COMMUNICATION & MEDIA

TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION

GUIDE

1.0

Trans-European Division
of Seventh-Day Adventists®

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & CREDITS

Preamble

We have good news and bad news!

The good news? The gospel message has not changed.

The bad news? If you want to reach more people with the same message, engage your congregation in the mission of the church and grow by connecting with the unreached around us. We need to review the role, strategy and ministry of communication and media in the church.

As a communication leader, you have your role to play alongside your pastor and other responsible members of the ministry, because everything communicates. Everything. Every sermon. Every event. Every annoucement. Each poster. Every flyer. Every website. Each newsletter. Every post on social media. Everything communicates. Communication is something your church does every week that impacts everyone in your church. Do you want to communicate about your event, program, ministry or other initiative?

You would think that today more than ever, with all the new methods of communication available to us (websites, social media, videos, emails, texts, etc.), it is easy to get a message across, isn't? Unfortunately, this is far from the case. Indeed, it has never been easier to spread a message. However, getting it across has never been so difficult!*

We want to offer you a very practical guide to help you share all the messages of your Church. You know … the things we do in our Church, every week.

The principles in this guide are applicable regardless of the size of your church, your team, or your budget.

How this guide came about

This fantastic resource, covering a variety of topics from content creation to cybersecurity, and from crisis communication to communication audits, is the result of cooperation between, and drawing on the resources of Adventist communicators across three divisions: North American (NAD), Inter-European (EUD) and Trans-European (TED) divisions.

The story of how this guide came about is a beautiful illustration of how cooperation strengthens the Church. During GAiN Europe 2022, an annual conference designed to help Adventist communicators connect and work together, Emanuel Ban and Marianne Penner, Communication directors for the North and South France Conferences respectively, shared with colleagues the French version of the guide. Penner and Ban, inspired by some NAD articles, produced a comprehensive guide to support the work of Adventist communicators in their area. In turn, SEC Communication director, Dr Sorin Petrof, inspired by Penner and Ban's presentation at GAiN, contextualised and translated the guide back to English with the support of the TED leadership.

The adapted version you hold in your hand is a proof that together we can go further. At the TED we are committed to enhancing cooperation by uprooting silo mentalities and territorialism. Why? Because the communication process cannot be entrusted to one individual or department of the Church. It is everyone's mission. Each local communication and media coordinator has a role to play! And as that famous song goes, "It's always better when we are together."

source - Bowdle, Phil. Rethink Communication: A Playbook to Clarify and Communicate Everything in Your Church

My Division

Who are we?

We are small but committed team!

Pastor David Neal,
Communication and Media Director

Journalist Vanesa Pizzuto,
Communication and Media Associate Director

Our mission is to help our fields achieve substantial, sustainable, and long-term growth by providing exceptional service and witness.

HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH THE WORLD

tedNEWS

- tedNEWS is a monthly online journal, published by the communication department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Trans-European Division. Readers are free to republish or share articles with appropriate credit including an active hyperlink to the original article.

- Our partnership with Adventist News Network and Adventist Review Ministries means that your local stories can inspire the whole world! You can submit a story **here**: https://ted.adventist.org/news-submission-portal/

Social Media Channels

@TransEuropeanDivision

transeuropean

TEDAdventist

Trans-European Division of the Seventh-day Adventists

@TED2you

Website

https://ted.adventist.org

HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH YOU

We are always only a phone call (+44 1727 732500) or an email (tednews@ted.adventist.org) away! Additionally, we appreciate staying in touch through the following channels/opportunities:

Digital Meetings

Our number one aim is to serve you with excellence. Key to this is staying connected – and listening to your ministry experience. For this reason, we schedule quarterly Zoom meetings, bringing together Union Communication and Media directors to share, encourage, collaborate, and even 'conspire' together.

Please save the following dates on your calendar:

> **24 January, (10.00 am)**
>
> **02 May, (10.00 am)**
>
> **26 September, (10.00 am)**

[Restricted event: only for Union communication directors]

Training Webinars

Dedicated to serving you with relevance and excellence, the Trans-European Division (TED) and Inter-European Division (EUD) communication teams are collaborating together to provide you with 10 free European Communication Webinars per year.

The webinars take place the last Tuesday of each month, at 6:00 pm London time (7.00 pm Bern). Topics vary from developing content strategy to avoiding burnout and are presented by various professionals from around the world. These are intended for all communication directors and professionals working for the church, as well as enthusiasts and digital influencers.

Please save the following dates on your calendar:

> **31 January (Tuesday)**
>
> **28 February (Tuesday)**
>
> **28 March (Tuesday)**
>
> **25 April (Tuesday)**
>
> **23 May (Tuesday)**
>
> **27 June (Tuesday)**
>
> **18 July (Tuesday)**
>
> **26 September (Tuesday)**
>
> **31 October (Tuesday)**
>
> **28 November (Tuesday)**

[Open event: for all communication directors and professionals working for the church, as well as enthusiasts and digital influencers]

Digital Evangelism Forum

We want to empower digital evangelists across the division to share the Gospel with their families, friends, and wider community. We believe it is imperative that we support their development with both appropriate training and funding. For this reason, we have created the Digital Evangelism Forum, a hub to share resources and inspire one another. Quarterly meetings take place via Zoom.

Please save the following dates on your calendar (more meetings will be added later):

> **26 January, (06.00 pm)**
>
> **02 May, (06.00 pm)**
>
> **05 September, (06.00 pm)**

[Open event: for all communication directors and professionals working for the church, as well as enthusiasts and digital influencers]

GAiN

GAiN Europe is the annual conference designed to help Adventist communicators connect and work together. It normally takes place in October, over a weekend (Friday to Monday).

In addition to great training and networking opportunities, GAiN Europe produces an annual multimedia project. Happiness, the fifth GAiN Europe project of this kind, includes a book, a documentary series, and even social media clips. These resources are available free of charge through the GAiN Europe network. They can be used by church media entities, ministries, Hope Channel studios, and Adventist radio stations around the world.

Scan QR code to subscribe to the tedNEWS

PART 1

YOUR MISSION SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT IT

Your mission

Congratulations, you are your church's communication leader. Your role is specifically designed to ensure that members stay informed and that the church is properly represented to the public.

This first chapter will focus on your job description and the first and most important action you will take in your church: a communication audit.

Extract from the Church Manual *p. 88*
Communication

"Communication ministry calls for the support of every layperson, Church employee, and Church institution. The communication department promotes the use of a sound program of public relations and all contemporary communication techniques, sustainable technologies, and media in the promulgation of the gospel. The church should elect a communication secretary and, where needed, a communication committee. "We must take every justifiable means of bringing the light before the people. Let the press be utilized, and let every advertising agency be employed that will call attention to the work."

If you are already working in communication, you are already familiar with all the terms and concepts used, but if you are new to this field and do not have much experience, you probably have many questions. Terms such as communication plan, communication audit, graphic charter, CMS, CSS, newsletter or Google Analytics might scare you.

Good news! It's not up to the communication leader to do all the work. Their role is to ensure that everything fits with the message the church wants to send and is consistent with the Seventh-day Adventist Church brand identity. For example, you don't need to be good at design, but you do need to be able to bring in someone who has experience in this area and especially to recognise when a design is appropriate or not for the church's message.

We know it sounds strange to talk about your church as a brand, but it is an important part of how you look at your ministry to make it welcoming and more readable to new people.

We will accompany you step by step as you take up your duties.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ROLE

We are proposing here a job description for the position of 'Communication Leader'. First of all, we would like to emphasise that the job descriptions in this handbook are indicative and not exhaustive. Of course, you can use them as a basis for adapting them to the needs, human resources, size, culture and organisation of your church.

Although specific titles and responsibilities vary according to the needs and culture of the church, *the communication leader is essentially a centraliser of the church's information* to be communicated to its audiences (members, visitors, and higher administrative bodies inlcuding the General Conference). Note that some churches operate with a media team and a church secretary for communication. Whatever the profile or size of your community, we encourage you to work together and take time to answer the questions posed in this manual. As we said in the preamble, everything communicates! All communication has an impact both internally on the life of the church and on potential visitors or more broadly on the image of the Adventist Church.

The Communication Leader

If the local church has called you to serve as the Communication Leader, in you, they recognise at least four leadership characteristics:

- **Competence**
- **Commitment**
- **Character**
- **Compatibility**

Competence

Competence is the ability to do the requested task. You may enter this role with either experience or inexperience. Whatever the case, you have demonstrated that you have one or many skills able to intelligently communicate information about the work, life, values, and teachings of the Church.

Commitment

Introduce me to someone who can record a single take in front of a camera, write an article without an edit, or even a preacher who preaches without notes – I want to meet them! The key to successfully getting a message across is preparation which takes time and practise. At whatever level the skill set is, a key leadership value is a continuing personal journey of growth - in this case to learn skills which lead to more effectively getting the message across to the reader, listener, or viewer. We are on this journey not simply because we believe in leadership excellence, but because we are representing Christ and His Church.

Character

Character and temperament are key for communication leaders. Often, they work under pressure, not least in meeting deadlines. Detail is important. People are most important! And the Communication Leader is called to engage winsomely well with all people – people who are at times different from me, in lifestyle, values, attitude and personality. With authenticity the value of the era, as is being non-judgemental, a grace centred Spirit-filled ministry is key.

Compatibility

Teamwork is essential. If you haven't been provided with a team to support your ministry, look for a team of volunteers to help. Lone ranger – silo mindset leadership has no place in the church. We only work well when we work with each other. Working with the pastor and elders of the church is essential, as is reporting to the church board on a regular basis. Temperament here is key – because the Communication Leader is a servant of the church – called to serve. Enjoy!

NOTES

POSITION:

COMMUNICATION LEADER

DEPARTMENT / MINISTRY

Communication

H

WEEKLY

In a few words:

Your main responsibility is to lead the creation of materials, and the communication strategy of the church. The scope includes announcements, social media, video production, web presence, printed materials, external and internal promotions, etc. You also coordinate the planning, implementation, and evaluation of church communication efforts to connect the mission of the church with making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Strengths and skills required

Leadership: Ability to lead, plan, organise, and have an overall vision. Ability to encourage, coach and motivate.

Creativity through the ways of communicating in order to arouse particular interest on the part of the community.

Public Relations: Loves people. Demonstrates strong written and verbal communication skills.

Able to think strategically to capture the vision of ministry leaders when developing communication.

Clarity: clearly and specifically communicates expectations and priorities to volunteers.

Vision

Our vision is to reach people, lead them to Christ, and help them grow in Christ to become commited disciples. Part of this service is helping people grow in community and in a personal relationship with Jesus through communication.

Organised: meets commitments, schedules and deadlines.

Responsibilities

Collaborates with the pastor and church board to identify priorities and determine the direction of communication efforts based on the annual calendar, objectives and initiatives of the church.

Lead the implementation of the social media strategy and web presence and assist in the production of digital content.

Collaborates with various departments of the church to produce communication materials and content, and support the promotion of events and other needs.

Identifies and captures compelling personal testimonies within the church and communicates them consistently.

Ensures proper use and respect of the Seventh-day Adventist Church brand.

Ensures high quality, high impact communication are created for internal and external audiences.

Cultivates, directs and manages a team of volunteer writers, photographers and content creators.

Team

The pastor has primary responsibility for the church's communication programme. He or she works closely with the communication team or committee.

The communication manager coordinates a team in a variety of communication disciplines (graphic design, video, technical, etc.) to provide comprehensive communication and media support to the church.

Personal commitment

A committed Christian who grows in faith and is committed to a life of prayer and Bible reading.

Can identify closely with the mission, values, vision, theology, philosophy and methodology of the church.

Ability to collaborate, cooperate and function well in a team environment.

WORKING AS A TEAM

When you accept an appointment, you don't arrive in a blank canvas. Things are already in place and when you leave it is important that your successor can continue the work. What a pity if precious time is lost recreating everything at each change of post!

My first 100 days in communication

This is not a list of tasks to be done once a day. We are simply offering you a few tips to get you started. You will find elements in the audit section and in the checklists.

The moment of handover is very important. You will find a **handover checklist** opposite. We recommend that you set aside some quality time with your predecessor to check all these points.

Make appointments to "get to know each other". Ask for a 30-minute meeting with the key people in your church. Review the routine of the various publications. What communication are sent out regularly and by what means? What communication are sent out as needed? What is the process of creating publications from start to finish? Who writes, designs, manages distribution, etc.? Review the social media posting routine. How often does the church update its various social media channels, and with what type of content? Is this content well linked to what is communicated in print and via email?

Read the newsletters of the last two years. **Find out what your church, Conference/Union have published in print or digitally.** This will give you an idea of what your community has found important and also what a supporter may have found out about your church.

Remove outdated content from your website. The outdated information on your website is the equivalent of mail and newspapers piling up in front of your house. Is anyone home? Is everything OK? Let the world know you're alive and well by removing outdated information from the site.

In any new responsibility, there is always some kind of mess. It may be an unsolved problem or a poorly done job, a minor problem that, left unaddressed, is now more serious, or simply a best practice that was never implemented. **Whatever the problem, find a way to solve it quickly.**

Look at the Church's annual calendar. What are the major events, the regular deadlines that need to be met? What should you and your team attend, contribute to and how? You need to understand what happens when in the life of the Church.

Create personas for your target audiences. Break down your target audience into groups and sub-groups. Make these people real to you by creating personas or vivid descriptions of individual people who are members of the groups and subgroups you have defined. Be very specific. Implement your communication for these people.

Update your email contact list. Is your email list up to date? Are bounces regularly removed? Do more people sign up than unsubscribe? Is it easy for people to sign up for your mailing, change their own email address and unsubscribe?

Review your GDPR.

Assess the health of your social media. Do the number of followers and connections on your social networks seem right? What about engagement levels? Are people liking, sharing and commenting? Review your messages. What are the main messages you are sending to your followers? Not sure? Look at email subject lines, newsletter headlines and your calls to action. What are your fundraising appeals about and what do you mention in your thank you letters? Do all these elements match what you think your messages should be?

Gather testimonials from the people you help. Gather stories from the people you help (see pp. 63). Good stories are excellent content for church communication. Ask them to explain what their situation was like before working with your church and what it is like now. Create a photo and video bank. The most powerful communication elements of a church include images. Organise your photo library, get into the habit of taking photos all the time **(great job for a volunteer!)** and keep a record of the events you are involved in.

Create an editorial calendar for the next 6 months. Editorial calendars describe what you will say, in which channels and when. Create one in your favourite calendar, spreadsheet, project management tool or download the blank template available in the shared folder. Make sure you have the logos and graphics you need. Make sure you have high quality digital files of your church logos and other important graphics. Implement the Church's design identity in all your **communication.**

Consider what you need to measure. Reflect on the key indicators of progress in your work. Throughout the handbook you will find evaluation sheets which we have tried to adapt for your respective churches. You can fill them in directly in this document.

Finally, always listen, don't be afraid to ask for constructive feedback. You will find that people are often very constructive. **Make it clear that you are open to feedback of your work.**

CHECKLIST

For an effective handover

When we offer time for the Church, we must:

☐ Go over the brief

Go over the requirements together - Whether it is a list of tasks or a precise specification, we recommend that you take the time to understand the intentions and plans already in place. This meeting is also important to give you access to all usernames and passwords. Log in to services such as your web hosting control panel, website FTP, social media networks, email service provider, etc. ***The longer you wait to find this information, the more difficult it will be.***

☐ Transferring the mailbox

With stakeholders (pastor, church committee, members…).

☐ Mobile phone and social networks

Putting the mobile back into communication with access to all social networks.

☐ Passing of passwords and Media

It is important to make a list of all accounts opened for the church, passing on contacts and passwords.

☐ Send an email from the dedicated mailbox outlining information the new leader will need

Whether it is a list of tasks or a precise specification, we recommend that you spend some time together.

☐ Sharing objectives

- What were your objectives during your term of office?
- Were you able to achieve them and if not, why not?
- What were the objectives of the church during your term of office?
- Was it able to achieve them and if not, why not?
- What are the current objectives?
- What new goals would you have set if you had stayed?
- What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the church?
- What concrete elements support your analysis?
- What have you put in place to improve on these these points in order to advance the evangelical mission of the church?
- If you had a magic wand that you could use only once, what would you change in your church?

The communication audit

Let's go for the first step... understand where we start from!

Communicating about your church's events, news and projects has consequences. Good communication can engage people and change their lives. Lack of clarity or poor communication, on the other hand, can lead to frustration among committed leaders or members, uninformed church members and stagnant growth.

A healthy church communication network is characterised by a few features: it follows a regular rhythm, it is attentive to changing news and needs, and it engages active and regular participation. It also relies on reliable online communication channels, such as a website or social media platform, which church members use regularly.

Can your church communicate more effectively? No matter how well we communicate, we can do even better by asking questions, evaluating and making changes if necessary. No matter how well we think we communicate, we can do even better. How do we know? By evaluating and asking questions, reassessing and making changes if necessary. This is the basis of a local church communication audit.

Typically, the audit looks at all communication practices to determine how everything fits together to meet the needs of the congregation, visitors, etc., as well as specific communication media, such as the newsletter, website, etc.

An audit provides a systematic review of what you communicate and how you communicate it. This process can provide an honest assessment of what is working and what is not working for your church. It also allows for improvements to be made over time. The process doesn't have to be scary, but it does need to be detailed. Although any leader can carry out the audit, it is important to have a clear audit plan and to determine who will oversee and participate in it. After the audit, it will also be important to know who has the authority to set objectives and make changes based on the audit results.

Some examples of objectives:
- Determine the extent to which members are informed about the different ministries.
- Design effective outreach tools for each membership group.
- Identify the degree of need and receptivity for a specific communication tool or approach the church is considering (e.g. social media)
- Understand what the church community says it wants and needs to know.

Assess the results and trends. The types of communication people want and the ways they interact will emerge. Note the trends.

Now link the objectives you identified earlier with the needs of your church to create a communication plan.
This plan will answer the following questions: what, why, who, when and how. Be sure to communicate the results of this survey and the actions taken to meet the needs of your church members. Participants in this survey will appreciate open communication as evidence of their collaboration in ministry.

CHECKLIST

The communication audit focuses on measuring the effects of communication and defining the way forward.

☐ **Define the requirements with the objectives**

Define your objectives. What do you want to learn at the end of this audit? Write these down as statements of objectives and desired outcomes, and plan how you will report back.

☐ **Identify your audience**

List all the internal and external audiences served by the church, such as pensioners, young people, other age groups, new members, visitors, and so on. Identify the types of communication and information they expect and need from you. Understand the different views on communication efforts among different audience groups.

☐ **List your communication tools**

Be as detailed as possible. This will help you to identify all the channels currently used to communicate so that you know where to focus your attention.

☐ **Identify what is working in your current comms**

Look critically at your communication and identify where you are getting good results. This will focus attention on which channels to use and what can help improve others.

☐ **Identify what is not working in your current comms**

Be realistic about what is not working and ask the hard questions. Is the channel still relevant? Should it be targeted more or given to another team member? What have we learned from other channels that could improve results? This will help you to know where to focus your attention and possibly when it is time to abandon a communication channel.

☐ **Collect data**

Go straight to the source. Ask church members what information they need to stay informed and grow spiritually. You might consider holding focus groups or hour-long listening sessions to get new ideas. From the responses you receive, develop a survey that you can distribute throughout the congregation and on your website.

☐ **Analyse and suggest ways to improve**

The data informs the results of the audit and leads to improvements

☐ **Communicate the results**

A must! Feedback really does encourage and build trust with respondents and make them want to participate in the improvement and get involved; neglecting this step produces the opposite with an unpleasant feeling of not being heard. Doing good feedback is a powerful tool for encouraging and blessing you and your community!

Communication plan

"If You Fail to Plan, You Are Planning to Fail"

Benjamin Franklin

This sentence alone sums up the relevance of a communication strategy and the consequences if necessary!

You may have the best intentions when you embark on a communication action, but if the objectives are vague at the start, you will quickly be disappointed with the result (quality, support) in relation to your investment (time, energy, etc.) and you will find it difficult to assess the relevance of the action afterwards. It is therefore essential to sit down and list your communication objectives. The problem is that many people do not know where to start. So don't worry, we'll help you!

A communication strategy helps you define *who* you are addressing, *when* you are addressing them, and *how* you are communicating with that audience. Your system creates guidelines that can help you say "no" to good ideas and "yes" to what is best for your audience.

We offer you two practical sheets on pp. 21-22 to use as a working tool for your church and as a basis for your communication plan.

"If I had six hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first four hours sharpening the axe."

Abraham Lincoln

When we have a message to communicate, the common mistake is to go straight to the "promotion" phase of our message, assuming that the message we are communicating is as clear to our audience as it is to us. In this manual, we offer you a small challenge:

Before communicating a message, take time to rethink it to clarify it.
Clarifying your message starts with asking the right questions rather than assuming you already have the right answers. We will show you how to clarify your message using clarifying questions.

CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS & GUIDELINES FOR A COMMUNICATION PLAN

Make people learn, make them love, make them act

Before you communicate anything, answer these three questions which correspond to the three objectives of communication: to make people learn, to make them like and to make them act.

- What do you want people to know?
- What do you want them to feel? (Emotions drive people to act).
- What do you want them to do? (If they can't define it, they can't do it).

Guidelines for starting a communication plan

We offer you *a practical sheet p.21* for drawing up your communication plan. In order to better understand how it fits together, here are some guidelines to get you started.

Identify your objective: what do you want to happen after you communicate this message? More traffic to the website? More views on a video? Become known in the community? Raise funds for a mission trip? More participants in an event? Identifying your objective is a great first step in creating your communication plan.

Identify your audience: This is where you research demographics, geography, psychographics, etc.

The message: Now that you have your objective and your audience, you need to formulate a message that is effective for them. When developing this message, focus on the content of the message, as well as the mood and language you plan to use. Also keep in mind the type of communication channels you plan to use, remembering the different limitations of each channel.

Take action: You know what your objective is. You know who your audience is. Your message is ready to go out. Now it's time to send the message. Make sure you are prepared for any obstacles you may encounter.

Time to evaluate: As we keep saying, this is one of the most important steps in the whole process. After you have communicated the message to the people you have chosen, it is essential to step back and examine the results. How many people showed up? How many visitors did you get? How many visits to your website? How many videos did you watch? When evaluating, be sure to compare your results with similar projects carried out by your church, as well as with projects carried out by churches of a similar size. We have prepared *evaluation sheets* (see pp. 28-29) for different communication activities.

> Communication plans will be more effective if you have made the effort to get to know the people you are trying to bring together. Before undertaking any activity or sending any message, make sure you know who you are talking to. Get to know your audience better. Make every event or message personal.
> Something that shows you have gone the extra mile to communicate and build a relationship with them.

KNOW YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Now that you are clear on your objective, let's take the time to refine and focus your message with these three questions:
- Who is your target audience?
- What is the benefit of your message?
- What are the barriers to your message?

Who is your target audience?
- Who do you want to reach with your message?
- What are the most effective communication channels to reach this audience?

The very first thing to clarify for your message is who it is aimed at. Is your message for adults? Married couples? Men? Women? Parents? Students? Children? A particular neighbourhood? Be specific about your target audience. The more specific the audience, the more targeted and strategic your communication can be to reach them.

Identify the best communication channels to get your message across to your target audience.

Let's say the target audience for your message is high school students. If this is the case, you will want to identify the communication channels that high school students are already using and reach them through those channels. In the course of your research, you may find that email and print are not effective in reaching high school students, but that social media and texting may be your preferred methods.

What does your message achieve?

What is the gain for the Church?
- We want to achieve …
- The problem we are trying to solve is…
- The aim and purpose of the ministry is… ?
- The next step we want our audience to take is: …

What does the target audience gain?
- Why should they be interested in your message?
- What perceived need does your message address?
- What might they gain?
- What would be different if they responded to your message?

To inspire action, your communication plan should focus on how your message will help your target audience achieve their victory.

One of the key questions about the win is whether it is shared by the church and the target audience? If you don't take the time to ask yourself this question, you could waste a lot of energy and generate frustration. It's a bit like throwing a surprise birthday party for your partner in a restaurant and inviting all his friends, even though the menu doesn't fit his dietary restrictions and he's the type of person who prefers small groups!

What are the barriers to your message?

> "Just because you say something doesn't mean people have heard it, believe it or will do it." *@craiggroeschel*

The principle is to try to put yourself in the shoes of the person who will read your message! We all have our own perception filters which depend on our environment, our culture of origin, our education, our belief and value systems, our personal attitudes and the limits of language. For example, our cultures of origin determine what is right or wrong, what behaviour is acceptable or not in society, what is allowed or not allowed. It is therefore understandable that there are many barriers to communication and obstacles to good understanding.

Bernard Weber summarises this idea of filters and loss of information with the following sentence:

> "Between what I think what I want to say, what I think I am saying, what I say, what you want to hear , what you hear, what you think you understand, what you want to understand, and what you understand, there are at least 9 chances that we will not understand each other." *Bernard Weber*

WHAT WE MEAN TO SAY 100%   **WHAT WE REALLY SAY 70%**   **WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD 60%**   **WHAT IS LISTENED TO 50%**

WHAT IS INCLUDED 40%   **WHAT IS RETAINED 20%**   **WHAT IS PASSED ON 10%**

The loss of information

Taking the time to get to know your target and identify its obstacles allows you to revise your message, to specify it and therefore to *clarify* it! Clarification removes many obstacles.

The message is gradually transformed so that our speaker says to himself: We are in phase!

Let's take a concrete example that might be useful when looking for volunteers for your team!

You want to expand the communication team because you realise that there is a lot to publish. During the appointment period, on the Church Announcement Sheet, you include ***in the vacancies section***, the words "communication team: two people."

Let's try a little ***Reverse thinking exercise!***
You know that a Church supporter with graphic design skills wants to get involved and you're surprised because he hasn't come forward! What could be his obstacles?
- It's nomination time, so they may think it's for members only – but some tasks could be done by non-member supporters
- He thinks that nominations are for two years and he doesn't know where he will be next year
- He is not a big fan of committees and hears that everything in the church is done by committees, he is not available for that
- He imagines that it will be time consuming

By taking the time to clarify the needs, one is able to specify the communication removing many potential barriers.

The ad could read:

"Seeking someone available, one month or one year who can offer two hours of their time per week to create visuals for our Bible verses and program them once a week on our instagram account."

We gain fluidity and efficiency. People can project themselves, recognize themselves in what we communicate.

You now have all the elements to start your communication plan, so it's up to you!

… The next step is to surround yourself with a team!

NOTES

BONUS: THE PERSONA - A RELEVANT TOOL

Addressing the general public is a waste of time. Instead, focus on specific groups and sub-groups of people who are linked by common demographics,
values and relationships to your issues.

What is a Persona? It is a fictional character representative of a group of individuals. The method, first created in marketing to analyse the behaviour of a customer or prospect, has become very popular in digital projects.

The main interest of this tool is personification. We no longer think about a nice program that we could propose but we think about *John* with his needs, motivations or objectives. This allows us to integrate him into our thinking so that we can better respond to his needs. "And what would John think of a film-debate evening? Would a Sunday morning workshop with childcare solve *Mary's* problem? We refer to the reality of the people we want to reach.

The only warning we can give you if you decide to use this method is that it is only effective if you take the time to ask around, to fill in the profiles accurately and relevantly. A profile that is too vague may at best be of little use to you, or at worst mislead you. Start with yourself … what motivates you, what are you looking for? What do you need? Then for the other targets, ask, ask and ask again. You may be pleasantly surprised to see that your questions do not disturb, but that on the contrary, people are touched when you are sincerely interested in their reality. Your exchanges will surely be a source of blessings.

Several free persona creation tools exist online. We suggest you try hubspot.com. Click on the icon below to access the online tool. Just let yourself be guided through the 7 steps to create your persona. Then you will get an overview.

At the bottom of the page, you will have the possibility to add sections which makes the tool really relevant even in Church!

IN PRACTICE

ACTION PLAN FOR MY MINISTRY

MY CHURCH

Its mission The task at hand, the most important thing the Church wants to achieve.

Its values The human qualities that your church/community values.

Its objectives They reflect the mission. They are like milestones in the shorter term.

MY MINISTRY

The vision As part of your church's vision, what is the vision for your department?

My objectives It is nothing more than a process of planning and then moving forward step by step. Setting goals gives you a long-term vision and increases short-term motivation, and above all it helps you to organise skills and resources accordingly.

MY TOP 3 PRIORITIES
On page 21 you can find details of each of these priorities

Priority for action 1

Priority for action 2

Priority for action 3

MY METRICS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date

IN PRACTICE

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION & OBJECTIVES

Priority for action (general intention, concern, desired outcome...)
Identify a concern or priority for action in your church/community.

Field of communication   Promotion   Information   Consultation   Public Relations

Target audience Who? age group, church members, visitors... Be specific!

Object What you want to do?

Task What you are going to do with what means and names in front of each element ... beware that, where everyone is responsible, no one really is.

task   *responsible*

Duration The action is time-limited!

Formulating the communication goal Using the previous answers, formulate a communication objective in relation to the chosen priority for action. Introduce the formulation with an action verb.

Welcome
Communicate
Develop
Encourage
Make known
Identify
Inform
Implementing
Mobilise
Offer
Promote
Bring together
Meet
Raise awareness
...

Measurement indicators

Find a team

"If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be?…"
1 Corinthians 12. 17-19 (NIV)

Although good preaching or personal Bible study makes us grow spiritually, most of us do not grow beyond a certain point if we do not engage in service to others. Everyone can take part in the mission and there is no task that is not important. The body of Christ is made up of many parts… all of which are useful to each other.

You use your passions and gifts throughout the week… in your home, in your work, why not put them to use in your church? Let's assume that most members would like to serve but may be held back by a lack of clarity in the positions available (you will recall our concrete example on p.19).

Creating a communication team is a great way to share responsibilities and chances are you will have volunteers willing to give their time and talents to serve.

Now that you are clear on your own job description, and have given your work a direction with a communication plan, you have a better idea of all the things you need to think about.Make a list of everything that needs to be done and add two columns: "tasks I can do" and "responsibilities others can do".

This is where you should be prepared to spend some time. For any responsibilities you give to others, you need to be specific.

What exactly do you want a future team member to do? What skills do they need to have? What are the weekly tasks they will be responsible for? How can you recruit well if you don't have a clear idea of who you want to work with?

Forcing yourself to put the job description in writing will help you to be clearer.

A clear job description will also ensure that the new team member knows what they need to do to succeed in their new role. You would be surprised how many people fail to do their job well simply because they are not clear about what the job requires.

Creating instructions for all your responsibilities will take some time, more time than if you had just done the tasks yourself. But in the long run it will save you hundreds of hours because you will have a whole team helping you to do what you need to do.

Team members must have the skills and desire to fulfil their role, but they must also be team players. They should also *always encourage* your team so that everyone can grow spiritually and personally.

Use the job cards and personalise them.
These cards will help you clarify roles, and ensure that you are on the same page with your whole team.

POST:

DEPARTMENT / MINISTRY

H

WEEKLY

In a few words:

Responsibilities

Strengths and skills required

Team

Vision

Personal commitment

POST:
SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

DEPARTMENT / MINISTRY

Communication

H WEEKLY

In a few words:

Responsible for managing the online strategy of the church. He/she works to engage those who interact with the church) online and helps to use online technology (such as social media, websites, live broadcasts, mobile applications, etc.) to reach people with the message of Jesus Christ.

Strengths and skills required

Has a personal and growing relationship with God and a passion for the Gospel.

Is highly organised.

Has a strong ability to build relationships, be proactive, responsive to messages.

Has good communication skills, both written and oral.

Has a good understanding of social media platforms and engagement strategies.

Responsibilities

Manage social media conversations on all church's accounts, including interacting, providing support and answering questions.

Work with the pastor to create and implement an online strategy that includes website integration, mobile applications, social media, direct mail.

Assist and encourage the congregation online through live chat, social media.

Keeping abreast of new trends by providing an overview of ways in which the church can develop new online engagement strategies.

Manage church's social media, including planning and collaborating with the video team to create and upload videos to social media.

Maintain updates to the church's website, and other mobile applications.

Provide web traffic reports and other relevant data and analysis to ensure the effectiveness of the website, social media and other digital strategies.

Vision

Our vision is to reach people, lead them to Christ, and help them grow in Christ to become commited disciples. Our strategy is to seek, serve and grow. Part of this service is to help people grow in community and in a personal relationship with Jesus through communication.

Team

This position is about communication and social media, working with the pastor and the church committee and liaising with the technical team.

Measurement indicators

Create a social media strategy that drives engagement and increases followers (go from 50 to 100).

Increase engagement by 20% by the end of the year. Develop social media content that increases the % of subscribers who engage.

Include two digital evangelist volunteers who will help gather material for social media (stories, photos, captions, etc.).

Personal commitment

Be loyal to the vision and leadership of the church and always protect its unity.

Demonstrate a Christ-like attitude in all interactions with the congregation, leaders and volunteers.

Invest in and invite people to know Jesus and to come to church.

POST :
VIDEO PRODUCTION MANAGER

Media

H
WEEKLY

In a few words:

The Video Production Manager supports the church in the technical and production aspects of live worship for Sabbath services. He/she is responsible for the coordination and administration of the creative design process, weekend services, production elements and equipment.

Responsibilities

Oversee all technical systems related to live worship services, including sound, video projection, lighting and cameras.

Ensuring that the stage is set up properly for weekend services, rehearsals and events.

Schedule production staff and volunteers for weekend services and other events.

Keeping abreast of new trends by providing insight into ways in which the church can develop new online engagement strategies.

Assisting with the set up of events including, but not limited to, stage and lighting set up, sound system set up and adjustment, camera set up.

Facilitate the production of media files and ensure that song lyrics, images and moving backgrounds are loaded.

Strengths and skills required

Has a personal and growing relationship with God and a passion for the Gospel.

Reliability and speed, excellent organisational and planning skills.

Flexibility to change direction and priorities.

Has good communication and decision-making skills.

Willing to learn and take on management. Good knowledge of software.

Vision

Our vision is to reach people, lead them to Christ, and help them grow in Christ to become commited disciples. Our strategy is to seek, serve and grow. Part of this service is to help people grow in community and in a personal relationship with Jesus through communication.

Team

Measurement indicators

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Include two volunteers who will help gather material for social media (stories, photos, captions, etc.).

Personal commitment

? WHAT WAS PLANNED?

! WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

| | WHY THIS DEPARTURE FROM THE ORIGINAL PROJECT?

📌 WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM WHAT HAPPENED?

Evaluation

> "If You Can't Measure It,
> You Can't Manage It."
> *William Edwards Deming*

> "Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted."
> *Albert Einstein*

Why do an evaluation?

An evaluation is a way of learning how to improve. It is a good process for teams and churches. Often the evaluation of an activity or programme is limited to "Did people like it?" This leaves room for a rather subjective, partial and emotional response.

Effective evaluation is difficult. It requires thought and effort. After all, some things are not quantifiable. For example, the effort that has been put in is easy to quantify and this is often what we do when we evaluate. Unfortunately, this type of evaluation is usually used when there is no clear way to measure, when the objectives were not clearly defined.

A relevant evaluation question would be: Did this project/programme/event advance the vision (remember: objective + mission = vision)?

If the answer is YES, identify areas that can be improved for future events. For example, if you are evaluating an event and you see that it has helped to achieve the vision, work on the small details of the event that could

make it even better. This could be more volunteers, a bigger venue, more publicity, etc. If the answer is "NO, it did not advance our vision", then the question of why needs to be answered by considering the following:
- Was it in line with the purpose + mission = vision?
- Were the tasks given to the right people?
- Did we spend enough time preparing for it?
- Did we communicate it well?
- Was it created from a solution to a problem?
- Was the planning complete?

> "Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, five for each one should carry their own load."
> *Galatians 6:4-5 (NIV)*

Then ask yourself the following questions. The answers may surprise you, but evaluating this process allows you to understand your role in the outcome.
- What role did I play in this project?
- Was it my best work?
- If I were to evaluate myself on this work, would I be proud of my grade?

Proverbs 16:3 commands us **"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans."** Did you do it? Did this project come from you, your team or your church, or was it set up by the Lord? Many projects seem like good ideas. In fact, many of them are! But good ideas and effective ventures that advance the vision are not always the same. A prayerfully constructed project with clearly defined goals can only be a blessing to the Church.

EVALUATING YOUR CHURCH WEBSITE

It is easy to create a website for your church. But maintaining and keeping updated is another matter, as is being noticed.

An effective way to assess your website, is to imagine that you are a first-time visitor to the site, and that they are connecting with your church for the first time. It is the front door of your church. What do the see? Do they know who you are? And does the site authentically show who your church community is, what is important to you (values), and what you believe.

Website   Evaluation Date

FIRST TASK: TAKE AN ARIEL VIEW OF THE WEBSITE. WHAT IS THE BIG PICTURE?

Give a score of 1-10 (10 excellent) of your first impression

Can I easily get to where I want to go?		Photos – relevant or just filling space?	
Does the front page capture my attention?		Information relevant or outdated?	
What are the colours/images? Are they warm and inviting?		Copy & text proof-read perfect?	
Is the mission of the church clearly seen?		Everyday language or cliched?	
Is the design dated or contemporary?		Information cluttered or in clear boxes?	
Are contact details easy to find?		Church departments featured well?	

SECOND TASK : What is the purpose of your website and if it wasn't there would anybody miss it?

Is your website people, information, or ideas centred?

Is the website primarily for members, community or both?

If for both - are news reports/pictures and features inclusive?

Is there a 'members section' for internal committee meeting agendas and minutes?

When you Google the name of your church – what is the result?

I am interested in connecting with your church. Would your website be able connect me with someone (a person) who would be really interested in following up my enquiry within 24 hours, via e-mail or phone to help me discover more about your church, and who you are?   Yes   No   Maybe

THIRD TASK : THE TECHNICAL SECTION – MONITORING THE TRAFFIC

'Google Analytics' is a helpful tool which records website statistics. Your website designer / manager will be the best person to connect with to help with this.

How many visits have there been to your website over the last month?	
How many 'unique visits' have there been to your site over the last month?	
What is your most popular page?	
How much time do visitors spend on your site? Do they stay on some pages longer than others? Are some pages never visited?	
Who is your audience? Are your visitors local, national, international? Members, interests, community?	

Information leads to action.
Gathering information is only useful when it is eventually acted upon. From your evaluation, you should begin to get an idea of what you need to do. Another helpful way to evaluate the effectiveness of your church website, is to visit other church sites. Are they welcoming, informative and capture your attention. A website is a continual work in progress, to inform, educate and inspire.

Notes

PART 2

USING COMMUNICATION
-BEST PRACTICE-

Local information

Why advertise?

Announcements are essential to the life of the Church. They make it possible to disseminate useful information to the members of the community. They give visibility to the different departments of the Church to the largest number of people and make it easier for everyone to get involved in the different projects.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Identify the types of announcements

Local announcements: the life and practical information of the Church, its ministries and departments.

Area announcements: announcements sent by the Conference. Sometimes they also include announcements from the Union, the Division or the General Conference, as well as from schools, and other Adventist entities.

Other announcements: announcements and information from supporting ministries and others.

Information gathering procedure

Some of the tools at your disposal:

- The calendar of Church events and projects for the church year will allow you to anticipate the communication of important events and to relaunch the departments in order to recover the communication elements as soon as possible. The calendar of Conference events is available from your Conference/Mission.

Establishing a local procedure

We encourage you to work out a procedure with the church departments to receive the announcements with all the necessary information:

- Start and end dates of the announcement
- Text to be communicated (it should be as complete as possible answering the following questions: what is it about, why, when, where and how)nt)
- Audiovisual material (photos, video, poster, registration form, url, etc.)
- Communication materials

For example, it is possible to create a standard advertisement request form (Google form, Word, online web form, etc.) to be completed by the department. Please note that it is important to make the departments aware of the importance of sending the advertisements sufficiently in advance.

Distribution of announcements

It is important that announcements are made as widely and easily accessible as possible.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of possible publication:
- Weekly Sabbath morning announcements
- Newsletter
- Church or departmental mailing list (eg JAYS or Health)
- Whatsapp, Telegram, Signal or other group
- Church website
- Social networks of the church and/or the department concerned
- If relevant, ask the Conference to broadcast the announcement

COLLABORATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

We invite you to send us stories and announcements about your church. We can publish them on our websites and in our newsletters. Before sending, please check the following rules.

Respect deadlines. Ted News is a monthly online journal. Plase send your stories by 15th of each month.

When writing/editing your articles, ask yourself these six questions: Who, what, when, where, why and how.

Check facts and information. Check phone numbers, emails, websites, spelling of a person's name and title; attribute quotes to the right people; indicate the exact city or country where a church or school is located.

Limit the word count to 400-450 words per page. Mention the authors. Check punctuation and grammar. If it is a story or event, include one or two quotes per article. Include first and last names of the people involved, and their titles, if any. Pastor of which church? Member of which ministry?

Anticipate future stories/events. "Pre-write" an upcoming event, so that after the event you can simply fill in the blanks. Use current stories. Plan your story in advance to be published before or after an event. For example, don't use a winter story in the March issue.

Submit at least two or three photo options for each story. All photos must be high resolution files of at least 1MB or 300dpi. Include the names of the photographers.

Attach a caption to each photo. Captions "tell the story" of a photo. What are they doing in the photo? Include full names, titles/churches/locations.

Remember, depending on the setting/type of picture, the photographer may be required to gain the permission of the person being photographed (for example, when a child is easily identifiable in the image; or when the image will be used internationally). Before submitting pictures, ensure you have any permissions needed.

Pray through the process. You have been called to share the gospel through news and events in your conference/academy. Let God guide you in the writing, editing and photography.

Sharing pictures with the world...

Adventist Media Exchange https://media.adventistexchange.org is the official place to organize and share digital assets for the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide. This world-wide database contains an ever-growing collection of pictures (and other digital assets), that allows Adventist communicators to work and collaborate more efficiently.
To apply for an account, with uploading rights, send an email to comhostmaster@gc.adventist.org

Sharing stories with the world...

ANN Video https://adventist.news/videos/ann-english is a weekly program highlighting news and stories about the Seventh-day Adventist Church from around the globe. Each week the TED submits one or two stories to ANN Video. If you would like us to share your story with the world, please submit it **here** https://ted.adventist.org/news-submission-portal/ including a YouTube video link and/or pictures.
By submitting your story, you are granting us permission to share the pictures/footage.

NOTES

A MOBILE PHONE DEDICATED TO COMMS

Why have a dedicated number?

We strongly encourage each local church to take a telephone and mobile number for church communication, first of all because communication should not be linked to a physical person but to the local church.

It is important to have a contact number that will not change with every appointment.

Why a dedicated mobile phone?

Why have a dedicated mobile and not just a SIM card? Because Google uses an email address to install applications and they are saved in the corresponding drive. All applications are made today to be synchronized with your contact list.

Experience shows that handovers can be complicated when accounts opened for the church are synchronised with the personal accounts of a leader.

Some guidelines for any group on any network (WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram...)

You will find opposite a checklist of good conduct and advice for group administrators of any network. To make these tips more concrete, we have chosen to use Whatsapp as an example.

BEST PRACTICE FOR WHATSAPP

WhatsApp remains a very practical network used by many church members.

Like other networks, WhatsApp offers the possibility to create groups. You create the group and add the members you want without having to ask for their consent. This can become awkward or annoying if the person does not want to be part of your group or to make their phone number visible. Even if the person leaves the group, their number will remain visible on the group feed.

To avoid this kind of inconvenience and to ensure that all participants agree to take part, we advise you to *create a Whatapp group link.* The group preferences can be set by to the person who accepts to enter the group.

Another concern with groups is that if the reply option is not blocked, all members can reply, which can be annoying as the group grows.

If your group is only for information, we recommend the mailing list. If you need a group where several administrators give information to the group, it is better to stay in group mode.

The mailing list is a very practical alternative (max 250 people). People who wish to receive the information must send their name and surname by message but, above all, register the communication telephone number in their contacts, otherwise they will not receive the message, even if they are on the distribution list.

Keys for good group management

Whatever network you choose, the first key to good group management is to communicate your vision for the group and how you want the members to interact. *The essential preliminary work is therefore to write and share your vision and remind it regularly, especially to each new member.*

CHECKLIST

Rules for group administrators

For any online group to function well, it is essential to share and enforce the framework.

☐ Appointing multiple admins

Your role as administrator is therefore crucial to the good management of the group. We also advise you to appoint several administrators for your group and to always include the pastor as an administrator. This will allow for consultation before taking certain actions. This will also help when it comes to responding to shares or when members want to ask for advice.

☐ Establish the group's GOALS

The role of the lead administrator is crucial in this respect. Each group should have a written and regularly shared vision to bring order or to welcome newcomers. It is the responsibility of the administrators to be strict about this, otherwise the group will become a hub for all kinds of levity.

☐ Express disagreements CONSTRUCTIVELY

We do not always agree on everything that is shared in a group, especially when these groups are non-denominational. Silence is the first attitude that would help in this sense. Otherwise, you can give your point of view by complementing the person's idea.

☐ Write a CODE OF CONDUCT for the network

For each member to commit to a set of rules you have chosen.

The code could contain the following elements :

☐ Be WELCOMING

This group is a safe space. We focus on encouragement, not debate. Please be correct and considerate.

☐ Be GENEROUS

Give to this group more than you receive. Help us to keep the focus on church development.

☐ ZERO SPAMS

To keep this group a place of education and discussion, you are not allowed to share self-promotional, irrelevant or spam messages and comments. The administrators reserve the right to allow exceptions from our members.

NEWSLETTER FOR LOCAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

"Preferred by readers, the newsletter remains the most effective medium for digital communication."

What is it for?

The Newsletter is sent by e-mailing. The aim is to establish a special relationship with the recipients. Readers appreciate short texts (10 lines maximum) and direct language. At the end of the descriptions, a link is provided to the full article on the website. The aim is to take the reader to your website pages or the videos on your YouTube channel or those of the Union/Division. It should be seen as a kind of information hub from which your readers can pick up what interests them.

An alternative to the bulletin

The newsletter can complement or replace your bulletin if it is to provide short-term information. It is therefore important to establish a clear editorial policy and publication frequency.

The distribution of a newsletter as a PDF attachment is not recommended. The recipient will have to open the Acrobat software and probably print the letter to read it. Each additional click or "technical" step discourages the reader from even opening your letter.

Use e-mailing tools for this. There are many of them. Mailchimp in its free version is already very complete. Some appreciable features:
- very intuitive and easy to use with templates to customise
- allows you to build multiple mailing lists (your audience)
- allows you to test your mailings on mobile, tablet or computer
- allows the integration of a registration form directly on your website
- the statistical data is complete

Here you will find a complete checklist for writing an effective newsletter.

Before you start

- The e-newsletter generates an average click-through rate of 3% but can rise to 20% if the letter is well targeted
- Give an explicit title in the "subject line" of the message, such as "Weekly news from XX to YY"
- give a clear name of the sender that is easily identifiable. This is what will appear in the mailbox of all your readers. You can use the name of your church: XYZ SDA Adventist Church

Graphical structure: the specifics

To be effective, your newsletter needs to have a structure that is understandable at first glance! Particularly in the context of a local church, think of clearly highlighting all the sections that your members would expect to find in the newsletter, such as the agenda or the contact details for the pastor and elders.

Picture format

A little time-saving tip! If you make your images in YouTube thumbnail format, you can use them for a YouTube video, as well as for an article on your website or blog, and by right-clicking and saving it, it can be used as a slide for the Sabbath morning powerpoint. Why multiply your efforts?

HEADER

- banner and menu
- church logo
- newsletter title
- sharing elements

Content visible as soon as the letter is opened

ABOVE THE FOLD

Imaginary line after which the content is only visible by scrolling

BLOC

Create as many blocks as there are separate sections you want to highlight for your information

FOOTER

- links to your social networks
- GDPR elements
- Unsubscribe link (required)

CHECKLIST

For an effective newsletter

☐ Personalise your email

There is nothing more impersonal than receiving an email from a company without feeling that there is a human being behind it! Communication is all about relationships, and your readers should be able to identify with the person they are communicating with.

☐ Write an effective email subject line

The subject line of your email is the first thing your readers will see, and it should not be overlooked! It's simple, you can have the best newsletter in the world, but if your subject line doesn't attract interest, you're unlikely to be read. Keep in mind that ideally your subject line should not exceed 50 characters.

☐ Keep the email contact list up to date

☐ Optimise for mobile phone use

One of the reasons why email marketing is currently in such good health is undoubtedly mobile. Indeed, more than 50% of emails are read on a mobile phone, which shows the importance of optimising your emails for this format!

☐ Keep the email short and to the point

☐ Integrate storytelling (see p. 63) into the text of your email. Storytelling is the art of telling a story to get your message across.

☐ Prepare a text-only version of the email

You may have an HTML version of your email with beautiful images and a great design, but you can never be sure that your email will not display! For this reason, you should always prepare for the worst and offer a text-only version of your email, and make sure your email is readable even without the images.

☐ Add links to your images

Non-clickable images in emails are a kind of missed opportunity, as people have become used to images being clickable. So this can increase the chances of the reader going to your website and becoming a potential lead. Include a clear call-to-action in your emailing.

The key to the success of your emailing campaigns lies in the implementation of a clear and effective call-to-action.

☐ Add alt-text to your images and call-to-actions

☐ Add sharing buttons on social networks - Make it easy to share the email

☐ TEST TEST and TEST again the rendering of email on all email services

GDPR and Credits

Photos, videos, webpages

The European Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), applicable as of May 25th 2018, controls how your personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government. The main aim of this regulation is to enhance individuals' control and rights over their personal data. This regulation has many implications for you as a communicator.

PHOTO, AUDIO AND VIDEO LEGAL GUIDELINES

Source : Brotherhood Manual, "Legal Guidelines for Photo and Video Use"

Think about these examples:

You have just completed a successful community event at your church and there are several photos that you think would look perfect in your newsletter and on your website.

The pastor delivered an especially inspiring sermon, and you want to share it on social media. What is the protocol for using images of people? Do you need their permission? What about broadcasting worship services?

As society becomes increasingly dependent on technology as well as increasingly concerned with individual privacy, there are plenty of questions about liability when it comes to using digital images in ministry publications and websites. Here are a few best practices:

Photos, visual broadcasting & streaming

Most churches that broadcast online do so to share services as an outreach tool, however, not a lot of consideration is given to the security and safety aspect of that broadcast. We are duty-bound to provide a safe space for individuals to worship without anyone being placed in a vulnerable position.

Creating safe spaces, GDPR, Safeguarding, and consent are all factors to be considered before any recordings can be made.

In general, it is acceptable to use a photo or video footage from a church service or event as long as the people photographed are not individually identifiable.

However, attendance at a church service reveals religious belief, which is a special category data under GDPR. Special care and attention should be paid to meeting the legal obligations and observing best practice.

Please check how GDPR regulations apply in your local area.

Below you'll find a summary of general guidance and good practice:

Those appearing in film or photography must give their consent in writing. The consent form should specify what aspects of the service you intend to film.

A photo release form should also be signed by adults, and must include all the places/platforms that the photo or video may be used by the church. Regular attendees need only to sign this once, but it should be refreshed regularly e.g. every three years. New visitors should be asked before the service or event begins.

An area or areas within the auditorium or room should designated 'Safe Spaces' where the camera will not pan to or where the image cannot be captured.

Visitors should be notified before the service so that they can have an option to sit in the Safe Space if they do not want to be filmed or photographed.

Consent can be withdrawn. When an individual withdraws consent, the videos or images of that person should be deleted everywhere it has been stored or published online and offline.

GDPR should be considered when storing consented content.

Display a privacy notice in the church and website explaining how the personal information in relation to photography and/ or filming and streaming will be collected and processed by the church in accordance with GDPR.

Photos of Children

Posting or publishing photos of minors (children under 16) without permission from a parent or legal guardian could result in your ministry facing a legal claim, because it is against GDPR laws which cover all European Union (EU) countries and including the UK. If your Union or mission territory is outside the EU, we strongly recommend you check the local law on this matter.

It is always a good idea to inform parents ahead of time that you plan to take photos during an event or activity. Before using a photograph/film of activities involving minors, their consent and the written consent of a person with parental responsibility for them should be obtained. This must specify for what purposes the photograph/film will be used and how it will be stored if not destroyed.

Ask parents to submit a signed photo use agreement or "do not photograph" form before the activity, so your ministry team knows which photos they have permission to post. The form should note whether the agreement applies to a one-time event or an ongoing activity, such as the June 1-5 session of vacation Bible school.

Children in foster care require special consideration. Foster children are wards of the state, so foster parents cannot legally sign documents on their behalf. Ministries would need a signed photo use agreement from a foster child's caseworker. When in doubt, give a higher level of privacy to foster children. Often, they have been removed from their birthparents 'homes' due to abuse or neglect. In some cases, broadcasting a child's whereabouts could put the child at risk of being placed an unsafe situation.

Ask foster parents and others with privacy concerns to submit a "do not photograph" form. Keep an updated "do not photograph" list and share it with all staff and volunteers who might take pictures during ministry activities. Remind ministry workers to review the list before posting any photos online, even if they're posting to a social media page considered to be personal, closed, or private. Privacy settings change over time, and information once considered private can be shared inadvertently.

Worship Service Video

There are several portions of worship services that could lead to increased liability when recorded and broadcast:

Playing copyrighted music and video clips. In most cases, ministries can legally play copyrighted music for an in-person audience, but broadcasting this music generally requires additional permissions. Permission can be obtained directly from the composer/performers, or from organizations like Christian Copyright Licensing International. This group offers a special Church Streaming and Podcast License that should address most of the issues ministries face in this area.

Audio broadcasting

It has long been established that not all churches have professional audio technicians who are trained to an acceptable standard and can balance music/sound that can be audibly enjoyed by those within a church congregation as well as those listening online. Also, unless the recording of that audio is done in such a way that voices and instrumentation can be balanced when revisited post recording, the end- product will always be inferior. This is NOT a desired outcome, and not something that individuals participating, those listening within the church or those listening during the broadcast or those listening after the broadcast will appreciate.

Unless all the appropriate permissions are sought and licenses are set in place, recordings of this nature should not happen.

If the best quality cannot be achieved, it is suggested that Music recording should not be broadcast. It becomes a misrepresentation for the artist and for the Church.

For online broadcasting - It is suggested that maybe a pre-recorded piece of balanced music is played as theme music before the spoken Word and then a broadcast of just the Sermon or Message. This also alleviates the need for Copyright permission to be granted for the music attached to that broadcast.

For further information on permissions/copyright, please contact: **Christian Copyright Licensing International** **https://uk.ccli.com**

Sharing prayer requests. Some people may request prayer during a worship service, but they may not want their personal information broadcast to a worldwide audience as part of joys, concerns, and prayer requests. Unless prior written consent is received from everyone being prayed for publicly by name, it's best to delete the prayer section of the service from the broadcast.

Original sermons generally can be posted with no legal issues, as long as the speaker authored the sermon within the scope of employment with the ministry. If the sermon was written by someone other than the presenter, such as one borrowed from a collection of sermons found online, obtain written permission from the work's author or owner to broadcast the sermon. Some exceptions apply for older sermons that are considered part of the public domain. The laws in this area are complicated, so it's best to ask an attorney for help to make sure no copyright laws are broken.

Photos of Guest Speakers and Well-Known Figures

You've invited a guest speaker to an event at your church and you want to promote their presence, or you want to note on your website that a well-known religious leader endorses your ministry. Can you use the guest speaker's or well-known leader's photo?

The best practice is to obtain written consent from the individual outlining how his or her name or image will be used and expressing that it is for promotional purposes. The law of privacy allows a person to seek legal protections from the use of his or her name or image by another person or organization. It's best to be careful in this instance, especially with the development of 'publicity rights' of celebrities and other influential people now taking shape.

Member Directory Photos

Have each member sign a form acknowledging that their image and personal information—such as name, address, and phone number—will be used in the directory. The form should allow members the option of withholding or protecting some or all of their information.

In the case of online directories, ministries should refrain from posting any identifying information (home addresses, phone numbers, and other contact information) on public, non-password protected websites. Online directories should be password protected to ensure that identifying information is restricted to members of the congregation.

NOTES

Zoom Meeting Security

Zoom is a useful and popluar video conferencing platform used to host meetings online. However 'Zoomboming' (in which uninvited attendees break in and disrupt meetings, often with inappropriate content) is on the increase. Internet trolls are using publicly posted meeting links and IDs, to join meetings uninvited and then post content, often of a hate-filled or pornographic nature.

To protect your meeting, please follow the guidelines below or visit the Zoom Help Center.

Stage 1 - In preparation

1. Check that you have updated to the latest version of the Zoom app. (Version 5 introduced security and privacy updates.)
2. Use the options below below (see Images A, B & C) when setting up a meeting.
   - Meeting ID: Generate Automatically
   - Password: Require meeting password.
   - Advanced Options: Enable Waiting Room, and Mute participants upon entry.
   - Disable 'File Transfer' to prevent the posting of picture and image files within the in-meeting chat feature. (Via Zoom's web portal)
   - Disable 'Annotation' to prevent participants using the annotation tools to add information to a shared screen. (Via Zoom's web portal)
   - Disable 'Allow removed participlants to rejoin'. (Via Zoom's web portal)

3. Do not post meeting details in public forums
4. If you don't need all the attendees to actively participate, use the Zoom app to stream the meeting through your Youtube channel (see instructions here) or Facebook page (see instructions here. Only share the Zoom details with your guest speakers.
5. If you have a large group get someone to co-host with you, to assist with keeping and eye on your participants to ensure the best possibly behaviour.
6. You can initially create a meeting without setting a password, then update the meeting deatils to add a password. Send the password separately to invitees before the meeting via email etc, so that the ID and password are not in the same communication.

Stage 2 - When starting the meeting

- Depending on the type of interaction you require for your meetingf, consider the following options.
- Mute Participants On Entry
- Uncheck 'Allow Participants To Unmute Themselves'
- Put Participants in Waiting Room on Entry
- Make sure that 'Who Can Share?' is set to Only Host.

3 RULES FOR IDENTIFYING THE BEST SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS FOR YOUR CHURCH

Source : Social Church, "3 Rules for Identifying the Right Social Media Network for Your Church "

There is no shortage of opportunities to spend time on social media. ***So how do you determine which channels you should be present on?*** Are you content with the big 3 traditional channels, or do you try to follow as many social networks as you can, invariably leaving some of them to burn out in the process?

It is difficult to choose which social media channels your church should be present on. ***On the one hand, you don't want to be on the one channel you feel most comfortable with while your church is on another. On the other hand, your resources are limited, and it is probably not wise to spread yourself too thin***, you and your church staff to monitor all the social media channels that appear. So how do you know which channels to choose and which to avoid?

Contrary to popular belief, your church does not need to be on every social media platform to be effective in this area. In fact, you probably shouldn't be. Not only do you run the risk of spreading your efforts to be effective on one platform, but you can also end up spending a lot of effort posting for little or no results.

Even the largest churches and ministries that have teams managing their social media presence across multiple platforms are only focusing on a handful of channels. Here's how to know if you're choosing the right social media platforms for your church.

Where is your target audience?

The most important factor your church needs to consider when choosing which social media channels to use is, "Where are the people I'm trying to reach?" And it's not as hard as it sounds, once you know exactly who you are trying to reach.

A good starting point is to look at your current church and understand the type of people you already reach well, and then go out and find more of those people on social media.

Once you know who you are trying to reach, it is simply a matter of finding out where they are on social networks. To do this, it is useful to understand what types of people use each social channel, and why.

Ask yourself these 5 questions about who you want to engage with as a church:

- What social media channels do they use?
- When are they on these platforms?
- Which channels do they spend the most time on?
- What kinds of things do they usually post?
- What kinds of messages do they like and interact with?

The more you know about who they are, the easier it will be to engage them on social media.

Never choose a social media channel because someone told you to. Choose a social media channel because you think you can realistically reach the people you are trying to reach as a church. That way you will focus your efforts where you can get the most out of them.

Where do these people engage most with my church? Followers are a measure of vanity. While they play into the algorithms and provide a kind of social proof that your church can use, a small engaged audience is better than a large disengaged one.

That said, it's important to focus on the channels where you think you can most effectively engage the audience you want to reach. On which channels do people comment on the messages you post, if you have a presence on those channels? Which channels get the most response?

Engagement is the most meaningful measure for any platform, so try to find those where your church can effectively engage with your community.

What resources and skills does my church have?

It would be great to be on all channels, but focusing on the channels that are most effective for your church's resources and skills is what will help you succeed in your efforts. If you have a small church, you probably don't have the time and resources to be present on more than two social media channels. Even a larger church may choose to consolidate its efforts to focus on the channels it finds most effective.

But it is not just a question of resources. What kind of messages do the channels you want to focus on require? YouTube, for example, is video-centric. If you don't want to post tons of videos, it's probably not for you. Similarly, Instagram is focused on high quality photos. If you don't think your church has the skills to succeed on this channel, hire someone who does or move to another social media channel.

Putting it all together
Deciding which social media channels your church should use can be a long process, but you now have the tools to make that decision effectively.

Trying to please everyone is bound to fail, and the best social media churches always focus on what they do best.

ANSWERING FAQS

Prepare your model answers

How do I connect to worship?

How can I contact the pastor?

Q :

Q :

Q :

Greeting, End of Worship Service, Upcoming Events

SOCIAL MEDIA PROTOCOL

A Conference policy example

- Officially appoint one or more specific community managers, if possible. In case of lack of resources, appoint the webmaster as the online community manager. This should be appointed by the Church Committee or by the Church Nominating Committee as voted by the congregation.
- Regularly fill this position among the responsibilities under consideration whenever the Local Church Nominating Committee meets, with the same spiritual criteria as the other eligible responsibilities in the Church.
- Inform the Conference of the intention to open social media accounts/pages (social networks) for the local church to collaborate, work in synergy, and receive advice and guidance.
- Vote, by the Church Committee, the creation of the accounts/pages and to communicate this vote to the Church and to the Conference with the identifier of the account (@churchname…).
- The communication officer, the referring church elder (minimum) and/or the church secretary should also have access to the accounts/profiles/pages, in addition to the officer in charge, to ensure that the accounts are kept under control if necessary. It is important to pay special attention to this when handing over responsibilities, so that the permissions of the different accounts are transferred to the new appointees. The list of accounts and passwords should be documented and kept in a secure manner (e.g. password tools such as KeePass, Dashlane, LastPass, 1Password or others) to avoid loss.

Checklist and specific recommendations by network

You will find a checklist on the opposite page with recommendations that can be adapted to any social media.

Apart from these general recommendations, we propose some particularities for Facebook and Instagram which are among the most popular and used social networks in UK and worldwide. They allow to connect with members, supporters and potential future members outside the confines of church meetings and can be used as a platform for evangelism and outreach. *The important thing is to hit your target where it is.*

Instagram features

Instagram is becoming a must in addition to other communication channels. It allows you to connect with a young and young adult audience. This platform allows you to visually present your message as well as the life and culture of your church online.

- *Create a business account:* It gives access to more features than a personal account.
- *Sync* the church's Facebook page (if you have one) to the Instagram profile.
- *Personalise the profile picture:* choose a high quality version of your church's logo. Instagram profile pictures are 110 x 110 pixels and circular, so you need to make sure your logo is easy to read and not partially cropped. Remember to use the same profile picture on all your social media platforms.
- *Fill in the description:* is the perfect place to give an overview of your church. Add your mission statement, service hours and your church hashtag if you have one. You can fill in your church's address so users know where they can find you.
- *Personalise the Bio* with your church's website URL so that Instagram users can click and be redirected directly to your website for more information.

Facebook features

Facebook allows you to have either a public page or a group that can be made private.

The advantage of the Facebook page is that it can be used as a showcase, hence the importance of filling in the profile correctly.

The advantage of the Facebook group is that you can share photos or events that you want to keep local. However, keep in mind that this solution does not guarantee respect for the use of group members. Instead, consider that everything you post online is public.

- *Take care of the information on the page:* description, church address, opening hours … MISSION (link to the federation page) The mistake: botch the descriptions, which are very useful for the visibility of your page.
- *Keep it simple:* The profile image of the page must be the Adventist logo. The banner should represent the local church. Change it only on special occasions, a few times a year. Match it with your website if you have one. The mistake: not having the logo in the profile picture, or a cropped or pixelated logo.
- *Choose your images:* The image is blurred? Pixelated? You don't have the rights? Don't publish it! Add a synthetic description with a link to the website. The mistake: putting in photos that are too amateurish, or too standard (image bank).

CHECKLIST

Applies to all social networks

☐ Consistency & uniformity of username

Before opening anything, consider the consistency of the local church's brand on social media. Use the same name, profile picture, header images and bio on each platform to affirm brand recognition and help members identify official accounts.

☐ Be honest and transparent

Represent the Adventist Church in a positive and uplifting tone and use integrity and honesty to build trust with our members.

☐ Link to your website

Your website is your main communication tool; you can link to your website in almost every message.

☐ Promote your social media channels

Include your social media handles (names, unified if possible) in all your other communication channels such as your website, emails and printed materials.

☐ Check your spelling

Certain social media cultural norms may deviate from traditional grammar and should be used when using each platform. However, all posts should reflect a high level of professionalism.

☐ Engage with your online community

Respond systematically. Establish standard answers in a church committee for example. (See Replying to FAQs factsheet). Mistake to avoid: not replying to messages.

☐ Be consistent

If you have little news, publish once a week. Publish at the right times Possibility of scheduling your publications to arrive at the right time on your target audience's news feed.

☐ Adventist trademark and branding

Follow the official Adventist brand guidelines (see pp. 68-73). Messages should be worded to represent the official voice of the account, not those of individuals. An exception to this rule is for church representatives making a public statement (church pastor, federal official, etc.)

☐ Use hashtags

Enter referring keywords to be found by people who don't know your account e.g. #10daysofpride will refer to all pages that participate and that have also entered the #.

A website

Churches wishing to set up a website should:

Administratively

- Formally appoint a webmaster or, if possible, several webmasters (appointed by the Church Committee or, during the nomination period, by the Nominating Committee and voted on by the congregation).
- Plan to regularly include the appointment of this position among the responsibilities considered each time the Nominating Committee of the local church meets, with the same spiritual criteria as other eligible responsibilities in the church.
- Inform the Federation of the intention to create a website for the local church to collaborate, to work in synergy, and to receive advice and guidance.
- Vote, by the Church Committee, for the creation of the website and to communicate this vote to the Church and the Conference.
- The communication officer and the referring church elder should have access to the website, in addition to the webmaster, to ensure that they can keep their hands on the website if necessary. It is important to pay particular attention to this when handing over responsibilities, so that the permissions for the various accounts are transferred to the new appointees.

- The list of accounts and passwords should be documented and kept in a secure manner (e.g. password tools such as KeePass, Dashlane, LastPass, 1Password or others) to avoid loss.

Technically

- Look for your own hosting service and/or provider (e.g. netAdventist), and make sure that they are GDPR-compliant.
- Ensure continuity of the web page, even if the webmaster changes, choose a CMS (Content Management System) that is easy to manage. Avoid custom-made CMS, and user-friendly systems such as WordPress (preferable) or Joomla. The developer community is very large and resources can be found quite easily, which ensures an easier handover between different webmasters.
- It is recommended to set up a tracking system to measure unique visitors or page views.
- The local webmaster/provider is responsible for the security of the website. It is important to pay attention to this in order to avoid losing a site through hacking (introduction of a virus or a hacker taking control of it) or ransomware (blocking the site until a ransom is paid). Regular backups are essential to recover or rebuild the site if necessary.

The Adventist Brand

- For the visual identity, always keep the homogeneity with the Adventist "brand" and its visual code. Themes (templates) and modules are available on the website https://alps.adventist.io/v3. You can develop your own theme, but it must keep the palette of colours, authorised logos and corresponding fonts (downloadable free of charge) as well as the layout of contents as explained on the website https://identity.adventist.org.
- Don't forget to put links to the Conference.
- Make the content of the site easier to download in different browsers and have a good page rank:
- Put keywords in each publication.
- Put keywords in the description of the site.
- Don't upload too many images or heavy images, or video or audio.
- It is preferable to put the heavier files (video, audio, photo, PDF) in third party services (YouTube, Flickr, DailyMotion, Mixcloud, Issuu, etc.) to nest the documents.

netAdventist

The **netAdventist** platfrom is virtualy free website and hosting option. netAdventist is licensed by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. All Adventist churches may have access to netAdventist, but there may be a small cost **(sign up here)**. It incorporates tools such as mailing list management, RSS feed generation, and podcast creation, as well as e-commerce capabilities.

In addition, your netAdventist site is able to generate online forms and polls, as well as load and display documents (i.e. school handbooks or church directories), create photo albums and event calendars, and submit prayer requests. Add to all these great features netAdventist's open license format and you have a very powerful software suite for managing your organization's website.

Sites using the Adventist framework will visually identify with Adventist.org and many other denominational sites, while maintaining their own unique elements. Key features include large locally supplied photos, the option to include the Adventist Beliefs widget that ties to www.adventist.org, responsive code that helps your site look great on everything from smartphones to big computer screens, and configurable links to social media sites. Learn more here.

Anyone can use it to create and manage their own website, even those with limited technical knowledge. It has a very intuitive user interface. You don't have to be a programmer or pay a programmer to keep it up, and it's

designed to enable multiple users to contribute, not just a single webmaster. You will also be able to create unique log-in accounts for members and set levels of access for users. netAdventist uses a web interface, which means there is no software to download onto your computer and you can access it from anywhere in the world.

netAdventist features

- news
- links to Adventist ministries and resources
- e-commerce features
- document groups
- RSS feed generation
- mailing list management
- multilingual capabilities
- podcasting
- online forms and polls
- prayer requests
- photo albums
- calendar of events
- user accounts
- any custom material you add

Learn more about netAdventist here

Content and legal issues

- If, for various reasons, it is necessary to buy a domain of one's own (see above point on domains), take a vote in the church committee and register the domain in the name of the local church (preferably in the name of the cultural association), never in the name of a person (or leader).
- Respect the legislation of the country by being aware of the legal responsibility of the local church association, taking particular care: not to use illegal or pirated modules; not to disseminate confidential or defamatory information; to respect privacy; to disseminate photos or videos, especially those of children, if the people concerned are opposed to them or are not members of the church.
- Do not develop your own formulations of Adventist beliefs, statistics, etc., but point to relevant websites and pages.
- Update annually the copyright in the website and the legal details, GDPR, etc.
- Special attention should be paid to the choice of links to other websites. The information provided by these websites linked to a church portal should be consistent and support the mission, message and values of the church. Legal advice should be sought as to whether or not the website contains any commercial activity, and whether or not this would compromise the status of the local organisation as a religious entity or non-profit organisation.

Social media audit: Questions to ask yourself

Jamie Jean Schneider Domm - Digital Strategist for the North American Division, adapted to European context.

Many of this blog's readers are church employees with a potentially large digital influence. What you do with that influence matters. We've all made mistakes communicating online, but it's never too late to start fresh by conducting a personal social media audit. **Below is a checklist to help you evaluate your social media profiles and identify areas of potential change or improvement. Whether you have four friends or four thousand, as disciples we must strive to reflect Christ always, drawing others to His life-saving truths and love. We cannot do this effectively when our words or actions send mixed or divisive messages.**

Social media is public by nature and has blurred the lines between a person's work life and personal life. No matter how high your privacy settings are, your activity is always public at some level. As representatives of a faith group, your individual accounts are no longer just personal. This can be a positive thing. Each of us are called to be disciples, and this includes reaching the digital mission field. I believe that God is calling a generation of youth to the digital mission field, but, to be effective, we must begin by setting boundaries with ourselves.

Your are encouraged to read through these questions carefully and make any necessary changes to your social media profiles. This may include removing old posts and pictures. In extreme situations, deleting accounts may be necessary.

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT CHECKLIST

Do you list your employer or ministry on your social media profiles?

Brand your posts as personal and your own opinion. Employees are allowed to associate themselves with their organization when posting, but they must clearly brand their posts as personal views and purely their own opinions.

Are you sharing your faith with personal stories?

Share your story. Be human, have fun, exchange ideas, and connect with others. Your life and work can be a powerful witness of what God is accomplishing through you.

## Are you taking the necessary precautions to protect you and your loved ones' personal information?

Protect yourself and loved ones. Be careful about what personal information you share online, and regularly check your privacy settings. Never publicly share your home address, social security numbers, login credentials to ANY account (especially passwords), credit card information, security question answers, complete birth date, etc. Only "friend" people who you actually know.

Are you spreading "inflammatory speculations," "rumors and gossip" or confidential information?

Act responsibly and ethically. Be honest, be professional, and be kind. Always verify questionable content with credible sources before sharing information and remember to honor others' privacy. Do not publish, post, or release information that is considered confidential. Remember, you can be held personally liable for content you publish online. Comply with legal privacy requirements as outlined in the General Data Protection Regulations (2018). Make corrections to mistakes quickly and apologise.

Are you giving credit where credit is due?

Respect the intellectual property rights of others. It's okay to share, just don't claim it as your own work.
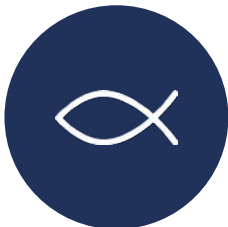
Would people know that you are a Christian based on your social media and would they like Christians?

Represent your faith values. Social media can be a powerful witnessing tool; remember that your posts can have a greater impact and reach than you realize. Diversity of opinion is respected and valued within the Church community, but as an employee, your followers may confuse your opinion with the official position of the Church. While this is most likely not your intention, prevent confusion by avoiding posts that conflict with your organization's official positions on matters and observe principles of impartiality.

Follow the golden rule. Do to others as you would have them do to you: Luke 6:31. This means avoiding gossip, mean-spirited comments, mocking or shaming others, bullying, and any other behavior that causes emotional harm or distress.

Do you have any content on your profiles that would be potentially embarrassing if an employer, grandparent, or respected mentor saw it?

Use only uplifting images and language. Do not post sexually explicit images of yourself or others. Do not use profanities or violent language.

Do you find yourself in heated discussions online? Do you ever write comments online that you would never say to a person's face?

Avoid conflict. Avoid publicly discussing controversial topics where emotions can run high and can result in inflammatory or inappropriate discussions. Take it offline, have a private discussion, or simply do not respond. Always show respect for others' opinions. As members and leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we represent a diverse people with a diverse set of ideas, experiences, and perspectives. We cannot properly serve when we are dismissive of certain groups and ideas.

Special note regarding politics: The Seventh-day Adventist church does not officially endorse any candidate or political party. Voting choices are strictly up to the individual. Church leaders and employees should not inadvertently or intentionally use their influence to advocate for their political preferences. Employees of the Church should maintain principals of impartially and avoid promoting their political viewpoints on any of their social media profiles.

Let us reflect Christ and His love at all times—avoiding partisan politics and conflict.

Do you air your work frustrations online or gossip about co-workers?

Protect your work family. Everyone has good and bad days. Do not air work grievances on social media or use your channels as a sounding board for the problems you see in the Church. Others may be negatively impacted and turn away from the Church. You could also embarrass yourself or endanger your job. The Adventist community is very closely connected online so your posts may be widely seen. It is always best to seek counsel offline and/or direct your concerns to HR. Focus on the positive, and, like any family, resolve issues privately.

Have your opinions, habits, faith, or attitudes changed over the years?

Remove old posts or accounts that may reflect poorly on you or no longer represent your beliefs. Old posts or accounts that misrepresent who we are now, may detract from our ability to be effective witnesses, especially as many people seek to find fault with us. We are all growing in our faith and developing our character. It's a good idea to clean up old posts or profiles that are no longer relevant to who we are.

Do you find yourself glued to your phone, losing track of time, and not accomplishing what you need to do? Do you browse social media until bedtime and then have difficulty getting to sleep?

Create balance. Social media can be addictive; know when to turn it off. It is healthy to take breaks from social media. Don't let social media affect your job performance or your personal life. Tune out roughly two hours before bedtime for optimal sleep, don't check social media while driving or walking, and maintain good posture.

IN SUMMARY

If you are unsure whether or not to share or write something online, err on the safe side and simply don't post it. It is likely that you have friends who are not Christians or who may be struggling with their faith. Don't be another reason for them to leave their Church. Find ways to use your digital influence to encourage others and share your faith in positive ways.

If you are forgetful or ignore the guidelines above, there are a few things that could happen. You could: Inhibit the ability of the Church to accomplish its mission; turn someone away from the Church; get your organization in legal trouble; get fired.

Personal social media often captures snapshots at different points of an individual's spiritual journey. Given the gospel of grace, these snapshots should not be held against a person years after conversion and seasons of dedicated service. By removing old content that does not reflect who we have become, we can prevent it from sending mixed messages to those we witness to online or providing fuel to those who seek to find fault.

YouTube: a channel for my church?

A FEW QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU START

Among all the social networks, a YouTube channel has many advantages in terms of visibility and referencing on the second largest search engine in the world after Google. Videos are becoming increasingly important on the web. Shared on social networks, their dynamic content has a potentially greater reach than articles or photos.

The containment period will have been a good time to test and evaluate the reach of a YouTube channel and its different types of content.

The Union's Youtube channel aims to collaborate with the local church channels, increase their visibility and referencing as well as the number of visits to the related pages and thus highlight the collective experience.

One of the keys to this great visibility, besides the effort of a good referencing, is a set of quality contents! Everyone will benefit from it! *The communication department of your conference is here to accompany you in these steps and to advise you before launching the Youtube channel of your church.* The purpose of this tutorial is to provide some guidance on the creation and management of the latter.

Special features of a local channel

It represents the Union at the local level, and more widely the Adventist Church in your country. It is therefore normal at the time of its creation:
- to inform the your constituency of its creation
- to respect the naming conventions in place force
- to respect some visual identity and representation recommendations.

CREATION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH YOUTUBE CHANNEL

The first step is to have a Gmail address. We advise you to create one to manage your church's communication. See our article on creating gmail addresses*.
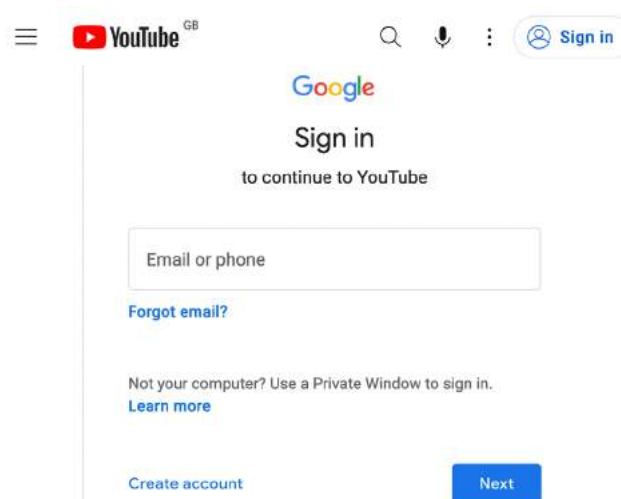
If the church already has a Gmail address, go directly to YouTube, log in and **click on create a channel**.

You will be greeted by a message from YouTube. You are about to become a content creator! **Click on the "Start" button.**

Use a custom name

Be careful, here you must select "Use a custom name" so that the channel is recognised as a "brand" channel and thus allows advanced functions such as adding administrators. This will allow you to manage the channel with a team. If you already have a YouTube channel and have chosen to create it using a personal name, it will be possible to switch this channel later, but it is better to do it from the start!
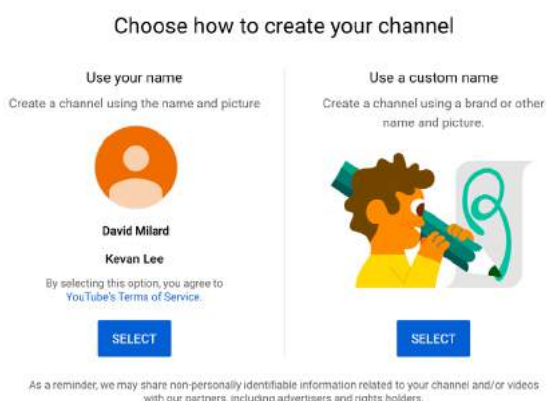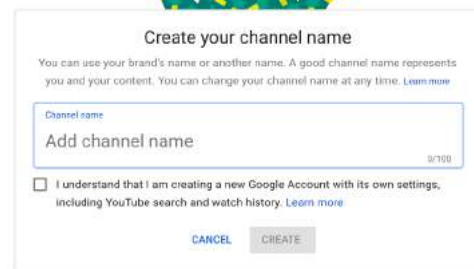

Naming system for Local churches

For your church, create the name of the channel, taking care to respect the naming system in place:
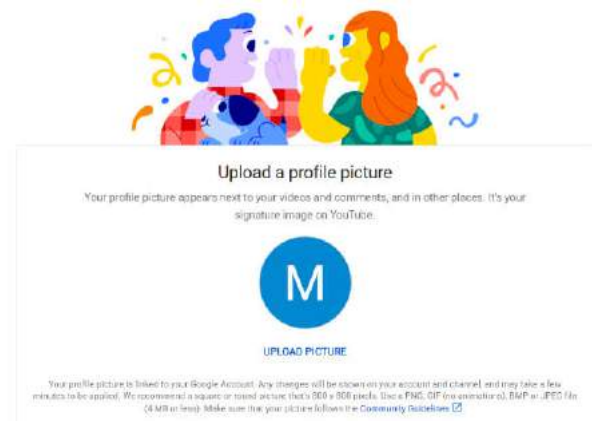**"XYZ Seventh-day Adventist Church".**
We want to respect and reinforce a Union/Conference/Mission Adventist visual identity online and it is important that all official church channels are easily identifiable.
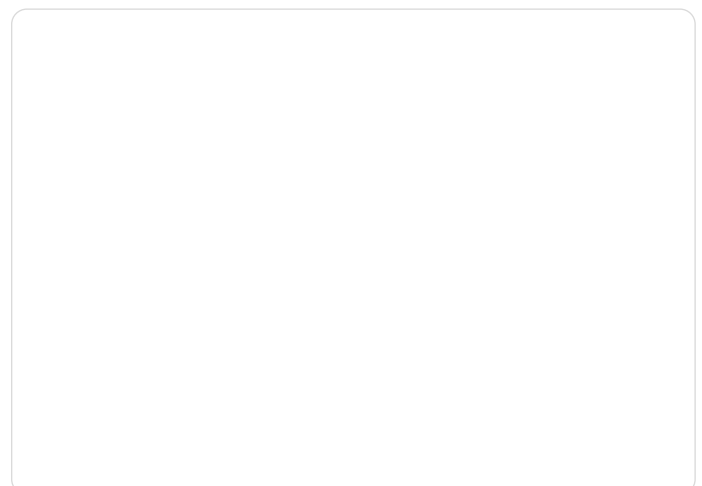
A profile picture

Once the name has been placed and this step validated, all that is left to do is to put a profile photo.
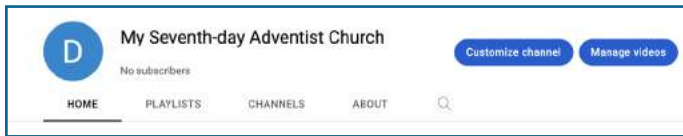

Congratulations, your church's YouTube channel is created! You will be able to witness the spiritual life of your community and share the Gospel message with the world!

NOTES

CUSTOMISING THE CHANNEL

You still have to personalise the channel to make it unique and appealing!

We advise you to use the **online software Canva** for your designs and gaphics. It is possible to get a free license for churches, so don't miss out!

Four sections to which we ask you to pay particular attention

After clicking on *"customise the chain"* there are four places that will help you.

1. The About section

Introduces the channel, its purpose, its publisher (the local church). This is the place to make the following links:
- website of the Local Church
- possible social networks Local Church
- federal website

2. Adding an image

Add Channel "Artwork" will allow you to customize the channel's home bar. You can add a custom design, or a picture of your city to start. In the same section, include your church's website address, as well as its Facebook or Instagram page.

3. Adding channels

The "Channel Selection" section will allow you to reference the Federation's YouTube channel, Hope Channel, sister churches, etc. It is strongly recommended that at least the Conference's YouTube channel be listed.

4. Adding a section

It is very useful to add the playlists you have created, or those of other YouTube channels such as TED Adventist media. It is thanks to this function that you can create a channel for your church, in order to improve its digital visibility, without having to create content internally. You will be able to be a relay of the programmes organised by the TED!

Single playlist

Allows you to highlight a series of talks, on a series of meditations or other. If the playlist is hosted locally by your channel, you can select "My playlists" and search for the one you want to highlight. However, if you don't have any content of your own yet, or if you want to highlight another channel's playlist, click on "enter playlist URL".

"Multiple playlists"

Allows you to collect several playlists from different YouTube channels on a given topic. Remember to name the section you create on your channel.

To enter a URL, go to the YouTube pages of the playlists you want to retrieve, then go to the playlist tab. Click on "View full playlist", then, retrieve the URL that is located in the navigation bar. You will be able to adjust the playlists to choose which one to show first. Below is a vertical layout that has the advantage of being able to detail the content of a playlist and make people want to watch it. So you can create a channel in five minutes, just by collecting images and existing playlists.

UPLOADING A VIDEO?

It's simple, wherever you see the icon ▣◢,it will allow you to either upload a pre-recorded video or do a live broadcast. You can also go directly to "YouTube Studio".

Live broadcasts

Activate the function 24 hours before by checking the account. The easiest way to do this is to click on the "Go Live" button which will automatically guide you through the verification stage. Alternatively follow: https://www.youtube.com/verify

Verification is mandatory for any video over 15M.
To see at a glance all the options (live, long videos, custom URLs, etc.): https://www.youtube.com/features?nv=1

YouTube Studio is your Dashboard. This is where you can check comments, analytics, audience etc.
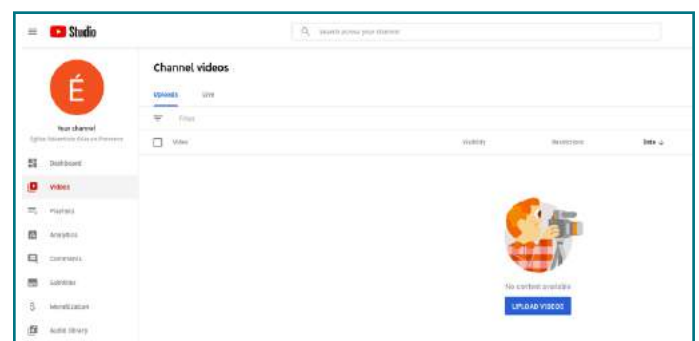
MANAGING THE CHANNEL

Now that your church's YouTube channel is complete, all that's left is to show you how to add a team of administrators or moderators to help you run the channel!

Click on "Manage permissions"

If Google/YouTube asks you to authenticate yourself, this is perfectly normal. For some accounts, Google may also ask you to fill in a code that will have been sent to the mobile number listed as the main contact for the account.

Enter the email address (Gmail) of the people you want to invite to help you manage the channel. Please note that there are 3 levels of control:

- ***Owner:*** will allow that person to do whatever they want with the channel, including deleting it.

- ***Administrator:*** will allow this person to do almost anything except delete the channel..

- ***Communication Manager:*** llows the person to moderate comments, view analytics, etc. but not to add/remove videos, change playlists, etc.

This section allows you to change/revoke previously given permissions.

The YouTube channel is functional for your church and can serve as a showcase for what is happening in the Federation or for the activities of the departments.

NOTES

CHECKLIST

Improve the visibility of videos

When creating a new YouTube video, make sure you have answered the following questions:

☐ **Quality** Is the video in high definition (HD)?

☐ **Keywords** Does your file name contain the right keywords?

☐ **Thumbnail** Is it in the right format (16:9; resolution 1280x720; minimum width 640 pixels)?

☐ **Video title.** Does the title of your video include the important keywords?

☐ **Decription** Is the description explicit enough (200-400 words); does it also contain these keywords.

☐ **Link to your website** Is a link to your site included in this description?

☐ **Have you added tags** (descriptive keywords to help people discover your content)?

☐ **End screen/cards** Do you use the last 5-20 seconds to promote other videos, encourage viewers to subscribe to your channel, or another call to action?

GOING FURTHER: MANAGING YOUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL IN CREATOR STUDIO
https://support.google.com/youtube/
answer/9396735?hl=en-GB

PART 3

CONTENT CREATION

Basics of Content Creation and Strategy

Jamie Jean Schneider Domm - Digital Strategist, Social Media + Big Data, North American Division

"Social media is the ultimate equalizer. It gives a voice and a platform to anyone willing to engage." *– Amy Jo Martin*

Before we get started, we must first answer the question, "Who is a content creator?" The ultimate source of creative content and inspiration will always be the Bible and God. Therefore, those of us who answer the call to share the gospel online must always look first to Jesus Christ and His word for guidance.

Social media and modern technologies have eased entry into the world of telling stories, sharing ideas, and expressing thoughts through creative visual content to a wide audience. We can all be writers, creatives, and publishers now. This means that when it comes to creating content for evangelism and discipleship, the role is no longer restricted to pastors, theologians, and other trained professionals. Church leaders can organize teams of content creators within their churches and ministries by empowering professionals or aspiring young people with expertise in design, video, communication, writing, technology, etc. Many congregations have yet to tap into the potential of tech savvy members and their modern-day spiritual gifts. Greater collaboration across multiple generations can be fostered by investing in young people and giving them space to utilize their skills in this area for the Church.

Organize Your Team

There's no single way to organize your team(s), given that every ministry is unique. Start by taking an inventory of your church's human resources and individuals' personal interests and skills. Then organize accordingly to best accomplish your goals and utilize your church body's strengths and talents. Determine roles and responsibilities, set up a multi-channel content calendar that can be shared with everyone on the team, and map out your content strategy, being sure to take an integrative approach that incorporates both traditional and digital methods of communication.

Download a content calendar template (be sure to customize it to reflect your channels). We recommend using Google Docs for sharing the content planning calendar with your team.

RULE OF 7

Remember the "Rule of 7"

The "Rule of 7" states that a person needs to be exposed to a message at least seven times before they'll take a desired action. Develop a comprehensive content strategy that incorporates both traditional media and digital, working together to maximize impact. In most cases, digital media is not used in place of traditional forms of communication, but in addition, as a means of amplifying your message to a larger community.

Implementing an effective content strategy requires repeated, consistent messaging from multiple communication channels. Plan to repackage your content for different platforms and channels. If we view evangelism holistically, every touchpoint matters, as your target audience is likely to come in contact with several.

These touchpoints may include, but are not limited to:

- ***Traditional:*** printed awareness materials, lectures, events, courses, seminars, pop-up advertising, flyers or radio advertisements, direct mail, billboards, leaflets, newsletters, printed newsletters, other materials, posters, letterhead, business cards, general resources, radio broadcasts

- ***Digital:*** digital advertising messages and design, digital newsletters/emails, digital publications/blogs, digital flyers, website(s), social media content, videos, online resources, podcasts

With this in mind, try utilizing a diversity of content, touchpoints, and channels that are relevant to your mission to help reinforce the same "story" or message in unique ways to maximize effectiveness.

The 20/80 Rule

Whether you realize it or not, your communication and content (or lack thereof) are telling a story, and that story is key to giving your audience a sense of why your ministry is valuable. When your audience values what you're doing, they are more likely to respond to your call-to-actions and actively participate in other ways. Social media is popular because it speaks to a basic human need: to connect and share. We must use digital media to tell our "story" all day, every day, and build a connection with our community that ultimately motivates them to draw closer to Christ.

Along with the "Rule of 7," you'll want to incorporate the 20/80 principle in your content planning. The ideal ratio of posts on an organization's digital media should be 20% direct appeals (calls-to-action to get involved, donate, register, etc.), 80% engagement. In other words, 80% of the content posted by your ministry should:
- demonstrate the need your organization fulfills through services it provides,
- share what initiatives your ministry is implementing to satisfy the felt needs of your community,
- update your audience on your various goals and efforts,
- showcase impact through testimonials and results,
- and engage and connect with your followers.

Think of social media as a potluck with friends during which you share your desire to go on a mission trip, or your excitement about an upcoming event you're organizing. You wouldn't hard sell them or ask them for their involvement with no context, but you might talk about your goals, ambitions, why it's important, and why you're excited about what you have planned. Once your friends understand how important this mission trip or event is, they will naturally be more inclined to help you when you mention that you haven't yet reached your fundraising goal, or they may even accept your invitation to attend with you.

The same principle is true for an organization's social media channels. If you spend most of your efforts telling the story behind your ministry and creating value, your followers will gradually become more emotionally invested.

Then, when you make direct appeals for action (the 20%), you will have better results because your supporters feel like they understand the importance of your mission, know what to expect, and know how the money will be used. This is especially important for millennial givers, who demand transparency and accountability when it comes to use of funds.

Plan Efficiently

Social media can seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be. For most Adventist entities, social media manager is just one of many hats an employee or volunteer might wear. If you happen to be a full-time digital strategist, you're likely managing multiple campaigns and projects at once. Regardless of your level of expertise, there never seems to be enough time in the day to accomplish everything you need to do in order to stay on top of the ever-growing evangelistic influence of digital media. Streamlining your approach will help you and your team tackle a large workload.

Here are our top three tried-and-true time-saving tips for developing your content and/or campaign strategy:

- ***Schedule your content in batches.*** Scheduling your content (and ads) in advance helps you focus on big picture items without the urgency of consistent posting. Plan out regular content in advance and make time to schedule it in monthly or bi-weekly chunks. Then you can focus your attention on engagement, community building, data analysis, strategic planning, and other projects. Staying on top of performance analytics enables you to better evaluate and optimize your strategy, ultimately helping you reach your campaign goals. This technique empowers you to be more proactive

in your digital strategy, as opposed to reactive. You'll also have more flexibility to respond quickly to comments or address any unexpected issues or changes.

- ***Create evergreen content and repurpose posts.*** Just because you posted a piece of content once doesn't mean your entire audience has seen it or had the time to react. Remember the "Rule of 7" states that a person must see a message at least seven times before they take action. Consequently, it's a good idea to use one post multiple times to ensure greater exposure. Over the course of several months, you can schedule pieces of evergreen content with slightly different wording and images, and post at different times of day and different days of the week to reach different groups of people. Evergreen content is content that maintains it's relevancy indefinitely, without losing its usefulness after a certain time period. This enables your team to invest more time into creating compelling posts and strong resources, videos, and images that could be used multiple times, instead of constantly seeking to create new original content. Then, weave new content around these evergreen posts as it becomes available. This technique helps guarantee a consistent posting schedule and continuous flow of content.

For event-specific campaigns, you can leverage the technique of repurposing to build urgency towards deadlines. For example, as the last day for an early-bird registration approaches, you can rework the same message and call-to-action using key buzzwords to attract attention.

Messaging example:
- Two weeks until the early-bird discount ends!
- Early-bird registration ends THIS Friday. Register today!
- Don't miss out! The discount price for registration ends tomorrow. Sign up now!

Then utilize the scheduling in advance technique and set up the posts ahead of time, as well as any targeted social ads you have planned.

- ***Build off previous campaign plans for reoccurring events.*** his is possibly our biggest hack for annual or repeating conferences and programs. Always keep your strategy outline and performance report from the previous campaign. For the next project, simply reuse what worked, change what didn't, update/tweak the content and timing for the new event, and freshen up the images. Systematically building off the previous campaign improves campaign performance and results each time you make adjustments that strengthen it. By tracking each campaign performance and studying the results, you not only continue to reach your audience more effectively, but lower overall costs. Why reinvent the wheel, when you can just improve it?

Repurpose What You Already Produce

No need to start from scratch; your team is probably already doing a good job generating content related to newsworthy events or outreach. Packaging it for the digital space and publishing online enables you to grow your potential audience exponentially beyond the worship service. A great amount of what your team may already produce for your local church ministries is content, for example: sermons and live-streams each week, studies for small groups, messages from the pastor in newsletters, videos, pictures from events, testimonials, etc. Always look for content you are already creating, then consider how it can be repackaged and weaved into your overall digital content strategy. This can be inexpensive and have long-term value as the content stays in place and is relevant for people to discover far into the future. Prioritize content that will help your audience in a tangible way, either emotionally, physically, spiritually, or psychologically.
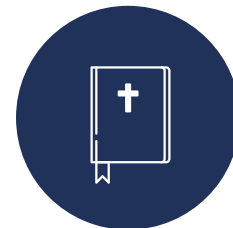
Finding Relevant Content Ideas For Your Target Audience
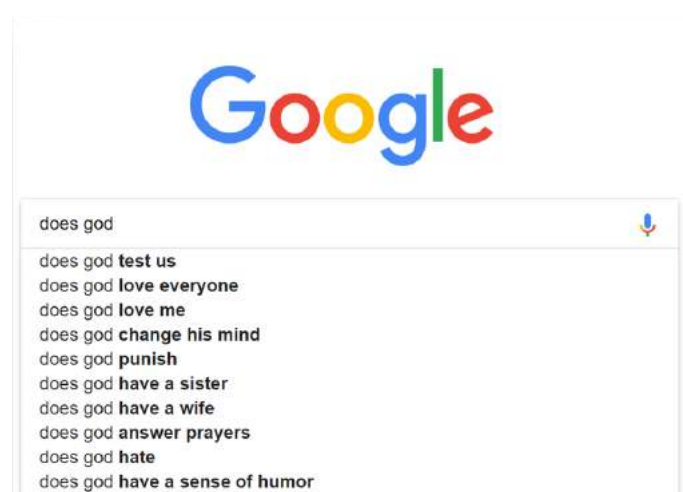
If you're like many content creators, you've hit a creative roadblock at some point. It doesn't matter if you're a pastor, Christian vlogger, or a digital disciple; we have all run out of content ideas and sat staring at our laptops at some point. As digital evangelists, we want to create relevant content, but may not always be sure what people are searching for online. Our purpose is to meet the needs of people in the digital space, and luckily, the inspiration we need lies in tools many of us use every day. Being strategic and intentional with the content we create, can help us provide people with the answers and connection they are searching for.

I've said this before: people are literally Googling for God, and I don't expect this to change anytime soon. Each year there are millions of Google searches for answers to questions like:

- Is God real?
- What happens when we die?
- How do I know I'm saved?
- Why is there so much suffering in the world?

There is a great need for our message of hope and wholeness. Additionally, many people are hurting emotionally, entertaining suicidal thoughts, or feel there is no hope for their situation. They turn to the internet for companionship, understanding, information, anonymity, and more. It's easier for them to pour out their heartfelt searching to Google or on social media than it is to talk to a friend, neighbor, co-worker, or family member. Consequently, this is where we, as disciples, need to cast our net. We need to provide the kind of spiritual food the fish are looking to feed on.

Here is an easy tip for a wealth of content ideas: Find content, write content, and curate content related to top Google searches. Frame your posts to pique curiosity and answer people's questions, addressing their deepest longings. You can get top search data from any search engine, YouTube, and other social media trend tracking sites. Try it. Start typing in a question and let the search engine auto-finish. The top results represent the most popular search queries. In other words, you will see what large numbers of people are searching for online. It gives you a sneak peek into their needs, worries, nagging questions, and often hidden yearnings.

These trends allow us to predict what topics audiences may find interesting, and we can use this predictability to speak to the masses in a relevant way. When we make content that speaks to people's spiritual needs and seeks to address their deepest longings, we can change lives through digital evangelism. Being strategic and intentional with the content we create allows us to provide people with the answers and connection they are looking for online.

Bonus Tips:

- Explore Google Trends for more ideas that can be specific to your location.
- Name your blog post, video, etc. the same as the search result you're basing your content on, so the search engines match it to that specific query. This helps your content appear higher in the search results and receive greater visibility. For example, you could start typing "Does God…" into the Google search box and choose the top-ranking query in the example above: "…test us." Then create a blog post and/or video named "Does God test us?"

"You must come close to those for whom you labor, that they may not only hear your voice, but shake your hand, learn your principles, feel your sympathy."
Ellen White, Gospel Workers p.192

I cannot stress this enough: while data and research can be a huge asset when trying to find relevant content to create and issues to address, nothing replaces quality time with those you are seeking to reach. The best thing you can do in order to understand the needs and interests of your audience is to engage with them in person. Talk to them, ask questions, show them you care, and dig deep into their perspectives and challenges. This kind of relationship-building can also take place in the digital space when necessary.

Additional Content Tips & Ideas:

- Try new things and see how your audience responds.
- Crowd-source content from your church community (members' content as well as conference, union, and division resources) to help when you have limited time or manpower. You don't have to create everything.
- Break the scroll, think differently, and allow creativity in your team.
- Build predictability/expectations for when new content will be released (like a new blog post every week or new podcast episode released on the first of each month) but don't be so predictable it's boring.
- Develop a multi-generational creative team with room to innovate and fail.
- Lower the barrier to entry by demonstrating what it's like to be a part of your church community. Peel back the corporate-ness of a brand to reveal humanity by featuring behind the scenes videos and live streams.
- Put your church culture on display. Give your audience a glimpse of the events, spiritual life, and friends they might make.
- Champion your ministries, team, and member achievements online.
- Find ways to showcase how non-members could fit in and be welcomed in your church.
- Tell stories, and share experiences and testimonies online.

- Offer digital bible studies, live-streamed prayer sessions, webinars, etc.
- Share inspirational passages, health nuggets, practical advice for day-to-day challenges, marriage and parenting tips, community alerts, resources relevant to community issues, etc.

Content Tips for Personal Digital Discipleship

Start slow, if sharing spiritual content online is new to you and your friends. However, continue to be your authentic, unique self, who is also in a public relationship with Jesus. Share your interests but find natural ways to weave in your faith. Over time, it will get easier.

Share practical content that is relevant to you and helps "prepare the soil" for future conversations with people within your sphere of influence.

Some examples, as described by Communication Executive Rachel Lemons Aitken, could include:
- Relationship articles
- Lifestyle content
- Healthy living headlines
- Videos showing healthy food being prepared
- Recipes
- Workout tips
- How you're making health changes in your life
- Mental and emotional health tips

The Purpose of Content

Digital media grants the community the immediate ability to sense what your church is about by seeing its:
- Content
- Personalities
- Culture
- Environments
- Beliefs
- Services to the community

However, in order for your digital content to be effective, your online visitors must actually feel welcomed to attend in person, transforming online engagements and conversations into an on-site, in-person experience. Remember those brand touchpoints discussed earlier.

> A person's perception of your church and faith will be based almost entirely on experiences they've had interacting with your organization (brand)

Your digital strategy must go beyond "content out, bodies in." Strive to create content that moves people through their spiritual journey. Find ways to feed your community's spiritual needs beyond the few hours they spend in a church service each week. Provide spiritual guidance to those people who may never come to a church service. Afterall, the kingdom of God is an all-day, every-day pursuit. His Church and teachings should be available 24/7.

Done is Better Than Perfect

People are drawn to authenticity in communication, not perfection. This trend is likely to hold true over the next decade, and this is good news for content creators. There is a place for highly produced professional content, but don't let resource or skill-set limitations prevent you from attempting to create valuable content. Remember:

> "When you are called, and have a teachable spirit, God will equp you,"

Keep learning and keep trying. You and your team will improve with time and practice. Your videos and content do not always have to be produced pieces, nor should they be, in order to optimize relatability and impact. In fact, overly produced content can turn people away. That doesn't mean be sloppy or allow for typos, but understand that you're not competing with Fortune 500 advertising campaigns or mega-church branding. Local churches and ministries have the advantage when it comes to showcasing real people, authenticity, and community in a way that doesn't feel contrived. Don't hesitate to go live on your mission trip, post your event pictures, and share your in-the-moment thoughts online.

Fail Productively

It's fine to fail, just make sure you learn. Not every idea will be a winner, but each piece of content you produce enables you and your team to see in real-time what resonates with people and what doesn't. Your team, through trial and error, can steer toward content that is most impactful to your target audience. Digital media allows us to test, change, and update our content and messages until we get it right, without the burden of high costs. Remember, you're not in this alone. The Holy Spirit is working alongside you. Your message might only reach a limited number of eyes at first, but it could be the exact message those people needed to hear. Small impact doesn't necessarily mean no impact.

Storytelling

Storytelling is the most powerful form of human communication. Consider this: more than a third of Jesus' teachings were delivered through story.

The key to capturing someone's attention

There is a reason why most of the Bible is made up of stories: it is an incredible tool that Jesus himself used to capture attention and convey more than a third of his teachings.

Christ comes to Earth, proclaims the kingdom of God to anyone and everyone who's gonna listen and he does so using story as the primary device of communication. So what is it about storytelling that makes it so powerful?

Well, a bit part of it comes down to the way that our brains render character-driven narratives. To quote psychologist Pamela Rutledge, "To the human brain, imagined experiences are processed "the same as real experiences." So when someone's telling you a story, as you begin to imagine that story in your head as you hear it, your brain is processing that in the same way as if it actually happened.

In a culture as fast-paced and attention deficit as ours is, understanding how to capture someone's focus and attention is an invaluable skill. Storytelling is applicable if you're speaking from stage, posting on social media, creating videos. Anytime communication is happening, storytelling is valuable. It's the only type of communication that forces our brains to focus.

THE SOURCE OF GREAT STORIES

Stories don't need to be extravagant to be powerful. On the contrary, the most powerful stories are the ones that deal with the innermost struggles that every single one of us is forced to deal with. Questions like is this all there is to life? Am I good enough? Does anyone even care? These types of questions are the starting point for the absolute best stories

But when you see storytelling not through the lens of an extravagant, over-the-top adventure plot, but instead through the internal struggles happening within each one of us, well that's when you begin to realize that you have a countless number of stories to share, just as we all do because we all share the same human experience. And just like we're wired to listen and respond to stories, we're also wired to share stories with others.

Using storytelling to communicate with your church allows information to reach members on a personal level and thanks to the digital age this has become easier than ever.

Discover the storytelling power of "show, don't tell"

Telling people facts can be helpful. But this is not a great way to impart a lesson. This is why you must master the art of "show, don't tell."

Christ comes to Earth and he shares some of the most important truths that the world has ever heard and how does he do it? By showing us through stories that we know as parables. Instead of just telling us about redemption, he shows us the story of the Prodigal Son. Instead of just telling us about love, he shows us the story of the Good Samaritan. And instead of just telling us about the kingdom, he shows us the story of the Mustard Seed. Show, don't tell.

When you communicate by telling, you force others to experience the exact same thing as you did and this negates their unique circumstances, life experiences, world views.

However, when you communicate by showing, using story, you invite everyone to the table, to stumble upon their own epiphanies, and to experience truth in a deeper and lasting way.

The two secrets to telling a gripping story

Every great story demands contrast, good versus evil, strong versus weak, life versus death, love versus hate, contrast. Two opposing forces warring against each other. And the tension between these two forces can be summed up in two simple words, and these represent two of the most crucial elements of every gripping story, triumph and tragedy. Every good story needs a healthy dose of both triumph and tragedy, and the greater the dose, often, the greater the story. And perhaps there's no better example of this than the story of Jesus, particularly, his crucifixion and resurrection.

If you want to tell a good story, then you need to embrace both tragedy and triumph. You can't have one without the other. But when these two elements work together, they forge the foundation of a great story.

Three storytelling hacks that will help you to reach more people with your message

Here are three simple ways to instantly supercharge your stories.

Tip 1: Be specific. When you're telling a story, you're describing a series of events to another person or group of people, and while you can clearly recall what these events looks like in your mind's eye, the audience that you're telling the story to, well they don't have any context for that. And so, the more specific that you can be while describing what happened, the more that you can paint a clear picture in the mind of your listener. So for instance, instead of describing a man by saying he was tall, say something like he was six foot, five inches tall. That extra layer of specificity allows my brain to formulate a better picture of this man in my head, as you describe him to me.

Tip 2: Use dialogue. So, instead of recalling a conversation by saying, "Yeah, I talked to my mom and she told me dot, dot, dot," actually recreate the dialogue. You'd wanna say something like, "So I call my mom on the phone and I say to her, "Mom, here's the thing, I know you're expecting me "to come by for dinner tonight, but something just came up. "I'm not gonna be able to make it." And I could instantly tell my mom was upset. Before I could even finish the sentence, she was saying, "I can't believe it! "I got your favorite meal ready, dot, dot dot, "yada, yada, yada," the conversation would go on from there. And this is important because it allows your audience, in this instance, to be in the moment. Instead of just hearing about what happened, they get to experience as if it was happening in real time.

Tip 3: Use the five senses. use all five senses, sight, sound, touch, smell and taste. Remember, as you recount a series of events and tell someone else a story, you can clearly see what's happening in your head, but the person you're telling the story to, likely has no context for anything that you can see in your mind's eye. So you need to paint a picture for them. But, not just paint them a picture pertaining to what you saw, but to how it really felt in the moment. So instead of just describing what the barn looked like, you could say something like, "The barn smelt like fresh sawdust, and every time I took "a step, I heard a different type of creek "coming from the floorboards beneath me." More than anything, when telling a story, you're probably gonna be focusing on the sense of sight and creating a vivid image in the mind of your listener, but don't neglect the other four senses.

Note some verbs to use

1.2.3

A three-step foolproof storytelling formula for telling compelling stories

Do you struggle with connecting your message with people? This three-step storytelling formula is a foolproof process you can use to move people to action.

Wherever communication takes place, this simple three-step storytelling formula will help you.

Three simple steps.

Step 1: A character with a desire
Step 2: Encounters a problema
Step 3: Makes a decision

Example, the story of Jesus. t's sometimes called the greatest story ever told, so how does that fit into our three step formula. Well, let's see.
- **Step one**, character with a desire. Jesus comes to our world on a mission to redeem humankind and usher in the new kingdom of heaven on earth.
- **Step two**, character with a desire encounters a problem. Well, to accomplish his mission, Jesus must willingly give himself up to be put to death, a death that will come in the form of crucifixion.
- **Step three**, our character with a desire encounters a problem, makes a decision. And Jesus agonizes over this decision, right? He cries tears of blood. He asks his father, "Hey, is there any other way?" And yet inevitably, Jesus makes the decision in a demonstration of perfect love to give up his life for the sake of others.

So, that's the greatest story ever told distilled into our simple three step storytelling formula. ***Not every story can be as powerful as the Jesus story, but you can use the exact same progression to share basically anything.***

Keep stories Christ-centred
You can use some questions to keep us on track:
- Is God the subject or the main theme?
- Where is Christ at work?
- How does God change things?

Use all the platforms on which you are present

Storytelling is not just for your blog or Facebook. It applies to every platform your church is on and every page of your website. Use it on landing pages, your blog, your 'About Us' page, ministry pages, social media campaigns and even advertisements.

Turn your church into an engaging persona filled with stories that engage readers. You'll keep your current members interested while reaching out to new people. Plus, stories make people want to share them.

By using all platforms, you will reach a much wider audience who will continue to share your stories. You may even find that your stories reach platforms where your church is not even present. Also, as your stories gain popularity, you will discover more stories as people comment on them, giving you more ideas and a better understanding of what people want and need to hear.

NOTES
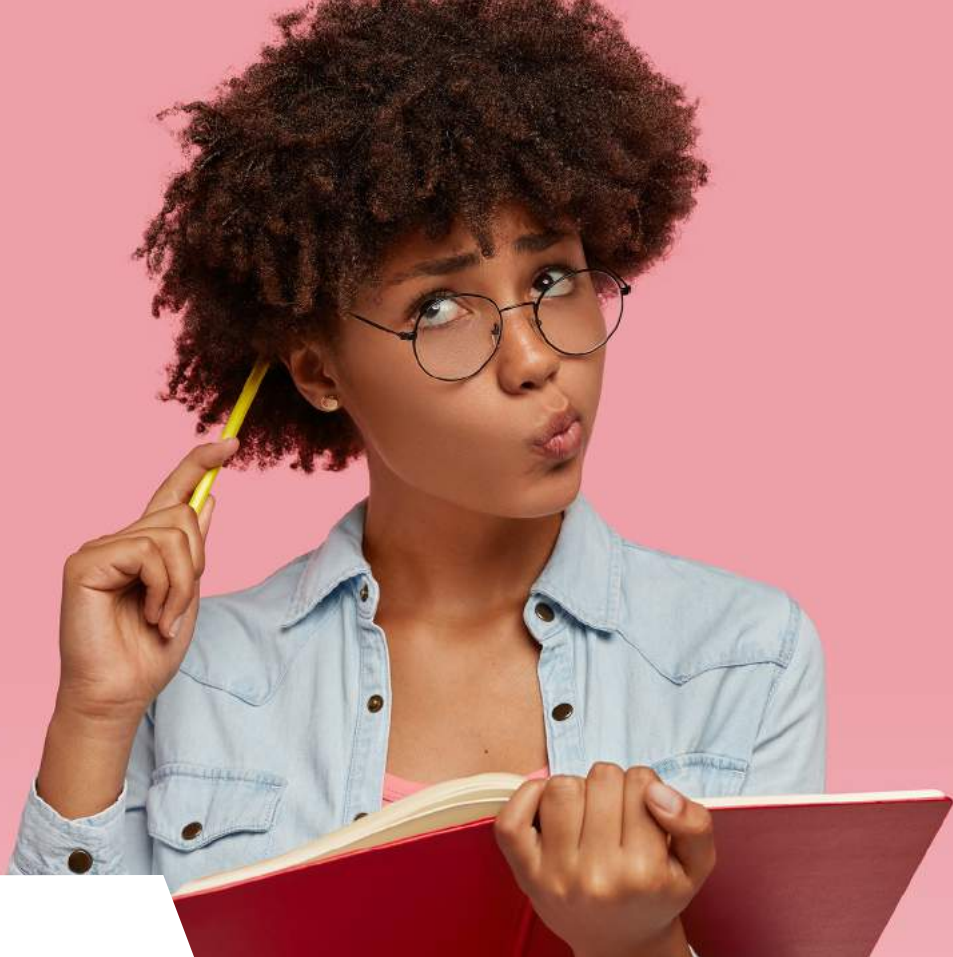
News & Creative Writing

David Neal - Communication & Media Director for the Trans-European Division

There are typically three types of writing for the Adventist Communicator: the news report, the commentary, and the testimony.

Whatever the type, we must know who we are trying to connect with. For an Adventist audience? Or for the community? Are they firm or nominally Christian? Otherworld faith or secular? What is the biblical literacy level of the reader - excellent, limited, or poor?

In addition, what is the age range of the readers? Young, old, post-modern, generation, Y or Z? We need to identify who the reader is so our writing may connect.

The News Report

Any news report is composed of the answers to 5 key questions: **who, what, where, when and why**. In this sense, the story becomes your story as an eyewitness. Who is this story about? One person or many? What is unique about this person that they are worth reporting about? Have they achieved something special? Have they given many years of service in their role? Are they celebrating an anniversary or graduation? Have they contributed something greater than themselves – for example, fundraising for a cause which will benefit others? What is it about them that gives them a 'sparkle factor' that will be of interest to the reader?

When reporting on a church event, a baptism, a day of fellowship, or a vision, the church has to reach the community – the same questions are asked.

Illustration

Let me illustrate with a report that typically reaches the editor of the church magazine:

> "On Sabbath, January 1st, Fred Smith was baptised at the London South SDA church. It was a great occasion with family, members, and friends in attendance. Before the baptism, Pastor Jones read the statements of faith Fred promised to live by. The congregation sang 'Just as I am' as Pastor Jones immersed Fred. Afterwards, Fred was accepted into the fellowship of the South London church, followed by a pot-luck lunch."

Using the who, what, where, when, and why principle, let's try and reshape that story so that the reader's eyes do 'not glaze over.

> "Fred Smith's pathway to baptism on Sabbath, January 1st, at the London South church is nothing short of a miracle. Fred was just 19 when he realised his life was a mess. Having grown up an Adventist Christian, he decided that the faith of his parents wasn't for him. In pursuing happiness through casual relationships and becoming considerably wealthy through a manic and stress-filled lifestyle, Fred reached a crisis point where he realised his life was empty.

One day last year, Fred reconnected with an old Pathfinder friend, John, from childhood. As they talked over a cuppa in a café and reminisced about growing up together, something stirred in Fred's heart. He missed listening to the stories of Jesus, the faith-building sermons and reflecting on the bible stories. Sensing something going on in Fred's life, John invited Fred to join his small group. This Fred did, and with the support of Pastor Jones, Fred recommitted his life to the Lord. No one was more thrilled about Fred's decision than John, who had consistently prayed for Fred for many years. Indeed, Fred's return was miraculous for many in the South London congregation!"

Which version would you read instead? And which version is more likely to be picked up by the editor of your church magazine.

The Commentary (or reflective thought piece)

Let's imagine you are interested in writing a reflective thought piece or Commentary for a church magazine that will inspire and encourage members on their discipleship journey. The task is to determine your theme – and write it down. Often, a thought piece arises due to a current event, particularly a news report. I was taught to hold the bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other. Following this principle is one way of ensuring that we keep connected with the world around us.

Illustration

As I listened to the news this morning, I heard that according to the 2021 census data (just published in December 2022), 46.2% of the English and Welsh population say they are Christian, a decline of 13.1 percentage points since the last census in 2011. I have an idea for an article!

Immediately my mind begins to buzz. Few people in the UK now say they are Christian. That's significant. There's a question here – how will that affect how we reach English and Welsh people with the gospel? With fewer people connecting with the Christian faith, how will that affect civic society? Fewer marriages? Further biblical illiteracy? Laws & policies instituted which are contrary to God's kingdom? How should the church respond? How does the bible say we should respond? Is it a more significant challenge for the church today to witness, or was it as complex for 1st-century Christians? And what if – will there come a day when the Christian faith will no longer exist in these lands?

That last question is quite dramatic, but if used as a title, you are sure of a reader! So, these questions are the seed thoughts which will shape the article.

The Testimony

The most effective way to communicate truth in today's Netflix-driven society is through the power of the story. A story is particularly appealing if it results in triumph over challenge. The purpose of Christian testimony is to share the goodness and power of God in the life of the one sharing the testimony and to encourage the listener in their faith. Not every disciple of Christ on their journey of faith has a dramatic 'triumph over challenge' story to tell. Often, they live their lives in what can be described as the 'joyful mundane', simply living their life with Christ living in and through them, consistently, quietly, but faithfully.

As we tell the story of an individual on their faith journey, it's helpful to tell their story in three parts:

1. My life before Christ
2. The point and circumstances of my decision to follow Christ
3. My life today – growing in Christ.

It is easy for the story of any individual to focus – on the individual – all about them. But in writing a personal testimony or about someone else, the challenge is to talk about the individual's life as their life connects with Christ. It is 'my story' in one sense as it connects with 'his story'. And that really is the unique quality of 'the testimony' because testimony is more about 'Him' than about 'us!

To unpack this a little more, it's worth asking the following questions:

- What was your life like before you met Christ?
- What were your hope and dreams?
- What were your biggest concerns?
- When you met Christ for the first time, how did you feel? How did you react?
- How have your priorities changed since meeting Christ?
- What emotions, feelings, and thought processes do you have since meeting Christ that you never had?

Ultimately, when we write a biography, a testimony about an individual, for all their achievement, for all their powerful and sometimes dramatic and exciting story, the person we want to lift through them is the power and influence of Christ.
Whatever we report, however, we reflect, whoever we profile, is it not the purpose of the Christian writer to lift Christ because it is Him we want the reader to connect with?
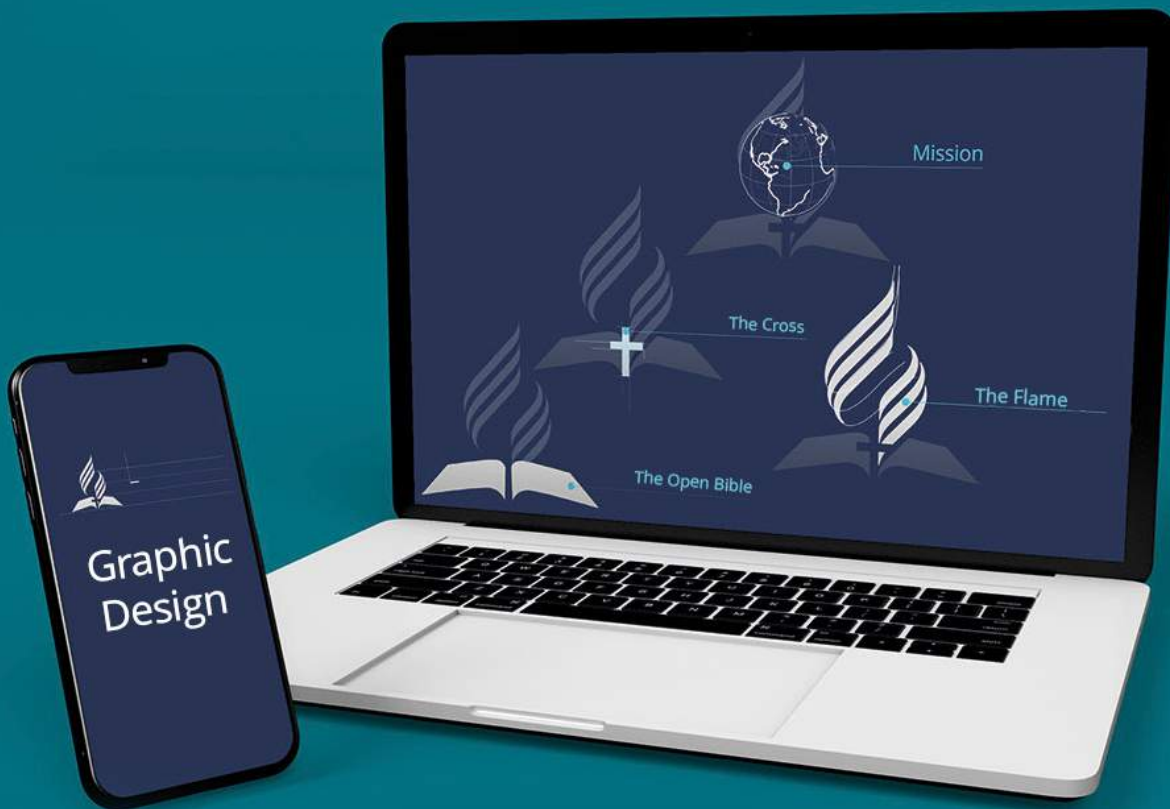
Graphic design

Presentation of the graphic design

We are all different from each other. We speak different languages. We dress differently. We have different jobs, different styles. We live in different countries and have different cultures. We also worship God in different ways. We celebrate and express our joy in a thousand different ways. And yet, we are all Seventh-day Adventists.

Through our churches, ministries and organisations, we all communicate differently, to the point where it can sometimes be difficult for the public to realise that we are all part of the same body. When we design our tools, we sometimes forget to think about our context and what would help our audience understand that we are part of the same body.

While the world is flooded with information, the various actors in our society are evolving their communication in parallel with societal, technological and marketing developments. As a result, content and information are multiplying and saturating us. It is therefore essential to adapt while remaining distinctive and easily identifiable by our audience.

So how can we present ourselves? How can we use typography, colours, patterns, images and layouts to better express our Adventist identity? How can we effectively achieve a design system for our formats, media and materials that is flexible enough to accommodate our diversity, while presenting us as a unified body?

After months of prayer, reflection, testing and collaboration with communicators and designers from churches around the world, a system has been developed. This global system helps to achieve our twin goals of unity and diversity. It will also be an effective aid in sharing the Good News.

This manual identifies the core elements and principles of our graphic design system. They are dynamic and updated through the lessons our members and church leaders learn from their audiences.

As language and culture are constantly evolving, we ensure that these guidelines are not static, but rather dynamic and adaptable. Some regions may feel the need to adapt these principles to their specific contexts.

We strongly encourage churches to think deeply about what works best for their respective audiences. However, what works best for most audiences in our increasingly mobile and interconnected world is to be able to identify ourselves effortlessly as Seventh-day Adventists.

Therefore, it is best to communicate clearly to avoid misunderstandings and confusion. This means that any major changes to the guidelines of our graphic design system will require a global debate and new decisions by our governing bodies.

The ultimate goal of this work is to help people identify us clearly so that we can convey our hope and joy about the beauty of things to come.

ADVENTIST SYMBOL AND LOGO

OLD LOGO

NEW LOGO

Evolution of the logo

With this new graphic design system, the Church's logo has evolved into a monochrome, solid-colour version.

The Adventist Symbol

The Seventh-day Adventist symbol, which many people think of as the "logo," has been in use since 1997, and is the most recognizable element of our existing visual identity system.

Aside from ensuring that the symbol continues to appear on materials, the new system affords a wide level of flexibility.

The symbol is now free to exist in isolation, detached from the name of the church or entity. It is still preferable for the symbol to have a thoughtful relationship to the rest of the design system.

We recommend in most cases, where the symbol is detached, it sit within in the Sabbath column. When not using the Adventist symbol within the Sabbath column or locked up with an entity name, the preferred version is the knocked-out circular version, which allows for more graphically pleasing layouts.

The symbol can be used in a variety of colours. However, it is recommended the symbol only be used in solid-colour versions. The symbol may be a different colour than the accompanying wordmarks, but all elements of the symbol should appear in the same colour.

The Bible forms the base of the design and represents the Biblical foundation of our beliefs. It is portrayed in a fully open position suggesting a full acceptance of God's word.

The Open Bible

The symbol of the cross, representing the gospel of salvation, is positioned in the centre of the design to emphasize Christ's sacrifice, which is the central theme of our faith.

The Cross

An invisible sphere represents the earth. It is encircled by three lines in the shape of a flame*. Our mission of evangelisation is worldwide.

Mission

This shape is formed by three lines encircling an implied sphere. The lines represent the three angels of Revelation 14 circling the globe and our commission to take the gospel to the entire world. The overall shape forms a flame symbolic of the Holy Spirit.

The Flame

LOGOTYPE

ENTITY

SYMBOL OF THE CHURCH

Composition of the logo

The church symbol and the logotype must be accompanied by the ® symbol.

Margins

Maintain a clear space around the logo to ensure visibility and impact. To make sure it's easy to read, avoid making the logo any smaller than: Basic wide logo minimum size: 2.25" wide; Basic centered logo minimum size: 1.625" wide. Use a minimum of two times the height of the lowercase letters on all four sides of the logo.
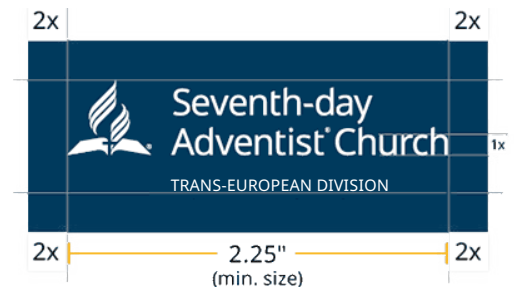
Logo positioning

The Adventist Church logo may be used centred or left aligned only. The name of the institution, entity or department should always be placed below the name of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, not in isolation.

Logo of local churches and entities

The name of the Federation, Department or Church must always appear *in the secondary part of the logo* and cannot replace the name of the Church.

Department logos

The departmental logos allow for quick identification of the communicating department or ministry and contribute to the consistency of the church's brand identity.

In order to further strengthen our brand, the format of the logos has evolved and that of the departments should be composed as follows:
* 1st line: Adventist Church
* 2nd line: name of department
* 3rd line: name of church or conference

Logo typography

Based on the Noto Sans typeface family, Advent Sans has extensive language coverage and allows for consistent communication in multiple languages.

ATTENTION: Only the Advent Sans font can be used with the Adventist Church logo.

✅ Advent Sans ❌ Noto Sans ❌ Open Sans

❌ Noto Serif ❌ Droid Serif

Secondary fonts

Noto Sans
Noto Serif
Open Sans
Droid Serif

Complementary typefaces to Advent Sans can be used as part of a coherent and harmonious design system.

The recommended fonts for blocks or body text are : Noto Sans and Noto Serif, Open Sans and Droid Serif. Open Sans and Droid Serif include a variety of weights which can be used for establishing visual hierarchy.

If you are a graphic designer, feel free to use other typefaces.

Design choice

You can choose the colour of the symbol and whether to use it with or without a circle, but you are asked not to make any creative changes to the symbol. It is important that it continues to be easily recognisable by our audience. So do not change or add any type of branding.

If you plan to use only the symbol, use the circular shape, as it reinforces your contrast with the rest of the layout. If you plan to use other formats, use them with care and caution.

Distortions

Warning: make sure you respect the proportions of the logo and do not stretch or distort it.

You can choose the colour of the symbol and whether to use it with or without a circle, but you are asked not to make any creative changes to the symbol. It is important that it continues to be easily recognisable by our audience. So do not change or add any type of mark.

Do not match a light logo with a light background

Do not match a dark logo with a dark background

Do not put the logo on a pattern background or with an image.

Do not put the logo in one colours on a background of several colours.

Do not apply any special effects on logo.

Do not apply gradients to the logo.

Do not add additional graphics to the logo

Do not add additional text to the logo

THE SABBATH COLUMN

The Creation Grid

The Adventist Church's graphic design system includes what we call the "design grid". This is a seven-column layout structure that you can use in your designs, where possible. These columns refer to the seven days of creation presented in Genesis.

The first six columns are for text, images, illustrations, trademarks or any other element. In these six columns you can insert all the elements of your communication. But the seventh column, the Sabbath column, should be separated to be special and different from the other six columns, as a visual reminder and celebration of the seventh day.

The idea is to keep a contrast between the six columns and the seventh. You can, for example, do something complex and colourful in the first six columns or you can do it only in the seventh column. However, if you do it on both sides, there will be no emphasis on the seventh column.

The "Sabbath column" may be filled with any background element: a full image, a texture, a pattern, an illustration with colours or white space, as long as it looks good and fills the whole column. Beyond the background image, the seventh column should never include a mark or other element, except for the Adventist symbol.

Recommandations

- Make sure the columns are exactly the same length.
- In the seventh column, use only the church symbol.
- Do not use the spherical symbol inside the seventh column.
- Do not use text in the Sabbath column.
- Avoid using a single line to separate the column.
- Provide contrast between the column and the rest of the design.
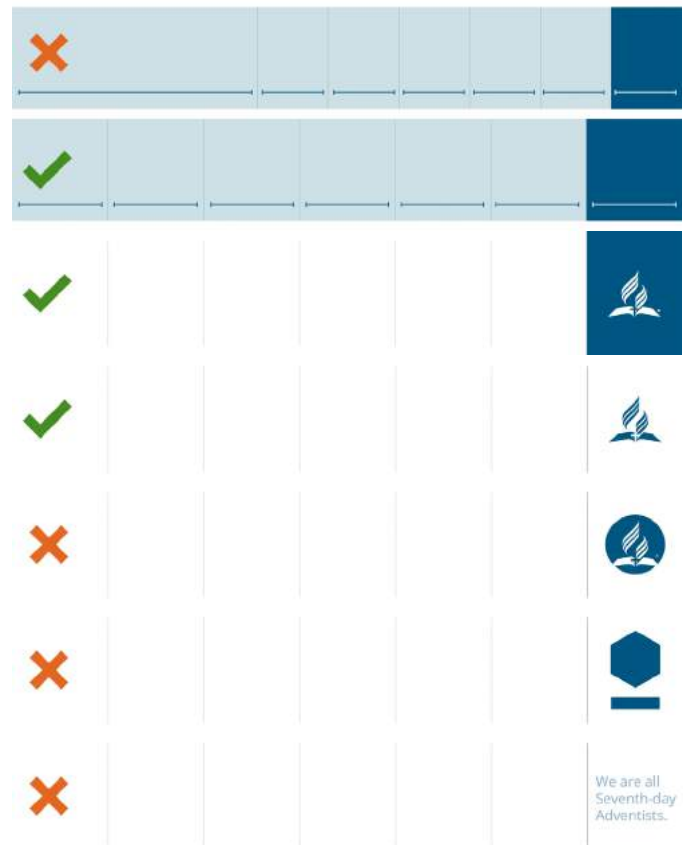
The colours

There is no official colour for the Adventist Church logo. It can be chosen according to the elements of the document or design of which the logo is a part. However, it must remain in a solid colour.

If the symbol is applied to an image in the Sabbath column, it should appear in white.

However, each department of the Church may choose an institutional colour to be used as a default. In this context, the General Conference has suggested a colour scheme.

The South England Conference has decided on Denim as its official colour for the production of certain elements: business cards, official documents, envelopes, etc.

Each church or entity can choose a colour from the suggested palette or choose another colour to suit them. However, make sure that you use a colour with sufficient contrast and that it is easy to use.

Attention ! When choosing a colour for the logo, do not forget to save it in the necessary colour modes (CMYK, RGB, Pantone...). In addition to colour, the church logo can also be used in white and black, or greyscale.

RECOMMENDED BASE COLOUR PLATTE

EMPEROR PANTONE 268C	EARTH PANTONE 476C	GRAPEVINE PANTONE 216C
DENIM PANTONE 302C	CAMPFIRE PANTONE 1595C	TREE FROG PANTONE 362C
MING PANTONE 7474C	WARM PANTONE 7409C	COOL PANTONE 364C

Colours of the SEC

DENIM
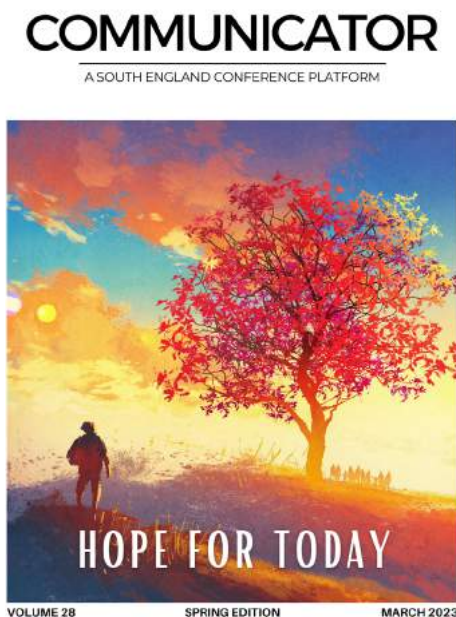HEX#
2f557f

CONFERENCE

LINK TO THE FULL PALETTE

NOTES

Graphics workshop

GOOD PRACTICE AND GROUND RULES: POSTER DESIGN

Why make a poster?

The objective when making a poster is to capture attention in a short time and to get a message across clearly and quickly. A poster can be seen and absorbed in seconds and without much effort on the part of the reader. If you want your poster to be one of the most attention-grabbing, the poster must have a purpose, be aesthetically pleasing and convey a message.

Define a goal!

Engage in a blood donation project, food collection for ADRA bible study, outreach...
Share an event, a department, the Church, Hope Chanel, book...

Gathering and organising information

This will save you too many changes

Do you know the six W's rule?

1. WHO - Who is communicating? Who is the organiser?
2. WHAT - What is being communicated?
3. WHY - What are my objectives?
4. WHEN - When will the event take place?
5.WHERE - Where is the event taking place?
6. to WHOM - Who is the target audience?

Follow the reading direction for better readability and efficiency

Did you know that there is a natural reading direction for documents that should be respected?

Z-reading for Western countries.

Why Z-shaped reading?

It is simply the way the brain usually reads a poster!

Less is more!

The challenge is to say as much as possible with as little as possible! Not easy, is it?

The idea is not to overload your visual: it should remain simple and clear so that it is easy for the reader to understand. An overloaded poster will confuse the message you want to convey.

less is more...

Give your event credibility by using a photo

Using a single photo for your poster is a great idea to give your event credibility.

A well-chosen photo illustrates an event perfectly.

Pay attention to the quality of your photos and images

Image rights

Also ask yourself the question of the rights to use the image: does the image belong to you?

Is it free of rights for commercial use?

So you don't have to ask yourself this question: Canva images can be used for any purpose, personal or commercial.

Add energy to your advertising poster with colour: attract the eye!

The right choice of colours is fundamental for a successful event poster. Generally, a limited number of colours are used for a poster. The right choice of colours is fundamental for a successful event poster.

Use the right typeface

A font is an integral part of the poster. The importance of choosing the right font should not be underestimated.

A well-chosen font can emphasise the benefits of your poster, while an inappropriate font can evoke unpleasant associations and destroy confidence.

These classic fonts communicate respect for tradition, reverence, reliability and comfort.
Examples: Times New Roman, Baskerville, Georgia Italic.

Sans Serif fonts have no extra lines and have a more modern look. They channel aspiration, novelty and cleanliness.
Examples: Franklin Gothic, Calibri, Myriad Italic.

The script fonts look like they were written with a pen. These sources communicate elegance, creative thinking and tenderness.
Examples: *Edwardian Script*, *Freestyle Script*

Modern fonts are new style fonts that represent determination, progress, elegance and style.
Examples: Futura, Corbel.

USEFUL SOURCES

Royalty-free images, vectors, mockups

https://unsplash.com/

https://freepik.com

https://pexels.com

Cite photo credits in all publications!

Your secret weapon for professional designs with templates for Instagram, stories, You Tube banners, Facebook, Posters etc. CANVA offers 30 days free with all the features, then the free mode is already more than enough for a church use.

https://www.canva.com/

Our advice: create a church account with several administrators, Canva offers the possibility to share folders from the same team!

WEB COPYWRITING AND SEO ELEMENTS

Before you promote your church online, take the time to do some keyword or hashtag research. You want your website or social networks to appear when people search for these words. *It is important that you know your keywords.* These are the words that people type into search engines and social media when they are looking for something.

With a little patience and method, you can improve the search engine optimisation of your website and your publications on the different networks. Each network has its own algorithm.

However, we hope that following good practice will make it easier for search engines to crawl, index and interpret your content.

Search engine optimisation (SEO) often involves making small changes to parts of your site. When considered individually, these changes may seem small, but when combined with other optimisations, they can have a significant impact on the user experience and performance of your site in natural search results. *The purpose of a website is to meet the needs of users, and any optimisation should aim to improve their experience.*

Source : Google Search Central, "Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Sterter Guide"
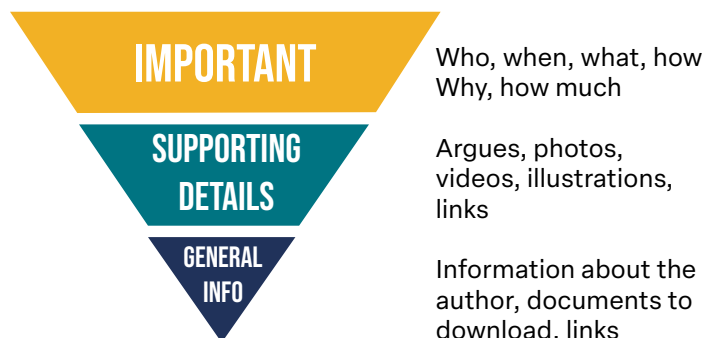
What is good user experience on the web?

A good user experience on the web depends largely on the following elements:
- the appearance of the site and its ergonomics
- its capacity to reassure the user of its credibility
- the effectiveness of the site: the information sought must be found intuitively and easily
- the indexing
- the ease of use
- the ability to adapt to different devices

One of these users is a search engine, which helps users discover your content. SEO is about helping search engines interpret and present content.

Spend some time improving how search engines will interpret you! Work on your page titles, headings and content, making sure your keywords are everywhere.

The Inverted Pyramid

IMPORTANT — Who, when, what, how Why, how much

SUPPORTING DETAILS — Argues, photos, videos, illustrations, links

GENERAL INFO — Information about the author, documents to download, links

In a text dedicated to the web, the rule of the first third is taken into account: the Internet user pays priority attention to the top and the centre of the screen. These are the strategic areas par excellence. The periphery and the bottom elements are neglected.

Where to place keywords?

Source : Keacrea, "Où Placer Efficacement vos Mots Clés Dans Votre Site?"

There are 6 areas to pay attention to when placing your keywords:
- The title and headings
- At the beginning of the body text
- At the beginning of sentences and paragraphs
- In bulleted lists
- In the photo caption
- In the url
- In the hypertext links

Again, identify the areas where you need help and be specific in your request. It is important to match your needs to what your volunteers really like to do. Identify people who enjoy content creation, including writing, design, photography, videography, etc.

NOTES

CHECKLIST

For good web copywriting

☐ **UX Design**

Putting yourself in the internet user's shoes.

☐ **Inverted pyramid**

The essential information first! Rule 1/3. Hierarchy of information, striking and visible headlines, short content (250-300 words), bulleted lists, links, captioned illustrations.

☐ **Identify keywords**

Google trends, synonyms to search.

☐ **Key words**

Make sure they are in proportion of 7 keywords per 300 words. No overoptimisation.

☐ **150 words home page | 300 words other pages**

Google tends to penalise articles of less than 300 words for their SEO.

☐ **Accessible writing**

It must be clear and well argued. Never lose sight of your target audience, to whom your content is addressed.

☐ **Links and call-to-actions**

Include links, gateways between the pages of the site. Consider the home page of the site as a hub. Include call-to-actions (encourage people to click). This will also indicate their interests.

☐ **Visible contact details and geolocation**

Someone should be easy to reach. Put the pastor's number and the church's address prominently on the homepage or link to the Federation's churches page. A visitor should be able to find the church quickly.

☐ **Update the website regularly**

Ensure that information is always accurate and up to date.

Lighting workshop

LIGHTING WEBINARS

### Position yourself facing the light source

All too often, we notice a poor position of the person being filmed in relation to the light source. This results in their face being poorly lit, which contributes to the amateurish look.

⊘ LUMIERE FRONTALE   ⊗ LUMIERE DE DOS

Use 3-point lighting

The most common lighting configuration is a three-point light setup. This configuration consists of a main lamp, a fill lamp and a back lamp.

The main light should be the strongest of the three and provide most of the insight into your subject.

(back light)
Rear

(fill light)
Filling

(key light)
Main
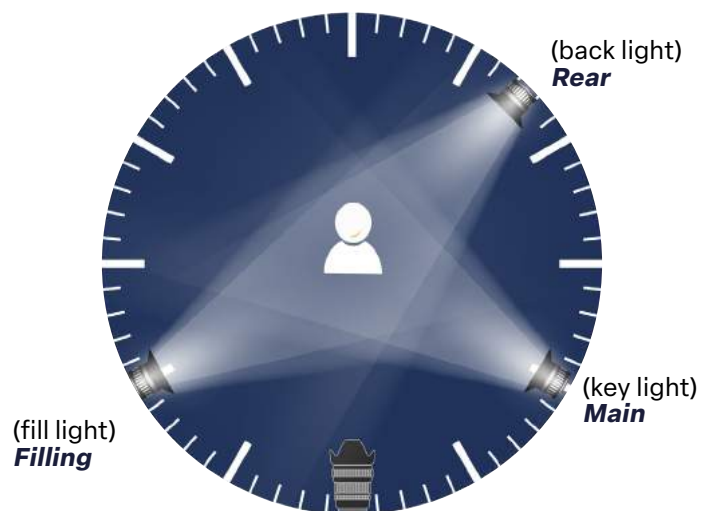
The filling light eliminates shadows caused by the main lamp. It should be less intense than your main lamp so that it eliminates shadows but does not produce a flat image.
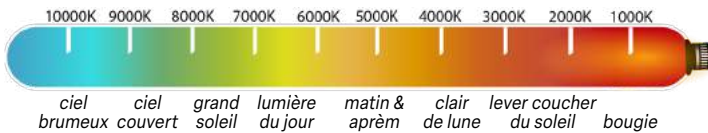
The backlight separates your subject from the background, creating depth and also avoiding a flat image. It can produce a harsh light (without diffusion) as it will not produce a shadow on the subject that the camera can see anyway.

The three-point light is perfect for interviews, promotional videos, webinars and many other types of filming.

Choose the colour temperature of the light

Not all lamps produce the same light. Depending on the filament in the bulb, the light may appear more or less "warm" or "cold" in the camera lens. This difference is also noticeable to the human eye.

Consider the lighting ambience of a medical practice (cold fluorescent light) and compare it to that of a comfortable living room (warm tungsten lamp). This concept is called colour temperature and can be measured on a ***Kelvin scale.***

| 10000K | 9000K | 8000K | 7000K | 6000K | 5000K | 4000K | 3000K | 2000K | 1000K |

ciel brumeux   *ciel couvert*   *grand soleil*   *lumière du jour*   *matin & aprèm*   *clair de lune*   *lever coucher du soleil*   *bougie*

Be aware of glare. Glare on glasses can be a big problem, especially with lamps with large diffusion boxes. One trick to help reduce this problem is to raise the lamps and look through the camera's viewfinder until they are no longer visible in the glasses. If raising the lights is ineffective, try moving your main light and fill light a little further apart, keeping them relatively aligned.

If possible, it is best to avoid mixing lamps with different colour temperatures. This can lead to poor colour balance, and produce unnatural video images.

Shot scale, framing and camera position

Close-up: we only see a part of a character to which we want to draw attention. It allows us to read directly into the inner life of a character, his or her emotions and most intimate reactions. This is the plan for psychological analysis.

Rule of thirds

Imaginary lines are drawn that divide the image into three horizontal and three vertical parts. These are the lines of force or lines of thirds, on which the interesting subjects of the image should preferably be placed. Placing the subject in the centre of the picture often creates a monotonous and uninteresting symmetry. Placing the subject off-centre on one of these lines creates a certain dynamism in the image, which makes it harmonious for the human eye and reinforces its aestheticism. A character, regardless of his size in the shot, is framed with his eyes at the top 2/3 of the image.

NOTES

Streaming

There's a popular saying among photographers that the best camera is the one you have with you. This often means what we already have in our pocket; our smartphones.

For churches who are new to live streaming we recommend using an app called Switcher Studio. This app allows iPhones to be used as cameras to live stream your church service to a platform such as YouTube.

Switcher studio has compiled a comprehensive guide explaining how to do this which we have placed in our *Dropbox Resources folder*, and we encourage you to go through this document if you're considering live streaming in your local church. We have also compiled a short list of equipment needed to get started, you may even own some of the items already.

It is worthwhile mentioning that live streaming is not a requirement. Some local congregations may feel more comfortable without cameras constantly filming them. It may be the case that there are vulnerable people in the congregation which prefer not to be captured on camera and local churches should be accommodating to all their members. Still in these cases, audio recordings of sermons (podcasts) may be a better option and still have potential for sharing and outreach.

First Steps

Whatever your approach, the first step should be to build a small technical team who is comfortable to embark on this journey of learning new skills and being consistent in their service. Next, the technical team should research and decide what sort of equipment they wish to work with and make proposals to their church board. It's important for initiatives to come from the media team who will be using the equipment each week. When initiatives come from the Pastor or church board, they often fail because the technicians haven't taken ownership of the initiative and therefore have little motivation to be consistent and continue.

Working with volunteers requires a different approach compared to working with employees. Volunteers give of their time freely but to retain them long-term, they should be offered value in return. Whether its learning new skills or simply the knowledge that others around the world are now able to watch their local church service is great motivation for them to continue in what they do.

Checklist for live streaming

Good, clean audio. Audio is very important and special attention should be given to the audio that's being streamed ensuring it is well mixed and at a consistent level. Ideally, a member of the team should be dedicated to monitoring online audio at all times.

Good lighting. For any camera to function well, it needs good light. Ensure the front of your church is well lit and you will have good quality images from your cameras.

What to stream? Identify what parts of your church services you wish to stream, and which parts are not suitable to stream. Also identify whether you have the copyright to the material being streamed, particularly music and images.

Be consistent. To build an online audience, consistency is key. Can you and your team stream every week? Do you need a rota system?

CHECKLIST

Livestreaming essentials

If you have decided to livestream your church services, pay attention to the following:

☐ **Good, clean audio.** Audio is very important and special attention should be given to the audio that's being streamed ensuring it is well mixed and at a consistent level. Ideally, a member of the team should be dedicated to monitoring online audio at all times.

☐ **Good lighting.** For any camera to function well, it needs good light. Ensure the front of your church is well lit and you will have good quality images from your cameras.

☐ **What to stream?** Identify what parts of your church services you wish to stream, and which parts are not suitable to stream. Also identify whether you have the copyright to the material being streamed, particularly music and images (see p. 40 and shared drive).

☐ **Be consistent.** To build an online audience, consistency is key. Can you and your team stream every week? Do you need a rota system?

Have you addressed the following areas?

☐ Vision & Objectives

The church has defined and voted on a clear vision and objectives for why it streams worship services.

☐ Trained technical team

One person can potentially take care of all the technical needs (sound, projection, streaming) of a small or medium-sized church. However, ideally, it is better to have a team of three or more people for quality and consistency in the long term.

☐ Technical video equipment

The Church is equipped with technical material adapted to its needs.

☐ Technical audio equipment

List available in the shared drive

☐ Assessments

Have an evaluation sheet according to the objectives set for the stream. Have the team and listeners fill it in regularly. (see p.83)

Schedule regular evaluation and debriefing times, including the pastor, members of the technical and communication team, and if possible someone from outside the team.

POST:
ONLINE MODERATOR

DEPARTMENT / MINISTRY

Communication

H

WEEKLY

In a nutshell:

Responsible for managing the online strategy of the church. He works to engage those who interact with the church online and helps to use online technology (such as social media, websites, live broadcasts, mobile apps, etc.) to reach people with the message of Jesus Christ.

Strengths and competencies

Has a personal and growing relationship with God and a passion for the Gospel.

Is highly organised.

Has a strong ability to build relationships, be proactive, responsive to messages.

Has good communication skills, both written and oral.

Has a good understanding of social media platforms and engagement strategies.

Responsibilities

Manage social media conversations on all church's accounts, including interacting, providing support and answering questions.

Work with the pastor to create and implement an online strategy that includes website integration, mobile applications, social media, direct mail.

Assist and encourage the congregation online through live chat, social media.

Keeping abreast of new trends by providing an overview of ways in which the church can develop new online engagement strategies.

Manage church's social media, including planning and collaborating with the video team to create and upload videos to social media.

Maintain updates to the church's website, and other mobile applications.

Provide web traffic reports and other relevant data and analysis to ensure the effectiveness of the website, social media and other digital strategies.

Vision

Our vision is to reach people, lead them to Christ, and help them grow in Christ to become commited disciples. Our strategy is to seek, serve and grow. Part o f this service is to help people grow in community and in a personal relationship with Jesus through communication.

Team

This position is about communication and social media, working with the pastor and the church committee and liaising with the technical team.

Measurement indicators

Create a social media strategy that drives engagement and increases followers (go from 50 to 100).

Increase engagement by 20% by the end of the year. Develop social media content that increases the % of subscribers who engage.

Include two digital evangelist volunteers who will help gather material for social media (stories, photos, captions, etc.).

Personal commitment

Be loyal to the vision and leadership of the church and always protect its unity.

Demonstrate a Christ-like attitude in all interactions with the congregation, leaders and volunteers.

Invest in and invite people to know Jesus and to come to church.

PURCHASE DECISIONS FOR EQUIPMENT TO BROADCAST WORSHIP SERVICES ON THE INTERNET

For small churches on tight budget, or who have to carry and set up their video and sound equipment each week because they do not own their place of worship, consider the following option. Prices may vary depending on the current sales/promotions. The list below is a sample and based on UK 2022 prices. Prices will vary according to time, place and currency.

Portabe rig recomendation

Equipment type	Brand	Model	Cost	Point of purchase	
Camera	Apple	iPhone	£1099	https://www.apple.com/uk/shop/buy-iphone/iphone-14-pro/6.1-inch-display-128gb-space-black	
Tablet	Apple	iPad	£679	https://www.apple.com/uk/shop/buy-ipad/ipad/256gb-blue-wifi	
Livestreaner	Switcher Studio	-	from £600	https://www.switcherstudio.com	
Stabilisation	DJI	-	£145	https://store.dji.com/uk/product/osmo-mobile-6?vid=121851	
Audio Interface		-	£139	https://www.dv247.com/en_GB/GBP/Focusrite-Scarlett-2i2-3rd-Gen-/art-PCM0015841-000	
Wireless Router	TP-Link	TP-Link Next-Gen Wi-Fi 6 AX5400 Mbps Gigabit Dual Band OneMesh Supported, Dual-Core CPU, TP-Link Homeshield (Archer AX72)	£139	https://amzn.eu/d/c4U4oqU	

Crisis Communication Management

Victor Hulbert and David Neal - Former and Current TED Communication & Media Directors Respectivly

The Communication leader is often the key link between the church and the community, particularly the press and civil society. It's a reality that 'things happen' in this world. Whether a matter is expected, or unexpected, it makes sense to be prepared. It was a former British Prime Minister who once announced to UK citizens, "Crisis – what Crisis?" All around him the country was in crisis, industrial conflict, health care problems, inflation, and a shortage of energy. His remark at the time was seen as completely insensitive to the mood of the nation, and shortly after making this statement, the electors decided that they wanted a new leader.

So, when the church faces a crisis, local, national, or even international, we do not ignore it, or pretend it does not exist, but face it and deal with it –in wise, tactful, and appropriate ways. Take a moment to consider about why it is important to have a crisis management strategy in place.

Below are some suggestions:

- To provide risk assessment, to assist in crisis mitigation
- "If we do not manage the crisis, the crisis will manage us"
- To protect our good name and reputation
- To protect the personal safety of our employees and members
- To prevent and reduce risk
- To reduce or avoid the possibility of litigation
- To control damage from various sources
- To provide an opportunity to get a positive message out about the Church
- To build confidence in leadership
- To have system in place when a crisis arrives
- To have trained personnel to deal with crisis
- To anticipate crisis before they happen
- To have responses ready before a crisis strikes
- To provide a team, rather than handle it alone.

Crisis Management Team

Do you have a crisis management strategy in place? If not, you can design one with your team. Let's do a reality check here. For the local church context there is not a need to have a huge team of responders. All that is required is a small group of allocated leaders which would usually comprise of the following:

The pastor
Two Elders
The Communication leader
A further board member

Designing Your Strategy

Here are some useful steps to help guide design your strategy:

1. Determine the facts and gather relevant information by using specialists who are well-versed in the situation the church is facing.

One of the most pressing concerns in a crisis is the ability to determine the relevant facts and gain information as fast as possible. Remember to ask for advice on all important matters – principles and beliefs, legal, institutional, financial, technical, human resources. This information will assist in determining the scale of the problem and place it into perspective. The team members with fact-finding responsibility should not delay as the media can be very impatient. But – at the same time, do not be afraid to say to a journalist, "thank you for your call. At this point in time, I am not aware of all the facts. I will try and help you when I am better informed."

2. Depending on the nature of the crisis, and the extent of publicity raised with media and civil society, a call to the mission / conference / or union Communication director may be helpful.

This is a clear principle. The communication director is available to help you and your church get through this problem.

3. Know the "Skeletons in your cupboard"!

That sounds like a scary item. But what it means is, review any former negative press or crisis reports. Consult with relevant entities and partners. Understand and prepare message points for any previous church crises in your Union / Conference / Mission that have been in the media.

4. Meet and stay connected with the team

The team for your local church is suggested above. Stay close to each other, consult, wrestle over the best way forward, process the problem together. Listening to each other, and seeing the matter from another perspective is key. And then come to a consensus as how to respond.

5. Manage the response action/approach

Establish official lines of communication with the following:

* The members you serve
* The local conference / union
* The local media, or when interested, the national media.

Openness and transparency are key. At the same time, some information is confidential (for example medical history). In the case of an unexpected life and death situation, great sensitivity is required towards the families of the victim. Reveal nothing to the media about an individual without first seeking permission from the next of kin/family concerned. This in many ways is common sense, and the response team help work this matter through and are aware of the sensitivities of such situations.

6. Arrange for debriefing and follow-up work

As soon as the crisis has subsided, it's time for the team to reflect. And if something went wrong in the process, it's not a time for 'the blame game', but an opportunity to review the procedures which should be improved as a result of this process.

What makes a good spokesperson on behalf of the church?

Characteristics of a good spokesperson:

* know the organisation well (strengths & weaknesses)
* exude confidence and command a high level of respect.
* handle the anxiety of standing before cameras and journalists
* think fast and formulate clear, succinct answers.
* work under intense pressure
* speak persuasively.
* talk in simple, everyday language.
* understand the needs of the media.
* be able to demonstrate concern and compassion naturally.

While the crisis management strategy is essential to help the church in its moment of possibly great difficulty, or a member(s) associated with it, as essential is the ability to rise above the crisis, in the very real knowledge that God through the power of His Holy Spirit is with you and those concerned facing the crisis. It is this element in combination with the strategy that will help you and your team sensitively and prayerfully get through the crisis – and hopefully, just hopefully somehow those who listen, read, and view what you share will somehow be comforted.

Communication crisis is a nutshell

The following are very brief tips and, while helpful, should not replace talking to an expert. Your Communication Director and the President are there to provide helpful and additional advice.

Contact by a Journalist

- Be friendly and helpful.
- Ask who is calling and what organisation they represent.
- NEVER say "No Comment". It means you have something to hide.
- Buy some time/slow down. "Give me 20 minutes, and I'll get back to you".
- Get the facts you need.

"What information do you need?" "How much detail do you need?" "What angle are you following with the story?"

Always consult higher. Who should be aware of this story? Who has the facts? Ask the Conference or Union Communication Department for advice.

- Ask who the best spokesperson is?
- Get back to the reporter.
- ALWAYS meet your deadline.

For a programme request

- Be friendly and helpful.
- Ask who is calling and what organisation they represent.
- Gain an understanding of what the programme is about. Will it be aggressive or exploratory? Reality TV, documentary, debate. Are there samples you can see?
- Never commit on the spot. Take some details and promise to get back to them.
- Consider if the programme will enhance or detract from the image of the Church.
- If positive, consider if you are the best spokesperson or whether others may be more knowledgeable or experienced.
- Always consult higher (Pastor, President, Communication Director).
- Then get back to the researcher.
- If selected, prepare, prepare! Research as much as you can to be ready for your appearance.

Interview Techniques on a crisis story

- Offer condolences (where appropriate).
- Refer to the action to be taken.
- Give reassurances.
- Indicate the scale of action to be taken.
- Deflect blame (where appropriate).

Here are a few tips:
- Reporters and researchers are just doing their job.
- You are the expert.
- You can control the interview.
- Keep on the subject using message points.

GLOSSARY

Solid colour
Solid colour which is a surface inked with a uniform colour.

Good to print (G.T.P.)
A test proof judged to be perfect by the client, who signs it at the printer before the final print run, in accordance with this impression.

Branding
(Brand) Branding is about managing a brand's image and giving a company a strong personality and a unique identity. In general, we speak of brand branding.

Buzz
Noise around a communication subject (organisation, brand, etc.) that increases its notoriety. Nowadays, information, whether in the form of images, text or video, can be duplicated and disseminated instantaneously without geographical limits thanks to blogs, forums, chat, email and SMS… It refers to a phenomenon as old as the world: word of mouth.

Graphic design
A document that groups together all the standards (colours, shapes, layout) that are specific to a structure or a brand. The graphic charter is to be respected in all documents relating to the structure or brand, in order to establish a consistency of presentation.

Thumbnail
A press term that applies to the schematic description on paper of all the pages of a document. It allows a quick view of the entire brochure (in reading order).

Cloud
"The cloud" is a virtual space outside your computer. The cloud is a virtual space outside your computer, where data (files, photos, videos, software, etc.) are stored. Thanks to the Internet, this space can be accessed using connection data that allows you to consult your data anywhere on the planet.

Target
The audience or subset that a campaign seeks to reach, to identify.

CMS (CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM)
Software that simplifies the creation, editing and publishing of web content. Most professionals use quality content management systems such as WordPress. They are designed so that a person with no knowledge of web languages can edit the content of a site.

CMYK (suitable for printing) versus RGB (suitable for the web)
CMYK The four primary colours of printing: Cyan, Magenta, Yellow ("Y") and Black ("K" for "blacK" or Khol). These four colours can be used to print any colour. RGB (Red, Green, Blue) : A system of additive synthesis by which each colour is rendered on the screen according to its red, green and blue components. R+G+B = White; G+R = Magenta; R+G = Yellow; G+B = Cyan. The addition of these lights gives the basic primary colours pigments except white.

Institutional communication
Institutional communication covers all communication actions aimed at promoting the image of an institution, a company or an organisation to its constituents, clients and various partners.

E-mail newsletter
This is a newsletter sent by e-mail or paper periodically.

Market research
Methodical work of collecting and analysing information to better understand and know a market, an audience or an offer. The aim is to make better marketing and sales decisions.

Bleed
Consists in making the background (colour or image) overflow outside the final print format for a print without margin.

Hyperlink
Link to move from one document to another. On the web, this refers to links to navigate between sites.

Live streaming
Rrefers to the real-time broadcasting of a video. It is a special form of streaming, in which the video is broadcast simultaneously with its capture, without the possibility of editing or modifying it. The video can simply be supplemented with some brief additional information.

Logotype
The graphic emblem of a company or a community. More commonly known as a logo.

Media
The media is a channel used to convey advertising messages: press, TV, internet, poster, radio.

Browser
It is a program or interface whose main function is to display information from websites. Browsers receive information that they obtain from a server.

Domain name
This is the name of your website for the server that hosts it. When you rent a domain name, it is accompanied by a dot (".fr ", ".com ", ".org "…). Any search on an engine (Google, MSN, Yahoo etc…) will be directed by the domain name to your server, and consequently to your website.

Intellectual property
A set of laws that includes both copyright and industrial property rights. Since 1992, all the texts governing intellectual property have been brought together in the Intellectual Property Code.

REACH
Refers to the reach of a publication on social networks. In other words, reach is the number of people who will be reached by your message, regardless of its form. The word reach is also used to define the coverage of an offline campaign such as a radio or TV spot.

Responsive
The notion of responsive is attached to the design of websites. A responsive design must give the visitor an optimal consultation of the website, facilitating reading and navigation. The same website can then be consulted through different devices (computers, smartphones, tablets, TV, etc.) with the same visual comfort.

ROI (Return On Investment)
Marketing professionals use the formula: "ROI is king". ROI is the return on investment, or the quality of an advertising campaign. Have the objectives been achieved? The ROI will look at the measurement criteria set up beforehand in relation to the budget invested, membership, the increase in subscribers, etc.

SEO (Search Engine Optimisation)
SEO is the acronym for Search Engine Optimization and can be defined as the art of positioning a site, a web page or an application in the first natural results of search engines based on a key word or phrase.

Top-of-mind awareness
We talk about top of mind when we are interested in the notoriety of a brand. The top of mind corresponds to the first brand cited, the one that remains in the lead. For example, if a survey is carried out such as "Do you know any brands of soft drinks?" there is a good chance that Coca-Cola will be mentioned several times as the first choice by the respondents.

Typeface (typography)
Typography (often abbreviated typography) refers to the various processes of typesetting and printing using raised characters and forms, and to the art and manner of using different types of type for aesthetic and practical purposes.

U.R.L.
Internet address recognised by browsers. The Universal Resource Locator is the syntax used as a unique identifier to access each of the billions of personal web pages and page elements.

"

Return home and

TELL

how much God has done for you.

LUKE 8.39

"