

stuff you wish they taught in seminary



Do These 5 Things Now
**TO GIVE YOUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES
MORE IMPACT**

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Christmas is a really big deal at your church. It's the time when we celebrate the birth of Jesus and it also represents some of the largest services you may host all the year long.

From this vantage point, all these weeks away from the crunch time, we've pulled together 5 things to do, in order to give your Christmas Services more impact than ever before. Typically, these services represent your best time of year to reach people who usually don't attend any church. Here are just a few ways to ensure that these services have as much impact as they possibly can!

Get Your Services Listed Online

Don't wait to get your Christmas Services listed online. There are websites that list local events that you need to ensure your services get on-board. It's not the best idea to leave this to the last minute because the longer they are listed, the better chances they have of being seen by people. Also, the longer they are listed, the search engines accord them more authority.

A few places to make sure your Christmas services get listed on are:

- **Your Own Website** // Start by ensuring your church website has a page with all

the required information about your Christmas services listed on it. Link back to this page from across the web when you list the services on other event sites.

- **Facebook Events** // Two billion people use Facebook every day and all of those users are no more than 3.57 connections away from each other. [ref] Although you might not be an active user of the Events tool on Facebook, the audience is just so large that you need to make sure you're listed here, to promote your services!
- **Hyper-Local Sites** // Undoubtedly your community will have a site focused on local school board politics or talk about potholes on the main street. These hyperlocal sites typically have an events section looking for content to fill in. Patch is the leader in this space with over 900 active local sites. Nevertheless, browse through and you might see someone else offering this service too.
- **Government Sites** // Check your town and country websites because they often provide event listings about what's happening in your community. These services are seen as encouraging local businesses and can offer a great

source of community connections!

Google, It // Finally, drop by Google and just enter your city name and “local event listings” and you’ll find more places to get your services listed.

Buy Your Volunteers a Gift

Serving at your Christmas services is a sacrifice. Typically, your volunteers are away from their family during this busy time of the year. In addition to it, these services are some of the busiest of the year, which means that they are stretched during these experiences. If you act now, you can get a gift for them at a relatively low cost, as a token of gratitude.

Here are some ideas for a small gift for your Christmas volunteers:

- [Custom Printed Christmas Ornaments](#) from 4Imprint ([same from Alibaba](#))
- [M&Ms with your logo](#) on them!
- [Everybody loves a cool swag...](#) a classic!



Go the extra mile and “merchandise” your gifts to your volunteers in such a way that it communicates how special they are. Roll the t-shirts and put a simple thank-you note on them. Set up a table in a special area that highlights the gifts for your team. Wrap the gifts like a Christmas present to give them an extra pop! You’ve invested to pull together this gift, now present it in a way that attracts your volunteers’ attention.

Plan Your Recall Strategy

Christmas presents an amazing opportunity to have those people who generally stay

away from the church, attend the services. You might indeed have a higher percentage of your audience “unchurched” during Christmas than any other time of the year. But the question remains. How can we get those people to return to your church in January? The answer is simple. In a very real way, the ‘success’ of a Christmas service is what happens to the attendance in January. Now is the time to plan out your recall strategy in an attempt to encourage as many of those people to return, as possible.

Here are some elements of an effective recall strategy for your church this Christmas time:

- **Collect Guest Data** // Offer your guests a great gift in exchange for their contact information. If you don’t have the contact information of your guests, it’s very hard to follow up with them.
- **Thank You Email** // Send a quick email shortly after the service to thank people for attending your service. Make this as “content rich” as possible with videos from the service, links to social media and other goodies. In this also include an “advertisement” for the January service.
- **Narrow the Announcement Focus** // During the actual Christmas service, work hard to ensure that you aren’t “over messaging” people. The primary goal is to get people to come back in January. Hence, reflect on that during the announcement; show a trailer for January - requesting people to attend.
- **Hand Out an Invite Card** // As people leave the service, hand them a reminder card about what would be happening in January. Ask them to take it home and put it up on the fridge, and refer to it again after the busy holiday season.
- **Bonus: Bribe Them** // This might be over the top for some churches but [Hal Seed from New Song Church in California](#) shares how his church has seen great returns rates by offering a “free t-shirt Sunday” in mid-January that they talk about at their Christmas services. They have their volunteers wear the shirts during their Christmas Eve services and let everyone in

attendance know that they too can get one for free them if they come back in January. So, great! What free gift could you offer to your people to encourage them to attend in January?

Set Up FREE Tickets

Christmas Eve continues to be critical times for churches to reach out into their community. Many leading churches will use some form of free tickets for these big days to encourage people to register ahead of time for the event.



The scarcity of tickets and its being ‘sold out’ encourages the community to invite their friends early so that they can get their desired service time. **It also helps if your church members ask their friends for a confirmed commitment as the scarcity of the tickets projects a need to essentially register their intent.**

Free ticketing also results in the church receiving the contact information of every registrant before the event occurs. **You can use this contact information to plan your**

follow-up with guests, even before the actual start of the event.

You can also manage service times better with tickets - **as the most “popular” service time fill up and “sell out”, people can be redirected to a different service time.** Often, people can shift the service time to a different time of the day and obtain tickets can make that selection process seamless.

Finally, using a service like [Eventbrite](#), your services will be “cross-promoted” with other Christmas events happening in your community!

Add a Service Time

Remember all the work your team put into pulling off the Christmas service last year? Your team invested time, effort and energy to make it great... So why not offer another opportunity for people to experience your Christmas services? You need to make this decision now because it will require some leadership and logistics planning, to pull it off.

Here are 3 reasons you should add another Christmas service to your lineup this year:

- **Attend One | Serve One** // At the core of all the churches which make an impact, are thriving volunteer leaders who are fired up to make an impact in their city. By adding another service time, you are making it more likely that your amazing volunteers will actually be able to attend the services this year!
- **More Options = More People** // If the timings are shifted around even by an hour, more people in the community might be available to take part in the Christmas services. By simply adding more service times, you are making the service available to more people who are caught in between a busy ‘life and work’ schedule.
- **Stewardship** // Your team has invested to make the service great and by adding another service time (even if it’s not full!), you are leveraging that investment to reach more people. It honors the work your team invested into making it all happen, by attempting to get more people experience it.

BONUS: Rest

Lastly, take some time to rest. What if this was the Christmas season that you want to fully enjoy with your family and friends, rather than being totally worn out? Is there a way to slow down now and take some time to rest and reload before the commencing of this busy season? Can you take some time off for a few days and just relax? What rhythms could you build in for this season to lend you the energy needed to give everything you can to this season?



Take some time now to rest before the season starts to heat up. Find time to unplug and take care of yourself and family.

Unplug.

You'll need to unplug, in order to get ready for what's coming next!

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