

## Every Weekend Matters: 6 Strategies for Holiday Hospitality

We're barely ankle deep into the summer season around these parts. The mountains and beaches are calling, and people are responding. (Side note: mountain people? I love you. Let's hang out more. Beach people? I pray for you. And for your sunburned, dehydrated, squinty, sweaty, sand-covered bodies. Maybe we can be better friends at heaven where [there's no more beach.](#))

But I digress. **If you're in charge of the hospitality or guest services team at your church, chances are good that you are already feeling the pinch of summer.** Whether your volunteers have fled to high ground or sandy shores or Disney or Great Wolf Lodge, you're worried that there won't be adequate coverage to make it to September. The only problem is that while your volunteers may take some down time, your guests won't. Their version of down time will likely be checking out your church for the first time.

So how do you balance the drought of vols with the influx of guests? Here are six strategies to cope:

**1. Refuse to relax your standards.** The easiest thing to do is to clock out of excellence for the summer. Drop a team here. Do without a volunteer there. However, that leaves your guests with a less-than-ideal experience. While your overall team numbers might be down, your campus coverage shouldn't be. As you start the summer season, continue to think from the perspective of your guests and fight for their comfort. **Related posts:** [Four Ways to Stay Alert](#). [Why Outside Greeters Are More Important Than Inside Greeters](#).

**2. Get on your vols' schedule.** True, there are some people who decide to head out for a weekend getaway at the very last minute. But for the majority of people on your team, they've had vacation on their schedules for months. That makes it easy for them to get their vacation on *your* schedule, as well. Shoot a quick email to your team and ask them to let you know the weekends they'll be out of town. That quick memory jog will keep you from a lot of surprises later this summer.

**3. Go after your one-offs.** Summer is a great time to ask people to serve who normally don't. Ask people to fill in for a couple of weekends with no pressure to do anything else. Give them an easy win – mixed with low commitment – and watch the gaps get filled in. (And who knows? You might just end up with a new vol who didn't know how much they loved serving others.)

**4. Make it a team effort.** Go after your Sunday School classes and small groups and encourage them to take *one* Sunday out of class to serve as a team. This can be a healthy break in their normal routine and help them have an others-focus.

**5. Help them beat the heat.** For those who are serving, keep in mind the uncomfortable conditions they'll endure. Send reminders to your outdoor people to bring caps and sunglasses. Provide water, Gatorade, and sunscreen. Surprise them at summer's end with a visit from the

ice cream truck. Rotate them often so they're not in the elements too long.

**6. Send them off with a smile.** Do not. I repeat: *do not* make your vols feel guilty for taking a break. In fact, you should make sure that everyone has at least a couple of weekends off during the summer, even if they're not traveling anywhere. We don't do our teams any favors when we lord over them like taskmasters. Rather, push them to enjoy some Sabbath time. That'll pay off in long-term loyalty.

> [Read more from Danny.](#)

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