

— 5 STEPS —

To Creating an Effective Marketing Campaign for Your Parish





5 STEPS TO CREATING AN EFFECTIVE MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR YOUR PARISH

Years ago, marketing your parish was pretty straight forward. You had a goal you had to complete, and parishioners gave to it because it was expected of them. You went to church every Sunday and you tithed consistently. But things have changed, and that is no longer always the case today.

People have a choice in parishes they attend and causes they support. And with the bombardment of “asks” we’re faced with every day — from UNICEF to GoFundMe —

we all need to be strategic when it comes to where we give our time, talent and treasure. Today, it isn’t enough to give parishioners a “what” — we need to make sure we supply them with a “why.”

Read on for five things you need to create an effective marketing campaign for your next big (or small!) parish initiative.

1 DEFINE YOUR GOALS

Are you trying to restock the parish food pantry? Sell enough homemade bakery to afford new faith formation materials? What about a capital campaign to update the church sound system? Whatever the needs, be sure to clearly state what you are looking to accomplish and when.

This is an area where being as detailed as possible helps you come out ahead. As an example, try writing a statement of intent. This can then be used in your communication efforts to parishioners and potential donors as you move ahead.

“We will be selling homemade bakery the next two weekends after Mass to help pay for our next parish mission. Our goal is to collect \$550 for the speaker and all materials, so that we can keep the program free for all

who wish to partake. Please consider stopping by after Mass and donating to a great cause!”

2 SET A BUDGET ... NO REALLY, SET A BUDGET

Not everyone likes to talk about money, but it’s an important discussion to have before any major or minor initiative. Consult with your team on what may need to be purchased, rented or subscribed to in order to get your fundraiser off the ground.

Let’s say you’re working on a small parish campaign to upgrade your sound system. A sample budget might look like this:

Letterhead, envelopes, and postage: \$250

Pew cards: \$50

Email communication — premium email platform (monthly): \$20

Volunteers to stuff, address, and stamp letters: Free

Total cost: \$320

Now that you have the budget necessary to implement the campaign, be sure to add it to the amount you're trying to raise, so that you can recoup the cost of marketing.

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3 FIGURE OUT YOUR AUDIENCE

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While we should hope that our parishioners are coming to Mass every weekend, the truth is that they often aren't. And there are so many reasons as to why — perhaps they are attending a different parish or decided to begin skipping Mass due to personal reasons. Whatever the reason, we need to remember that not all of our members are in the pews every Sunday. We need to think outside the box and reach out using multiple channels of communication. Which leads us to...

4 CHOOSE YOUR MEDIAS

There are so many ways you can get your message out. From the printed bulletin to the weekly digital newsletter, social media platforms and website to printed letters. Depending on who your audience is and how they like to communicate, be sure to research the best way to highlight your "ask."

You'll want to definitely connect with your members by announcing what you're trying to accomplish at Mass and in the bulletin, but then also remember to get to the people who might not make it to your parish each weekend. If you have their contact information, send out a broadcast email or postal mail with all the donation details. Be sure to help keep the campaign in mind via social media, too!

5 DEVELOP YOUR MESSAGE

Let's circle back to the point we made in the beginning about how people today are being asked for financial help more and more. In order to solidify their support, your parish needs to make a connection with them. Remind parishioners how much your parish depends on their support, and all the good things that you'll be able to accomplish with their help.

Example Message to Parishioners:

As we take a moment to reflect on all the hardships this year has brought, I can't help but also think upon the gifts that came along with them. COVID-19 and the closing of parishes brought much heartache to our community, but with it also came beautiful moments of strength in our faith.

We may have become socially distant during these tumultuous times, but there is no doubt that our spiritual relationship with Christ is closer than ever. If you have yet to do so, please consider making a recurring gift to our parish. Your continued support helps sustain our parish and renews the ministries that matter so much to so many.

PRO-TIP

Are the words just not coming? We've got you covered. Check out "4 End-of-Year Donation Appeal Templates" that your parish can utilize.



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