

Creating a Congregational Communications Plan



Wendy Kuschel
Sr. Communications Coordinator



Goal of Church Communication:

To reach people for God's Kingdom

5 Rules of Good Communication

RULE #1

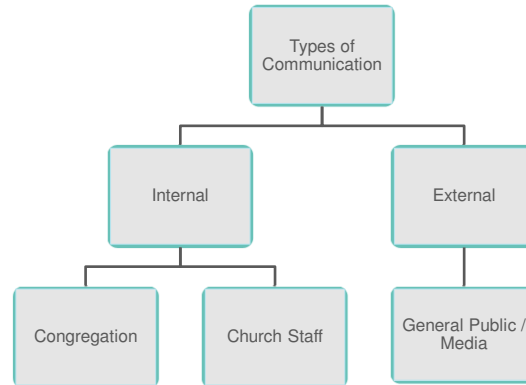
5 "W's" and an
"H"



Rule #2

Know your audience

- External Communication –
 - To the general public, non-members
- Internal Communication –
 - To your members/partners
 - Inside your church office, church council or volunteer leads



RULE #3

Repeat it 7 times

- Communicate the same topic 7 times, but in different ways
 - Yes, really, SEVEN times.
 - 1st communication: Person becomes aware
 - 2nd: Think critically about it
 - 3rd: Gain ability to act on it
 - 4th: Internalize the information
 - 5th – 7th: Internalized information guides actions and behavior

Source: medium.com

RULE #4

Get to the point

- Communicate Thoroughly... but... Get to the Point
 - Don't give too much info/unnecessary details
 - (Eg. you allow a member to share a single spaced, 2-page writeup on simply asking for VBS volunteers)

Volunteers Needed: St. Anne's Kitchen is such a beautiful facility and the people are so appreciative when St. Florence volunteers serve lunch. We realize not everyone is available on Thursdays to serve lunch so here is another opportunity to help. St. Anne's Kitchen needs to have their dining room white plastic tables and chairs pressure washed. We need a pressure washer, 6 volunteers and rags. Date to be determined. To volunteer, please contact [redacted] at [redacted]. This will take approx. 2hrs. Thanks in advance for any help.

Rewritten:

Do you own or know how to work a pressure washer? St. Anne's Kitchen needs your help! 6 volunteers needed for 2 hours. Call XXX-XXX-XXXX for details.



RULE #5

Don't under-communicate

- Don't give too little info
 - Eg. Pastor briefly mentions "Church Clean Up Day is Sunday, January 22."
 - What did he forget?
 - "More details are in the bulletin/e-newsletter/website"
 - Did anyone remember to add them there, though?
 - Time?
 - How many people needed?
 - What cleaning supplies people needed?



Moving Beyond the status quo.




Most common Communication Tactics:

- Pastor Announcements
 - Sunday Bulletin
 - Newsletter

- Consistency, Timeline and Targeted Communication *Matter*

Consistency

- Commit to a weekly or bi-weekly e-newsletter
 - Average Open Rate for churches – 27.62%
 - Average Click Rate for churches – 3.16%
 - Average Unsubscribe – 0.15%

<input type="checkbox"/>		20221224 WHO E-announcements Email • Sent Dec 23, 2022 at 11:23:00 AM CST 613 sends • 448 (75%) opens • 34 (6%) clicks • 1 (0.16%) bounces • 0 (0%) unsubscribes
<input type="checkbox"/>		Marriage Retreat Registration Open Sent Email • Sent Dec 22, 2022 at 12:02pm CST 35 sends • 27 (77%) opens • 0 (0%) clicks • 0 (0%) bounces • 0 (0%) unsubscribes
<input type="checkbox"/>		Untitled Email Created 2022/12/22, 11:48:59 AM CST Sent Email • Sent Dec 22, 2022 at 11:57am CST 35 sends • 27 (77%) opens • 0 (0%) clicks • 0 (0%) bounces • 0 (0%) unsubscribes

Source: Mailchimp

Consistency

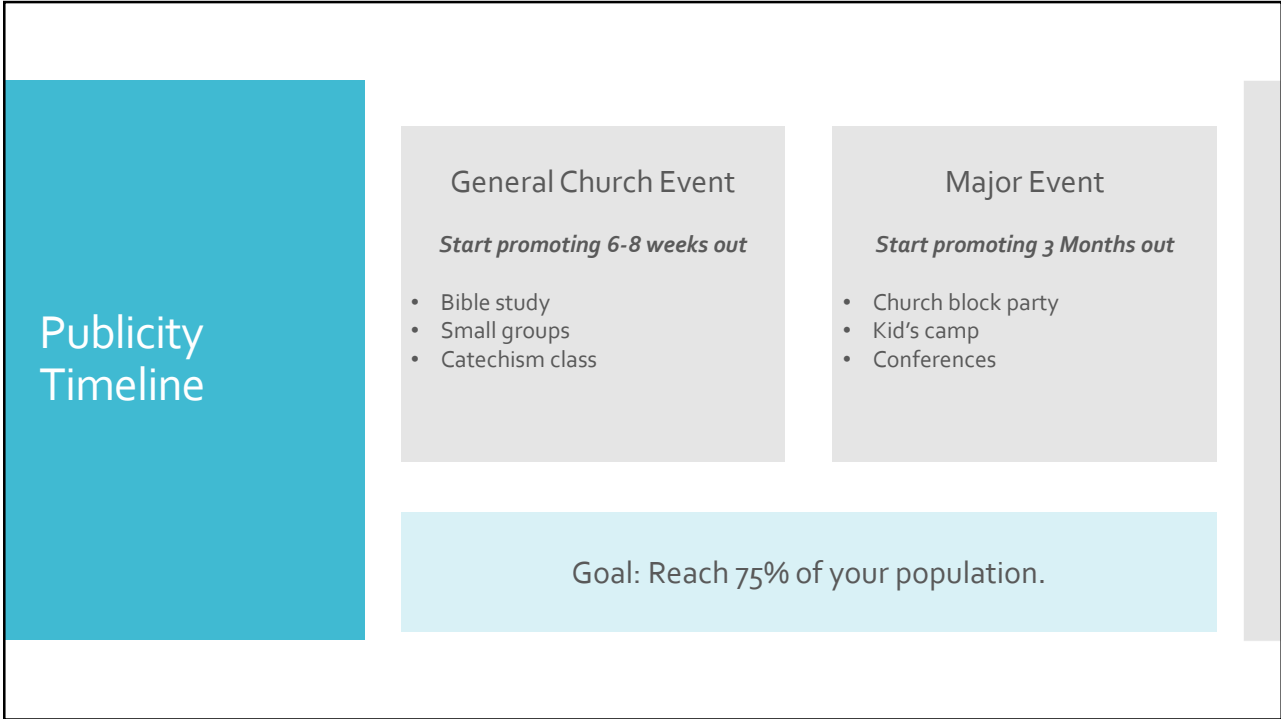
- Update website several times each week
- Church logo (and variations of it) should be on all promotions
- Ministries should have consistent, cohesive logos:



- Social Media Posting
 - Be consistent with the times of day you post
 - 6am, noon and 7-8pm are effective times of day

Publicity Timeline

How soon before my event should I start promoting?



The graphic features a large teal square on the left with the text "Publicity Timeline". To its right are two grey boxes: "General Church Event" (start promoting 6-8 weeks out) and "Major Event" (start promoting 3 months out). Below these is a light blue box with the goal: "Reach 75% of your population."

Publicity Timeline

General Church Event

Start promoting 6-8 weeks out

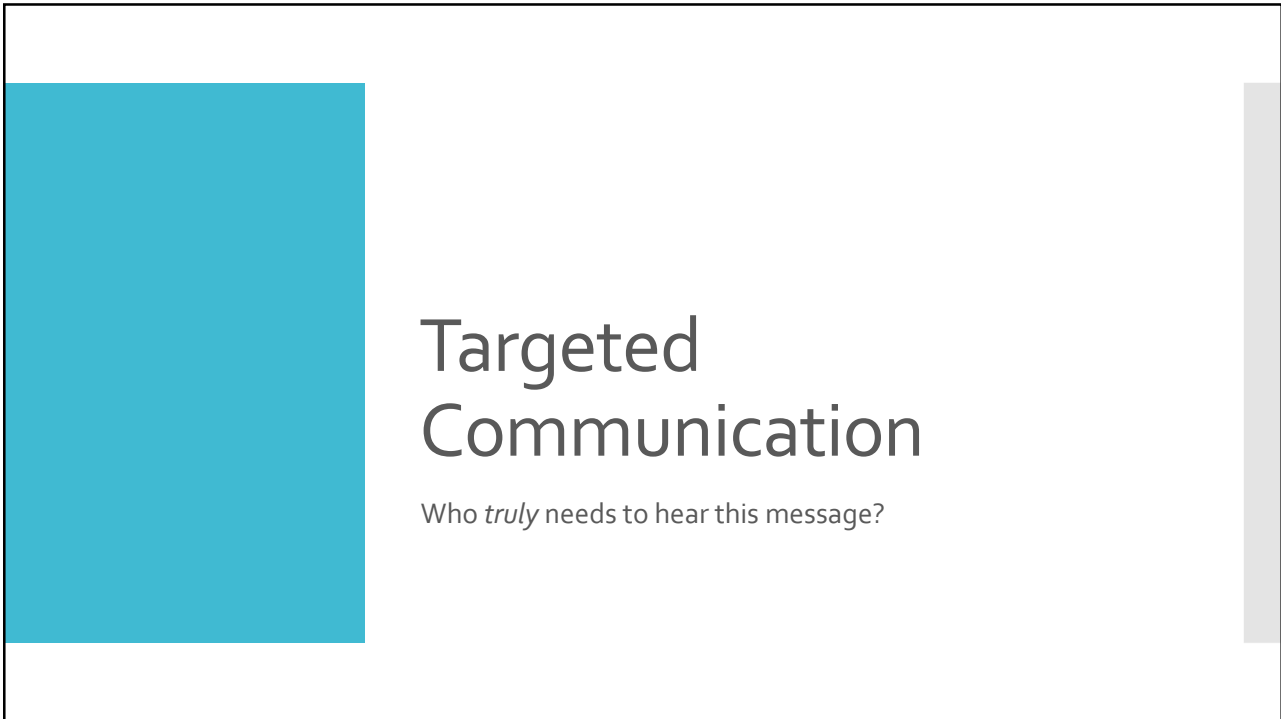
- Bible study
- Small groups
- Catechism class

Major Event

Start promoting 3 Months out

- Church block party
- Kid's camp
- Conferences

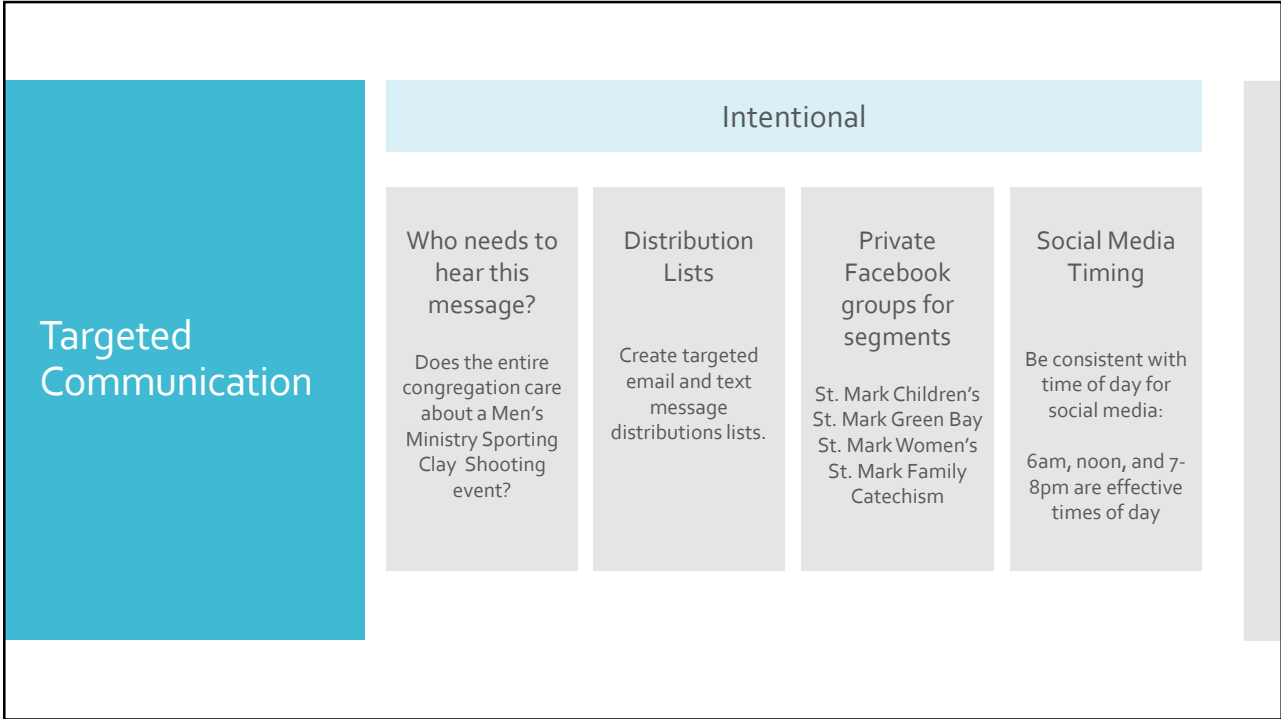
Goal: Reach 75% of your population.



The graphic features a large teal square on the left. To its right is the text "Targeted Communication" followed by the question "Who truly needs to hear this message?"

Targeted Communication

Who *truly* needs to hear this message?

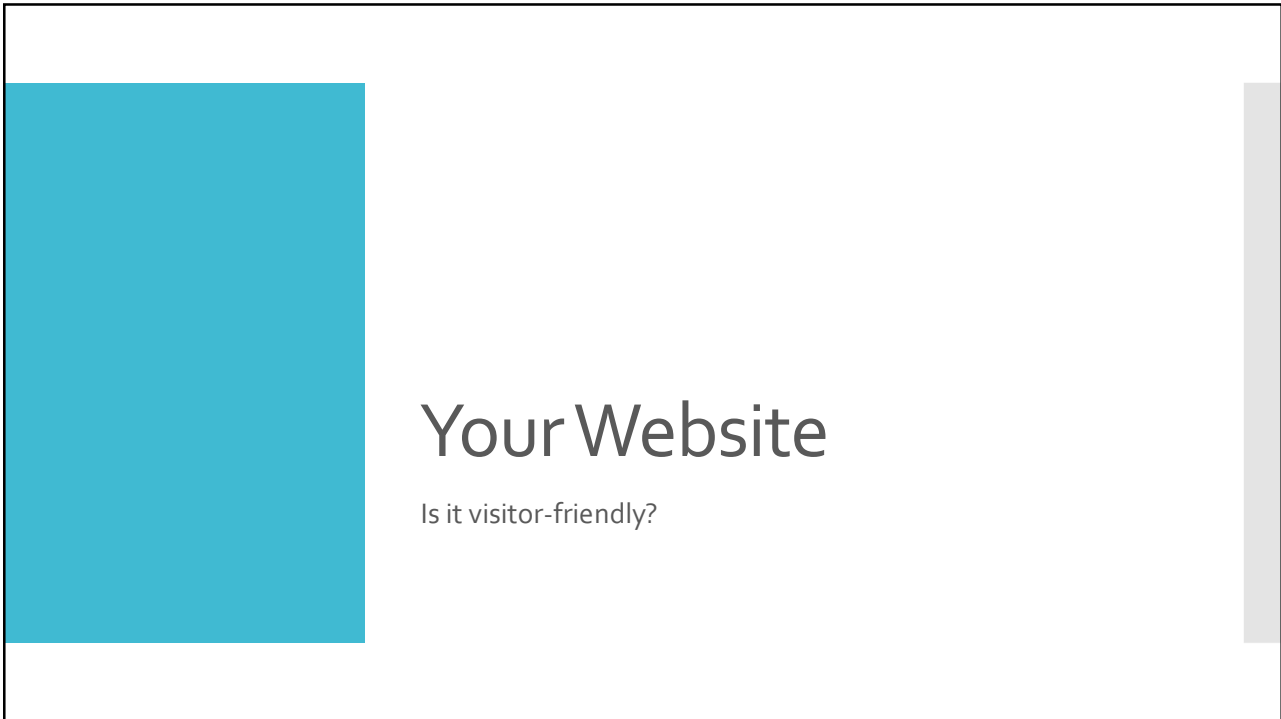


The diagram is enclosed in a black border. On the left, a teal vertical bar contains the text "Targeted Communication". To its right, a light blue horizontal bar is labeled "Intentional". Below this bar are four grey rectangular boxes, each containing a question and an answer. A vertical grey bar is on the far right.

Targeted Communication

Intentional

Who needs to hear this message?	Distribution Lists	Private Facebook groups for segments	Social Media Timing
Does the entire congregation care about a Men's Ministry Sporting Clay Shooting event?	Create targeted email and text message distributions lists.	St. Mark Children's St. Mark Green Bay St. Mark Women's St. Mark Family Catechism	Be consistent with time of day for social media: 6am, noon, and 7-8pm are effective times of day



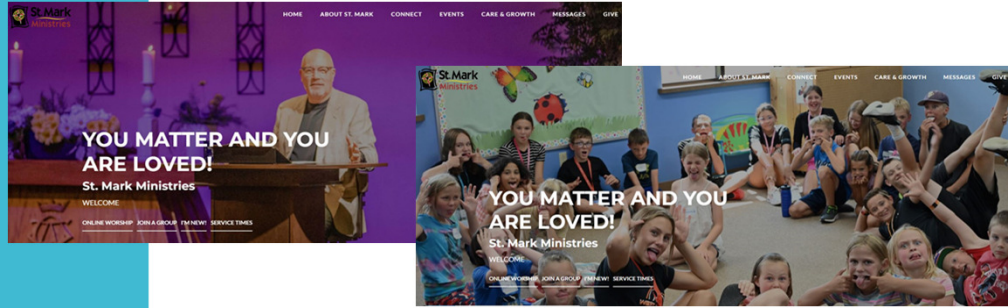
The diagram is enclosed in a black border. On the left, a teal vertical bar is present. To its right, the text "Your Website" is displayed in a large font, with "Is it visitor-friendly?" below it. A vertical grey bar is on the far right.

Your Website

Is it visitor-friendly?

Website

- Is your homepage VISITOR-focused?
 - *If it doesn't highlight the impact you have on your world, doesn't build trust, and guide first time visitors to their first step, you are failing.*
- Source: Janelle Suzanne, Louder Agency
- Is your website mobile-friendly?



- You OWN this

Website

Have you answered:

Who you are?

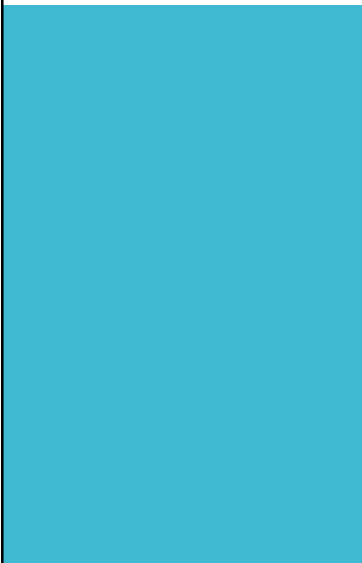
What you do?

Why should I care?

What should I do next?

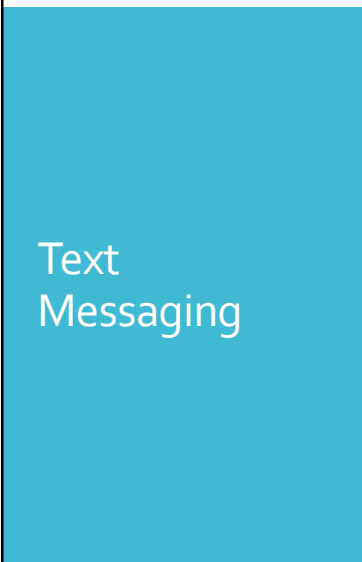
- It should tell a story about who you are and what they will experience
- It needs to engage your audience
- It should tell people that they belong
- Does your homepage have a video?
 - Viewers spend 100% more time on pages with videos on them*
- Include a simple, clear header, no more than 7 navigation menus

*Source: MarketingSherpaTweetThisStat!



Text Messaging

Want to reach your masses quickly?



Call to action

To: 94000

St. Mark Ministries: You matter. So do your insights on how we do future ministries! Please take our brief congregational survey. <https://clr.cm/0Z3l>

Tue, Sep 27 at 7:30 AM

St. Mark Ministries: Thank you if you've already taken our Cong Survey. Your input is important! It's anonymous, and worth your 5 minutes. <https://clr.cm/no2c>

Fri, Nov 11 at 10:09 AM

St. Mark Ministries: Yikes! Today is your last chance to register for Faith & Family Night tomorrow! Looking forward to seeing you there! <https://clr.cm/AgN5>

To: 94000

Tue, Dec 13 at 8:37 AM

St. Mark Ministries: 2 job opportunities at St. Mark School. Admin asst. (28-30 hrs), and After School Care workers (pay starts at \$17/hr). <https://clr.cm/v4Rb>

Wed, Dec 14 at 2:47 PM

St. Mark Ministries: Are you targeting generosity as a New Yr's resolution? Make it simple this yr by using our new online automated giving. <https://clr.cm/010h>

St. Mark Ministries: Are you targeting generosity as a New Yr's resolution? Make it simple this yr by using our new online automated giving. <https://clr.cm/010h>

Sun, Dec 25 at 8:00 AM

St. Mark Ministries: The Savior of the world has come! Here's a Christmas day video devotional from Pastor Parlow. Forward it onto others! <https://clr.cm/P5wR>

Tips, Tricks & Resources

- Gorillapod – for Facebook Lives
- Halo light
- Pay attention to your background
- Canva Pro!
- Schedule your Facebook posts in advance (Business Suite)
- Horizontal pics work best on social media



5 Things to do Today

1. Buy e-newsletter subscription or text messaging service
2. Take more horizontal pictures (and get your staff to help you!!)
3. Work on your website to be visitor-friendly
4. Set aside April 24-25, 2023 – Dare to Lead best practices conference
 - Presentation: "What's Working in Communications in 2023"
 - StMarkMinistries.com/D2L, registration opens January 23
 - Green Bay, WI
5. Check out my free resources:



St Mark Ministries		EVENT PUBLICITY CHECKLIST									
Time relative to Event	Other Scheduled	8 weeks before	5 weeks before	4 weeks before	3 weeks before	2 weeks before	1 week before	Week of	1 week after		
Publicity Focus	Save the Date	Kick-off	Gain Interest	Gain Interest	Register	Register	Register	Register	Conclude		
Publicity Channel	Save the Date	Report "Save the Date"	Gain Interest	Gain Interest	Register	Register	Register	Register	Conclude		
Social media	Save the Date Facebook Post & Event Creator	Report "Save the Date"	Gain Interest	Gain Interest	Register	Register	Register	Register	Conclude		
Posters / flyers	Print & distribute	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post		
Posters (small) mail	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post	Post		
Church/School website	Calendar Event	Event	Event	Event	Event	Event	Event	Event	Event		
YouTube	Upload video	Video	Video	Video	Video	Video	Video	Video	Video		
Announcement in church	Share through website	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement		
Email	Save the Date	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement		
Bulletin	Save the Date	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement		
WISDNews For You	Save the Date	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement		
Adrian TV	Save the Date	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement	Announcement		
Other											