3 Features

-

Every Engaging Church Website Has

E *360 Strategy*

The Front Door of Your Church Isn't the Building Anymore

-

Most churches know that having a website is non-negotiable, but how many churches have given their website's "front door" a fresh coat of paint? How many have strategically built a window for people on the *outside* to peer *inside* the church? We see most churches communicating like they did 30 years ago, and it's based on the idea that people get info and make a connection with your church by physically attending services each week. Church websites are the new stained glass windows helping people catch a glimpse of who a church is through a story, all online.

If your website isn't working, or if you aren't updating messages and going through all the communications tasks along the way, you are creating barriers for people that are just trying to take their next step with Jesus.

At e360, we partner with thousands of church teams from all sizes and denominations every year to build an engaging website. We want to empower churches to attract visitors and help people take their next steps online. What do engaging websites have in common? Other than being aesthetically beautiful, they all follow these three best practices:

"Ask yourself two things: Is my church's website an accurate representation of my church? How does it speak to first-time visitors and guide them on a pathway to connect?

TELL A STORY WITH A CLICK

Your church's homepage is one of the most valuable tools you have to show and tell your church's story.

-

When visitors get to your site they're looking for a clear pathway to learn about your church (and you want to intuitively guide them). They should immediately see is an image or video featuring the people that make up your church. The first thing a visitor should read is a clear headline that tells them how your church can help them.

Your homepage may have a refreshed logo and accurate service times, but does it tell your church's story and invite visitors to join the vision?

"Take a deeper dive into your website with an e360 Strategist. Get a free website assessment and receive honest and constructive website help so you can make a better first impression and communicate your church's story.

START TODAY

.05 seconds

is all it takes for a potential visitor to form their first impression about your church.

THREE STORY TELLING DEVICES YOUR HOMEPAGE NEEDS

Giving potential visitors a glimpse of your church isn't simply placing a mission statement on the homepage and hoping they read and understand the language, nor is it filling your image rotator with upcoming events. Refresh your homepage today by following these three digital storytelling devices.

▶ **1. More Pictures, Less Words**. When visitors first land on your homepage they're looking for a clear pathway to learn about your church (and you want to intuitively guide them). They should immediately see an image or video featuring the people that make up your church. Photos and videos help visitors form their first impression by showing diversity, multiple generations, church size, and can even show what to expect from their first visit. Your homepage may have a refreshed logo and accurate service times, but does it tell your church's story and invite visitors to join the vision?

▶ **2. Invite People to Participate.** Evoking header images and videos strengthen a visitor's first impression, but a bold tagline evokes action. A tagline is a phrase used to describe what you offer people in the shortest space possible. It's often paired with your logo to add meaning to your brand. Strong taglines distill your church's vision, and speak into people's sense of survival—the primitive desire to live and thrive. This desire could look like wanting to build a social network of community, or seeking truth and meaning for their lives. Your tagline should call visitors to action to participate in a vision. A movement. Something greater than themselves.

"Did you know: On average users will click on 2.5 pages per visit to your site.

▶ **3. Intuitively Guide Visitors.** The human eye perceives information visually rather than processing blocks of data like computers. When a visitor comes to your website for the first time, they are looking for an organized way to browse and learn about your church. When your homepage has a large, colorful call to action button (CTA) overlaid on top of your header image (and below your tagline), users feel in control when browsing and know exactly where to click first.

Your visitor's CTA button should link them to a single landing page designed to help plan a visit, learn more about what to expect when visiting, or a page about your church's vision.

If you want to refresh your website to effectively tell your church's story, start an e360 Strategy Project. e360 Strategy gives you the scalable website plan and confidence that your site is making a lasting first impression.

START TODAY

GUIDE USERS ON A PATHWAY

Visitors are coming, but they're just not staying. Each week see visitors slip in and out of a service and they're never seen again. If you find yourself without a clear pathway on your website for visitors to engage, **we can help**.

—

Your website should be your go-to ministry tool that takes your church's values, content, and design, and fuses them together to move people on a path that achieves ministry goals. At e360, we teach churches how to set up pathways on their website that engage each audience: visitors, regular attenders, and engaged members—all from one website. We call this user journey, the e360 Critical Paths Framework and it's actually quite simple.

"Is your church really helping people become fully devoted followers of Christ, or are you just giving them a nice place to go to church?

HOW THE *e360 CRITICAL PATHS FRAMEWORK* GROWS CHURCHES

The e360 Critical Paths Framework defines clear next steps to engage and launches a newcomer on their spiritual journey.

–

The *e360 Critical Paths Framework* starts with your church's mission and defines each audiences' ideal next steps for growth. There may be different types of pathways in different churches, but there is always a pathway that is strongly endorsed and supported by the senior leadership of the church. The e360 *Critical Paths Framework* defines:

▸ How individuals or families initially hear about your church and what you're known for the in community.

▸ Which critical pages visitors need to find on your website in order to plan a visit.

▸ The steps and internal processes that use your Church Management System and website to funnel people into groups, classes, serving teams, local and global, and more.

▸ Which key media & resource help your congregation grow spiritually.

▸ The processes and info that keep mature members up-to-date with church happenings.

"The *e360 Critical Paths Framework* isn't just an idea or concept. It's a proven plan that achieves ministry results by strategically guiding engagement.

Milestone Church
used the *e360 Critical Paths Framework* to redesign their site to digitally funnel people into their Growth Track classes, which grew their church by 42%.

VIEW SITE

SCALE AND GROW ALONGSIDE YOUR CHURCH

When your church grows and new features are built onto your site ad hoc, the site becomes hard to update and maintain. This translates to a pieced together website that doesn't fully represent your church or meet ministry goals. Plus, if your website isn't functioning properly, you run the risk of people never making it to the front doors of your church because they can't connect at the front doors of your website.

▶ **Church Growth.** What would your church's growth look like if you could spend time strategically planning for the future before you launched a new site?

▶ **Ministry Goals.** What would it look like if your website was easy to adapt and change to meet church goals?

▶ **How?** Churches enjoy working one-on-one with an e360 Strategist to create a scalable website plan. They can add small group finders to their website, expand to multiple campuses, and launch new campaign initiatives— all with the confidence that their site is built to grow.

e360 Strategy helps clarify and identify who your church is, what the key points of interest are, and lays out a clear pathway with notes to strategically build your new website. Plus, your e360 Strategist guides you and your team through the *e360 Critical Paths Framework*, teaching each ministry the power of a website as a digital ministry tool to connect with people. Get the strategic plan your church needs by visiting hello.ekklesia360.com/strategy.

Eagle Brook Church had expanded to 8 campuses and their website just wasn't reflecting their changing and growing church. Using the *e360 Strategy Critical Paths Framework*, Eagle Brook created an authentic online experience designed to engage unchurched people, which resulted in serving 54,000 people at Christmas across all campuses and 750 decisions to follow Christ.

"e360 has been influential in helping us reach thousands of people for Christ, because oftentimes, an unchurched person's first step is to seek us out online or through a podcast. We could not accomplish our mission without the e360 teams.

BRAD H., EAGLE BROOK CHURCH

VIEW SITE

Building an Engaging Website Doesn't Have to be Stressful

Start an e360 Strategy Project and get the plan your church needs to build an engaging website. Attract more visitors that stay, get the fresh coat of paint your website needs, and become the confident communicator with a scalable plan for your church.

START TODAY

How to start an ℰ360 *Strategy* Project

▶ Schedule a call by filling out the form online at hello.ekklesia360.com/strategy

▶ We get to know your church and discuss your website needs.

▶ Start your e360 Strategy Project and become the communicator with a plan.