Pray One Million

What would happen if every Seventh-day Adventist in North America would spend just a few minutes each day - or maybe just one minute each day - praying for one specific person...a neighbor, a colleague, someone special that God lays on your heart? What if even half of our members would catch that vision?

Well, if just half of us made that commitment between now and the next three or four months, and if we spent only a minute each a day - one minute each day - over the next ten weeks or so we would storm the gates of heaven with more than a million hours of focused intercession! Read More

5 Tips for Fixing Your Church's Web Design

By Chip Dizard

Every church has a web site, but many need a few fixes to make a larger impact. I want to share 5 tips to fix your church's web site design.

1. Figure Out Why People Are Coming To Your Site.
   This seems like too much of a philosophical approach to web design and not enough action, but I promise you this: if you do not have this nailed down, you are missing out on so much effective traffic! Do people come for information on events? Then have your links and web forms easily scannable and accessible. Is your target audience new visitors that should see your ministries? Make that prominent. Read More
Serving the World's Cities: 
An Andrews University Response
By Skip Bell

Cities have been interwoven in human experience from the beginning of time. Some will argue that humans prefer the gentle pastoral beauty and pace of life familiar to uncrowded rural settings, but the reality tells us otherwise. For whatever reason, we gather in cities. Today's cities are larger, more creative, diverse, and global than ever. In the mid-19th century less than 10% percent of the world’s population lived in a metropolis of 100,000 or more. By 1900 the urban population in the world had increased to 14%. Today 60% of human population is in the city, and in developed nations like Canada and America, it is an astounding 75%. And the pace of migration to urban life is quickening. Today's cities are the center of power, culture, economy, and spirituality. Read More

JOIN THE DISCUSSION ON FACEBOOK

It Is Time to Take Church Media Risks Seriously
By David Fournier

For the large church with a media team, social media outreach, a video team that streams services online or through their local cable network, media risk is an important topic. For the small church that meets in a home with just a few members, media risk is ALSO an important topic. Read More

JOIN THE DISCUSSION ON FACEBOOK

Convention Hotel Accommodations
By Chariolett Johnson

Pastors attending the 2015 NAD Pastoral Family Convention can begin their experience at one of the eight-three or four star hotels specifically selected for convenience and comfort in Downtown Austin. Walk to the Austin convention center, shopping, vegetarian and vegan restaurants in this walkable city.

Take advantage of rooms with single, double, triple, and quad occupancy room rates that include concessions like in-room internet, breakfast, and discounted parking rates depending on what hotel selected. Hotels with suites are also available for those bringing their families. For more information on hotel options go to www.nadpastorsconvention.com. Reserve your room today!

Ideas, Events, Resources, Announcements
Jesus, the ONE - Do you want to draw closer to Jesus? Would you like to learn how to draw others to Him? There are only three days left to register (by Dec. 31) at the regular rate for The One Project gathering in San Diego, Feb. 8-9. Register while there is still space. This gathering will be focused on the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7. With reflections from Alex Bryan, Chris Oberg, Laurence Turner, Emily Whitney, Ivan Williams, Randy Roberts, Japhet De Oliveira, John McVay, Dwight Nelson, Karl Haffner, Manny Arteaga, Tim Gillespie, Michaela Lawrence Jeffery, Sam Leonor and more. Special guest John Ortberg will focus on discipleship.

Just for pastors and theology students: One extra day for free, called *Reframe* to explore the implications of Jesus. All. In our congregations. This will include a Q&A session with the One Project leadership.

Jesus Unlimited - Dr. Ricardo Graham, president of the Pacific Union Conference, has written a book that invites us to imagine Calvary and the spiritual, emotional, and physical wounds of Jesus. Based on well-beloved passages of Scripture, each chapter not only provides a good devotional read, but fresh ideas for your next sermon.

How to Predict Divorce - Kevin Thompson does a lot of weddings and has learned an uncanny way to tell which couples will succeed and which couples are most likely to divorce - all in the way the wedding cake is exchanged.

Previous resource links:

- Adventist WestPoint
- 5 Reasons a Pastor’s Sabbatical Blesses Everyone
- Parsonage Allowance
- 3 Common Traits of Youth Who Don’t Leave the Church
- 3 Childcare Options for Small Groups

Best Practices for Adventist Ministry is published by NAD Ministerial. Opinions expressed belong to the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of NAD Ministerial. Publisher: Ivan Williams; Managing Editor: Dan Martella. Copyright 2014 North American Division Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists.

v(301) 680-6418
What would happen if every Seventh-day Adventist in North America would spend just a few minutes each day – or maybe just one minute each day – praying for one specific person...a neighbor, a colleague, someone special that God lays on your heart? What if even half of our members would catch that vision?

Well, if just half of us made that commitment between now and the next three or four months, and if we spent only a minute each a day – one minute each day – over the next ten weeks or so we would storm the gates of heaven with more than a million hours of focused intercession!

The purpose of the initiative is not the one million hours, it’s rather to remind us that we are part of a Movement-wide commitment to pray specifically and consistently and passionately for the person or persons God lays on our hearts.

Most of us pray regularly with a prayer list. That’s good. But it’s easy for that list to become simply a mention of those who are important to us: Bless our pastor. Bless my children. Bless my uncle in the hospital. But we will ask God to lay on our hearts the name of a certain individual for whom we will pray a more focused prayer – for a minimum of a minute. We’ll claim a promise in their behalf. We’ll ask God to use us to reach them, whatever their current spiritual journey.

According to Romans 8:34, Jesus stands at the right hand of God and is interceding for him or her, so we are joining hands with the great Intercessor on behalf of the one whom He has laid on our hearts.

We are part of a praying Movement, a prayer Movement. The whole family across North America, pleading with God to do what only He can do to reach the hearts of those He loves. Many of our people are observing that we need to write URGENT over everything we do.

Is that a doable? Half of us...one minute each day, pleading with God to show us someone He wants us to bless, to encourage, to put our arms around... Is that a doable?

It is.
Participant Response
Thanks for this idea, the potential is enormous. I like to think of what God can do when we spend just one extra minute interceding earnestly for even one person.
Pastor, Mid-America

The difference for me was when I realized that we can join with Christ as He intercedes for those on our prayer list. Now that’s a privilege!
Pastor, North Pacific Union

I learned right away that as I’m seriously praying for someone God also shows me how to reach out to that person with encouragement, or whatever is needed. He knows.
Prayer Coordinator, Pacific Union

As I pray I’ve discovered that this initiative has the capacity to change at least two people – the person I’m praying for, and me.
Church administrator, Pacific Union

The whole idea of being part of a “prayer movement” motivates me to pray.
Lay person, Mid-America

The students in my school have really picked up on this idea. They love to choose one person and pray specifically for them for a full minute. They found it hard at first, but as they do it they learned to love it.
Elementary teacher, Columbia Union

We have started setting aside one minute during our worship service on Sabbath mornings to have our people pray for a specific person. At first a minute seemed like a long time, but now most of them are really enjoying it.
Pastor, Atlantic Union

I love the idea that I’m part of bringing a million hours – a million hours! – of intercession to God.
Lay person, SDA Church in Canada

More information can be found at Pray One Million
5 Tips for Fixing Your Church’s Web Design

By Chip Dizard

Every church has a web site, but many need a few fixes to make a larger impact. I want to share 5 tips to fix your church's web site design.

1. **Figure Out Why People Are Coming To Your Site.**
   This seems like too much of a philosophical approach to web design and not enough action, but I promise you this: if you do not have this nailed down, you are missing out on so much effective traffic! Do people come for information on events? Then have your links and web forms easily scannable and accessible. Is your target audience new visitors that should see your ministries? Make that prominent.

2. **Simplify and Declutter**
   This goes hand-in-hand with the previous tip. Do not overload your website with extras, but instead focus on what your audience needs and what you have the capacity to share. Too many links in navigation can actually hinder traffic and make it difficult for people to find what they want, and make your website unusable.

3. **Use The Right Tools**
   I love to write code with basic text editors, but I don’t create from scratch. People that work on your website need to have the best tools available. Most sites use a CMS or Content Management System. They are usually affordable for most Adventist Churches.

4. **Minimalism Is In**
   I have been a big fan of minimalist design. For those that do not know what this is, it is a design concept of using minimal elements that allow a strong color palette and the content to shine through. The web has always been ugly with terrible graphics. Skip that and instead jump on board with simple and beautiful.

5. **Tell Stories In All Mediums**
   A website is not just data. Yes, share your forms, point them to the time for services, and ministries that are available. But tell the story of your ministry with words, images, and video. Allow the person to fully grasp what your church is about just by the web design and with faces of those you serve and worship with you.

*Chip Dizard is a member of New Hope Adventist Church in Fulton, Md and is part of the media ministry team. He also has a video training sites [webvideochefs.com](http://webvideochefs.com) and blogs about church production on his media site [chip.photography](http://chip.photography).*
Serving the World's Cities: An Andrews University Response

By Skip Bell

Cities have been interwoven in human experience from the beginning of time. Some will argue that humans prefer the gentle pastoral beauty and pace of life familiar to uncrowded rural settings, but the reality tells us otherwise. For whatever reason, we gather in cities. Today's cities are larger, more creative, diverse, and global than ever. In the mid-19th century less than 10% percent of the world's population lived in a metropolis of 100,000 or more. By 1900 the urban population in the world had increased to 14%. Today 60% of human population is in the city, and in developed nations like Canada and America, it is an astounding 75%. And the pace of migration to urban life is quickening. Today's cities are the center of power, culture, economy, and spirituality.

People continue to migrate to the city. There is an optimism people have about the city, although there are large portions of today’s cities marked by poverty. The reality remains that the city is the center of power and wealth, and those who live in the city seek to share in that economic opportunity. Cities will continue to provide the narratives of our human experience.

The reality is that the city is a dilemma. Though they hold promise, they do not always satisfy human need. They drive cultural and ecological change, growth, and pollution at the same time. Cities enchant us with possibility, but for too many the attraction of the city has been a deception, and the city a place of injustice. One can describe cities as flourishing, as providing abundance, and at the same time as broken, in trouble, even as places of despair.

The significance and challenge of the city for the Christian church is the question of how to go about sharing the Gospel there. Or one might say how to live as a disciple of Jesus in its midst. The city is a space for 21st century mission. It is an opportunity for the church to respond with love and care to the challenges facing urban populations and to transform the culture.

Christians bring their influence into the life of the city as they live there, work there, play there, and socialize there. Most young adults leaving our colleges and universities establish careers in one of our world's urban centers. They need support as they bring the presence of Christ into those cultures.

Recognizing this challenge, the Andrews Doctor of Ministry program offers an Urban Ministry Concentration. The next cohort in this concentration will begin in March of 2015 in Chicago. Dr. Skip Bell, Professor of Christian Leadership, leads the concentration.

The goal of the Doctor of Ministry Urban Ministries Concentration is to develop three areas in a person who serves in an urban context: being, knowing and doing. Being helps the doctoral students to experience transformative development in several areas including spirituality, discipleship, compassionate vision for the city, and appreciation of diversity. Knowing develops students’ knowledge base in issues of urban society, how systems shape life and mission in the context of cities, and how to promote healthy cities. Doing cultivates skills including creating vision, identifying needs, community development, leading and managing specific ministries, and managing change.

The curriculum is a rigorous four-year experience plus a transformative project. The program requires work with the best literature in the area of study, field research, theological and spiritual formation, relational learning with a cohort, dialogue and lecture with the world's leading experts on urban culture and mission, and immersion in three specific cities; Chicago, Toronto, and London. The participants will work with a variety of real urban issues including housing, poverty, justice, hunger, education, human conflict, health services, and empowerment.
“This is an extraordinary formation and leadership opportunity for our church,” Bell states. “These Doctors of Ministry will cherish a dream of Christ in the city, and of urban neighborhoods where the next generation of disciples of Christ can thrive in faith and life.”

Dr. Sung Kwon, Director of Community Services for the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist church, has led an initiative of the North American Division to provide two scholarships for these Doctoral students in each union territory in North America. Interested students or church administrators can inquire about those scholarships from the Doctor of Ministry office.

Applications must be begun by January 16, 2015. Instructions, information and a DMin application package link can be found at the Doctor of Ministry web site accessed through the Andrews site, or www.doctorofministry.com. The cohort is limited to 25. For more information, call or email the Doctor of Ministry office at 269-471-3544 or email dmin@andrews.edu.

Skip Bell is professor of leadership and director of the doctor of ministry program at the Andrews University Seminary
It Is Time to Take Church Media Risks Seriously

By David Fournier

For the large church with a media team, social media outreach, a video team that streams services online or through their local cable network, media risk is an important topic. For the small church that meets in a home with just a few members, media risk is ALSO an important topic.

As we look at the news we see major corporations struggling amid controversy over social media missteps, patent wars, and cyber breaches that exposed customer’s information. It is tempting to think that these issues do not affect our churches. The unfortunate truth is that small organizations are attacked more frequently than larger organizations. Experts estimate that as many as 30,000 websites are infected every day and 80% of those belong to small organizations. We know for a fact that cyber breaches have occurred within the Church.

Adventist Risk Management attorneys have had cases where local churches infringed on copyright protected material. Modern technology allows content owners to track the use of their material more effectively.

Church media issues are not something to ignore. Understanding both the issues and opportunities will help you avoid missteps and ensure success for your ministry.

Social Media

Social media users often fall into two camps: the enthusiastic and the cautious. When it comes to managing your church, school or institution’s media presence, you want to aim somewhere in the middle. It’s important to bring personality, warmth and humor to your online presence, and it is easier to achieve that goal once you’ve spent time carefully planning your strategy.

First, you should identify how you plan to use media to enhance and supplement your ministry efforts. That might include:

- Engaging your congregation
- Reaching your wider community in new ways
- Creating an online gathering place
- Providing immediate feedback
- Establishing space for detailed discussions
- Promoting events, activities and programs

The next step is to acknowledge that with all the new tools at our disposal come new areas of risk. Effective risk management is about identification, assessment and the prioritization of risks, and effective media planning is no different.

While thinking of risks could make any media use seem intimidating, these tools are also great resources for your institution. When your staff is educated on best practices, and when your organization has a social media policy and emergency response plan in place, you may find the benefits outweigh any potential hazards.

Rather than restricting your ability to use media in any way, we want to free your institution to explore its possibilities. The following tips will help you and your employees avoid missteps.

Cyber Risks

Start by limiting access to the church’s webpage. Establish administration access so only a few key people can update the
Limit staff access to the church’s network. Churches gather and store large amounts of sensitive, personal information on members, including information related to their giving. Most data breaches, such as identity theft and embezzlement of funds, occur from the inside. Be sure your church staff only has access to areas of the network that are appropriate for their leadership level.

It is best to keep two separate networks, one for general use by teachers and leaders, and another network for church employees (office staff, pastors). These should be firewalled with strong passwords in place. Be sure to change the passwords on a systematic basis.

To learn more watch Local Church Cyber Risks (4:41)

Litigation Discovery
These days, social media is the first stop for attorneys looking to build a case. Comments posted on social media channels are often used in court. Make sure your employees and volunteers are aware of the potential risks.

Identifiable Information, Photos of Minors
Church websites and Facebook pages often share personally identifiable information, which an outsider can use to contact a minor. This exposes children not only to predators, but also to non-custodial biological parents who may try to contact their children against court orders. Protect minors by never posting birth dates, phone numbers, email addresses or school names. In addition to obtaining written permission from parents or guardians to post photos of minors, you should also get written permission to post photographs of adults.

Right of Publicity, Release Forms, Permission
As with anything, a healthy dose of common sense and courtesy will go a long way toward keeping your students and employees safe.

Do not post photos of a minor online without a written form of consent. Uploading pictures and tagging them on Facebook may be commonplace, but the Children's Online Protection Act (COPA) requires that images of minors NOT be used unless written consent has been given. It also forbids including any identifying information of minors to keep pedophiles from finding them. While churches and other nonprofits are not obligated to follow COPA requirements, it’s best to cover all the bases and implement them anyway. Turning off functions like geo-tagging on photos, and foregoing tagging minors’ names on Facebook photos, are two ways churches can keep young people safer.
**Defamation, Confidentiality, Invasion of Privacy**

If an internal dispute occurs, any disparaging comments about individuals posted online by church staff may be considered defamation, putting the church at risk for a lawsuit. Avoid any disclosure of private facts about people or situations unless you have permission. Never post something that might be confidential without checking first. A classic mistake many churches make is posting prayer requests along with people’s names.

Do not include names or other identifying information on public prayer lists. Church offices also need to avoid displaying private information, such as posting the pastor’s schedule with too many details (whom the pastor is visiting in the hospital, etc.).

Gatekeepers are a must for any church blog. Blogs that include comment fields are becoming a minefield for defamation, libel, and slander – approving comments before posting can help you avoid future incidents. Post commenting guidelines that explain what will or will not be tolerated, and be sure to clearly state why a comment was not posted, or was removed.

Churches also need to consider implementing guidelines for leaders who publish personal blogs, including a disclaimer that their views are their own and not the views of the church they lead. These guidelines should include a statement against using the official church logo on any personal blog, website or social media profile.

**Copyright Infringement**

It is against the law to utilize articles, photos, music or other materials without obtaining permission first. *It's not enough to simply give attribution to the author when posting.* In order to legally post copyrighted material, whether it’s a sermon from a visiting evangelist or a video of your worship service containing copyrighted music, you must have the proper authorization. This can either be through a license the church holds or directly from the owner of the copyrighted material.

CCLI provides copyright licenses for music. That license defines what you can and cannot do with the music. Make sure to check whether your license includes the right to record, stream or broadcast.

If pastors, worship leaders, and other leaders are creating original works, such as sermons, songs, or training curriculum for small groups, and wish to retain the copyright, they must create these works outside of normal work hours. These original works should also be created using a computer that is not church property. Otherwise, absent a contract, the church, not the individual, likely owns these original works.

To learn more watch [Church Media Risks: Copyright](http://www.nadministerial.org/article/947/for-nad-pastors/articles/it-is-ti...)
Sexually Explicit or Inappropriate Communication with Minors
No one ever thinks it will happen – until it does. Prevent inappropriate contact between adults and minors by establishing clear, specific guidelines in your social media policy. Teachers and church leaders should not follow, friend or engage with students on social media directly. One-on-one communication with minors should be greatly discouraged.

In some instances, it may be appropriate for teachers and leaders to create a public, professional media presence where they indirectly communicate with students and parents, and answer questions. If you feel this is appropriate for your institution, the activity should be routinely monitored.

For older students, apps such as Reminder were created to allow teachers to communicate via text (homework reminders, due dates, etc.) without sharing their cell phone numbers. These apps also keep a record of sent messages, in case administration ever needs to review their content.

Fine-tune your social media policy and include it with your employee handbook. Establish clear disciplinary measures and enforce them.

Adverse Employment Decisions
In many states, it is now illegal for an employer to take adverse employment action against an employee for making disparaging or critical remarks against the company or its leaders on his or her own social media account. These laws apply to churches and other nonprofits. Avoid liability by including a social media policy in your employee handbook, with stated consequences for violations. The law does not always apply if the employee is violating a policy they agreed to upon employment.

Computer, Device Security
An unlocked computer or device is an open invitation to data theft or malicious pranks. Make sure all church-owned computers are set to a timed, locked screensaver, and recommend that all employees do the same with any personal devices they might use for work. Many devices have the ability to be remotely wiped, so make sure this is enabled for all church property.

Hijacked Brand/Faked Accounts
All it takes is one disgruntled individual for your church or school to suddenly become the victim of a fake social media profile. These can range from a petty annoyance to serious misrepresentation and confusion, so it pays to be on the alert. A regular search of social networks will help you uncover imposters. While policies vary according to networks, you
may be able to report the fake profile and ask for it to be removed. If not, you can at least be aware of any potential damage and prepare accordingly. Also, it’s wise to reserve your church or school’s name on any social network you might want to use in the future.

Creating a Social Media Policy

Social Media Policy Guide

Note: one thing to add near the top might be:

1. Advise your employees that you have the right to monitor their social media and Internet activity.

2. Remind employees/volunteers to familiarize themselves with the employee/volunteer agreement and policies included in the employee/volunteer handbook.

3. You should state that the policy applies to multi-media, social networking websites, blogs and wikis for both professional and personal use.

4. Internet postings should not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the organization or to any third party that has disclosed information to the organization.

5. If an employee/volunteer comments on any aspect of the organization’s business they must clearly identify themselves as an employee/volunteer and include a disclaimer. Example: "the views expressed are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of (your organization’s name)."

6. Internet postings should not include organization logos or trademarks unless permission is asked for and granted.

7. Internet postings must respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure and other applicable laws.

8. Employees should neither claim nor imply that they are speaking on the company's behalf.

9. Organization blogs, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, etc., could require administrative approval when the employee/volunteer is posting about the organization and the industry.

10. State that the organization reserves the right to request the certain subjects are avoided, may withdraw certain posts, and remove inappropriate comments. (Does this apply to individual employee accounts?)

Five Steps You Can Take to Avoid and Minimize Risks

1. Document all current and intended media use by staff and employees.
2. Implement safeguards. These include disclaimers on employees’ personal accounts; permission for the use of photos, videos and copyrighted material; and protection of confidentiality.
3. Train your employees and volunteers on proper and improper social media use. Choose one person to be the spokesperson in times of crisis, and see that they have crisis management training.
4. Monitor the church website and social media posts by assigning gatekeepers.
5. Build a crisis management strategy. This is separate from a social media policy, and specifically addresses the steps you will take in case of emergency. First, provide your leadership and communication team with basic crisis management training. Many online learning sites have free or low-cost courses in social media best practice and crisis management. Next, decide whether you should be reaching out to your community on an individual basis, or whether you would rather direct all inquiries to a single point of contact (a section of your website, one official social media account, etc.). For smaller institutions, the directed approach is likely the best use of resources.
Part of your crisis management strategy should be to designate a spokesperson who is both authorized to speak on your institution’s behalf and able to respond quickly. Consult with a lawyer before making public statements, and coordinate the approach among the leadership. Crises should be addressed within 24 hours. Lastly, remember to be human – offering compassionate, apologetic responses to injured parties, committing to fixing the issue and communicating openly will go a long way toward minimizing damage.

While this might seem like an intimidating amount of information, all the education will definitely pay off. With a little effort and strategy, your church or school will see the benefits from the increased visibility, connectivity and sense of community that your media presence can foster.

*David Fournier is manager of client care for Adventist Risk Management*

*Reprinted from CALLED*