



Church Website Blueprint

For Your Church

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to provide your church with a precise blueprint for your entire web presence that will transcend beyond the basic website to drive the best results for your investment of time, money, and personnel. Since 2001, NetMinistry has served over 60,000 churches, ministries, and Christian businesses, helping them to establish their online presence. Every year, we focus increasingly on ways to improve the bottom-line results for your organization. This blueprint is one of the many ways we do that.

The blueprint is divided into several parts:

Strategic Goals: These are based on the goals you provided to us along with goals you may not have voiced, but that we know you have as a church.

Ways to Capture Results: This section discusses the various technologies that you will need for people to interact with you. Because websites are not just a one-way medium like television, we can set “traps” to capture the results you are looking for. Don’t worry – even though it’s about technology, we keep the language simple to understand.

Your Unique Value: This section makes suggestions for extending valuable content and functionality so that visitors to your website will be more likely to interact with you in a way that accomplishes your goals.

Optimal Website Structure: This section outlines the sections and pages your organization should create on your website. This is based on our experience and continued research as we monitor the top 100 churches and ministries in the world, measuring what is working and what is not.

Recommended Design Options: This section provides you with what we believe will be the best way to organize and design your website. We focus on the homepage and the overall website template as well as the individual pages.

Ongoing Website Care: This section explains what we recommend updating on a regular basis and how to go about doing so. We provide a recommended schedule as well as best practices for doing so.

Online Outreach Strategy: This section provides you with a detailed outline of the strategy we recommend for marketing your ministry online. It includes information about SEO, online advertising, social media, e-mail marketing, and content-driven marketing strategies.

How We Can Help: This section briefly describes how we can partner with you to help you implement as much of this blueprint as possible.

Establishing a Presence for Your Church On the Internet

Strategic Goals

Through years of consulting with churches and ministries around the world, we know quite a bit about your goals. Taking the goals that you provided us when you requested this blueprint in mind, here is a full set of goals we feel your church should have in mind when establishing your web presence.



Online Goals for Your Church

We suggest that the following goals are of utmost importance for your church:

- New visitors to your church
- Attendees to your events
- One-time and recurring donations
- Views/Listeners of your sermon video/audio
- Volunteers for your events and projects
- New enrollment for classes and programs
- Purchases of resources
- Benevolence and counseling inquiries
- Visitor invites by members
- Increased participation and involvement
- Increased exposure of your ministry through multiple channels

- Collect prayer requests and needs
- Spread the Gospel through written, video, and audio content
- Internal communication and collaboration
- External board and committee collaboration

These goals are not necessarily in order of importance, but they are all critical for your church to get the most out of its online presence. They are entirely possible with the correct strategy and the right resources. That is the focus of this blueprint.

Learn more about choosing the right goals for you by going to:

<https://vimeo.com/228587927>

Ways to Capture Results

To generate measurable results from your web presence, you will need to implement what we call “traps” to capture them. We define traps as specific calls to actions that lead to mechanisms that will allow your website visitors to interact with you.

A good example of a trap is an online form. If someone is compelled to fill out a form and submit it, you receive that information and act on it. If that form is a new visitors inquiry form, you can measure how many of those submissions you receive each month and create monthly goals to increase them.



Recommended Traps for Your Church Website

The following is a list of possible traps we recommend for your church website:

- New visitor pre-registration form
- E-mail subscription form
- Volunteer forms
- Invite a friend form
- Sharing buttons (For social networks and e-mail)
- Shopping cart
- Event registration form
- Comment or questionnaire form
- Prayer request board or form
- Contact form

- Sub-ministry involvement form
- Secure donation system or form
- Class or workshop signup form
- Member access registration
- Study/home group registration
- Directions from your house form
- Benevolence and help forms
- Ask pastor a question form
- Sermon feedback form
- Testimonial forms
- Prominently displayed contact information
- Board registration
- Commenting
- Event submission form
- Private messaging form
- Text messaging form
- Downloads
- Mobile app installations
- Transportation request
- Venue usage request

These traps produce measurable, tangible results that help you assess whether your web presence is performing or not. Each trap has its own technology behind the scenes that sends you the information provided by the visitor by e-mail, into a data management system, or onto a distribution chain to staff and volunteers.

In the best cases, you can implement a technology that will power every aspect of these traps and the way that your ministry team interacts with the people who inquire and each other.

Traps Alone Aren't Enough

However, traps are not effective on their own. For people to want to use them, you must provide value of some sort to encourage them to interact with you.

Learn more about using traps to capture your online goals by going to:

<https://vimeo.com/228587411>

Your Unique Value

For people to want to provide you with their information, or feel compelled to interact with you online, they must first feel like there is some sort of value in doing so. Your church provides a unique value and mission – something that is buried in the DNA of who you are and what God has called you to be. That unique value is what must come to the surface for people to gain access to it and connect with you.

If traps are the way they interact, value is the “why” they connect. Let’s explore the many types of information and tools you can provide to give enough value to make people want to connect.



What Your Audience Needs

Before we list the values, let’s list the needs your audience has. **Keep in mind that 90-95% of visitors to your websites will not be members.** Your website should focus primarily on this audience while providing easy to find resources for your members.

Your audience needs:

- A new church for themselves and their families
- Help with life issues and struggles
- Information about an upcoming event
- Access to your courses and workshops
- Resources and materials you have authored and made available

- To stay up-to-date with your church
- To easily invite friends and family to the church
- To volunteer for your next event
- To provide feedback about their experience
- To ask theological and life questions
- To seek help when they are in times of trouble
- To be connected with ministries within the church
- To watch or listen to past sermons they missed or like
- To contribute financially
- To share their prayer requests with you and members
- To receive a visitation
- To arrange transportation to service
- To receive salvation
- To use your venue
- To check-in
- To receive child care services
- To establish community and fellowship
- To join a small group

These are the common needs of your audience. Answering these needs is the value they are searching for. Now, with the needs established, let's go over the types of value you can provide as a church.

What Your Audience Values

Values are the “why” people interact with you. They are a combination of things they can quickly and freely access as well as things they must interact with you first to access.

- Virtual church tour
- New visitor information and instructions
- Video sermons
- Upcoming event promotions
- Helpful blogs with spiritual and practical insights
- Sermon notes and outlines
- Online courses
- Devotionals
- Bible study tools
- Form and document downloads
- Member services portal
- Giving management and reporting
- Directions and easily accessible contact information
- Incentives for visiting (gift baskets, free materials, etc.)
- E-mail insights and devotionals
- Study/home group information
- Child care information

- Transportation options
- Visitation information

You can also boost engagement on your website by offering unique tools and resources. One great example is a church that offers a directory of local churches they recommend. This makes them a great resource for church seekers while projecting an attitude of unity, causing prospective visitors to visit them first.

Learn more about extending value by watching our video at:

<https://vimeo.com/228587600>

Optimal Website Structure

We've studied thousands of churches with an emphasis on the top 100 churches in America at any given time. Below, we've provided a list of every page a church website should have, with the word **NECESSARY** next to what we feel is the minimum you need for your church website.



Recommended Church Website Page List

As you review the list below, keep in mind that your church does not need to have all these pages immediately. We recommend choosing the minimum you can prepare quickly to get online fast and grow from there. Website pages are simple to add later and should only be added once you have enough content written and created to justify them.

- Homepage **NECESSARY**
- About
 - o Visitors / I'm New **NECESSARY**
 - o History
 - o Statement of Faith **NECESSARY**
 - o Staff
 - o Pastors **NECESSARY**
 - o Mission / Vision
 - o Announcements **NECESSARY**

- o Service Requests
 - o Social Networks
 - o Social Feeds
 - o Venue Usage
- Calendar
 - o Upcoming Events **NECESSARY**
 - o Schedule / Service Times **NECESSARY**
 - o Transportation Services
 - o Event Submissions
- Get Involved
 - o Ministries **NECESSARY**
 - o Groups
 - o Prayer
 - o Serve
 - o Missionaries
 - o Boards & Committees
- Grow
 - o Watch Live
 - o Photo Gallery
 - o Blog
 - o Sermons **NECESSARY**
 - o Media
 - o Courses
 - o Resources
 - o Devotionals
 - o Prayers
 - o Bible Tools
 - o Downloads
- Member Services **NECESSARY**
- Board / Committee Services
- Giving **NECESSARY**
- Contact / Directions **NECESSARY**

Once again, choose only the pages you have content for or can quickly gather to start. Then, grow your website over time. Too many churches wait months and even years because they want a billion pages and know they don't have the time right now. Don't make that mistake. Start today with what you have and grow as you go.

For more information on structuring your website properly, watch our video here:

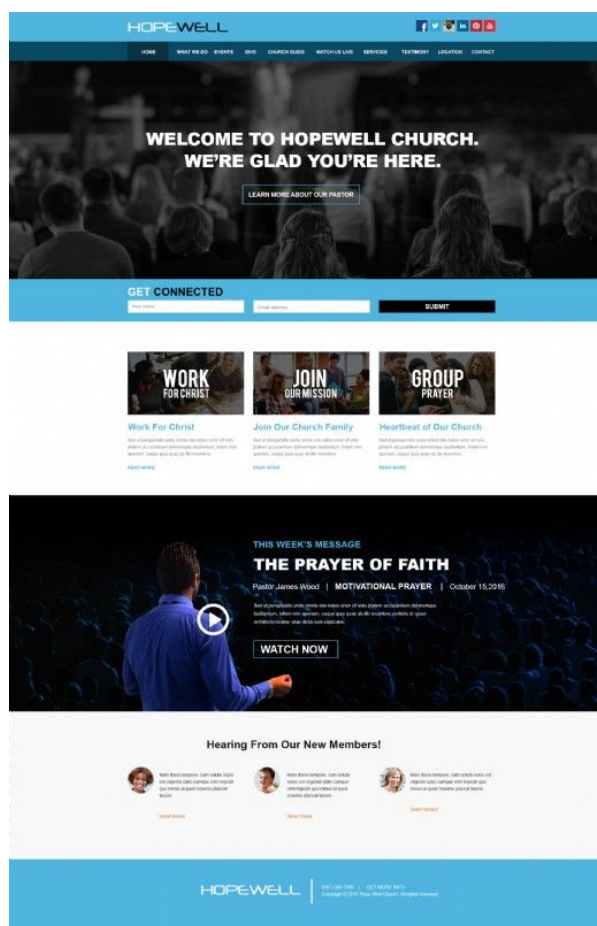
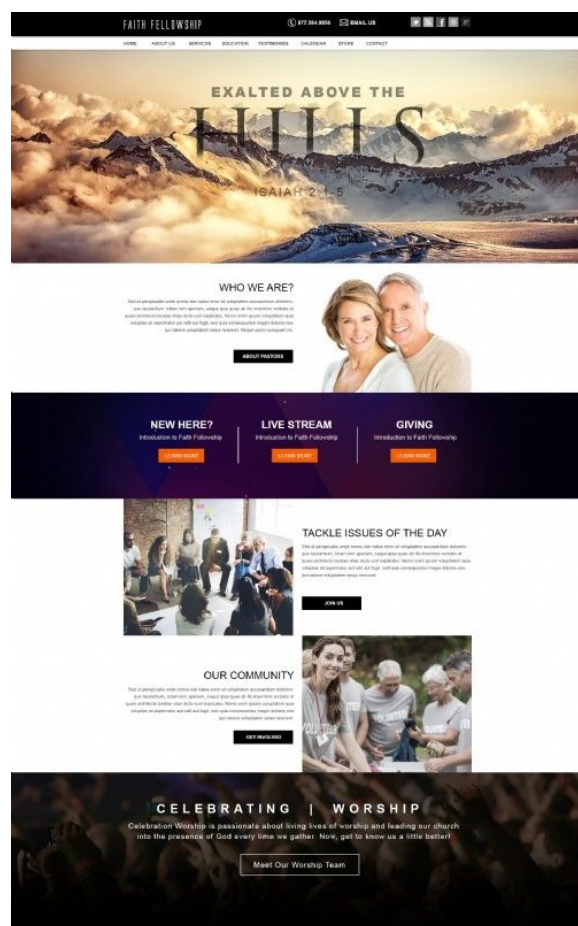
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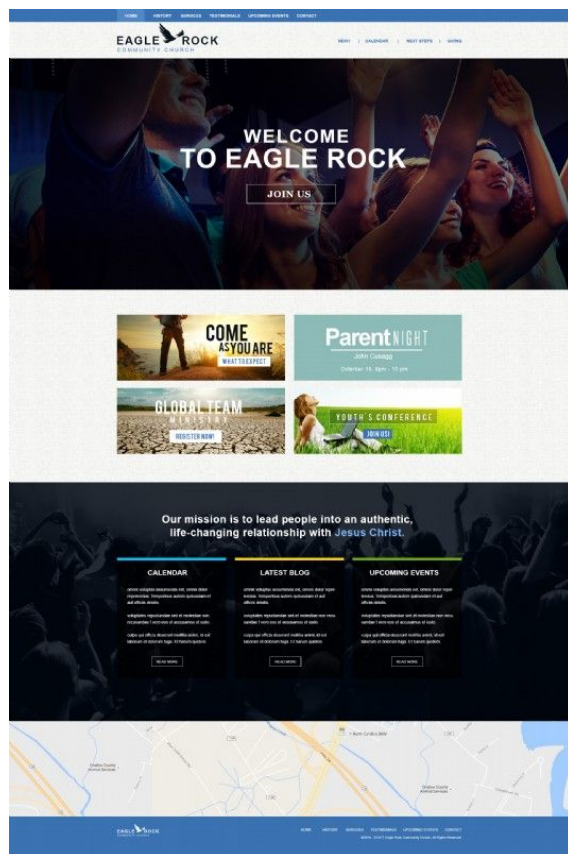
Recommended Design Options

When we work with most churches, the design is what they are most concerned about. Most of the time, discussion about goals, traps, values, and organization (known as GVTO) don't even take place. The result is an over-emphasis on how a website looks as opposed to a distinct focus on how it should work to accomplish your goals. These are known as “vanity” websites, designed to impress the owners of the website more than meeting the needs of the website visitors.

The answer to this is to focus on “wireframes”, or very basic design layouts that make sure we accommodate everything on the page while keeping the discussion very simple. Then, later, we have a designer fill it in with beautiful graphics, color, and content to make the website look beautiful.

Based on the information we collected from you, here are some concepts we recommend for you:





The main idea behind these design concepts is to create a homepage that will serve as the “cover of the magazine”, leading people into the contents of the website. Homepages do not attract website traffic, as many pastors believe. Marketing does. The function of your homepage is to get people off the homepage and into areas of your website they are most interested in, preferably the areas you are directing them to most.

We’d love to work with you to discuss your homepage more specifically so that we can zoom in on the pieces of your church that we may not necessarily know at this point.

See more concepts at <http://netministry.com/gallery/>. Keep in mind that we usually tailor concepts around your specific needs, so you aren’t locked into anything in our gallery.

Building Your Website Is Just the Beginning: What Happens After Building Your Church Website?

Ongoing Website Care

Once your website is built, you will have created a foundation for all your digital communication. Now, it's time to think about how to best use your website to distribute ongoing news, updates, events, media, and more. Care and growth of your website, which we call Advancing, will be where you spend most of your time.



Static vs Dynamic Content

In a nutshell, static content is information, images, and media on your website that doesn't change very much. Dynamic content is information, images, and media that needs to be updated on some sort of a scheduled or on-demand basis. For example, the pastor's bio may only need to be reviewed once a year. However, your event calendar should be updated weekly if not daily. To keep things easy for your ministry, it's important to identify what parts of your website need to change regularly and which parts do not.

Content to Create on a Regular Basis

These are the types of content you will need to create on a regular basis depending on the pages you choose to have on your website.

- Every 12 Months
 - o Review/Update Church History
 - o Review/Update Statement of Faith

- o Review/Update Mission/Vision
- Every 6 Months
 - o Review/Update New Visitors Page
 - o Review/Update Service Times
 - o Review/Update Content for All Ministry Pages
 - o Review/Update Online Courses
- Every Month
 - o Review Staff Page
 - o Update Monthly Announcements
 - o Update Monthly Events
 - o Review/Update All Groups
 - o Review/Update Photos Gallery
 - o Publish Downloadable Documents
- Every Week
 - o Update Weekly Announcements
 - o Schedule 3-5 Social Network Posts
 - o Revise/Update Weekly Events
 - o Review/Update Online Sermon Library
 - o Publish Live Services
 - o Publish 1-5 new blog posts
 - o Review/Update Send Out Weekly Devotionals
- Every Day
 - o Review/Update Service Requests
 - o Review/Update Prayer Requests
 - o Review/Update and Comment on Social Media Posts/Comments
 - o Review/Update Service/Volunteer Requests
 - o Review/Update Contributions
 - o Review/Update Send Out Daily Devotionals
 - o Check & Answer Information / Visitors Requests

The **Killer Nonprofit Website Content Strategy** is attached with this blueprint to help guide you into a cohesive strategy for your ministry.

Online Outreach Strategy

Once your website is receiving the care and attention it deserves, it's time to spread the word about your ministry and begin attracting website traffic to fully accomplish those goals you gave us.

For marketing your church online, we teach our clients a method called SCEWPS (pronounced “scoops”). It's an easy way to remember the most important aspects of internet marketing. These methods account for over 90% of the traffic and results on the internet.



SCEWPS of Yummy Website Traffic

Below, you will learn about the main components of SCEWPS and what they mean for your church website.

Search Engine Optimization: This is a method of making your website more reputable, resourceful, and relevant in the eyes of search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo.

Content Marketing: This is the core strategy that feeds all the other methods. It's about creating great content that can be distributed throughout the internet, leading people back to your website.

E-mail Marketing: E-mail is still the king of internet marketing. Build your list of names and e-mail addresses to create a broad audience for your announcements, invitations, and donor campaigns.

Website: Your website is the base of operations for all your internet marketing. With the right website, you can house all your quality content and systems, using the other marketing methods to drive and convert traffic there.

Pay-Per-Click Advertising: This is the paid portion of your online marketing, although there are other forms of paid advertising that can be used as well. Pay-per-click (PPC for short) is a form of advertising that allows you to only pay for how many times your ads are clicked instead of how many times they are seen.

Social Media Marketing: This is the most popular type of marketing due to its viral nature and the fact that it's relatively free. Social marketing is best used as a sharing and engagement channel. Always publish to your website first, then share to social media. Once you do that, be sure to interact with commenters and promote your content using boosted and paid advertising.

We've included the Nonprofit Internet Marketing Manual to provide you with more information about how to execute on your strategy.

You're Not Alone. You Don't Need to Reinvent the Wheel.
Focus on Ministry Not Your Website.

How NetMinistry Can Help

Are you a pastor or ministry leader looking for ways to use the internet to increase weekly visitors, regular donations, volunteer involvement, and community reach? Did you know that your web presence can help you to do that?

This blueprint has come from almost two decades of working with over 60,000 churches, ministries, and Christian businesses. NetMinistry was created to help your organization reach its goals by helping you to execute on this blueprint. You're in good hands with us.



A 360 Degree Service

We don't just create websites. We help you to establish a real, tangible presence online. Then, we help you to update and care for your website while assisting you in the marketing as well. We have options for churches that want to do most of it themselves as well as for ministries that just want to focus on their ministries, not websites.

Free Phone Consultation

As part of our outreach to churches and ministries, we provide you with a live person to help you review this plan and choose the components that are right for you. Then, we can provide you with the cost of setting it all up – everything from the design to the technology to the ongoing services.

Best of all, our options are priced for the budget that any ministry can afford – from the startup church plants to megachurches.

Follow this link to contact us by phone or web today:

<http://netministry.com/contact>

