



# Church Communication Strategy: *A Guidebook*



# How to Use This Guidebook

**This ebook is designed to be interactive—it's a guide.**

Mark it up, take notes, and use the worksheets. You may want to print a copy and work through it while also keeping the digital copy open so you can click through links and look at examples online.

*Find a system that works for you.*

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# Welcome

Creating a well-defined, carefully-crafted communication strategy for your church is high on every communicator's wish list. The problem that I hear—over and over—is that many don't know where to start.

A communication strategy helps you define whom you're speaking to, when you're speaking to them, and how you're communicating with that audience. Your system creates guidelines that can help you say "no" to good ideas and "yes" to what's best for your audience.

That's where this guidebook comes in. At *Church Juice*, we're entirely committed to helping you energize your church's communications. That communications plan you've been dreaming of having? We're here to help you make one. And, as always, if you need more help, reach out. I'd love to hear from you.



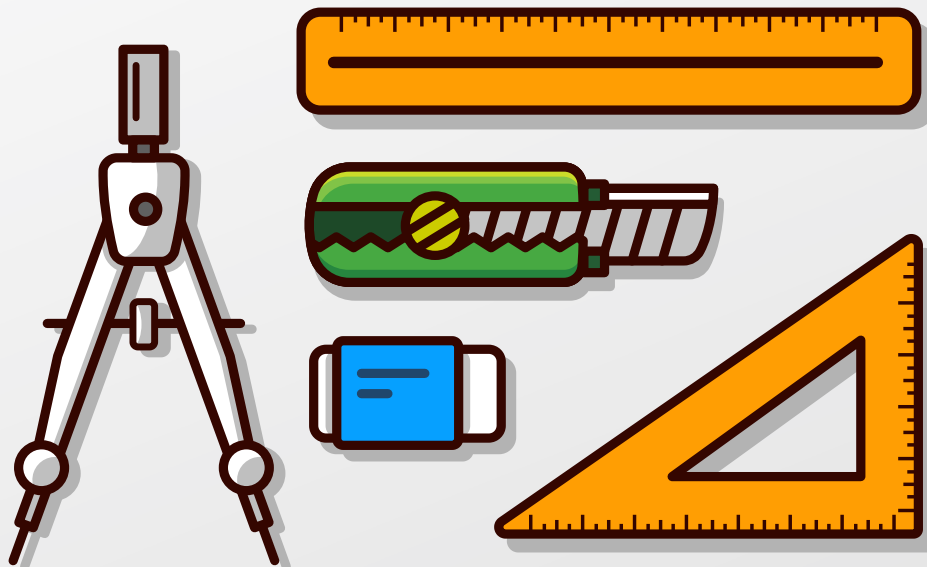
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PART I:

# Evaluating Your Effectiveness



The best way to start a communication plan is by auditing your current methods of communication. Sound scary? It's not. We're gonna make it easy. Ready to start?

## **STEP 1:** Your Current Status

Here's your first project: list every method your church currently uses to communicate with both your congregation and your community. List every single thing you can think of. Think about everything you print (looking at your Sunday bulletin and missions prayer card), every way you send a message online (hello, website!), and think about those other areas (like the pesky digital sign outside), too.

Next, list every mode of communication you dream of using or your team has talked about using. Maybe you've been thinking about starting a closed Facebook group or creating yard signs—this is the place to list those dreams.

# Communication Methods

Current Method	Dream Method
<i>Eg. Bulletin, Newsletter, Banners, Facebook</i>	<i>Eg. New website, mobile app, annual report</i>

How many different methods did you document? 5? 25? 50? My guess is that your church uses more avenues than you thought to get your message out there. And the reality is, you're probably using too many.

But here's the thing: you're not the only one. As communicators, we know communication is essential, so we want to make sure we're communicating well to every audience. And as church communicators, we believe our message is the most important message the world has ever heard. So, it's tempting to constantly try new things and implement more ways to communicate.

Many of us feel pressure to introduce new communication channels because of the downward trend in regular church attendance. Regular attenders now show up once a month, not once a week, and this means that many members will spend less than 15 hours a year at church. It may seem logical to want to bridge this gap by adding more and more ways to inform people, but the reality is that more channels often actually make our messaging more unclear. The more ways you attempt to communicate, the more it muddies the waters (not to mention it adds extra work to your plate).

The good news here is that less is more. But, we can't just eliminate methods without thought.

## **STEP 2:** Communication Evaluation

This is where step two comes in. Evaluate your methods of communication. On the next worksheet, you'll see four columns. Fill them out, according to the directions below, using the methods you listed above.

In the first column, document the ten communication methods that take up the most time. List them in order of most to least time.

Then, in the second column, estimate how much time each communication method takes each week (or each month, if that's easier).

To complete the third and fourth columns, you'll need to do a little more research so that you can be more objective. Take your time here—get accurate numbers. Actual data means you can make more informed decisions, so don't skip out.

In the third column, list the ten ways you communicate that have the greatest reach. By reach, we mean the number of people that hear or receive your message through that medium. For some things, these numbers are easy to find. Social media and website analytics will give you insights into your audience. If you use an email service, such as Mailchimp, you should be able to see how many people



open the email you send. You can also (hopefully) look at Sunday attendance numbers to realize how many people your Sunday communications are reaching. Some statistics may take more homework and research. But be diligent.

In the fourth column, list the actual reach data you find next to the method you listed in column three.





## **STEP 3:** The New Normal

Now make a list here of what communication methods you'll use moving forward. Make sure the list is complete, because we'll be returning to it later.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.

PART II:

# Your Audience



## Finding Your Audience

Who's your audience? Most churches will define their audience as everyone. Great. That's fantastic—way to be specific.

I get the notion and the likely cause for this answer. The gospel is for everyone, and we want to reach everyone with the gospel. Often the actual reason, however, is that churches don't know who their audience is.

A little while ago, I was consulting with a church to help energize their communications. When I asked the same question I just asked you, I got the typical answer of “everyone.” So I tried digging a little deeper. I wondered what age demographics attend their church. The reply was more of the same. “Well, we have a little bit of every demographic. We have some college students, some young families, some middle-aged congregants, and some senior citizens.” So, I tried to learn more. “Okay,” I said, “that's great that you have so many people from such a wide range of ages. What percentage of attendance would you give to each of those different demographics?” They responded that it was pretty evenly split. So I asked to take a look at numbers. When we looked at actual attendance numbers, we began to see a clearer picture of who made up their church. The attendance leaned 55+, with only a handful of family units under the age of 40.

So I'll ask you again: Who is your audience? Who is *actually* attending your church? Here are some additional ways you can gather information to help define your audience (you may have different or

- Membership information
- Facebook Insights
- Mailchimp audience
- Website analytics

Take time at this point and get some actual data. Fill in some of that data on the next page.

## Audience Analytics

Data Source	Male/Female %	0-17	18-29	30-49	59-69	70+	Other Data
<i>Ex: Facebook</i>	<i>M 51%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>43%</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>18%</i>	

Other helpful data to know:

Number of family units:

Average family size:

Number of Members:

Number of Regular Attenders:

Average age of first-time guests:

Hobbies and Interests:

*Facebook and Twitter are great places to identify your audience's interests.*

## Developing Personas

Now that you've got a better idea of who your audience really is right now, we can identify your core audience. Your core audience is the "person" or "persons" whom your church is most likely to attract, based on data. Based on our information that you just discovered, we can create a persona. [A persona](#) is "a reliable and realistic representation of your key audience segments."

Cool definition, right? I'm sure it's clear as mud now. Basically, a persona is a fictional character we create to personify our actual audience. It helps you identify to whom you're speaking. Knowing your audience—and defining your audience—empowers you to speak and communicate with them differently. Each persona has different needs and different ways they communicate. So when we know the "person" we're talking to, we can tailor our messaging to better reach and engage with them. Each persona provides a visual representation of a person we're trying to reach—whether in the congregation or out [in the community](#).

Here are some examples of personas that *Church Juice* and our partner programs utilize:

[Jackie Workparent](#)

[Laura Powermom](#)

[Eric Apprentice](#)

Looking at the information you put down earlier, how many different personas does your church need to create? Be as specific as you can be. Create as many personas as you need, but not more than that. Every persona should be different in how we communicate with them. What they care about should be different, the way they communicate should be different, their behaviors and patterns should be different. Be creative. Be specific. Everything from the persona's name to occupation, age, and hobbies all matter and make a difference.

**Think about it:** how you communicate to people might differ based on what they do for a living, what they enjoy doing in their free time, or other specifics. Even a globally-recognized brand like Coca-Cola markets to specific demographics. They sell differently to corporations than they do to people attending a ballgame. They communicate differently to people in the United States than they do in India. Your reach might not be as broad as Coca-Cola's, but you still speak to different types of people.

Create what you think is an accurate representation of your audience (based on the data).

Let's start working on communication by defining our audience and creating personas.



# Persona Worksheet

Persona's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Their Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Where do they live? \_\_\_\_\_

Roles or Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Goals: \_\_\_\_\_

Challenges: \_\_\_\_\_

Goals:

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Is there anything else you should include?

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What's the best way to communicate with this person?

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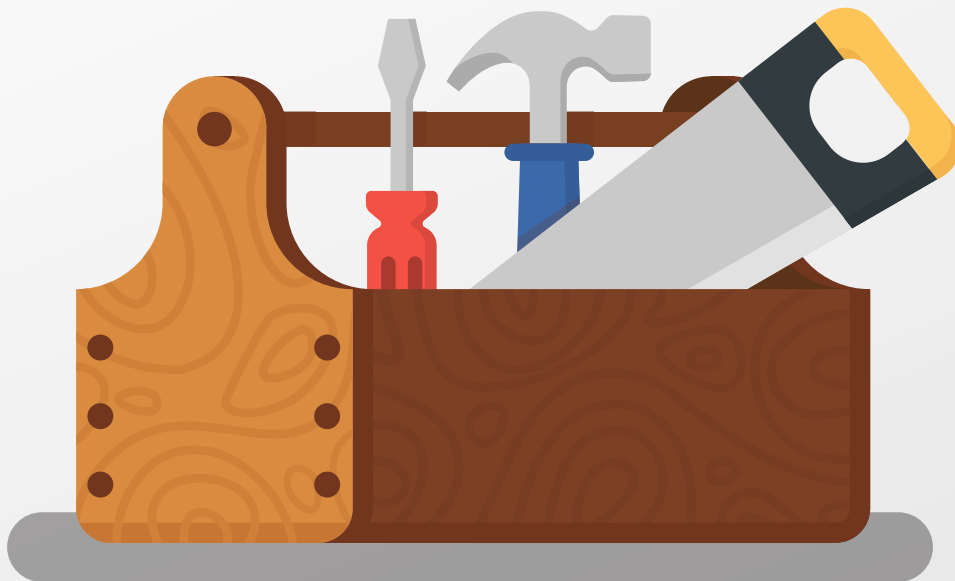
Now that you've created your church's target personas, it's essential to know how to use them! A persona is one tool in your toolbox to help you identify appropriate mediums to communicate to the people you're trying to reach. Because you can quickly point to their habits, hobbies, and interests, it can help you figure out the most effective way to reach them. The details in a defined persona give you ways to better answer your audience's questions and felt needs. This means wasting less time and energy on channels with little reward. Your persona helps you shape what you say and how you say it to the audience.

That's why knowing your audience is so important. And because you know your audience well now, you could create the personas. And that leads to better, more targeted marketing and communication.

Now let's turn away from our audience for a moment and start looking at processes.

PART III:

# Building Your Processes



## Defining Your Hub

More often than not, churches need to simplify how they're communicating.

We think that we need to throw the message out there in every way possible for people to hear what we have to say. We assume that if we throw everything at the wall, hopefully, something will stick.

The problem is that people are used to hearing the same messages over and over. If they continue to listen to the same message, they begin to ignore that message. We start to sound like a dull drum, beating over and over again. We're talking, but nobody is listening.

So what do we do?

Simplify. Streamline your methods of communication.

You already know what's working and what's not (I hope you didn't skip chapter 1). If something's not working, then you need to be okay with getting rid of it. There are many good things we could be doing, but we want to focus our attention on what's best. Sometimes, that means we need to adjust our strategy. Simplify how you're communicating. Streamline what you're saying.

One great way to do this: create a central hub for all of your communication. Create one place where anyone can go to get whatever information they need. Do you need to know if it's your Sunday to serve in the nursery? Go to the central hub. Can't remember what time the neighborhood outreach starts tomorrow? Central hub. All of your church's communication flows out of and points back to the central hub. That's where people can rely on getting the information they need.

**Where is your church's central hub?** It could be an online space (your website, maybe a secondary website, an email list, or a mobile church app). It could be a physical location (the lobby of your church building or the weekly bulletin). Your central hub could be a hybrid of online and physical, or it could be something else entirely. Where would it make the most sense for your church to have its central hub?

As you simplify your church's communication streams, creating a hub helps centralize how information flows through your church. It helps ensure anyone can get whatever information they need; people rely less on you to promote all information to every prospective attendee.

What kind of a central hub of information will your church have?

For most churches, a website is going to be that central hub. It's easy to access from anywhere.

There are lots of ways to create a central hub on your website (a landing page with quick access to all areas of ministry, or perhaps a secondary website). But if you need a little more help visualizing what this might look like, maybe [you'll find this explanation from Nucleus church websites helpful](#).

Your central hub is the crucial piece to your communication strategy. While it's important to use different, targeted, methods to promote something, all of those methods should point to your central hub. Grab their attention, and send them to the hub to get all the answers they need.

Examples of online central hubs:

[tvcresources.net](http://tvcresources.net)

[cotm.info](http://cotm.info)

[getinvolved.cc](http://getinvolved.cc)

[ark.info](http://ark.info)

[adabible.info](http://adabible.info)

# Building A Communication Request Process

If you're a nerd like me, building processes and strategies are an enjoyable part of your work. I love thinking about how something can be improved and then figuring out how to get it there. Building a process, strategy, and guidelines for your communication requests can help you improve communication and create consistency. But a process only works if everyone follows it.

WARNING: Whenever you create a new process, it's important to remember that the process is new, not just for you, but for the rest of your staff, your ministry leaders, and your church. Implementing a new strategy means influencing culture. And changing culture takes time. So don't get frustrated when your youth director reverts to their old ways three weeks after you've published and trained the ministry staff on how to utilize your brand new, incredible communication request process. There will be setbacks. But over time, the culture will change. People will begin to embrace the new strategy when they see how it makes their life easier and helps their ministry succeed further.

## *What's a communication request process, and why do you need it?*

A communication request process should help you sort incoming information. The goal is to get as much applicable information as possible in a timely manner. With this information, the communication gatekeeper can decide when to communicate something, where it would be best to advertise, and what calls-to-action we need to provide.

Running communication requests through a centralized process will help each of your communications be more targeted and effective. Your audience will be more likely to see and hear the messages that pertain to them and not be distracted by the stuff that doesn't pertain to them. In turn, people will tune out less of what you have to say because they'll trust that what you're communicating is essential to them.

As we simplify our communication, we must build a request process that helps sort, evaluate, and assign information. What basic information is crucial for you to know?

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I would dare to suggest the “5 W’s” should probably be the backbone of your request form. (In case you forgot, the 5 W’s are who, what, where, when, and why—and sometimes how).

Besides knowing the ministry, event, or program’s basic details, there might be other information that would be valuable to you.

Before we dive into building your form, let’s lay out all the information you’ll probably need.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requestor’s Name                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Theme of Event   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requester’s Contact (Email, probably)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Main Call-to-Action (probably point to your central hub) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Event Name                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Registration requirements                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Event Date                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of attendance                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Event Location                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Text, tagline, or other information to be included       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recurrence (Does it recur, and how often)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sample social media posts                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Target Audience                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred communication methods                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discipleship or Outreach                        |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Design Influences (colors, styles, ideas, etc.) |   |

Can you think of anything else? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Great. Now that you’ve thought about what type of information is helpful for you to know from the start, let’s talk about the timeline. The best way to think about a timeline is to work backward. Let’s use a typical event for most churches—Christmas Eve service—as an example. What would be the timeline for your church’s Christmas Eve service *in an ideal world*?

When’s the event?      December 24

How long would you like to promote the event for? \_\_\_\_\_

Working back from December 24, what date is that? \_\_\_\_\_

How much time would you like to be able to work on design before your promotion date?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Working back from your promotion start date, what date is that? \_\_\_\_\_

How long do you need before starting the design to get the information? \_\_\_\_\_

Which means you need the request form filled out by what date? \_\_\_\_\_

How much lead time does this provide (from the form date to the event date)? \_\_\_\_\_

How much lead time did you have (from information date to event date)? \_\_\_\_\_

Okay, so that might be ideal. Let's talk about reality for a second. Asking those same questions, what is your current communications timeline reality (think about last year's Christmas Eve service, or other Christmas event)?

When was the event? December 24

How long did you promote the event for? \_\_\_\_\_

What date did you start promotion? \_\_\_\_\_

How long did you have to design the materials for the event? \_\_\_\_\_

When did the person in charge get you the information needed? \_\_\_\_\_

How much lead time did you have (from information date to event date)? \_\_\_\_\_

Looking at these two timelines, what sticks out to you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Achieving your ideal communication timeline may not be possible, at least not right now. That's okay. However, if it is reasonable—excellent! Next, let's try to develop a realistic timeline for your current situation.

Event Date: December 24

Promotion Timetable (how many days/weeks/months): \_\_\_\_\_

Promotion Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Design Time (how long does it take to design?): \_\_\_\_\_

Design Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Time Needed before starting on the project: \_\_\_\_\_

Information is due: \_\_\_\_\_

How many weeks before December 24?: \_\_\_\_\_



If that seems reasonable to you, and you think the rest of the ministry leaders can get on board with it, then go with it. This may also be a great time to pause and discuss with the rest of your staff, ministry leaders, or whoever provides you with event information. Are your expectations realistic? Can they get on board with it? Having those discussions will be beneficial for getting buy-in from leadership, even before implementing a new strategy.

[Cue the elevator music! And make sure you don't skip this important step. I can wait here!]

So, how'd that conversation go? Do you need to revise your timeline? Using feedback from staff and leadership, sketch up your final, working communication timeline.

Lead Time Needed (Information Due to Event Date): \_\_\_\_\_

This allows for \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks to process incoming information.

It provides \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks for design to be completed

Then allows for \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks/months of promotion before the event date.

## Requests for ongoing communications

Wait a second. What if it's not a one-time event you're trying to communicate? What if we're talking about something that happens every week, or every month, or some other recurring schedule?

Depending on the program and how often it recurs, things may look a little different. Your "event date" could be changed to the "last date of the promotion." If you have a kids midweek program that runs with the school calendar, you may spend all of August promoting the ministry that kicks off September 1—but maybe you want to advertise it until September 15.

Or, if it's something that happens regularly enough, you may need to change how long you promote it. For example, if you just said you want to promote an event for six weeks, but you have a monthly dinner that happens on the first Sunday of every month, advertising it for six weeks might be unnecessary.

What exceptions or alternative timelines do you foresee needing to address?

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Are these alternative timelines something that you could still address within your standard form and timeline? If you only offer one version of a request form, it'll be easier for the ministry leader to use regardless of the type of event. So how could you work these variables into one request form?

## It's time to build it!

My recommendation is to build your form online. Paper forms might seem like a great idea—but think about all the information you're asking for and how many different ways you could be receiving it. An online form means anyone can access the form from anywhere, at any time. Stick with one method for your form, and keep pushing people to use the form. It'll become a habit after a while.

Before building your form, here are a few things to think about:

- Do they offer a way to build forms, and is there a benefit to having them in the same place as your ChMS?
- Do you utilize a project management system? Do they have form builders, or are there options that integrate with your project management?

If you are not going to use your ChMS or project management system, I encourage you to look at other online software that offers great-looking, user-friendly form builders. Some can build more complex forms than others, but all have a free version. Find the one that meets your needs and will create a great form that anyone can use. Here are some to try:

- [Google Forms](#)
- [Typeform](#)
- [Paperform](#)
- [JotForm](#)

Finally, make sure you set up your form to notify you when a form is submitted. And remember, try to make your form as user-friendly as possible—you want to remove any barrier possible to help get people on board using this new system.




## Tiers of Joy

A great way to help you prioritize what gets communicated through different avenues is to [set up a three-tiered approach](#) for church communications. Various events fall under different tiers. The tier depends on two things: 1) how much of the church the event applies to and 2) how to best communicate it.

Since you already created your request form and process, those answers will help you determine under which tier the communication will fall.

Here's an example and what it could mean for your church.

In keeping with the *Church Juice* theme of energizing church communications, I chose to go with the term “wattage” to help you get a better grasp. More wattage means more energy, time, and communication avenues.

		WEBSITE	SOCIAL MEDIA	BULLETIN	STAGE	INVITATIONS	EMAIL	SLIDES
<b>HIGH WATTAGE</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>MEDIUM WATTAGE</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>LOW WATTAGE</b>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### High Wattage Events

A high-wattage event is the highest level of communication. This should be an event that applies to the whole congregation, or at least 85% of your regular attendees. These are events that everyone needs to hear about. Some good examples of a high-wattage event are Christmas or Easter services, something related to the church's vision, next steps that apply to everyone (small groups launching, for example), or a new sermon series starting next week. High-wattage events require the most energy. They are the events that should be promoted and talked about across all of your church's methods of communication.

### Medium-Wattage Events

Most events should fall into the medium-wattage event category. These events apply to many people in the church, but not everyone; a general rule would be events that apply to 35%-85% of your Sunday attendees. These would be events like baptisms, significant ministry events, next steps, or giving.

You don't need to promote medium-wattage events across every platform or medium; instead, they should focus on where they will be most effective.

### Low-Wattage Events

The lowest level of a church communicator's investment should go into low-wattage events. These events apply to less than a third of your congregation and are pretty specific to certain crowds or ministries. Some examples involve new guests, an upcoming children's event, or a time change for a particular Bible study.

The church should communicate low-wattage events sparingly, using only the venues that make sense for the announcement. Instead of using the church's channels to share these small announcements, you should focus on empowering and equipping the leaders to speak to their particular audience.

### Setting Up Your Tiers

Your church may need to apply these general terms differently to better meet the needs you face. It's important to remember that you need a central location where people can access information for any event, regardless of what tier it falls into (so your central hub should be across all levels).

Decide what channels make the most sense for each tier and how that applies to situations you come across regularly. Once you have a set structure in place for what communication methods make sense for varying events and communication, you'll want to pair this with what the target audience is for the event. (Remember those personas you created? That's where they come into play.)

Set up your communication tiers as a guideline—not a set of rules, but a method to help guide your decisions.

Remember—you're changing church culture. So be patient, understanding, and don't be quick to make rapid changes. Get the necessary people on board, and begin to make incremental changes so you can communicate to your people more effectively.

Let's work on your church's tiered system. Use this next page's worksheet to create a system that works for your church. Refer back to [Step 3](#) of that first section of the book, where you listed your new normal's communication channels. Each one of those channels, along with your central hub, should be on this list.

Method	Small Event	Medium Event	Large Event

## A Content Calendar

I'm a procrastinator. I remember in high school starting a paper over lunch when it was due the following period. I hardly ever did homework at home, like it was intended. I'd sit in class, doing homework for the next period. Or, I'd wing it on a test. The problem with this mentality is that it didn't teach me the value of preparation. I still did fine in all of my classes. I graduated with a pretty good GPA. So, heading into college, my habits didn't change. But my GPA did. I quickly learned the value in planning—and when we're trying to communicate well, that value is amplified even further.

There's value in planning. While my natural tendency is to procrastinate (even today), I've learned the importance of preparation. I know that if I'm going to give the best presentation, write the best article, or provide the best counsel possible, I need to be prepared. Social media is another excellent example of the importance of planning.

We all want more engagement on our church's social media profile. You realize when more people engage with your content on Facebook, even more people will be exposed to that post, meaning you're able to reach more people with the love and truth of the gospel. So how do you increase engagement online?

All of our churches have lots of events happening. There are times of the year when it seems like every ministry has some activity happening within two weeks of each other. So how do you manage the pipeline to ensure each event is communicated successfully?

One key in both of these examples is preparation. Creating a content calendar can help you prepare for the busy seasons of ministry to ensure everything gets communicated clearly and effectively. A content calendar can also help make sure you're not dropping the ball anywhere, ensuring that you're doing your best to make every ministry communication and event as successful as possible.

Creating a content calendar doesn't have to be complicated. Don't overcomplicate your calendar. Just find something that works for you. It will help you plan, keep track of everything that's happening in your church, and prevent details from slipping through the cracks.

There are lots of ways to approach your content calendar, but here's what it could include:

1. Social media schedule
2. Central hub updates
3. Design calendar or timeline
4. Content creation (videos, blog articles, etc.)
5. Bulletin, email, or other avenues to add a short announcement
6. Stage announcement schedule
7. Probably a schedule for all your methods of communication

Some people use project management software, like [Trello](#), [Monday](#), or [Asana](#).

Others love spreadsheets, so they use a content calendar—like [this template](#) for Facebook or [this template](#) for a complete overview of the content and social media.

So now you've seen some examples. Let's work through what needs to be in your content calendar. Go back again to [Step 3](#) of this book's first section (where we listed your communication strategy's new normal). How will you work each communication channel into your content calendar? Creating a coordinated calendar system will help your team look at the whole picture of communication. Working your different tiers into that calendar can help you easily navigate through your planning. And working with your personas will help you target your communication more effectively.

Use your imagination, and find a system that works for you—because what works for me might not make sense to you. And if you want something to succeed, it needs to work for you (instead of being a burden). Still, I recognize you may want some additional ideas. [Here's an example](#) I created that compiles all of the different aspects of the strategy into one spreadsheet (there are separate tabs at the bottom).



PART IV:

# Putting It All Together



## Before we go, one example

If this all still feels a bit abstract to you, maybe a concrete example will help. Let's go back and take a look at that Christmas Eve service we worked through earlier.

At Fifth Church in suburban Alberta, Canada, Christmas Eve is their biggest outreach event of the year. They pull out all the stops (appropriate, since they have a massive pipe organ) and provide families with a traditional Christmas mixture with a modern take.

Since the Christmas Eve service is a church-wide outreach event, bringing in extended families of church members and families from the community-at-large, the volunteer Communications Team at Fifth knows that it's a large-tiered event that they'll need to promote it well.

Based on the church's communication procedures, they start planning for Christmas Eve's marketing in mid-October, intending to start marketing on November 27—four weeks before Christmas Eve.

Since Christmas Eve is a high-wattage event, they've decided that every mode of communication is acceptable. But they also know that their target audience is their Deborah persona—a middle-aged mother of adult children (the matriarch of the family) whose busy, empty-nester lifestyle keeps her connected to current events, her family, and hobbies. She best receives communication through social media and television.

The Fifth Church team decides to pull in the influences from their Deborah persona and market their target audience as effectively as possible. They choose to promote:

- Heavily on Facebook, since Deborah stays connected on Facebook.
- Through partnerships with local news stations because Deborah gets her news and information from television.
- Direct mail, because Deborah is the one who takes care of the family's finances (and thus, checks the mail most often)
- In online ads, like Google and more localized websites, since Deborah is also tech-savvy.

And to wrap it all together, all of these different mediums of advertising (or outreach) point back to one place: the church's website, its central hub.

The team used their content calendar to plan out social media posts, interviews with the local news, and all the other details so that the whole campaign was a well-designed, coordinated effort to advertise Christmas Eve well.

## The finish line

And, there ya have it! You've worked through all the necessary details of creating a bonafide communication plan for your church. Now create a document (maybe even have someone design it for you, so it looks that much more professional) that compiles all of this information into one easily accessible guide.

Here's what it should include:

1. The information on your central hub—and maybe include details of how leaders can get this hub updated as needed
2. Your process for requests
3. Your tiered strategy
4. Your defined audiences, including the personas you created
5. Your content calendar and strategy

Just one final reminder: this is a plan or a guide—[don't make it a policy](#). Policies are set in stone and take more effort to modify and adapt to changing needs. A plan, strategy, or guide can all easily adapt to your fluid communication landscape. The “rules” can bend to meet your needs. Plus, nobody likes to have another policy. Help guide your people to better communication!

As always, *Church Juice* is here to help and support you. If we can personally help you energize your church's communications, don't hesitate to reach out!

# About Church Juice

At *Church Juice*, we're passionate about church communications. Churches have more access to powerful media tools than ever before. As a nonprofit ministry, we're here to help churches to be intentional about how they use these tools to communicate with their congregations and communities. Whether it's through marketing, social media, internal communications, website development, or other avenues, we equip you to energize your church's communications.

Since 2009, *Church Juice* has provided churches across North America with free online resources—including blogs, ebooks, white papers, and webinars. We also create virtual and in-person opportunities for church communicators to come together, learn, and encourage one another.



Visit [churchjuice.com](http://churchjuice.com)



# CHURCH JUICE

ENERGIZING CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

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