
Most People Don't Care About Your New Series

As evangelistic methods shift in a post-Christian world, it's important for churches to adjust their strategy. You see...many of our messages to the community are self-centered. They have an altruistic intent, but they are really about us and what we offer at OUR church.

- Check out *our* brand new series.
- You should come to *our* epic event.
- We have this band, this speaker, this program, and this ministry.

This may not be the intent and these programs and events really do have the potential to alter someone's life trajectory. But, it's a "selfie" strategy of promotion. And it's one of the biggest reasons churches are ignored.

It's time for the church to shift its approach from "Look at us" to "Let's Talk About You." It's time for churches to add value to the people in their community.

A Radical New Approach to Adding Value

Instead of talking about your programs and ministries, change your approach. Start adding value. Start helping people before you invite them to church or into a conversation. When you shift your approach, here's what will happen.

#1 – You build trust.

When you add value and help people where they need it, you build trust. Trust is huge because it's one of the few things that lead to influence. Think of the

people you go to for information or advice. You don't go there primarily because their information is solid...you go there because you trust them. Skip the trust-building step and try to influence too soon and your message will fall flat.

#2 – You can pastor people in your community before they even step foot into your church.

Do unchurched people in your community want to raise good kids? Or have better marriages? Or get out of debt? And, does your church have information that could help? When you speak to people's real needs, you're providing a simplified version of pastoral care. And, adding value like this makes personal invitations so much better. Imagine your church members inviting their friends, neighbors, and co-workers to a church that's already added value to their lives.

#3 – You earn the right to ask.

Ever try to offer unsolicited advice? How did that work out? Most of the time, it backfires. Because people who offer their opinions without offering their help are usually ignored. But, when you add value and help people, you earn the right to ask. You will actually earn the right to invite. Add before you ask and see if it doesn't open more doors.

#4 – You really get to know your community.

One of the long-term benefits of a value-add strategy is you really get to know the hopes, fears, worries, and struggles of the people who live in your community. It's so much deeper than demographics. When you add value and create conversations, you tap into the ethos of a neighborhood like never before.

#5 – You create conversations.

When I was a Christian college student, I learned how to present the gospel in three to five minutes. I was focused on conversions, not conversations. While presenting the gospel quickly is a useful skill, most faith conversations take

months not minutes. When you add value, you will create conversations that might lead to more meaningful opportunities.

Three Things You Can Do to Start Adding Value

If you're ready to change your language and tweak your approach, here are three things you can do.

#1 – Create valuable content people actually want.

Survey your community. Pull some people together to brainstorm topics. Figure out what people are talking about and enter the conversation. Create helpful content that addresses questions people are really asking. It could be a checklist, guide, eBook or short video.

#2 – Repurpose your existing content in a way that's easy to digest and share.

Your church is already awesome at creating content...you do it every week. You can repurpose and repackage it to make it more user-friendly. Remember that amazingly helpful sermon series you preached last fall? Why not turn it into a short eBook? Why not create a follow-up resource? Why not repurpose into three short videos? You've already got the content – make it shorter and sharable and extend the shelf life. Your most popular sermon series of the last year is the perfect candidate.

#3 – Share your content online.

Once you create helpful content, share it online. Facebook and Twitter are perfect for this. Instead of using those platforms as digital versions of your bulletin, use these platforms to add value. If you want to increase engagement, stop making announcements and start posting helpful, valuable content.

Interestingly enough, many small businesses and major corporations are realizing this is a better approach to marketing. In the business world, it's called content marketing. That term might not connect with pastors and church leaders, but it's really just a form of online outreach.

Don't just share your service times and series info online. Look to serve, first.