

# Effective Outreach Tools

from ACS Technologies

**O**utreach begins when your members and community become actively involved in your ministry. With a strategic approach and the proper tools, your church can move forward with outreach right away. This article focuses on how to get people to your event and how to promote your event within the community; it is excerpted from the ACS ministry guide *Going Outside the Church Walls*.

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## Begin Reaching Out Today

Once you've adequately planned your outreach strategy and motivated your members, you can focus your efforts on promoting your events and worship services. There are many outlets available to help you publicize your event: your church website, email, direct mail, the local media, advertising, and word of mouth.

## Web Site

We live in a culture that gets information from the Web, so give your members the information they need about your events on your church Web site. There are numerous ways to reach out to people from your Web site in a dynamic way. You can:

- Use your site to advertise upcoming events
- Let members see the small groups they can join
- Let people sign up for events and small groups
- Upload podcasts and streaming video

A great way to acquire and maintain a quality Web site with these features is by using an online service to host your site and help you build and edit it. With this kind of service, you are given the tools to design and edit your site whenever

you want and no additional software or coding skills are required. You decide who is permitted to edit the site. By having multiple contributors, it saves a single person from having to build a site from scratch and gives you more content to keep your site dynamic.

## Email

Email is a convenient, efficient, and effective way to publicize your event. You may want to consider using an email service that allows you to email large groups of people at once with customized messages for each group. Be sure that you identify your church in the subject line so people recognize who the communication is coming from.

## Direct Mail

Postal mail is also a valuable way to spread the word about your event. Consider using mailing software that interfaces with your church management software to invite community members to special events. These programs can generate lists and produce labels to make mailing easy. There are also bulk mailing services that allow you to CASS-certify mailing addresses for accuracy, which can make you eligible for postal discounts.

## Local Media

Don't be afraid to "think outside of the box!" Media organizations are always looking for stories, so if your event has an interesting slant to it, you could land on a radio or television station or in your local newspaper. Along with story ideas, send background information to reporters with key facts about your church and contact information for your event.

## Advertising

Newspapers usually have special advertising sections so take advantage of this outlet. Also consider leaving information at visitors bureaus and larger employers in your community. Another good publicity option is your local chamber of commerce. An annual membership for a non-profit organization is usually nominal; once you're a member of the chamber they can help by including your church's information in their directory and list some of your events in their public calendar.

## Word Of Mouth

Last, but certainly not least, don't forget to use your congregation to spread the word about your outreach efforts. Whether you have just a few members or thousands, your members can really help spread the word about your events. Be sure to ask your members to participate in publicizing the event; start early so you can get it on people's calendars. Be sure they have the details they need and that the event details can be easily found on your church Web site.

These solutions are only a few of the ways you can meet the challenges of establishing a successful outreach ministry. No matter your goals or budget, the optimal solution is whatever works best for your ministry and community. See what you and your team can come up with to get your outreach program to be a success.

For the full version of the ACS ministry guide *Going Outside the Church Walls*, download it here. To get more information about how ACS Technologies can help you be more effective in your outreach efforts, please visit [www.acstechnologies.com](http://www.acstechnologies.com) or call 1-800-736-7425.

Struggling with Outreach?

How do you **REACH** the people in your community and **RETAIN** the visitors you already have?

Download the ACS ministry guide, *Going Outside the Church Walls*, for ideas and practical solutions!

[ideastoimpact.com/outreach1](http://ideastoimpact.com/outreach1)

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