

stuff you wish they taught in seminary



# *Do These 8 Steps*

**WHEN YOUR CHURCH LAUNCHES A NEW SERIES**

---

RICH BIRCH



Church growth is more of a flywheel than a cannon shot. **It requires consistent energy applied in the same direction over time to see results.** It doesn't happen overnight but as you gain traction the small wins start to add up and something truly amazing happens.

A year ago, the church I worked in was named one of the fastest-growing churches in the country by Outreach Magazine [ref]. As I reflected on this, I tried to dissect our strategies and what made us different from other churches. I wondered what it was that seemed to make a difference and enable our growth. **I became convinced that our consistent focus on series promotion was part of the equation.** For over 30 series in a row (that's nearly three years), we would do the same thing to promote every new series. And although we'd mix up the content to ensure the approach didn't get stale, we always applied the same core elements every time we did something new.

If you're looking for ways to jumpstart your church's growth and help you launch a new series, repeat these same elements every time you launch a new series at your church. **The goal is to build excitement for the new series and encourage your people to bring as many friends and family members as they please.** Staying focused on repeating these eight every series is a part of the discipline that will add energy to your church growth flywheel!

- **Heads Up Announcement - Two Weeks Before** // As you near the end of the series that you are currently on, take some time to telegraph what's coming up next. Doing this

helps your people know what to anticipate next in the life of the church. It could also serve as an incentive to persevere to people who might not be raving fans of the current series. Momentum is generated in all organizations by "new" things. Our minds are hardwired to see the new and novel and be attracted to it. By articulating what is "new and exciting" in the life of your church, you can start generating positive momentum. Momentum is first an idea in your people's minds before it translates in tangible impact. This announcement should be anticipation-inducing and explain the core "hook" for the series. A positively toned announcement on a slide with the start date and core "look" of the series would be a great start for your church!



- **Trailer Video - One Week Before** // The week before the series launches is critical for your people. During the service, play a short trailer (45-60 seconds) that sets up the tension of the series. This video is designed to entice its viewers to want to learn more and to invite their friends to the series.

Oftentimes, you'll notice churches use questions in these trailers because it is a simple way to frame the series. A video trailer is an important communication tool because it breaks up the format of a "talking head" doing announcements and grabs peoples' attention. This video should also be shared on your social media channels during the week after it's played. (Bonus: email core "insiders" and invite them to share the video online so it spreads more on other channels.) Two-thirds of your church are visual learners so the stretch of communicating what is coming up through a highly visual form, like a trailer, is important to consider. If you are looking for ideas for trailers, [New Spring](#), [Elevation & Life.Church](#) all give away their video trailers (and more) from their series.

• **Invite Card Packs - One Week Before** // Invite cards continue to be a relevant tool even in an age of ever-increasing digital communication. These physical cards are inexpensive to produce and provide a tangible reminder to your people to invite their friends. There should be enough information on the card so it stands alone as a communication tool. The series information, as well as the dates, times and location, need to be clear on the card. In the text, ensure that the card actually invites people to attend. (You'd be surprised how people from outside church don't know if they are actually welcome to attend your church). Work with your guest services team to ensure that these end up in the hands of as many people as possible. You could place them on every seat in the auditorium so people have to pick them up and look at them when they sit down. Another potential distribution idea is to have a team of people stand at your exits and hand them out to people as they leave. However, don't just hand these cards out one at a time; package them into packs of 2-3 with a rubberband around them. The implicit message is that you hope your people will invite more than one friend or family member to the series' launch.

• **Pastoral Moment - One Week Before** // As you head into the week before the series, it is important for your people to hear the pastoral heart behind inviting people to come to the new series. This isn't another

"announcement" about the "dates, facts and figures" of the series. It is a moment to slow down and impress upon people how important it is to invite people to what's coming up next. Explain why your church is heading in this new direction, take the time to tell them who you are inviting, and ask them to join you in inviting people to come the following week. The tenor of this time is showing the congregation how being an "inviter" is a part of their Christian faith. It also gives a clear indication to your people that the topic you're transitioning into has some weight and is worth them investing the time to be a part of. Show some passion for the "new" topic!

• **Social Shareables - Week Before** // We all know that social media can have a profound impact on how our ministries communicate with people. Don't miss the opportunity to ask your people to share some content online before a series launches. The goal here is to not post something that simply "advertises" the series but rather something that has content your people would actually be willing to share. The primary goal is "shareability" and the secondary goal is that people are informed about the new series. The trailer for the series is a "must share" piece of the puzzle but you should also experiment with other content types. Over time some forms of content get more shares than others so keep an eye out for what seems to be "trending" in the networks you follow.



• **Team Huddles - Week Before** // Your volunteers represent an important audience in and of themselves; ensure that they are well-primed to invite friends. Because they are disproportionately

committed to the vision of the church as volunteers, you need to make sure you ask them directly to invite friends the following week. We often overlook this group because we think they will just catch the messaging from the rest of the “general pipelines” that you’re talking about it in. This is a missed opportunity because the group wants to feel in on the development of the church and will be more receptive to your inquiries to invite people. This could take the form of the lead pastor holding a special “all team huddle” the week before a new series launches or simply a “cascade of information” through the leadership structure of the church. The important thing is that this group gets a special request to pray for and invites friends to the upcoming series. There is just a small percentage of people who actually invite friends and these people are usually also volunteers. Thus, make sure to address this group directly.

- **Direct “Ask to Ask” Email - Thursday Before** // Most people who make the decision to attend your church this weekend for the first time will do it the last three or four days before the service. The prime inviting time is Thursday through Saturday because most guests that will choose to come to your church during that period. A strategically placed reminder from the church on the Thursday before is a something you should do every time you launch a new series. This multifaceted email should highlight the social media that seems to be getting the best traction as well as provide some simple tools people can put into play right away for inviting their friends and family. This email should be focused on “tools” to help equip your people to invite their friends. Assume that they’ve lost the invite card and can’t remember what the series is about and provide them everything they need to learn about the series to invite their friends.
- **“Starts Tomorrow!” Email - Saturday Before** // We’ve referenced this in the past but [emails from the church on Saturday do help drive attendance](#). As opposed to the

Thursday email, this one does better coming from the Lead Pastor, or the Campus Pastor if you’re a multisite church. The tone of this email is a last-minute request for people to attend the following day and to invite friends to come with them. The aim is to build anticipation about what is happening the next day. It should be “underwritten”, that is direct and to the point and should not contain a lot of graphics and formatting. It should look as if it was sent out from the leader to people directly. Quick and to the point. It doesn’t need a lot of frills but is just a direct ask to attend the following day and to bring friends. You could link to a single sharable item like the trailer or social media post that has performed well over the week but don’t overdo it. The email is designed to get people’s attention as they are going about their day.

Visit [unseminary.com](https://unseminary.com) for more free resources!

UNseminary

**UNLIMITED GRAPHIC DESIGN HELP**  
for only **\$370** per month.

Can someone say Amen?

LEARN MORE @ [designpickle.com](https://designpickle.com)

DESIGN PICKLE