

Successful Churches Use Social Media to Tell the Bigger Story

Communication today is real-time, all the time. Thanks to the continuing innovations in technology and the rapid rate of adaption, events that occur around the world – or across the street – are now capable of being seen by millions of individuals. And it's not just the "viewing" that is important – it's what effect those views have on the individual watching them.

The social media platforms that exist today, as well as those which are being developed and will be the next big thing, can have a far-reaching impact on the ministries of your church.

Are you taking advantage of them? Or, do you feel like they take advantage of you? Is social media creating communication traction? Or is it becoming a constant distraction?

THE QUICK SUMMARY - [Trending Up](#), edited by Mark Forrester

Every church has a story that can change the course of people's lives but how do you share that story beyond your four walls?

Throughout these pages, you'll find simple strategies for creating powerful content that can connect your church to the people who need the life-changing story of Christ. Leading church communications specialists break down complex social media themes, providing accessible, practical answers to questions that all churches face, such as:

- What should I be posting based on my goals?
- How do I use social media as a tool to foster community?
- How do I get the people I'm trying to reach with social media?

With this book, your church will be ready to reach one of the biggest missions fields today: the billions of active users on social media. Topics include:

- Why Social Media?
- Content Strategy
- Story: Your Church's Story & God's Story
- Connecting with Your Church
- Reaching Your Community

The book includes recommended books, websites, blogs, and other tools to help you develop your social media presence.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

The power of story to captivate people and move them to action has been used by leaders for thousands of years. From the earliest oral traditions passed from generation to generation to cat memes that have a lifespan only as long as it takes to view them, stories can be a powerful

communication tool.

The platform of social media can take the power of story and communicate it instantly to hundreds or thousands of people. With it, you can connect with people at work, at home, in the car, at the store – literally almost anywhere.

However, that same platform can turn off hundreds or thousands of people if it is not used in a way that aligns with the rest of your church's story.

Your social media strategy should fit into everything your church communicates, which means it must fit into a bigger story.

The best way to bring social media into a bigger story is to use it to help tell the three bigger stories already happening around you: your church's bigger story, your community's bigger story, and God's bigger story. Identifying each one is the first step in understanding how social media can complement – and not compete with – everything you do.

Connect to Your Church's Bigger Story

There's a good chance your church has boiled down its work into one simple mission statement. Everything you do as an organization – from program and marketing to human resources – should fit into this concise statement. That includes social media.

Every picture and video, post, and reply is aimed at furthering your mission,

Connect to Your Community's Bigger Story

If you look long and hard at the community you live in, there's a good chance you'll see groups of people gathered around certain ideas. Your community is crawling with bigger stories.

Knowing your city's DNA can help you use your social media efforts to tell your community's bigger story. Find one or two of those stories and engage your social media efforts to tell it.

Connect to God's Bigger Story

If your church incorporates Christian doctrine into everything you do, why shouldn't you include social media? If we meet, pray, and serve because the Bible tells us to, may Scripture offers direction can be guided as well.

It might seem a bit trite, but the more you can connect your social media strategy to the words God has given us through Scripture, the better. Simply put, obeying God's bigger story can help your social media to tell a bigger story.

Mark Forrester, Editor, [Trending Up](#)

A NEXT STEP

Make a chart tablet sheet for each of the three “bigger stories” listed above. Draw a vertical line down the middle of each chart tablet under the title.

In a team meeting, ask your team to review each of the three chart tablets and list social media actions that you are **currently** doing for that topic. Complete each of the three chart tablets in a similar manner.

Next, evaluate the lists. Are these actions effective? How do you know? How are you measuring effectiveness? Is there something you could be doing, but are not, to make the action more effective? If so, assign responsibility for someone on the team to ensure that is done.

Next, ask your team to review each of the three chart tablets and list social media actions that you **should** be doing for that topic. Complete each of the three chart tablets in a similar manner.

On another chart tablet, pull out the actions you should be doing, and group them under similar headings. For example, all actions under “Instagram” will be written under that heading. After you have grouped the actions by category, discuss as a team which are the most important for you to accomplish first.

Pull out the top three items, and assign responsibility, a timeline, and checkpoints for each. At a future meeting, discuss the status of each.

After the top three have been accomplished, measure their effectiveness, and review with the team how they need to be revised, left as is, or scrapped.

Follow the same process with all items on the list, three at a time, until all have been implemented.

Excerpt taken from SUMS Remix 78-1, issued October 2017.

*This is part of a weekly series posting excerpts from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** book excerpts for church leaders.*

SUMS Remix takes a practical problem in the church and looks at it with three solutions; each solution is taken from a different book. Additionally, a practical action step is included with each solution.

As a church leader you get to scan relevant books based on practical tools and solutions to real

ministry problems, not just by the cover of the book. Each post will have the edition number which shows the year and what number it is in the overall sequence. (SUMS Remix provides 26 issues per year, delivered every other week to your inbox).

>> [Subscribe to SUMS Remix](#)