

The Resource Guide for Church Planters

THE QUICK-START GUIDE FOR MULTI-SITE CHURCHES



A resource provided by



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INTRO TO THE QUICK-START GUIDE FOR MULTI-SITE CHURCHES

Like it or not, multi-site churches are here to stay. And they're no longer just a staple of the mega-church that's outgrown their main campus. Today, smaller churches — even relatively new church plants — are “going multi-site” to better reach and serve new communities. In fact, according to Lifeway Research, over 5 million people attend services at over 8,000 multi-site churches every weekend.

To help you with your campus expansion, we put together this resource that addresses some of the main points to consider. We cover the issue of video venues versus live teaching, how to handle social media across multiple campuses, and how to build a team for your multi-site campus.

Our hope is that this guide helps you with your multi-site church so that you can reach as many people as possible.



THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT HIRES FOR YOUR MULTI-SITE CHURCH



Launching a new campus is much like launching a brand new church plant. A core group of solid people is essential. Multi-site churches typically have the advantage of having a wealth of volunteers (usually from the main campus) to help with setting up, tearing down, and tying up the logistical and technical loose ends.

However, it's essential to have a full-time team of paid staff dedicated to the new campus. So what paid roles are essential for a new multi-site church? Here's our take:



Campus Pastor

Perhaps the most important hire for the multi-site campus is the campus pastor. The campus pastor may not teach on the weekend, but he or she will serve as the “face” of the campus. Regardless of who is preaching on the weekends, and whether or not that is done live or via video teaching, a congregation needs a leader they can go to — and one who can connect with the community.



Worship Leader

Video teaching may be the newest trend in multi-site churches, but there's no substitute for live worship with a group of believers. For this reason, an on-site worship leader is an essential hire. He or she should be capable of leading a band, leading a congregation, and have a heart for worship. Creating an atmosphere of authentic, humble worship is essential — which is why finding an authentic, humble worship leader should be a top priority.



Children's Leader

The children who come through your doors need a safe, organized, and fun environment to learn with their friends. A bad or unorganized experience for children creates a less-than-stellar first impression for the whole family. Adults in your community will often base their decision on which church to attend solely on their experience with childcare. This is why choosing (and paying) an awesome children's leader is so important. A safe, engaging environment for children is essential for any church gathering—and the hiring the right children's leader is a great start.

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Using Your Volunteers

The great news: statistically speaking, your core team is going to have lots of help from volunteers. According to Lifeway, over 85% of multi-site churches have reported that volunteer participation actually increased after starting their new campuses. This statistic certainly makes sense, as members who are moving locations and feel they are helping build the new campus from the ground up will be more likely to help out.



Uniting The Team Together

However, a multitude of volunteers shouldn't cause you to skimp on the core staff. On the contrary — this trend actually makes the importance of these three key hires even more pronounced. You'll need a great children's leader to put the right volunteers in the right places, a worship leader who can lead, rehearse, and schedule talented musicians who are giving their time, and an engaging campus pastor figuring out logistics and casting a vision for the campus.



VIDEO VS LIVE TEACHING: WHICH IS RIGHT FOR YOUR CHURCH??



It's the age-old decade-old debate... is live teaching better than using video feed for multi-site churches? The answer isn't obvious. According to a 2013 survey conducted by Leadership Network, 27% of multi-site churches use mostly video-based teaching, 46% use only live teaching, and 34% use a combination of the two.

There are many opinions out there, but the right answer really depends on the needs of your church. Let's take a look at the advantages of each:



Live Teaching

Call them curmudgeons if you like, but there are some people who will never prefer watching a message on a screen instead of seeing it in person. That's one of live teaching's biggest advantages — it provides a real-life connection that just can't be replicated. So if that personal touch is important to much of your congregation, live teaching may be the way to go.

Logistically speaking, another great advantage of live teaching is the initial affordability. Not having to invest money into expensive technical equipment for live feeds can allow your new campus to use resources for other things, like outreach events or an awesome children's space.



Video Teaching

Consistency in communication is an important aspect of any multi-site church — and one that video teaching definitely helps with. Having a consistent voice can help build a clear vision for all your campuses. Typically, a multi-site church using video teaching has a more unified feel, as each campus hears the same message delivered by the same voice each week.

Another great advantage of video teaching it can help make the best use of your team's talents. For example, perhaps you have someone on your team who'd make an excellent campus pastor but isn't all that suited for teaching. Video would allow this person to step into a leadership role while letting a more experienced speaker handle that duty for all campuses. Freeing people to focus on what they're best at can take a campus to the next level.

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HOW MULTI-SITE CHURCHES DO SOCIAL MEDIA

So... Which Should You Choose?

We're not here to tell you what to pick. But we would encourage you to make your decision based on the strengths of your team.

Do you have a bench of strong speakers who can provide excellent in-person teaching at each of your campuses? Then perhaps live teaching is the way to go. Or maybe you have a single teacher who's exceptionally gifted. Consider making the most of their talents by using video-based teaching.

Costs, logistics, and personal preferences aside, great communication always impacts people more than good communication does, whether being delivered live or on a screen.



Social media is essential to keeping a multi-site church connected. But how do you use social media to unite multiple locations while also allowing each campus to have its own voice? Should you keep all of the focus on the main campus's social media, or branch out with individual social media accounts?

There are no obvious answers, but we used our experience helping multi-site churches use social media to highlight some best practices for you.



Should each campus have its own social media accounts?

The answer is different for each social media platform.

For Instagram and Twitter, keep everything under one main account. Content on those networks isn't usually location specific, so it's best to consolidate your voice in a single account. If your campuses ever get to the point where they do need their own accounts, you can easily add those later.

Things are different for Facebook. Because Facebook pages are tied to specific physical locations, we recommend creating a separate Facebook page for each campus. This will let the congregation at each campus easily recommend that location to their friends nearby. You wouldn't want a member at the new campus promoting the main campus page, because the main campus is serving a different community that might be miles away.

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The Real Reason You Need Multiple Facebook Pages

Giving each campus its own Facebook page allows your community to “check in” at that location. What’s a Facebook check-in? It’s how you tell your Facebook friends about places you love, and it’s one of the most effective ways of inviting people to your campus.

Since every Facebook check-in is typically seen by about 200 friends, it’s a powerful way to tell people about your church. And it’s much more likely that someone will respond to a Facebook post from a friend than a flyer crammed into their mailbox.

Just by seeing a check-in, a friend of someone in your community will learn that they have a friend who attends your church. They’ll even know exactly where the new campus is located — right down to the driving directions. Pretty great first impression, right?



How to Get More Facebook Check-Ins

Facebook check-ins are so important that we built an entire program, called Reach, to help church planters get more of them. What so special about Reach?

With Reach, every time your community checks in on Facebook, we make a donation to a Kingdom-building cause. Like providing meals for homeless children, clean water for refugees, or care for orphans. Combining global missions with Facebook check-ins gives your church community a powerful way to tell hundreds of their friends about your church.



Want to grow your campus?

Reach is designed to generate personal, friend-to-friend, invitations to your church. We use the power of Facebook check-ins to generate *thousands* of personal invitations every week. How do we do it?

Every time a member of your congregation checks in on Facebook, we make a donation to a Kingdom-building charity.

To learn how Reach can help you scale personal invitations to your church, schedule a demo with us today:

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