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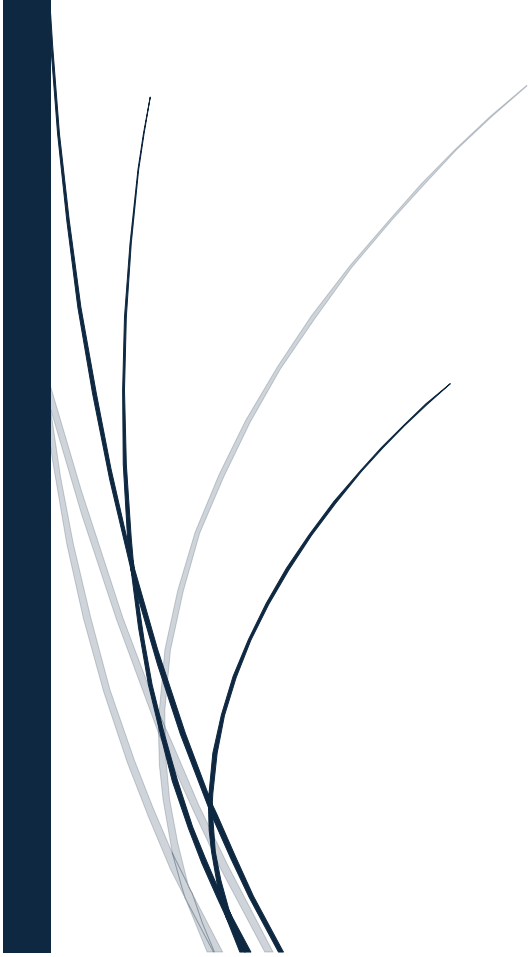
Guide to Church Growth:

Building the Insider and Reaching the Outsider



CEC Diocese of the Northeast

Guide to Church Growth:

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Guide to Church Growth: Building the Insider and Reaching the Outsider

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Overview

This guide is designed to provide clarity on the two complementary strategies for church growth presented across your webpages: **Build the Insider** and **Reach the Outsider**. These approaches work in tandem to strengthen the internal community of the church while effectively engaging and welcoming new members from outside. By balancing these two priorities, churches can grow sustainably while staying true to their mission and vision.

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Part 1: Build the Insider

What is Building the Insider?

"Build the Insider" focuses on nurturing and strengthening the internal community of the church. It emphasizes creating systems and processes that help current members feel connected, empowered, and prepared to serve.

Key Elements:

1. **Start with a Team:**
    - A strong foundation begins with a committed, well-trained team that shares the church's vision.
    - Prioritize collaboration and define clear roles to reduce oversights and improve efficiency.
2. **Let a Vision Drive You:**
    - A shared vision provides direction and unity.
    - Churches with a clear mission and vision grow with purpose, ensuring every decision aligns with their goals.
3. **Weekend Experience:**
    - Create a welcoming, well-prepared environment for worship.
    - Consider every detail, from the greeters to the service flow, to make guests feel valued and comfortable.
4. **Do Discipleship:**
    - Move beyond attendance numbers to focus on transformation.
    - Provide resources and opportunities for members to grow in faith and serve others.
5. **Systems for Scalability:**
    - Develop scalable systems for greeting, serving, assimilation, and small groups.
    - A well-designed system allows for growth without the need to reinvent the church structure.
6. **Do Less – Better:**
    - Simplify programs to focus on what truly works and aligns with your mission.
    - Be willing to let go of events or activities that no longer serve the church effectively.

Why It Matters:

A healthy church begins from within. When members feel connected and empowered, they naturally create a welcoming and supportive environment for guests.

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Part 2: Reach the Outsider

What is Reaching the Outsider?

"Reach the Outsider" is about creating opportunities to engage with people outside the church community. This strategy focuses on making a positive first impression and providing clear pathways for new members to feel welcomed and connected.

Key Elements:

1. **Online Presence:**
    - Your church's online presence is its new front door.
    - Optimize your website and Google Business Profile to ensure potential visitors can easily find you and learn about your church.
2. **Rethink Your Website:**
    - A visually appealing and easy-to-navigate website is essential.
    - Include clear information about your mission, vision, and what visitors can expect.
3. **Social Media:**
    - Use social media platforms to engage both existing members and potential visitors.
    - Share authentic content that reflects your church's community and values.
4. **Communicate Clearly:**
    - Provide accurate, up-to-date information on all platforms.
    - Consistent communication helps new guests feel confident about visiting.
5. **Measure and Adjust:**
    - Use analytics to evaluate the effectiveness of your outreach efforts.
    - Adjust strategies based on data to continually improve.

Why It Matters:

Your church's ability to grow depends on how well it connects with those outside the community. A strong first impression and clear communication can turn visitors into long-term members.

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The Synergy Between Building the Insider and Reaching the Outsider

These two approaches are interdependent. A healthy internal community (Insider) naturally creates a welcoming environment for newcomers (Outsider). Similarly, a steady influx of new members brings energy and fresh perspectives to the church community. Here's how the two strategies complement each other:

Build the Insider	Reach the Outsider
Focuses on existing members	Focuses on new visitors
Creates systems for scalability	Creates pathways for connection
Empowers members to serve	Invites newcomers to engage
Builds a strong internal foundation	Expands the church's reach

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How to Get Started

1. **Evaluate Your Current Systems:**
    - Assess the strengths and weaknesses of your current insider and outsider strategies.
    - Identify areas where systems can be streamlined or improved.
2. **Prioritize Scalability:**
    - Focus on creating systems that can grow with your church. Avoid restructuring every time attendance increases.
3. **Engage Your Team:**
    - Involve your leadership and volunteers in both insider and outsider initiatives. Their buy-in is critical for success.
4. **Track Progress:**
    - Use data to measure the impact of your efforts. Celebrate wins and make adjustments where needed.

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Conclusion

By focusing on both building the insider and reaching the outsider, your church can achieve sustainable growth while staying true to its mission. These strategies ensure a balance between nurturing the internal community and welcoming new members, creating a thriving, Christ-centered church.

For additional resources, visit our website or download our step-by-step guides for building systems and enhancing outreach efforts.