

Small Groups

Planning for Success with Easy-to-Use Technology

from ACS Technologies

Over the last several decades, small groups have grown in number and influence to become a central focus of church life. Not only do they help develop closer relationships, but they also encourage more responsibility and help foster spiritual growth. For the members of your small group ministry, the most important thing you can provide is easily accessible information and communication with each other. When information is not flowing and communication is lacking, people feel confused and disconnected. The following article on Web based small group management has been excerpted from the ACS ministry guide “[Planning For Big Success With Small Groups.](#)”

Communication is Key

Without an organized system in place, staff members lack important information. They don't know what groups are meeting, the current topics of study, when new members join a group, or even a group's meeting location.

While some leaders communicate well with church staff and members about their groups, many don't, which can lead to an inconsistent, poorly organized small group ministry. Rather than leaving vital communication up to leaders who may have differing commitment levels, why not set up a system that keeps everyone involved and accountable for their actions? The solution is Web-based small group management software.

With a simplified online interface, this innovative software offers small group ministries the ability to use the Internet to collect demographic and contact information, connect prospects with group leaders, and facilitate effective communication at all levels of your ministry. In addition, the information can be accessed from the office, home, or a Web-enabled hand-held device.

As with all computerized systems, the information available to your members is only as good as the information initially entered in the church database. However with instruction and

encouragement, participants at all levels of your ministry can enjoy a meaningful small group experience. This includes:

- Potential Attendees
- Small Group Leaders
- Church Staff
- Small Group Members

Potential Attendees

Imagine if your church members and attendees could search your church Web site for small groups that interest them based on criteria like stage-of-life, geographic location, or current study topic. They could also find small groups that offer child care, if that was their need. In addition, they could request more information and have the group leader contact them.

Small Group Leaders

What if, when a person requested more information, not only did the leader receive an email asking them to contact the prospect, but a task was automatically set up to keep the leader accountable for contacting the prospect and inviting them to the next group meeting? What if the leader could even review and

mark-off their task list online?

Church Staff

Once the assigned contact is made, the leader could return to the church's small group Web portal and enter a brief report about the contact with the prospect and any resulting action from the contact. All this information will then be stored in the church's central database and made available to the church staff.

Small Group Members

When a member indicates to a leader that they are ready to join the group, the leader can go online and add them to the group's roster, which will trigger an update to their record in the church's database. Once they are part of the group, the member then has access to a list of the other members and can email them or see their phone numbers to contact them, thus reinforcing the relationships between the members.

Technology Can Build Relationships

Building relationships, which strengthens your small groups, requires easy communication with each other and the entire group. By promoting fellowship and personal connections outside of the small group meetings you also improve the overall health and longevity of your groups. With the right online software, the capabilities for growth within your small groups ministry are limitless.

Raising the Bar

Of course, the possibilities offered by today's software solutions are not limited to the examples given above. There are virtually endless possibilities for how these solutions can help your small group ministry run as efficiently as possible, resulting in the relational connections and spiritual growth that are at the heart of your small group ministry.

To get more information about how ACS Technologies can help you take your small group ministry to another level, download the ACS ministry guide "[Planning For Big Success With Small Groups](#)", visit acstechnologies.com, or call 800-736-7425.

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