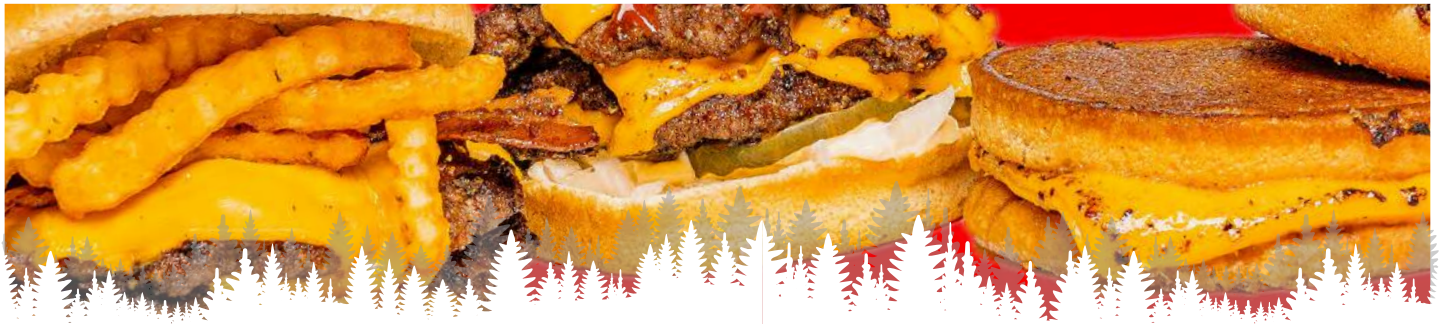




MRBEAST BURGER:

**WHAT IS IT?
WHAT IT CAN TEACH YOUR CHURCH!**

BY RICH BIRCH



If you're not familiar with YouTube culture, you might not have heard of [MrBeast](#).

[Jimmy Donaldson](#) (aka MrBeast) is the top content creator on the platform for 2020, and **he's super engaging**. Over the years, he's produced some amazingly creative content that has earned him over 51 million subscribers and all kinds of awards. He struck viral gold in January 2017 when he posted [a video of himself counting to 100,000](#) that was viewed tens of thousands of times in just a few days. That might seem like a strange start, but it gained him a lot of notoriety and launched him into the stratosphere of YouTubers.

In December 2020, **MrBeast launched MrBeast Burger, a restaurant chain with 300 locations, and he did it all in one day**. To put that in context, his restaurant chain is similar in size to [Shake Shack](#), [Smashburger](#), or [In-N-Out Burger](#). However, those burger chains took years to achieve the size and clout that MrBeast Burger accomplished in a single day.

The unique spin that MrBeast brings to the burger business is that his 300 locations are completely virtual. **The food is prepared by existing restaurants, ordered online, and delivered by third party delivery services**. MrBeast launched a MrBeast Burger app that provides relatively seamless ordering, payment, and delivery options. This is an astonishing achievement for any organization, and it provides all kinds of lessons for your church and my church as we think about what comes next in the life of our communities.

Obviously, MrBeast, being a YouTuber, [launched his new burger restaurant with an amazing video](#). Jimmy and his team rented an actual restaurant for just a single day and gave away burgers, fries, and drinks. They gave away more than just their new, delectable food, however. **On opening day, they gave away cash, computers, and even a car!** [This launch video has become a viral hit, and it is well worth your time to watch it and get a sense of the enormous scale of what MrBeast is doing.](#)

On launch day, the line of cars trying to get to the restaurant was 20 miles long. **In fact, the line was so long that police eventually had to close down the restaurant because of all of the traffic problems it was creating in this North Carolina town.**

MrBeast Burger is more than just an interesting fad or a YouTube story that came and went. **It provides some lessons for our churches as we look to the future and think about the development of our ministries.** Here are six lessons from the launch of MrBeast Burger that you can apply to your church.

ONLINE AND IN PERSON //

LEVERAGING THE BEST OF THE ONE TO MAKE THE OTHER BETTER!

It's fascinating to watch these online celebrities and digital businesses push into the in-person world.

MrBeast Burger represents an interesting hybrid because it is clearly an online digital platform but it delivers an actual in-person experience.

Although I'm excited about all the digital innovation that's happened over the last year or so, as we look to the future, we also need to consider how our in-person experience is going to be impacted by all that we've been learning online.

Rather than trapping ourselves in a false dichotomy of online versus in-person, how can we recognize the hybrid nature of our experiences? We obviously don't live in a purely online world, and our offline world is increasingly injected with digitally connected technology. How can we find a unique combination of the two that acknowledges the world we live in?

I'm struck by [Peloton](#) when I think about this question. Earlier this year, Peloton commented in an investor call that, even though they've seen such strong sales online due to the pandemic, they have continued to be committed to their in-person locations. [[ref](#)] They recognize that the need to connect in person is not going away any time soon.

AUDIENCE BUILDING //

WHO IS FOLLOWING ALONG WITH YOUR CHURCH'S STORY?

MrBeast didn't spend any money on Facebook ads, direct mail, or any other paid media. Think about that for a minute. It's astonishing, really.

He turned his sizeable audiences on to his concept, and it launched rapidly. This is an important lesson for our churches. **Audience building is core to MrBeast Burger's business.** In their case, that means building YouTube subscribers, Instagram followers, and an email list that they can reconnect with over time to keep drawing fans into their business. Even the decision to launch their own app rather than rely on third-party delivery apps indicates their interest in connecting and communicating with their audience.

Our churches need to be thinking about the ever-increasing audience around our ministries.

Years ago, Rick Warren explained that churches have five “circles of commitment”—community, crowd, congregation, committed, and core. As church leaders, we are aiming to move people from the community to the core. **However, there is a larger halo of people outside of the “community” that we need to build strategies to stay connected with.** These are people who are aware of us but maybe attended only a service or two in the last year. Or maybe they downloaded content that they found helpful from the church’s website.

How can we capture this group of people’s contact information so that we can keep them connected over time and eventually move them closer and closer to our ministries?

Audience building needs to be part of our strategy as we look into the future. **Effective ministries have always made space for people to belong to the community first without requiring them to behave in a certain way.** Audience building allows us to do that at scale—to have a wide variety of people in the general orbit of our ministry who we hope will eventually connect in a more substantial way.

PARTNERSHIP POTENTIALS // WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FUTURE.

It's fascinating to me that a YouTuber struck up relationships with hundreds of restaurants all across the country to make his food and that third-party companies he's never met will deliver for him. **Talk about effective partnership building!**

A partnering restaurant might be a local Italian place or a hometown burger joint. MrBeast Burger is focusing their efforts on marketing while relying on third-party organizations to ultimately deliver the food, meaning online delivery services cover the last mile to connect the restaurant and its customers.

It's a fairly seamless experience that creates all kinds of value along the chain. Restaurants all across the country have seen a boost in business because of their connection with MrBeast Burger.

In the future, there may be new opportunities for us to work together as churches across the country in a similar way. We've often drawn strong lines between our churches. However, one thing that we've seen pretty clearly during COVID is that churchgoers don't necessarily hold to those lines. A person may attend Sunday morning services at one church, engage in weekly Bible study at another, listen to worship music from a third, and maybe even reach out to a fourth for some other kind of assistance. **As we look to the future, can we dream up creative new approaches to partnership that will ultimately propel our ministries forward, reach more people, and connect them with the teachings of Jesus?**

AUTHENTICITY KEEPS WINNING //

IS THERE A HIGHER CULTURAL VALUE THAN EXCELLENCE?

If you don't normally spend time on YouTube or engage with vloggers, you might be slightly put off by how much authenticity these personalities exhibit.

So much of this content is behind the scenes and isn't pretty or polished. This authenticity draws the community in even more. **People want to engage when they see folks who are doing something online that is real and maybe just a little bit gritty.**

This was exhibited in the early days of MrBeast Burger, when there were, understandably, a few complaints about some of the burgers. Rather than hiding behind corporate statements, MrBeast himself took to the airwaves and spoke publicly about the challenges of opening a restaurant chain overnight, committing to improving the warmth of the burgers and the crispiness of the crinkle cut fries.

This has spawned an incredible amount of community content. In response to the complaints, people are now posting videos and photos to show off their freshly delivered burgers and celebrate an amazing meal.

All of this authenticity, ultimately, is more endearing to MrBeast's fans.

We've said it before, and we will definitely say it again. **Behind-the-scenes content that draws your community into the production is key when it comes to creating great social media content for your church today.** If you're launching new projects in the weeks and months ahead, how can you show people the process behind the scenes? How can you let them in on what you're doing?

Don't hide behind a fake "quality" veneer. Show some authenticity. Let people know what it actually takes to do what you do as a church.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AS A GROWTH STRATEGY //

THEY THINK IT'S A "GOOD THING" ... WE KNOW IT'S A GOD THING!

A core part of MrBeast Burger's offering is a **"buy one, give one"** strategy.

We've seen this with [TOMS Shoes](#) and many other brands over the years. **The idea is that a portion of sales will actually go to feeding people in the communities where orders are placed.** Based on comments online and the way people talk about MrBeast Burger, this is clearly an important part of the appeal of this new restaurant. It doesn't just make great burgers—it actually helps other people.

Our churches are called to make a difference in the lives of our community. Rather than hiding this away in some committee or as a sub-point on a strategic plan, community service needs to be seen as a part of your growth strategy. **Time and again we've seen the draw of churches that focus on getting their people out of their seats and into the streets.** And obviously, this kind of community service is not just good for your image in the community—it's a God thing.

NARROW THE FOCUS FOR A BIGGER IMPACT // SIMPLE CHURCH IS STILL THE BEST PATH FORWARD.

Take a look at the [MrBeast Burger menu](#). It has just a few items. In comparison to the [McDonald's](#) around the corner from you, MrBeast Burger has a much narrower focus, and it's hard at work improving the quality of what it delivers.

This small menu gives them the ability to focus on a few items and do them well.

[Remember Simple Church?](#) The idea is that churches should do only a few things and do them well in order to have more impact. Clarity. Movement. Alignment. Focus. Work on those things that move people closer to the mission and strip everything else away.

There was a time when churches would actually brag about how many services or ministries they had. *"We have 102 services at our church!"* However, we've seen all kinds of evidence that *simple church* is the way for our churches to grow and reach the people in our communities.

One of my fears as we come out of COVID and its impact on our churches with the addition of a robust online ministry is that our churches will become increasingly complex and we will lose this power of being a simple church.

What can we remove from our church today to make us more effective tomorrow?

We need to cut back on things that don't push the mission forward. What areas of our ministry are not effective? What projects are holding us back and siphoning resources? Now would be a perfect time for us to trim those things away so that we can focus our effort and energy on the aspects of our ministry that push us closer to our mission.

LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MRBEAST BURGER?

Here are a few links:

- [The Untold Truth of MrBeast Burger](#)
- [The North Carolina Kid Who Cracked YouTube's Secret Code](#)
- [MrBeast Burger Crashes the Virtual Dining Scene](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Gather your team together. Get them to read this article. Discuss!

- What struck you about MrBeast or MrBeast Burger? Can you apply this to your church?
- What have you learned from your online experience that should be applied to in-person services?
- How can you make your in-person experience more digital?
- How can you track people who might be in the “fringe” beyond the “community ring” around your church?
- What could you change to help connect with people who are aware of your ministry but aren't a part of what you do ... yet?
- The restaurants in this article had “excess capacity” that they leveraged by partnering with MrBeast Burger. What “excess capacity” do you have as a church that you could leverage by partnering with other ministries in your city, state, or country?
- Talk about how authenticity factors into your church's public communication. What could you do to increase authenticity as a church?
- What's going on behind the scenes that you could post online this week on your social media channels?
- Which other churches that are engaged in community service inspire you?
- What acts of service could you plan in the next three months to help people “get out of their seats and into the streets” to make a difference?
- As you come through COVID and restructure, consider: what have you added to your ministry that should be cut going forward?
- How can you offer a simpler “menu” in the future?