

Church Visitor Acquisition & Retention

Summary: No one joins a church without first visiting it. Therefore, the number of visitors a church has — and the number of those visitors who come back — has a great deal to do with a church's growth. This four-visit consultation will help a church evaluate its present visitor flow (number of first, second, and third-time visitors). Then, more importantly, it will help the church improve its effectiveness in generating more visitors and seeing those visitors return. The consultation typically occurs over an 18-month period of time.

Goal: This four-visit consultation has two simple, yet profound, goals: 1) to increase the number of people who visit your church for the first time, and 2) to increase the number of visitors who return.

Process: Prior to the first on-site visit, the pastor is responsible for recruiting a team of 5 - 7 people who are willing to serve on a visitor strategy task force that will be responsible for overseeing the visitor acquisition and retention strategy of the church.

In this consultation the client church's present visitor flow is first evaluated, and then compared against national norms of growing churches. (The ideal visitor to attendance ratio is 5:100 — five first or second time visitors for every 100 in attendance.) Next, specific "target numbers" are defined for the church. Finally, over the course of the consultation, specific strategies are defined, implemented, and monitored for increasing visitor flow.

Over the course of the four visits, the following topics are addressed:

Visit #1

The first on-site visit is comprised of church staff interviews and a 4-hour leadership training session with the visitor strategy task force. Included in the task force training is:

- Why grow?
- Evaluating the church's present visitor flow
- Visitor flow ratios
- Why people visit a church
- Why people return to a church
- Assignment of specific activities for the task force to complete prior to the next consultation visit

Visit #2

The second on-site visit consists of meeting with the visitor strategy task force to review activities since the previous visit, and define activities for the coming six months. The consultation visit also focuses on the following topics with the task force:

- Successful advertising guidelines
- Increasing member invitations
- Learning visitors' first impressions
- Getting visitors' names
- High visibility events as a way to increase visitor flow

Visit #3

The third consultant visit consists of meeting with the visitor strategy task force to review activities and define future activities. The consultant also focuses on the following topics with the task force:

- Why visitors return
- Building relationships between visitors and members
- From "entry events" to "entry paths"

In addition, a 2-hour evening presentation is made by the consultant to the entire church membership on the topic of "How Do We Welcome Visitors?" The purpose of this session is to sensitize members to their important role in extending a warm and caring welcome to newcomers.

Visit #4

The final on-site visit continues the mentoring process between the consultant and the visitor strategy task force. A review of the events in the previous six months is made, and a definition of a specific plan for the coming year is completed.

Many churches would experience growth in weekend worship attendance if they simply had a more effective method of attracting and keeping visitors. The focus and resources which this special topic consultation provides can begin your church on this journey to growth.

Each consultant visit includes presentation of research and proven guidelines for attracting and keeping visitors, as well as individual assessment of the sponsoring church's particular situation.

A component of all "Special Topic Consultations" is free telephone consultation for one year surround the visit/s.

Cost: This Special Topic Consultation for developing a visitor acquisition and retention strategy is available only as a package of four (4) on-site consultations. Total cost is \$2100, plus travel & accommodations for one person from Los Angeles, California.

Next Step: Call (1-800-844-9286), write (Box 541, Monrovia, CA 91017), or [e-mail](#) Church Growth, Inc. to discuss your particular situation and plans for mobilizing laity in ministry.