

Diocese of MO – Website Overview/Friday Talk

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- What is the purpose of your website?
 - Isn't a chest of drawers – it's NOT static, it's dynamic
 - Isn't just a "digital billboard"
 - It's a train station, a digital hub helping move people along on their journeys
 - Info boards have to be correct, but the purpose of a train station is to GO SOMEWHERE – make a connection
 - Informational to Relational: if your info isn't correct we won't have a relationship, but the focus of the site needs to be RELATIONAL
 - Speaking of connection, your digital hub needs to be at the center of your digital infrastructure. Like a train station, it's not just trains – it's cars, buses, sidewalks, local trains. Likewise website: video, calendar, social, payment processing, member info, newsletter AND ALL THESE PLATFORMS
 - Annoying to see something on one platform and not find it on another. Facebook is awful to search (like events); hate when you read something in the newsletter and can't find it on the website
- Design – NARRATIVE driven – what does that mean?
 - Happy people doing ministry in images: people, purpose, place
 - Narrative we want to share AND narratives that people come to us with
 - Information needs to be networked not hierarchical – children's choirs under music & children; baptism under worship/sacraments & newcomers
 - Intentional redundancy - Navigation and Access need to be redundant NOT content (so you don't have to duplicate effort to update it)
 - BIG PICTURE/What are you excited about?
 - Racial reconciliation, for example – using navigational constructs that connect the META THEMES of who we are. Diocesan service of reconciliation; Adult Forum study of a particular book; Youth Pilgrimage to racial justice sites; Outreach programs – need to tie these themes together. Obvious to US, but not to the observer of our website if we don't share these meta themes
 - KNOW your audience – what brings newcomers to your church? What are the questions they ask?
 - Western PA, former Roman Catholics
 - FLA former Episcopalians with pledge card in hand
 - St. Matt's Alaska – visitors from cruise ships and mother church for interior villages
 - Ministry directories – who is the audience: the "consumer" (drop your kid off for this youth event) or the "volunteer" (we need chaperones for this youth event)
 - If you can't connect it to a person, then don't list it
 - Opportunity to uplift Lay Ministry – BUT you need to be branding your ministry leaders with CHURCH BRANDED emails, etc. (ex. communications@stswithens.org, children@stswithens.org)

- Just because you CAN put it on the website, doesn't mean you should – altar guild is better served by an email list
- Other random thoughts
 - Design FOR MOBILE
 - 70% of internet access is mobile. If someone is on their phone looking at your site, what do they want immediately?
 - Dynamic vs Static content
 - Menu should be fairly static
 - Calendar should be dynamic
 - Other navigational constructs to reflect seasonal content, meaning liturgical season, season of church life, programs, ministries should be “semi” dynamic
 - Video vs Audio/Podcast
 - Podcasts – especially those loaded onto an Apple Podcast or Spotify
 - Discoverable by others
 - Portable (don't demand all of your attention)
 - Subscribe-able – so there is a push notification
 - Video – engaging/reassuring when you can't have or can't attend in-person worship
 - Barrier to entry is lower than walking in a door
 - Need to think of audience – hybrid is the HARDEST
 - Jon Anderson talk show studio audience model
 - Welcome Videos
 - Go beyond rectors behind desks
 - Avoid too much drone footage of HVAC on the roof & Parking Lot
 - SUSTAINABLE website platform that allows for customization
 - During pandemic people really realized the limitations of a lot of the platforms they were using
 - Instagram
 - Who uses it? NOT kids anymore!
 - YOUNG ADULTS
 - What life events precipitate young people looking for a church? People look for these things on Instagram
 - Use hashtags that people use to search ex. #pittsburghweddings #weddingvenues
 - Tag people – the wedding photographer who took the picture, the bride & groom, etc.

Just a few example of Membership Vision Churches

- <https://www.stthomascolumnbus.org/>
- <https://www.stmattsfbks.org/>
- <https://www.columba.org/>

- <https://www.christchurchcathedral.org/>
- <https://www.stpaulsnatick.org/>