

# CHURCH MARKETING REPORT



*Center for Church*  
COMMUNICATION

A casual look at the marketing and communication practices of churches across the U.S.

## INTRODUCTION

Marketing isn't a big priority for many churches, but many see marketing and communication as an outgrowth of evangelism, one of the core purposes of the church. More and more churches are beginning to learn from business that marketing can be an effective tool to fulfill their mission.

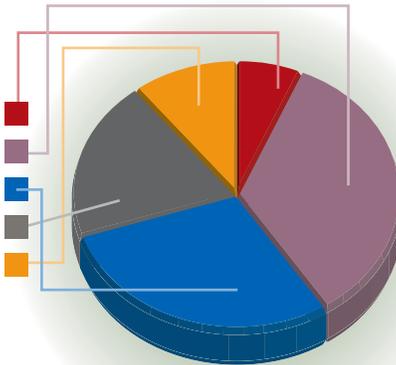
But many questions remain about how many churches are actually doing marketing and whether or not those efforts work. We surveyed over 500 churches, representing more than 40 different denominations to see how marketing fits into their plans and practices.

Marketing and communication are an outgrowth of evangelism

## CHURCH MARKETING

### Church Attendance

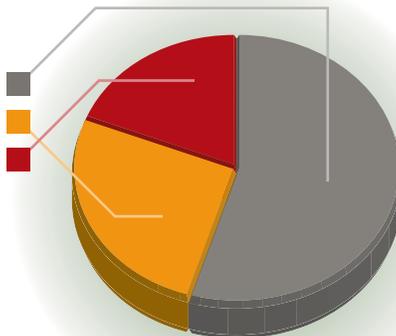
Less than 50	- 7%
50-200	- 34%
201-500	- 29%
501-1,500	- 20%
More than 1,500	- 10%



**64% of churches have between 50-500 attendees each week.**

### Visitors

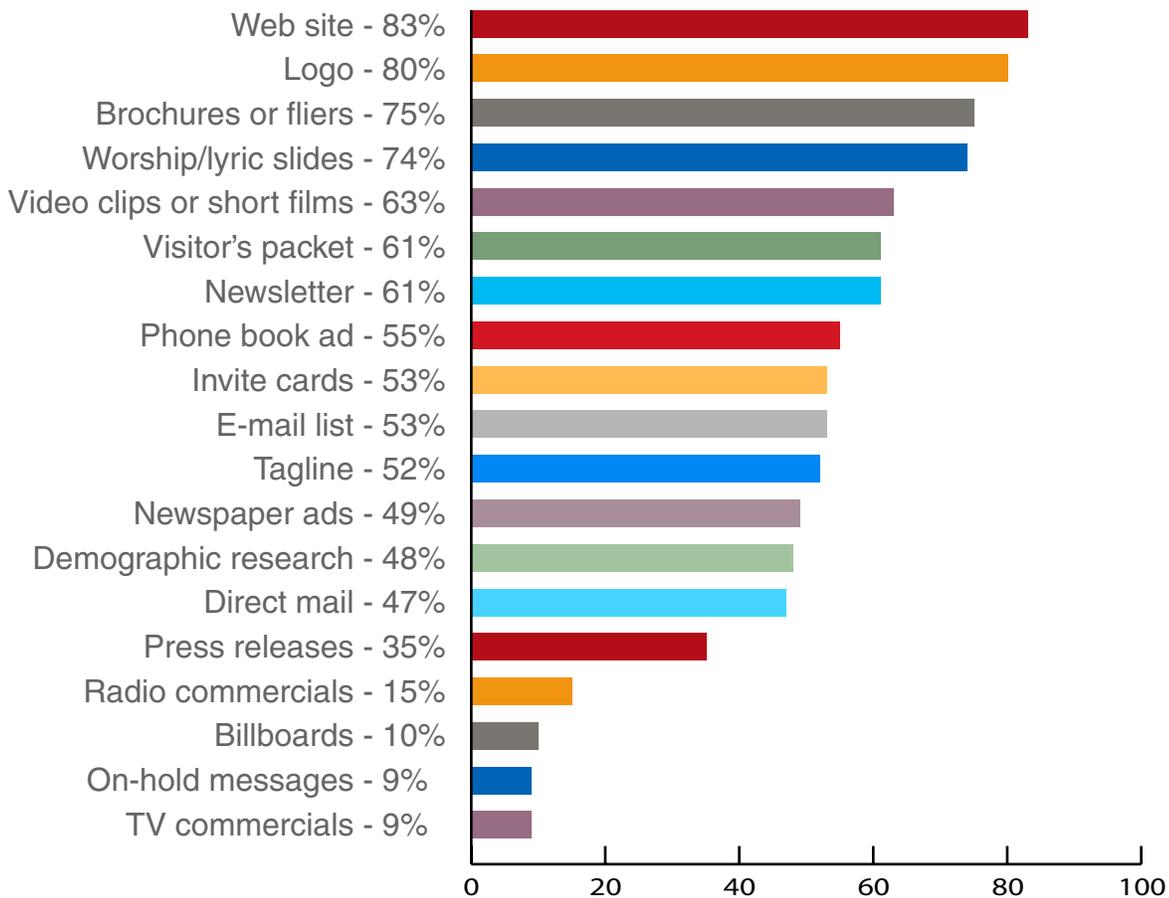
5 or fewer	- 55%
6-10	- 26%
More than 10	- 19%



**55% of churches have 5 or fewer visitors each week.**

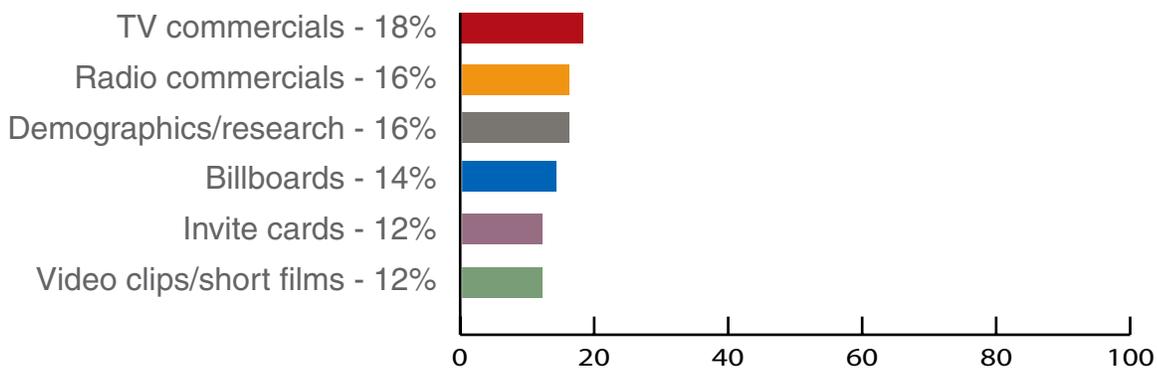
# CHURCH MARKETING

## What Marketing are Churches Doing?



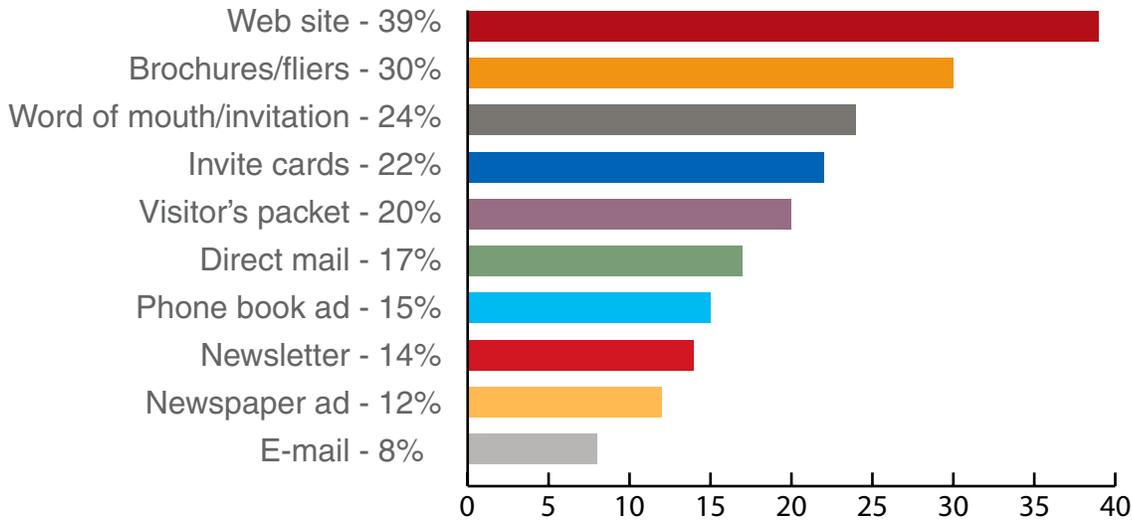
76% of churches aren't documenting or tracking the results of their marketing.

## Top 6 Marketing Efforts Churches Wish They Did



# CHURCH MARKETING

## What's Working for Churches



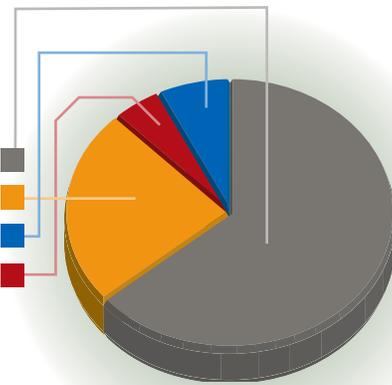
22% of churches didn't know which marketing method they used was most effective.

76% of churches aren't documenting or tracking the results of their marketing.

63% of churches said marketing and promoting their church was important or extremely important.

### Who Do You Rely On Most to Create Your Marketing?

- Rely on staff to create their marketing - 64%
- Rely on volunteers - 24%
- Claim not to do marketing - 7%
- Rely on an outside company - 5%



63% of churches said marketing and promoting their church was important or extremely important.

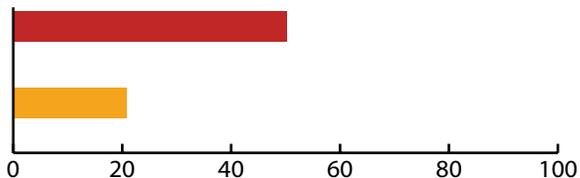
80% of churches spend less than \$10,000 on marketing and promotions each year (includes bulletins, newsletters, web sites, mailings, etc.).

Only 26% of churches were interested in receiving information on companies that could help them with marketing.

## CHURCH WEB SITES

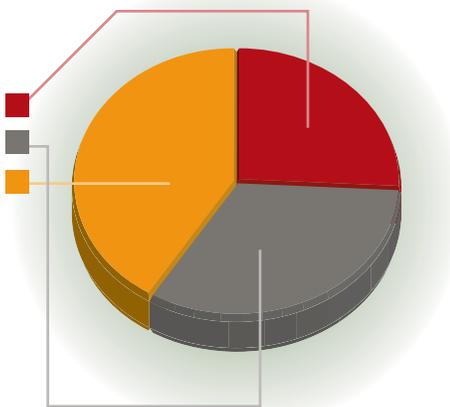
Since a vast majority of churches do have web sites (83%), we took a closer look at this marketing endeavor. 73% of churches said a web site is important or extremely important.

Churches planning a redesign in the next year - 48%  
Churches who recently re-designed their site - 20%



### Church Web Site Satisfaction

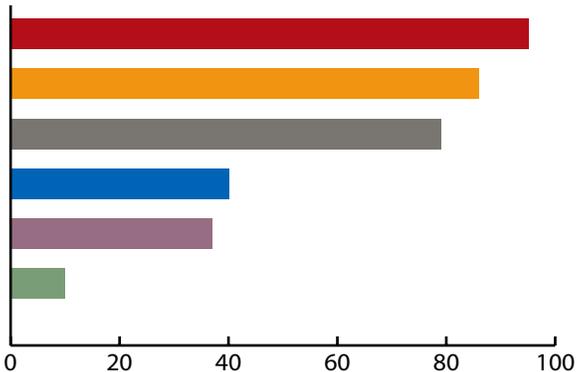
Dissatisfied with their web site - 26%  
Ambivalent about their web site - 33%  
Satisfied with their web site - 41%



59% of churches are dissatisfied or ambivalent about their web site.

### Church Web Site Features

Contact info - 95%  
News/announcements - 86%  
Maps/driving directions - 79%  
Sermon download (text/audio/video) - 40%  
Visitor information or a virtual tour - 37%  
Church blog - 10%

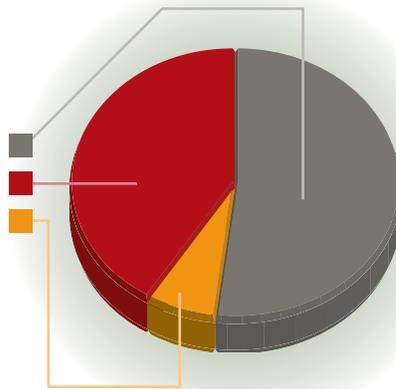


# CHURCH WEB SITES



## Church Web Site Updates

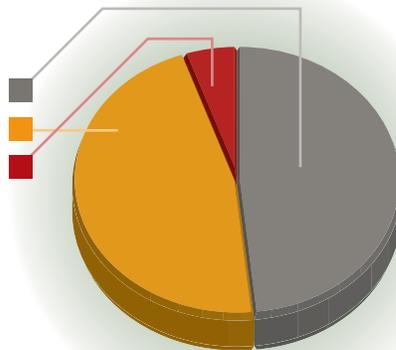
- Updated at least weekly - 52%
- Updated monthly or every few months - 41%
- Never updated - 7%



24% of churches rely on volunteers to do their marketing—except for the web where 44% of churches rely on volunteers.

## Who Updates the Web Site?

- Church staff - 46%
- Church volunteers - 44%
- Outside company - 5%



## CONCLUSION

That's a lot of numbers and statistics. But what does it really tell us?

### Churches Have No Plan

Churches are actually doing more marketing than expected, though they don't seem to be following a plan, especially when it comes to the most common and most effective marketing method:

- 83% of churches have a web site.
- 73% said having a site was important.
- Yet 59% were not happy with their web sites.

Furthermore, churches rely on volunteers for web sites almost twice as often as they do for other marketing efforts. If web sites were really so important for churches, you would expect more resources to be devoted to them.

### Churches Won't Invest

While 63% of churches said marketing and promoting their church was important or extremely important, most churches don't seem to be willing to invest in marketing:

- 80% of churches spend less than \$10,000 on marketing each year.
- Only 26% of churches were interested in companies that could help them with marketing.
- Even worse, 76% of churches don't track the results of their marketing.

Without information about what's working, willingness to get help, or investing in marketing, churches can't expect to improve.

### Marketing Plans

But improvement isn't that far out of reach. Churches are more receptive to marketing than ever before, they just need a plan to do it. They need a detailed marketing plan that explores their community, their history and their congregation and comes up with measurable goals and a plan to get there. Otherwise churches are just lost, haphazardly spending money when they don't know where they're going.

### Word of Mouth

Another way to improve—and one of the most cost effective methods—is the personal invitation, which was the third most effective method, used by 24% of churches (and it was a write in response). While the marketing world is just discovering and exploiting word of mouth marketing, it's something the church has been doing for 2,000 years.



A cheap and easy way to further leverage the personal invitation is with invite cards, simple cards a church hands out to members that they use to invite their friends. The card includes basic information about the church, including times and directions. It gives members a tangible reminder to invite their friends and it gives visitors the information they need.

### Marketing is Evangelism

As Christians we have a call to spread our faith far and wide, and a primary way any church does that is by how they market themselves. The final words of Jesus commanded us to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19). Improving church communication is a powerful way to put the great commission to action.

## METHODOLOGY

This survey was sent to 11,236 U.S. church leaders between July 11, 2005 and July 21, 2005. Of these, 573 responded (5.09%). The master list is current data compiled and owned by the Center for Church Communication, and is in no way an exact sampling of the entire church population. Furthermore, because the survey was only sent via e-mail, the data will have a slant to more technologically savvy church leaders. E-mails were only sent to church leaders with a first name, last name, church name, and current mailing address on file.



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ever told, but no one's listening.

## ABOUT THE CENTER FOR CHURCH COMMUNICATION

Churches have the greatest story ever told, but no one's listening. We think there's a communication problem. That remarkable story is lost thanks in part to poor research, little or no planning, bad clip art, cheesy photos and ignorable ads.

We believe there's a better way. It's not simply flashy designs or catchy slogans, but effective and authentic communication. If we can't communicate, how can we fulfill the great commission?

We want the Church to matter.  
We want your church to matter.

We help the church by offering information, resources, advice and starting the conversation about church communication

We are a non-profit organized by communications professionals who have been serving the church and mainstream clients since 1998.



### Church Marketing Sucks

Launched in 2004, the Church Marketing Sucks blog has been our primary service to churches. The site features news and updates on church marketing, helpful ideas and resources, commentary and philosophy, and a growing community of people interested in seeing the church matter.

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Helping the Church Matter