

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

Social Media Best Practices for Churches

Episode 107

Dramatically Improve How Your Church Uses Facebook, Instagram & More

What's the "win" for your church's social media activity? If you don't know, at best you'll waste time and resources, and at worst you'll do damage to your brand and the opportunity you have to engage people outside your church. In this episode, Tiffany Deluccia from The Unstuck Group's team joins Tony and Amy to help unpack some things you need to know to maximize the potential of social media for reaching more people and increasing engagement.

What's Pretty Much Always True

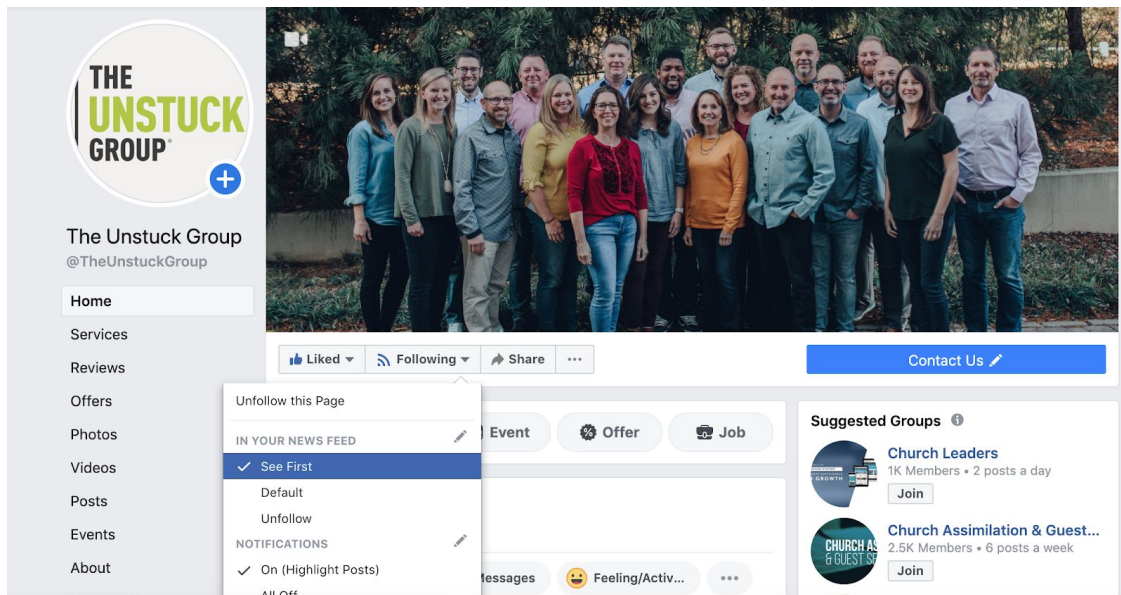
- **Social media should be “social.”** These are two-way communication platforms. Ask questions, respond to commenters, say hi, thank people for engaging, etc. You'll never gain traction until someone on your team owns the conversation, not just the posting.
- **Social media platforms help you execute a content strategy; they're not a strategy in and of themselves.** You really don't win any points for just being there. We all know from experience these platforms can waste time. The same is true for your church.
- **You need a strategy tailored to each platform you choose to use.** The content you post should match the experience people expect to have on each platform.

What's True... For Now

Facebook

- **It skews older.** Pew Research Center [reported](#) in May 2019 that 69% of American adults use Facebook, but only half of teens.
- **Groups are important.** Facebook has a [five-year goal of seeing 1 billion people in “meaningful groups.”](#) With Facebook's intentional focus on making these a sticky part of Facebook, there's big opportunity for churches here.
- **Spending is now required.** If you're going to be effective, you're most likely going to need to spend some money on ads.

>> One tip for helping your church's Facebook page posts reach your followers organically? Tell people about the "See First" feature. They can select it on your page to ask Facebook to make sure they see your posts.



Instagram

- In our recent [Church Engagement Report](#), we found only 44% of declining churches were using Instagram while 72% of growing churches said they are using that platform.
- Think “visual storytelling” not just “visual.” Help people get a feel for what your church family is like. Help them want to engage.
- **The quality of the photography matters.** The content that works on Instagram is pretty. Photos showing faces get 38% more engagement.
- **Try microblogging.** Each photo should tell a great story on its own, but you can expound and invite dialogue in the description.
- **Leverage video and “stories.”** [Video on Instagram](#) is short-form, up to 60 seconds. Stories, just 15 seconds. How you could use this to connect as people go about their day?

With both, be careful about how you post time-sensitive info. Almost no one sees the content you post organically in sequential order. This is also true on Twitter. On Instagram, one way around this is using Stories. They are featured and then disappear in a 24 hour period.

Bonus Resources

We didn't have time to dig into all of the popular platforms in this episode. Here are a few resources to help you go deeper:

- [10 Instagram Stats Every Marketer Should Know in 2019](#)
- [The Complete Guide to YouTube Marketing in 2019](#)
- [5 Insider Tips for Using Twitter in 2019](#)
- [The Ultimate Guide to Snapchat Marketing in 2019](#)

Next Steps

- **Get really, really clear on your content strategy.** Go back and listen to [Episode 61](#). Are you still thinking of ministry as something that happens at set times in your church building? This isn't an add-on to your ministry; it's a full scale shift.
- **Consider hiring a professional.** That could be an outside contractor, or you may need to hire a communications director.
- **Define the wins for each platform and how you'll measure them.** You can learn all of the best practices out there and apply them one by one, but the most educated decisions you can make about reaching the audience you're trying to reach will come from the analytics you have in your hands, in the analytics tools of the platforms you use over time.

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