



Digital outreach
Make your church an online superstar

What makes these among the best church sites of 2018? (Source: <https://bit.ly/2GOvkQM>)

- Fuel Church: <http://fuel.church/>
- New Spring: <https://newspring.cc/>
- Remnant Church: <https://www.remnantva.com/>
- Gateway church: <http://gatewaypeople.com/>





What makes these the best church sites of 2018? (Source: ChurchJuice, <https://bit.ly/2GOvkQM>)

- Large images and video
- Current
- No rotating announcements
- Images of real people
- **Clear Purpose**
- Clear Calls-To-Action (CTA)



Grace Journey

- Who and where is your audience?
- Where do they need to be?
- Who are you (brand)?
- How can you help them on their journey?



Grace Journey

DISCOVER	RESEARCH	COMMIT	MATURE
Stranger	Visitor	Prospect	Member
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitation • Website • Social Media • Email forward • Postcard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Social Media • Email • Postcard • Letter • Brochure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact info • Pastor visit • BIC • Volunteer • Join a group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual growth • Influence • Become expert • Lead • Serve • Share faith



Grace Journey: Role of gospel-sharing via media

- Best practices
- Websites
- Social media
- Email



10 website best practices



10 website best practices

- **Useful content** (to your audience)
 - Fresh and well-written
 - Focused on the appropriate audience
 - Real life stories and testimonials
 - Scannable or bulleted
 - Graphics are attractive and “authentic”
 - Video is more popular than graphics

1



10 website best practices

- **Simple, intuitive navigation**
 - Function over form, one-tap from homepage, breadcrumbs, top and bottom navigation, search function
 - Capitalizes on *About Us*, emphasizes what you do and who you are, short descriptor (motto), easily accessible and redundant information on location and contact information

2



10 website best practices

- **Attractive, branded appearance**
 - Design to represent your brand
 - Consistent, “no surprises” design and voice
 - Up-to-date content
 - Visually appealing
 - Graphics with real people, not stock photos
 - Open and clean (no clutter)

3



10 website best practices

- **Mobile-optimized**
 - 60% of internet traffic comes from mobile devices (InMobi); improves SEO
 - Google considers the mobile version of your site as your primary.
 - Use a mobile-friendly website builder
 - Pay attention to image sizes, columns, “tap” not “click,” standard fonts

4



10 website best practices

- **Calls to action (CTA)**
 - Remember the grace journey
 - You want visitors to take an action; invite them to act
 - Landing (action) pages are ideal for encouraging action
 - Gathering contact information is the most important CTA

5



10 website best practices

- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**
 - Factors
 - Positive: content quality, mobile-friendly, helpful keywords, authority/trustworthiness, link quality
 - Negative: paid for links, spam, keyword stuffing

6



10 website best practices

- **Analytics**
 - Learn
 - who is coming to your site
 - their location
 - their OS
 - the time of day
 - the pages they visit
 - the place they visit from
 - Adjust your website accordingly

7



10 website best practices

- **Domain name**
 - Easily recognizable and “remember-able”
 - Able to enhance your brand
 - _____.Church

8



10 website best practices

- **Testimonies**
 - People don't trust a church or business to describe itself accurately
 - Testimonies from members, guests, and “celebrities” are essential to credibility
 - Testimonies can be part of a church's storytelling

9



10 website best practices

- **Social media support**
 - Social media funnels visitors to the website.

10



10



10 social media best practices



10 social media best practices

- **Choose the best social media platforms for your ministry's brand**
- Each platform has its own characteristics, audience, expectations
- Use platforms that match your ministry

1



10 social media best practices

- **Choose platforms your audience uses**
- Cast your line where your preferred fish hang out

2



10 social media best practices

- **Engage with your social media audience**
- Listen to them (social listening)
- Respond to their questions, concerns, comments
- Produce suitable content
- Be personal
- Encourage conversation, interaction (ask questions)

3



10 social media best practices

- **Publish appropriately**
- Publish when your audience is online
- Design posts for each platform
- Image size, content size, graphics/video, optimize content for each channel
- Pair posting schedule/design with social media platform
- For scheduling consider using Buffer, HootSuite, etc.

4



10 social media best practices

- **Use a consistent tone/voice**
- Your tone/voice should match your brand and relate to your audience
- Consider the balance between serious/whimsy, informal/formal, male/female, old/young
- Develop a style guide. Important if more than one person is posting. Helpful for a "one person shop."

5



10 social media best practices

- **Share content more than once**
 - Social media posts are not seen by most followers
 - Republish “evergreen” content (holidays, topics)
 - Repackage content for other platforms
 - Link to content on your site
 - Repurpose content (e.g., publish part of blog post, a segment of a video)

6



10 social media best practices

- **Use graphics and video**
 - Do not post without a graphic or video
 - Videos are more popular than graphics
 - Live-stream events, commentary, slice-of-life reflections
 - Reports on church events
 - Others’ videos (with their permission): illustrate, inform, entertain

7



10 social media best practices

- **Strive for quality over quantity**
 - Whatever a church publishes online reflects their brand/image

8



10 social media best practices

- **Have a measurable goal**
 - Know how you want your audience to respond
 - E.g., website or page visits, response to an offer, the sharing of content, opt-in to your email list
 - Schedule/plan your posts

9



10 social media best practices

- **Have a measurable goal**
 - Design your website to elicit that response
 - Include clear and regular calls to action (CTAs)
 - Rule of thumb: one request for support of your ministry for every four articles about your ministry or related topics

9



10 social media best practices

- **Have a measurable goal**
 - Analyze whether your audience is responding as you want
 - Because each platform and the audience for each platform is different, set different goals for each platform

9



10 social media best practices

- **Increase your audience**
 - Organic growth: word of mouth, searches, shares
 - Paid advertising: inexpensive, targeted
 - Influencers

10



10 social media best practices

- **Increase your audience**
 - Develop relationships with influencers
 - Influencers are individuals who have a larger than average following on social media
 - Mini-influencers

10



12 email best practices



12 email best practices

- **Always ask permission to email people**

1



12 email best practices

- **Reaching your core audience, not large numbers, is key to email distribution**

2



12 email best practices

- **Make it easy to subscribe and unsubscribe**
 - Every field you require to subscribe will cause the conversion rate to drop by 25%
 - Source: Emma Email Marketing
 - Do not misuse contact information

3



12 email best practices

- **Personalize your emails**
 - But avoid being creepy (i.e., inappropriately familiar)

4



12 email best practices

- **First, provide value to your readers**
 - Only then consider how you might receive value from them

5



12 email best practices

- **Make it easy to read**
 - Scannable
 - Concise, minimal copy
 - White space
 - Design attractive subject lines

6



12 email best practices

- **Appealing visuals**
 - High emotional impact
 - Real people
 - Avoid large graphics that load slowly
 - Do not overuse graphics

6



12 email best practices

- **Mobile-optimized**

8



12 email best practices

- **Segment your mailing list**
 - Appeal appropriately to each segment

9



12 email best practices

- Brand your email content and design

10



12 email best practices

- One clear call to action
 - Give your CTA prominence (top of page)

11



12 email best practices

- Test and review
 - Test in a variety of browsers, especially mobile browsers
 - Check and recheck spelling, grammar, sentence length, etc.

12

A final encouragement

- LBD: Learn By Doing
 - Don't wait until its perfect
 - This field is constantly evolving
 - Start, then keep improving



Resources

- ShareGrace.net: ShareGrace.net/your-church%3A-a-superstar
- WELS Intersections ([Facebook page](#))
- WELSTech: welstech.wels.net

