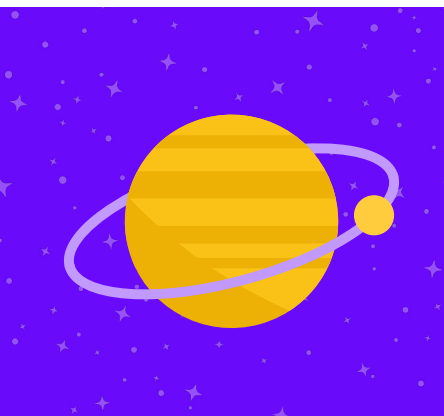




**THE ULTIMATE
TOOLKIT FOR
SURGING ATTENDANCE**



SOLUTION GUIDE



OLD-FASHIONED TECHNIQUES FOR MODERN GROWTH

There is a myriad of ways to invite someone to church: in person, via text, email, ads, social media, and snail-mail. We have no excuses for churches to not see new visitors coming through the doors every weekend.

The biggest reason your church might not be experiencing growth is that your people aren't inviting their friends. They have the methods, but they don't have the compulsion or the training.

Many people are ill-equipped to share their faith. They imagine rejection waiting for them at every attempt. They fear being ostracized by their friends or being perceived as "too pushy." They just aren't sure how to do the most important thing they can to fuel church growth: inviting others.

Not to worry. With a little help, your people can feel empowered and equipped to connect their friends to your church. All they need is a little help.

Ties that Bind

According to a [Lifeway Research Study](#), 66% of first-time guests find a new church based on the recommendation of a friend.

That means **if you want to see more people coming to your church, you have to be a church that invites**. And if you want them to stay, you need to help them develop relationships in community.

Tried and True

Mathew 16 reveals the secret of church growth - go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation.

I Peter 3 tells Christians to be prepared to tell people why they have hope. And Matthew 9 reminds us to pray that more people would be “workers” in the harvest.

It’s hard to read the Bible for all it’s worth and not discover that God wants ALL his people to share their faith.

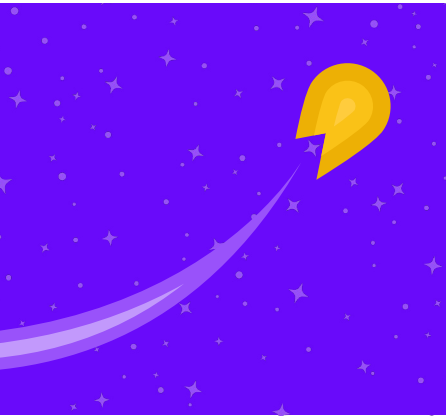
The #1 reason the Church has grown throughout history - through the drawing power of the Holy Spirit - is by people sharing their faith and the truth of the Gospel.

If you want your church to grow, **prepare and empower your people to invite their friends into the community of faith.**

Healthy Growth that Sticks

While it’s true that the top reason people attend church is to become closer to God, it’s also true that 57% of churchgoers say they stay at a church to be part of a community of faith. So if you want the people whom your church has invited to stick around, **you need to develop a healthy community where all your people are inviting others into community and experiencing healthy relationships.**

That’s why we’ve developed this guide: to show you how to get your people to invite their friends and maintain a robust church community.



TOOLS FOR THE TRADE

If you want growth that sticks, make sure you're doing these things well.



A Good Reputation

A big reason people don't invite their friends to church is that their church is embarrassing. Or at the very least, not compelling. At the start, you need to ensure that your church is offering something that people would be proud to invite others into. That means making sure your worship services are considerate of visitors. It means the communication you share in emails, on social media, and in signage is welcoming, inviting, and inspiring. You have to ask the question: "When a visitor gets to my church, what do they get?" If the answer is not super awesome, then your people won't invite friends.

This goes for social media too. You need to be posting things that show that you are functioning well as a church and that you have something to offer to others. Further, you need to post stuff that your people will want to share. That means your social media channels should be riddled with value-adding content. Imagine this: you are not currently part of your church and you come across a post from your church. If you wouldn't read it in that circumstance, don't post it.



A Cause

Most churchgoers aren't inviting new friends every week. Mostly because their friend circles haven't changed, and neither have the worship services. So, what's to say, "Remember that last time I invited you to church and you didn't come? Well, things are pretty much the same."

Give your people a fresh opportunity to invite their friends by pushing a special event or new initiative.

You could even organize a community-wide volunteer opportunity around a non-religious issue that everyone can get behind. Then, your people will have a good reason to invite their friends and introduce them to your church. Ideas might include:

- Clean up at your local park
- Help the elderly with yard work
- Revitalize a city block or section of road
- Food drive
- Clothing drive

Get your team together and get the ideas flowing, then land on one. The key here is finding something that will make it easy for people in your church to invite their friends, and for people outside your church to say, "yes."

HELLO!

Invite Card

You can't expect the people your people invite to remember when and where to go. So give them a card like the one below (or just use this one) which is customizable to time and person. It's a simple way to empower your people and offer a tangible reminder of a spiritual opportunity.



I'd like to invite you to _____ on _____
at _____ so you can experience what it's like
to be part of a great church community.

I hope you can make it!

Sincerely,



Announcement Slide

Use this or something like it in your worship services to encourage people to invite friends.

70% OF CHURCH GROWTH HAPPENS BY INVITATION.

Inviting people to church can change their lives, so let's change lives together!

Grab an invite card and invite a friend to church!



Invitation Script

Some people just don't know what to say. We recommend printing up a full- or half-page handout that you can give your people with ideas of what to say. Think about all the things your church does well. Consider the best time or event for a new person to come, then write out a few simple sentences that your people can use to invite their friends.

It could be something as simple as this sample script: "Our church is really doing amazing things in the community. I have been personally changed, and my family is totally experiencing a better quality of life because of our involvement at church. This weekend we're doing (insert special event), and I'd love for you to come and have some fun with us and check it out."

You might think this is a little too much hand-holding, but you'd be surprised how it can empower the introverts among you and remind or prompt the extroverts.



Prayer List

For the believer, there is no substitute for the power of prayer. But who to pray for? And how?

Put together a list that can be shared online (a Google Doc, a PDF, or a post in a private group) and start adding names of people to invite. Ask your people to prayerfully consider who to add to the list. This list serves two purposes: 1) it gets people praying to prepare hearts for the invitation, and 2) it keeps the people top-of-mind so when someone commits to invite them, they actually will.

Encourage your people to:

- Add names to the list
- Pray for God to prepare hearts to respond to the invitation
- Ask God to show them the best way to invite those people



Social Tools

Like we said before, you need to be posting high-value content that people want to read. It's about them, not you. People who aren't part of your organization don't want to know how awesome you are, they want to know how awesome you'll make them. So ask, how does your social media presence add value to its audience?

Okay, so your church has to create better content. BUT, your people can get away with a direct invitation on social media because they have relational capital with their friends. That's why shares are so valuable. With that in mind, you need to empower your people to invite online.

Remember that invitation script we just talked about? That is a great tool for helping your people invite others on social media to your events. In your weekly (or special) email, put that script in there and encourage your people to copy and paste it on social media. If you can provide an image for Instagram that has the event details, even better.

The key here: Get pre-made invitation content to your people so they can just copy, paste, and post an invitation to your church.



Texts & Emails

Print a paper with a canned email invitation and 3-5 potential text messages that your people can send. Hand it out on a weekend worship service and express the importance of being a church that invites. Then set your church loose with a challenge for everyone to invite at least one person, so you can double in size!

Text scripts that work well are:

- Hey, our church is putting on an awesome, new event this weekend. It's at (date/time/location). I hope you can make it.
- What are you doing this weekend? Our church has been having some pretty cool services that I think you'd appreciate. Want to come with me?
- It's been cool to see how growing my faith has improved my life. I'd love it if you would consider coming to one of our services.

All your text suggestions will have to fit your cultural context. This is another great opportunity to gather your team and brainstorm it. Bonus: The more people you get involved in the planning, the more people will care about the outcome and grow your invitational culture.



Phone Calls

OK, let's be real. Not a ton of people are going to make a special phone call just to invite their friends to church because you asked them to. But there are some people who will. Start by having a very real talk with your leadership team. Challenge each other to identify 2-3 people that you each can call this week. Then plan on reporting back to each other the following week to see how it went. This simple process creates expectations and accountability that will help your leaders get past the fear or busyness that usually gets in the way. If it goes well (which it probably will) then repeat the process with a bigger group of trusted people. And, just like with the texts and emails, provide some sample scripts or talking points to help boost their confidence.



Teaching on Invitation

Most people want to know the why before they'll do the what. Teaching gives you an opportunity to share the why behind inviting their friends to Church. We recommend having a big invitation on Sunday. Leading up to that, you should provide your people with the tools we're talking about in this guide. You should be praying for specific people, and you should teach why it's important to be a church that invites.

Here are five reasons (that you can include in your teaching):

- 66% of first-time guests find a new church based on the recommendation of a friend.
- 82% of unchurched people are somewhat likely to attend church if invited.
- Mark 16:15 - "And he said to them, 'Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation.'"
- Matthew 9:37-38 - "Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'"
- Romans 1:16 - "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes."

The goal here is to simply teach your people that their invitation could be the life-changing action that positions them in obedience to God's will as evangelists and positions their friends in God's forgiveness for eternal life. It's an opportunity we just can't afford to miss!



Checklist

Before you release your people to be an evangelistic machine, use this checklist to make sure you have everything ready for new visitors:

We have:

- Made changes and improvements to our worship services
- Added value on social media and in emails
- Prayed for people in general and specifically
- Created an invitation script for our people
- Designed and printed an invitation card
- Taught on the importance of inviting
- Shared the concept with a slide and announcements
- Put great greeters in place to welcome new visitors
- Determined how we'll follow up with new visitors
- Commissioned our people to go and invite others



GROWTH THAT LASTS

Connecting Events

Now that you have these people make sure you provide opportunities to connect. This includes social events, service projects, community outreach, and small groups. Every church does these differently, but every growing church has plenty of opportunities to connect at a variety of levels.

Relevant Teaching

Even though they came from a friend's invite, people stay at church because they want to get closer to God and live in community. Help them get closer to God. Help them discover who they are and how God wants to move in their lives. Teach in a way that helps them day-to-day. Show how the Gospel can come alive in their lives. Remember, the goal of information is transformation. If your teaching isn't changing people, you should change your teaching.

Be Worth It

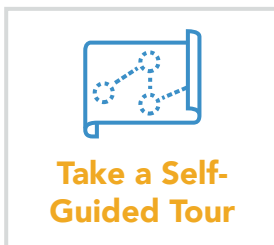
Your people went on a limb to vouch for your church. Their friends sacrificed valuable time to respond to an invitation. Don't let them down. Like a master builder, build on the foundation that has been laid before you, and build well. **We're rooting for you!**



Throughout this guide, you have seen several ways that Realm helps churches reach new people and manage the life and operations of a church. We're excited to share more about our revolutionary ministry tool, Realm.

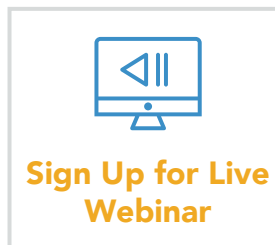
Realm provides solutions that will make your ministry and life way easier. It is cutting-edge church management software that combines administration, accounting, and community into one system. It also connects your entire church and personalizes each person's involvement in your ministry.

We'd encourage you to explore all that Realm makes possible by taking a demo, walking through a self-guided tour, or speaking with an associate today!



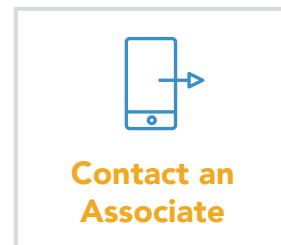
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