you ever met someone at a social gathering, and noticed the way you interact is through sharing your stories? People are interested in stories – we love reading them, watching them, listening to them, and telling them.

You might tell me a story about your cat, and I will tell you a story about the cat that visits our house and thinks it belongs to our family (a fairly shallow encounter). You might tell me something you believe, and I will reciprocate with something I believe (a more intimate encounter) – we are constantly sharing stories about ourselves, each one revealing just a bit more about who we are. This is how we get to know each other.

Take an onion. The Superficial layer – the onion skin – is the thinnest layer, it has the largest surface area. These make a majority of our relationships - we have lots of superficial relationships.

As you move inwards, the layers get thicker, and deeper, and less in number.

The way you move through the layers is reciprocal vulnerability through story telling.



When we think about “communications” in our churches, we often think of telling the congregation about the upcoming church event, or prayer needs within our church. But what if we think communications with an outward focus?

We have the greatest story ever told... yet when it comes to sharing it with those who don't know it, we often don't know where to start. And then communications either become a neglected part of our ministry, or we give it a half hearted go with little thought or strategy.

In the book of Matthew, the word “tell” is used 84 times; in the book of Acts it appears 22 times (NIV) – you get the idea that telling people about Jesus – communicating the gospel – is something we are called to do.

*“Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people all about this new life.” - Acts 5:20*

It is hoped that this is happening in Sunday Services, but in the context of the 10,080 minute service – the service that encompasses our whole week – we should be telling people about Jesus throughout the week as well.

Because we are story telling beings, one of the best ways to share Jesus with people is in telling stories. For example, we all have a story of how God has worked in our lives. Our church is made up of stories of God at work in lives. Each day, stories are being lived out, that tell of God's work in the world – from the growth group that meets in the church hall, to the person who serves by mowing the lawn at church. Each and every moment in the day is part of the story of God at work.

Telling each of these stories is showing people outside the church the goodness of God as he works through his people. It gives people outside the church a glimpse at the beautiful community that exists within the church.

But telling these stories isn't just to show people outside the church a glimpse of God's community at work – it also serves to encourage those within the church, it builds a sense of community, and helps people feel connected.

### One voice vs Many voices

It's tempting to think church communications is initiated, created, and executed by the Pastor of the church. It's easy to see church as a single body, with a corporate voice, telling the story of the single body in a corporate voice. But churches are made up of people, with many voices.

An authentic picture of the church community is many voices telling the one story. Think in the gospels of the many people that Jesus healed, and all of them went out and told their story to those around them. Many different experiences, and voices, and personalities, all telling the story of the one Man. This is how church communications should be.

Have a think about some people – they may be on staff, elders, or just mature brothers and sisters in your congregation – who may be able to help you tell the story with your communications.

### Communication Strategy

A simple Communication strategy defines 5 things that help you better communicate.

**The Problem** – what is the hole you're trying to fill? WHY do you need to communicate. Often by understanding the problem, you can better work towards a solution.

**Aims + objectives** – WHAT are you hoping to achieve through your communications? You can have several aims and objectives, with each being as specific as possible. In defining these, you will be able to find more effective solutions. Eg “we aim to tell people about Jesus” is too broad to be effective. Something like “we aim to reach 300 people in our town with stories of how Jesus has changed lives in our church” defines measurable goals, and a specific message.

**Target Market** – obviously your target market is everyone, right? No. This is one time when it is better to define WHO your specific

### RESOURCES

Church2Church Communications Survival Kit:

- Simple Communication Strategy Template
- Social Media Ministry Paper

### Building relationships with church

We have established that we are social beings who love telling stories, and that it's through communications that we build relationships with each other. But what does it look like to build a relationship with a church?

Although church is a group of individuals, all with their own personalities, groups also have a shared personality. And there is no reason why communications can't be used to build relationship with your church's personality.

When looking for a church, people will often look at what they believe, their philosophy of ministry, what they have to cater to their needs – these are all fairly superficial concepts. It's not until someone joins a church and gets involved in the more intimate aspects of the church that they really feel like they connect.

What would it look like if your communications acted to draw people into the more intimate aspects of your church's life before they even set foot in the door?

target market is. You will be able to figure out the best ways to communicate, the best channels to use, and the best language/ tone etc to use. For example, trying to reach over 60s by using memes on Instagram may not be effective. Similarly, trying to talk to teens by handwriting letters may not be the most effective. You may have several target markets.

**Key Messages** – These messages will be HOW you achieve your objectives. You may have one overarching key message, or lots of different ones aimed at different target markets. By defining your key messages, you can figure out the best target markets to reach (would teens really be interested in a crochet club?), and the best channels to use.

**Channels** – this is WHERE your message is going to appear, and is largely dictated by who your target market is, and where is the best place to reach them.

**Simple Church Communication Strategy**  
A church communication strategy is one of the most overlooked tools in ministry. But having a good, simple strategy in place helps you be more effective in your communication. This template takes you through 5 key definitions that will help you be more intentional and effective in your communications. And then provides a table to set out your strategy.

**Communication problems**  
What do you need to communicate? What are the problems you are hoping to solve with your communications? You may have several problems, or just one. In defining them, try to stick to a single problem for each bullet point.

**Aims and objectives**  
What are you trying to achieve by communicating? Again, you may have several, or just one. Try to be specific and measurable in your aims and objectives. This will help you to better measure the success of the strategy.

**Target markets**  
Who are you trying to communicate with? Different target markets will require different messages, and different channels (media). Try to be as specific as you can about your target markets – this will help you define the best message to use, and the best media to distribute the message.

**Key messages**  
These messages will be HOW you achieve your objectives. You may have one overarching key message, or lots of different ones aimed at different target markets. What you think about key messages, more about how each message might contribute to your aims and objectives.

<b>List your Target Markets here</b>	<b>List what messages you want to tell them here</b>
eg youth	The benefits of youth group membership

**Communication Channels**  
Channels are WHERE your messages might appear. It is largely dictated by what target markets you're trying to reach. Think about how your target market communicates, that will give you the way to finding the best channels.

<b>List your communication channels here</b>	<b>List what target markets you will reach here</b>
eg Instagram	youth, young adults

Simple Church Communication Strategy Worksheet

**Communications Social Media**

Your church is in. REVEALS THE OFFICIAL CHURCH OF THE WORLD of Jesus the Gospel of Jesus.

**CONNECT** to God through training in your church's mission for your life, and connect to the church through your relationship with Jesus and others. This is how you connect to God through training in your church's mission for your life, and connect to the church through your relationship with Jesus and others. This is how you connect to God through training in your church's mission for your life, and connect to the church through your relationship with Jesus and others.

**7 tips for using social media as a Christian**

**Remember that you are God's Social Media.** - what do you want to say? Remember that you are God's Social Media. - what do you want to say? Remember that you are God's Social Media. - what do you want to say?

**Don't worship, or become an image of anything else.** When posting on social media, it is best to focus on the message of the Gospel, and not on the image of the person or the image of the person or the image of the person.

**Share Jesus.** If you are a Christian, you should be sharing the message of the Gospel, and not the message of the person or the image of the person.

**Be real and be honest.** The Gospel is not a secret, and it should be shared with everyone. Be real and be honest. The Gospel is not a secret, and it should be shared with everyone. Be real and be honest.

**Do not worry about what others think.** Do not worry about what others think. Do not worry about what others think. Do not worry about what others think.

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