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## Creating an Effective and Organized Outreach Ministry

from ACS Technologies

**R**eaching out to your community is an essential component for growth and vitality. Churches that reach out effectively grow in size and influence. Unfortunately, many churches struggle to reach out in an effective way that is relevant to the people they are trying to reach. They find it difficult to connect with new people and bring them into the church. They also encounter problems with staying connected with the people that they bring in or meet through their outreach efforts.

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There are numerous practical ways to overcome the difficulties associated with outreach, plus many useful strategies and tools available to help churches move forward with outreach and begin to see the positive results. This article contains excerpts from the ACS ministry guide, [Going Outside the Church Walls](#), which offers advice on how to strengthen a church's outreach efforts. For a complete copy of the ministry guide, please visit [http://www.ideastoimpact.com/outreach\\_cmag](http://www.ideastoimpact.com/outreach_cmag).

### Know Your Target Audience

The first step in any effective outreach effort is to do your homework. It is important to know who it is you are reaching out to so that you can cater services, activities, and events to that demographic. A good place to start is by looking at your current attendees.

- Who is currently attending your church?
- What characteristics do they share?
- What appeals to them to make them keep coming back?

By capturing relevant information on your attendees and maintaining it in a system that makes it easy to retrieve, you will be steps ahead when identifying your target audience for your outreach efforts. By taking the time to understand your attendees, you will be able to attract

similar types of people who would also connect with your church.

### Turn Members into Inviters

Motivating and equipping your members to invite people to your church is probably the most effective way to reach out and bring in new people.

Every member in your church has what is known as a "sphere of influence" -- people with whom your members have relationships and potentially some persuasive ability. These include friends, coworkers, relatives, and neighbors. Within every sphere of influence, you can almost guarantee that one or more people would attend church or an outreach event if they were invited. Make sure to note associations with members in the information you are collecting for each visitor in your outreach efforts.

### Offer Appealing Events

Church events can empower your members to become inviters. Give your members great services and events to which they will feel comfortable inviting people. Having events and services that appeal to the interests and needs of the people that your members are targeting will boost the confidence of your members as they invite the people in their sphere of influence.

## Keep People Committed to Your Church

The final step in creating effective outreach is following up with the new people who visited. It is important to capture and gather contact information from each of the new people who attended your function, so you can begin to connect with them personally to thank them for attending and to invite them to another event. This will increase the chances that each one will return to your church.

There are other great options as well. Many churches call visitors or send a letter or postcard from the pastor thanking them for visiting and inviting them to return. Be sure you capture each one of these follow up contacts and note any response or outcome on the visitor's record. This can make your future efforts easier, more organized, and more personal.

Do not stop here. Once people have visited a function and been contacted, do not drop the ball. Get them involved. Help visitors determine their skills and gifts, and show them where they can serve.

These solutions can help you rise above the challenges faced when trying to establish a successful outreach ministry. By applying them, your church will be primed for growth and impact in your community.

These are just a few ideas to help you improve your outreach efforts. For a more comprehensive look at effective outreach, download the full ACS ministry guide, [Going Outside the Church Walls](#).

ACS Technologies® has a full line of solutions to help churches organize outreach activities and events. In addition, ACS has an experienced implementation staff that can help you implement your own individual outreach program. To get more information about how ACS Technologies can help you, please visit [www.ideastoimpact.com/outreach](http://www.ideastoimpact.com/outreach) or call 800-736-7425.

Struggling with Outreach?

How do you **REACH** the people in your community and **RETAIN** the visitors you already have?

Download the ACS ministry guide, *Going Outside the Church Walls*, for ideas and practical solutions!

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