

10 Advertising Secrets Every Church Needs

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Written and Copyrighted by: John Squiric and Bill Squiric Church Marketing Consultants

Make your advertising work harder and bring more people to your church.

That's what you want, right? I can help you. Even if you never entrust me with your advertising needs, I want to share with you 10 advertising secrets you can use to get better advertising results for your church from your next ad.

Secret #1

People get saved only for selfish reasons. I realize this sounds a little cynical, but really... who do you know who ever got saved because of an altruistic motive? Okay, times up. I'm then people only get saved because they have a need, want, some problem, or some fear, then you should show them, right in your ad, how you and your church can help them get what they want. I'm not talking about the prosperity gospel here. I am talking about better marriages, stronger kids, closer relationships, fellowship with God, a sense of meaning and purpose – things like that! Your church most likely does that for people all the time. Let the people who are reading your ads know this and more people will respond to your message. God will turn them into altruistic thinkers after they come and get saved!

Secret #2

Determine who you are trying to reach before you write a word of advertising copy. The pastorate is littered with examples of failed outreach attempts primarily due to the fact that the "outreacher" didn't understand, couldn't relate to, and wasn't anything like the "outreachee".

Being able to understand and communicate on the level of the people who will be reading your ads is vital to your success. Age, education, income level, family status, religious background – all are important variables you must take into account when writing your ad copy. You must speak your readers' language if you expect them to read what it is you have to say and then respond to it. It is also important to understand the "Buyer's Box" principle, which simply states that at any given time in a large group of people, a certain number of those people will be ready to make a buying decision for whatever product it is you wish to sell. For instance, if I'm selling mattresses, I can count on the fact that at any given time, a group of people is out there looking to purchase a mattress and will respond to the next ad I send them. They may have seen my ad tons of times before. However, since they were not interested in buying a mattress at that time, they really took little notice. Now that their back is sore and their wife is complaining of lost sleep, they are ready to get with the program and will devour any mattress ad they run across.

That's why sawy churches continually promote various "felt needs" message series with great success. They know there always is going to be a certain number of people in a "spiritual buyer's box" looking for help with their marriage, kids, or careers. These churches also realize that group is continually changing so they can go back to those successful boxes, season after season. Capture those lost souls for Christ by speaking to them and their needs.

In our context, God and the Holy Spirit are continually at work softening people up and making them receptive to His calling- often times by painful experience.

Secret #3

Every ad you write must have a strong headline that captures the interest of your target audience. "The wickedest of all sins is to run an advertisement without a headline." That's a direct quote from David Ogilvy, often considered the father of modern day advertising, and I couldn't agree with him more. Yes, in light of the big eternal picture that may be overstating things a bit. When it comes to the world of advertising, though, truer words have never been spoken. Never, ever place an ad in any medium unless the headline used has the potential to stop readers in their tracks and cause them to say, "Yes, that's for me." "I can see a benefit in what you're trying to speak to me about and I know this ad is for me." The headline is the gateway into your ad. Without its power to draw people deeper into your ad, people won't waste their time trying to figure out if there's something of value in there for them. They're too busy and have too many other things clamoring for their attention. Please, don't spend your church's hard-earned money on any ad and allow the graphic designers to neglect this non-negotiable rule

Secret #4

The more you tell, the more you will sell. Ad copy sells. Use more words. Inexperienced advertisers tend to shy away from using lots of words in their ads. They think people won't read it. That's a big mistake. Don't be afraid to use lots of advertising copy in your next ad – if it's written from a WIIFM (What's In It For Me) perspective.

PAGE SUMMARY:

This page is meant to help pastors and other church staff members in charge of church marketing, church advertising, church direct mail and other church outreach initiatives use the same advertising and marketing secrets employed by successful marketing and advertising professionals.

Learn How to Grow Your Church in about 90 Seconds



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Read More Church Marketing eBooks Below

8 Steps to Ensure Success on Easter Sunday and Beyond



Easter is the most significant day in the life of the church and more people will walk through the doors of your church on Easter Sunday than on any other day of the year. The church failing to market Easter would be like Doritos not marketing for Super Bowl

Sunday.

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How to Add Real Value to Your Church



Do you want to know how valuable your Church is at the present time? Take a survey to find out how many members have invited a friend, co-worker or family member to attend on a Sunday morning. If the numbers are low, chances are your members don't see enough value in your Church...

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Attract More Visitors to Your Church

Think about this with me. We are trying to reach the unchurched. Obviously, for some reason they have not previously been motivated to come and visit yours or probably any other church lately. Now, imagine if you were speaking to an unchurched person, one-on-one. What would you say to try to convince them to change their habits and decide to visit your church? Do you think one or two simple sentences would do the trick? Would you speak to them for only for a minute or so? If they gave you the freedom to do so, wouldn't you much rather go into compelling detail after detail about your church and what it has to offer them? How much more convincing could you be then?

Listen, people like to read. Just walk by any newsstand or visit any library or book store. Reading is a multi-billion dollar industry for a reason. The problem is that most church ads I see are very boring and self-serving. The church drones on about this program and that ministry. "We have this, we have that". Who cares? Certainly most readers don't, and that's why there's a major disconnect and your ad does not work.

Instead, write your ad and describe your church from the reader's perspective. Write to their interests, appeal to their emotions, and tell them how what you have to offer can help them get what they want. Lots of ad copy will help you accomplish that.

Secret #5

Don't overestimate the importance of slick graphics and artwork. Copy is King! Yes, it's nice to have a pretty logo, and photos can help paint a picture in the reader's mind about what it is you're trying to convey, but don't make the mistake of thinking that great art can be a substitute for applying these secrets.

It can't. Words will sell your story better than pictures, 9 times out of 10. The goal should not be to simply create an image and just let the community know you are there. Leave that for McDonald's and all the slick Madison Ave. agency types out there, whose existence does not depend on writing an ad that must get people to respond. Your ad must work, don't settle! If it does not draw people in the door of your church, it is a failure. Don't give up, but don't make the same mistakes again and think somehow you'll get a different response this time. The goal of all your advertising must be to get the unchurched to change their normal Sunday habits and decide to come visit your church. Great artwork, in my opinion, won't be enough to do that. You're going to need to have some words of persuasion behind it.

Secret #6

Use the type of words direct response advertisers use. "Direct response" is the advertising discipline that focuses on getting people to take immediate action.

This is where the money is made. These are the guys who make the phone ring for businesses. They know what they are doing because everything they do is continually measured and tested in order to see what works best. They may simply change out a headline in a long-running ad and see a 50% increase or 50% decrease in sales, but the important thing is that they track it to learn what works best. To them, advertising is a science.

In their study of this science, they've uncovered a few dozen keywords and phrases, which, when used, will simply cause an ad to work better, words like "You," "New," "Proven," "Breakthrough," "Special," "Guaranteed," "Discover," "Introducing," "Miracle," "Forever," "How To," "Easy," "At Last," "Free," and "Secrets." This may sound a little unbelievable, how just re-phrasing something can change response rate, but it's true. I've seen it in our church marketing. The words you choose are vital to the success of your ad. Discover how to introduce these special, proven, easy-to-use miracle words in your next advertising copy and you'll experience breakthrough results – guaranteed.

Secret #7

Use real life testimonials from people in your church in your next ad to lend credibility.

If someone is not attending church, chances are they don't think church can do much for them. Maybe they're skeptical. It's more than likely they just have no idea. Help draw them in and alleviate skepticism by using testimonials from people in your church who have successfully been helped by a particular message series, small group, or ministry of the church. Your claims and messages will be more believable if you can help the reader identify with someone who was in the same boat as them – and successfully overcame his or her challenge. A few short lines will do. In essence, you want the testimonial to say: "Yeah, I am just like you are, but this church, message, program saved my marriage, helped get my son off drugs, gave me more purpose. I know it can help you too".

Allow the testimonial to be as specific as possible, and try to keep the focus on only one item, aspect, or program per testimonial. In other words, don't let them comment both on how the recent marriage series saved their crumbling relationship and how their 10 year old son recently commented, "Sunday is the best day of his life." That would require 2 separate testimonials to be more effective.

Secret #8

Use a pastor invitation and call the reader to action. In business, they call this the "close." It's critically important.

Once you build your case and outline how a person can benefit from visiting your church, you must seal the deal and call them to action. Very deliberately invite them to come and take advantage of all that you have there for them. Even more powerful is to have the pastor invite them in a brief message. They must know you want them there, and you want them there this week! More people will respond if they are invited, and if you have a specific program or message series you can invite them to – well, that's even better and will yield your best response.

Secret #9



Have you ever wondered why your mailbox is filled with postcards, flyers, and letters from businesses big and small? It's simple... because it works! Churches just like yours are growing their congregations through direct mail...

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The Eight Keys to Effective Church Word-of-Mouth Advertising



The reason WOM advertising is so powerful is that, in most instances, the person talking about you and recommending your church, has nothing to gain in the transaction. This is unlike other forms of media, where the referring source has been

compensated in some manner. In a Neilson survey people were asked the question "Who do you trust?" the number one answer was "recommendations from consumers".

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How to Get People to WANT to Come to Your Church



Before you can understand how to attract people to your church, you need to understand the basic psychological factors that people experience before they decide to attend a new church.

Here is a recent statement from an unknown internet blogger about

church. "It is repetitious, predictable and a meaningless ritual. I would rather sleep in. I work hard all week and I deserve it!"... unknown author.

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God's 4 Step Marketing Process from Exodus 3



A few thousand years ago God used a 4-step marketing process to get Moses to obey His will. From Madison Avenue marketing gurus to the simple neighborhood pizza parlor, businesses are still using this exact same 4-step process. While they may

not be giving God the credit, the proof is in the scriptures, we just need to look for it.

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How to Effectively use Christmas and Easter to Grow your Church.



Christmas and Easter are the most widely celebrated religious holidays in the United States. Church attendance on those days often doubles and in some areas it may even quadruple

Use your website in conjunction with your direct mail. Have you heard this quote: "you can either love or hate the Internet, but one thing you cannot afford to do is to ignore it." It's true in business, and it may be even truer for churches. The Internet has tremendous potential for evangelism, which I personally have not yet even begun to grasp. However, one thing I have come to understand is that for the unchurched, the Internet represents a very non-threatening way for them to "check you out". By nature, the Internet is a directive medium. This means that like the yellow pages, unless the unchurched have a specific reason to search you out, they are not likely to just wander across your site.

However, if used in conjunction with your advertising message, you can draw readers to your site and give them even more compelling information and reasons to come visit your church. I have not proven this yet, but my hunch is the unchurched person considering attending your church as a result of an ad, will also visit your website to glean as much additional information as he or she can.

Don't disappoint. Use it as an opportunity to apply all the above principles and fill your site with as much compelling WIFM copy, testimonials and visitor-friendly information as you can.

Secret #10

The more your ad costs to produce and mail, the fewer people you can reach. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand this principle, but hang with me for a few more seconds and hear me out. This is the reason Truth In Advertising exists.

We want to multiply your church's advertising budget and allow you to reach 15,000 people instead of 10,000, or 25,000 instead of 20,000 – all without sacrificing quality, and while improving your likelihood of success. We can do this because we do it in the "secular" business field every day. God has blessed us, we have the resources, and we simply want to be faithful stewards and help you advance The Kingdom.

Based in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex, [Truth Advertising](#) is a division of a for-profit publishing enterprise. In addition to TA, we own a large group of shared mail advertising magazines, a solo direct mail business, and a manufacturing and mailing facility that services our own companies, as well as some of the largest printers and mailers in the country.



Some great family event opportunities. The questions is, how can your church capitalize on the opportunity to see all these fresh faces the following Sunday?

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How to create value in your church with direct mail:

If visitors to your church on a Sunday morning don't see anything of value for them or their families, chances are they won't make another trip to your church the following Sunday

How to use the power of "Back to School" to grow your church.



As you know, Easter and Christmas are considered the two most strategic times of year to attract people to your church. Yet, most churches don't realize that there is one more key time of year for bringing new people into their congregation. When is this special season? It's Back to School. If you're not marketing to your community at this time of year, you are missing out on potential guests!

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About the Author



John Squiric is a successful church marketing consultant in Plano, Texas. He is the co-owner of Truth Advertising; a not-for-profit ministry that helps churches get the most from their advertising budget.

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