

Heightening Visibility of Your Local Church: Being a Visible Church in a Visual Society Participant Guide

The purpose of this module is:

To encourage church leaders to regularly assess their church's visibility in the community.

Objectives:

- **Learn why church visibility is important.**
- **Learn how to assess your church's visibility in the community.**
- **Discover ways to increase your church's visibility in the community.**
- **Create a practical strategy to increase your church's visibility in the community.**

Lecture

Why is church visibility important in today's society?

- A. We live in a _____ society.
- B. Jesus' _____ was visual.
- *Jesus himself was God's visual representation to the world (Colossians 1:15).*
 - *The parables of Jesus were visual (Matthew 13:1-9; 13:24-30; 13:44-46).*
 - *The miracles of Jesus visually represented his compassion for people (Mark 5:21-43).*
- C. Our message _____ be visible for everyone to see.
- "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).*
- D. We will _____ more visitors to our services.
- A simple law of advertising states: the more people who know about your product, the more customers you will have.*
- E. Church members will increase their _____ in the church.
- As church members see their church advertised in public, they will experience a sense of excitement toward their church.*

I. **How to Assess Your Church's Visibility in the Community** (Adapted from Getting the Word Out by Frederick H. Gonnerman). Have the group answer two of the following questions:

- A. Who is the congregation's _____?
- B. Is advertising and communication primarily for members, those in attendance, or for the _____ community?
- C. Do you have statements of mission/_____ for publications/public relations?
- D. Have you critiqued your recent _____ and other communications efforts? How effective were they?
- E. What does your church building/sign _____ to the unchurched during the day and at night?
- F. Do you have a leader (laity or staff) _____ church visibility in the community?
- G. Is your church _____ in community events (e.g. carnivals, craft shows,

blood drives, fundraisers)?

- H. Are your church facilities more of a country club for the members or a _____ center for the needy?
- I. How _____ of your church is the average person in your community?

II. Ideas for Heightening Visibility

- A. _____
- B. Updated _____
- C. Attractive _____
- D. Business _____ for all staff
- E. Invitation cards for _____
- F. _____ catalog/magazine
- G. _____ listing and yellow pages
- H. _____ ads
- I. _____ commercials
- J. Community _____
- K. _____ lighting
- L. _____
- M. Special event _____
- N. _____ DVDs/CDs
- O. _____-based broadcasting

III. Where Do I Start?

- A. Create and propose a visibility _____.
 1. Be creative.
 2. Think _____ effective.
 3. Start _____.
 4. Discover a _____ or need in your community [*Lyle Schaller's three basic suggestions for congregations wishing to assess their growth potential.*]
 - a. "Study the Competition! Visit other congregations to discover what they are doing that is working."
 - b. "Engage in Self-Appraisal. Look at who you have been successfully reaching. Isolate the methods that have worked well and expand them."
 - c. "Increase the Entry Points. Create more and better ways for others to see how to get in your church" (*Find a Niche and Scratch It* by Robert L. Perry, pgs. 20, 21).

- B. Develop Your _____.

Three easy strategies for reaching out to your community from Rick Warren's book, The Purpose Driven Church. These ideas are helpful where you can be effectively visual.

1. "Know What You are Fishing For"
2. "Go Where the Fish Are Biting"
3. "Learn to Think Like a Fish" (The Purpose Driven Church by Rick Warren, pgs. 186-188)

- C. Begin with _____ to hand out to your people.

1. Why?
 - a. People love the _____ touch and invitation.
 - b. They are _____ effective
 - c. They give your people a _____ with which to invite others.
 2. How?
 - a. They can be created through Microsoft Publisher or a similar program (at a low cost).
 - b. They can be _____ by a local printing company.
 3. How to Construct an Invitation Card
 - a. Include church name, address, phone number, fax number, website address;
 - b. Select two or three attractive statements about your church;
 - c. Describe ministries your church offers;
 - d. List weekly service/activity times.
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Small Group Exercise

Assess your church's visibility in the community based on the assessment material we learned earlier. Break up into groups of three to four people. Be sure to assess your church using all eight questions from the lecture I. How to Assess Your Church's Visibility in the Community. Record your answers in the space provided for you.

Action Planning/Reporting

The homework assignment for this module is:

- Identify three cost effective ways to increase your visibility in your church.
- Create a strategy to make these things happen.
- Create a reasonable timeline to accomplish these things.

Assign these responsibilities to a capable person.

Additional Sources:

- Getting the Word Out, Frederick H. Gonnerman
- Find a Niche and Scratch It: Marketing Your Congregation, Robert L. Perry
- The Purpose Driven Church, Rick Warren
- Attracting New Members, Robert L. Bast
- Creative Leadership Series: Direct Mail Ministry, Walter Mueller
- Changing Channels: The Church and the Television Revolution, Tyron Inbody (Ed.)

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