

# Successful Seasonal Strategies

Yvon Prehn, [www.effectivechurchcom.com](http://www.effectivechurchcom.com) and [www.churchcomtraining.com](http://www.churchcomtraining.com)



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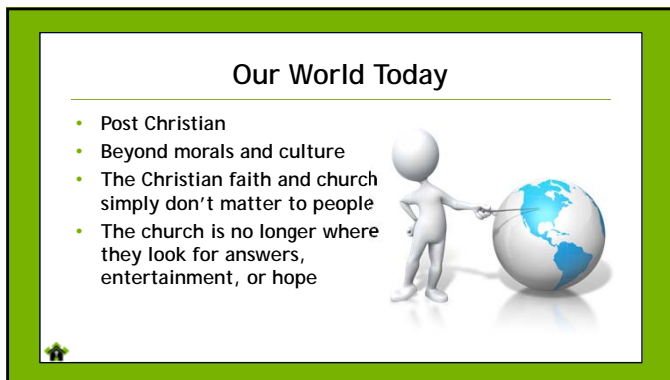
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*How do you get people to come to church?*

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*Seasonal Events!*

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Here's why Seasonal events work so well

- Everybody is thinking about them
- Secular advertising is pervasive
- Family not there for many
- The church is!



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### It's an "easy ask"

- It's much less intimidating to invite friends to a holiday party than it is to church
- No easier way to get numbers
- But you can do MORE!



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### Beyond a bigger service at seasonal events



- Not only can they grow your church in numbers, but with some strategic thinking . . .
- You will help your people grow as disciples of Jesus in two key areas:
  - *Evangelism*—Sharing their faith
  - *Serving others*—becoming like Jesus

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### Seasonal events do this because

- They provide a natural framework:
- For your people to reach out, invite to church, talk about their faith—
- *That's evangelism*
- A structure for volunteering before, during, and after the event—
- *That's service*



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To accomplish those things, you need:

- A Successful Seasonal Strategy that consists of:
- A Comprehensive PROCESS
- All-church TEAM
- Multi-channel COMMUNICATIONS
- EVALUATION & ENCOURAGEMENT
- That's what this course will teach you!
- Let's get started with the COMPREHENSIVE PROCESS that will give you a new approach to Seasonal events in your church



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Successful Seasonal Strategy

**COMPREHENSIVE PROCESS**

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Typical process for seasonal events

- A tremendous amount of time, money, and effort goes into planning, inviting, putting on the event
- The result:
- A big turnout!
- Great time for all!



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The day or event is considered a success,  
*however. . . .*

- The following week, it is back to church attendance as usual
- Little, if any increase in numbers
- No spiritual growth in current members
- Questions asked, what to do?



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What won't help

- Spending more money
- Blaming
- Discouragement
- Worst of all—complacency



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You need a  
**NEW PROCESS**



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## Typical Process

- The BIG EVENT as an end in itself



- All communications, all volunteer efforts focus on this
- But when it's over; it's over

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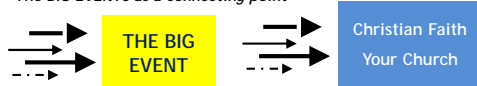
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## NEW: a COMPREHENSIVE PROCESS

\*\*\*that looks beyond the event itself

- Instead of the BIG EVENT as an end in itself
- The BIG EVENTS as a *connecting point*



- To introduce people to the Christian faith and Jesus
- To introduce people to your church
- To take people to the next step in faith journey
- To invite them to continuing interaction and activities with your church, the Christian faith, and Jesus

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## Overview of how this works

(Easter as primary example, ECC has resources for all seasonal celebrations)

- Don't just plan for the event itself
- This is where most churches put time, money, efforts



- But if that is all you work on, that is the only area you'll achieve success in

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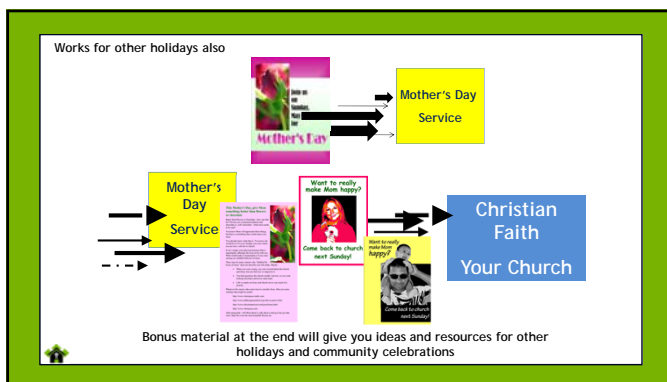
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### Why this process works so well

- Post-Christian world
- Church, Faith, Jesus is all new to many
- Many exposures needed to move people from rejection to tolerating to accepting
- Also, this process is needed to fully involve your people and for them to grow spiritually from seasonal events



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## *Seasonal events provide a starting connection*

- But a successful PROCESS won't happen naturally
- You must understand, commit to the process, **WORK** the PROCESS
- Now you need:
- An **ALL-CHURCH TEAM** to make it happen
- **MULTI-CHANNEL COMMUNICATIONS** for each step
- **EVALUATION & ENCOURAGEMENT** to make it an integral part of the DNA of your church



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## To implement this PROCESS & create the COMMUNICATIONS

- You need a TEAM
- And that's what the next lesson is about



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*Successful Seasonal Strategy*

**ALL-CHURCH TEAM**

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## Past PROCESS often Staff dominated

- Typically the church decides to buy some kind of mailing or social media advertising
- BUT that teaches the wrong things:
- That money can buy outreach
- That lasting success or failure is the responsibility of the staff
- That only the staff is responsible for evangelism
- That technology is relied on more than people



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## Instead— a BIBLICAL APPROACH

- Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
- Matt. 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- *Nothing in the verses above say "staff only" or "money primarily" or "trust in the latest tech or social media"*



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## Application

- We are ALL His witnesses
- We are ALL to be growing in spiritual maturity
- Participation in seasonal and special events will help us do this
- Non-scary way to do evangelism
- We are all involved though we have different tasks



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## Three key groups make this happen

- Church leaders



- Communication creators



- Congregation



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## Church leaders

- Church leaders
  - Vision
  - Share with the entire church the plan
  - Sermons—biblical motivation, encouragements to pray, be involved
  - Pastoral passion a key motivator
  - Assign Tasks, protect time for staff
  - Budget
  - Plan for evaluation and repeating the process



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## Communication creators

- Communication creators
- Remembering success is NOT solely dependent on them or their creativity!
- Many resources available today
- Encourage primary work in-house
- *Need a team for various channels*
- Track and evaluate



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## Congregation

- Key to success—front-line troops
- PRAY
- Do the inviting, mailing, distributing
- Staff and serve at the event
- Interact at the event
- Follow up after the event
- Intentional training in outreach, service, and discipleship



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## Benefits of this plan

- Outreach becomes something the entire church does for special and seasonal events
- Not something the leadership buys
- *Much more cost effective! Works for any church or church plant anywhere!*
- If successful—all are
- If not—all share in responsibility
- Spiritual growth & learning opportunity for all



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## Discipleship training as part of it

- Helps all members of the church become involved in *natural* evangelism and spiritual growth
- Members are encouraged to pray, invite, provide rides, encourage, be there for guests, serve at events
- Seasonal, regular outreach and spiritual growth becomes part of the DNA of the church!



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Now let's look at the Communications that help turn this theory into practice!



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*Successful Seasonal Strategy*

## COMMUNICATIONS OVERVIEW

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### Review of Successful Seasonal Strategy

- **INTENTIONAL PROCESS**
  - Before
  - During
  - After
- **ALL CHURCH TEAM**
  - Leadership
  - Communication creators
  - Congregation
- **MULTI-CHANNEL COMMUNICATIONS**
  - To get the work done



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## Multi-channel essential



- Many options today
- NOT a question of which one is the only one or the best
- NOT either/or but BOTH/AND
- Every church needs every channel
  - Digital
  - Print
  - People
- But adapt to your community
- Some more emphasis than others



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## Practical Implementation Advice

- A Communication TEAM
- For the various channels
- Match interest and skills
- Staff decides theme, branding for event, details
- Different channel champions communicate in their channel, but with a unified voice



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## Content essential for all communications

(Constantly repeated!)

- WHAT
  - Is going on
  - No cute names, no acronyms
  - Explain traditions
- WHEN
  - Date, time, duration
  - Defining details, childcare or not? A specific age?
- WHERE
  - Map to and at the church
- WHY should people come
  - *Don't work to be catchy—be CLEAR—because .....*



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## Everybody doesn't know!!!



Do we love others (of all ages & digital familiarity) enough to be sure they understand the details to link to an event?



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## *This is not a Design How-to because.....*

- Items and message are
  - *Timeless*
- Design, artwork, layout, media
  - *Always changing and dependent on:*
- Location, culture, denomination, skill level
- *The specific designs I show you may not work for you, the overall processes will*



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## Will be showing Samples/Templates

- These Templates *more of a reminder*, not design perfection
- You can modify them in any way you want
  - Type
  - Tone
  - Words
  - Images
- Templates will be from [www.effectivechurch.com](http://www.effectivechurch.com) but use from anywhere just so you do similar things!



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Successful Seasonal Strategy

COMMUNICATIONS BEFORE THE EVENT

Yvon Prehn  
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Congregational Motivation

- Preach, write about, social media to motivate your people to invite
- Outreach everyone's responsibility
- Not responsible to win the entire world, just the people around them
- Events NOT only for fun and to entertain their family
- Eternally important

There's a great idea... Invite your friends to church this Easter season!

1. Tell a story

2. Pray for friends

3. Invite your friends

4. Encourage them to invite

5. Invite your friends

6. Invite your friends

Invite your friends to church this Easter season!

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Include a Prayer List on the back

There's a great idea... Invite your friends to church this Easter season!

1. Tell a story

2. Pray for friends

3. Invite your friends

4. Encourage them to invite

5. Invite your friends

6. Invite your friends

Invite your friends to church this Easter season!

List of friends, neighbors, co-workers, relatives you will pray for and invite for Easter church activities

1. Tell a story

2. Pray for friends

3. Invite your friends

4. Encourage them to invite

5. Invite your friends

6. Invite your friends

Invite your friends to church this Easter season!

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## Digital

- Social media strengths:
- Great for motivation, invitation, story telling
- Not so great for connecting details
- So if you want them to show up
- Be sure you have a static, reliable digital foundation



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## Digital foundation—your website

- Potential visitors will check out your website like any business
- You don't want people to come to a website you *meant* to update
- For church members AND for guests
- ALL the DETAILS about ALL EVENTS
- Add a blog or section about that holiday
- Christian meaning, traditions, challenges
- Put these things ON THE WEBSITE *BEFORE* any other marketing is done



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## Additional digital suggestions

- Make website an event resource for members
- Downloadable PDFs—invitations, seasonal handouts, e.g. recipes, children's activities
- Social media content suggestions, graphics to share
- LINKS to apologetic, evangelistic resources
- Have a totally unfamiliar person check out website, Facebook page, ask if they make sense
- Have a Social Media and Email Response TEAM—volunteers and staff commitment



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## Print

- Strengths:
- Tangible
- Shareable in any situation
- Can contain all the connecting details and is retrievable
- Ends up on Communication Central in every home (the refrigerator)



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## Cost effective system for sharing

- Church creates....
- Postcards, door-hangers, invitation cards, flyers
- Your people your distribution system
- Leadership explains and encourages
- People distribute, invite, and pray



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## Church Business Card Invitations

- PRINT & DIGITAL Strategy and Sizes
- Regular size
- Square size
- Mini-card size
- Physically give
- Cards direct to expanded digital information



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## More than saving money—Disciple-Making

- When you create these materials consistently
- It becomes an anticipated system of outreach and spiritual growth



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## Don't forget children



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*Now that you have people at an event—what communications will help bring them back?*



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Successful Seasonal Strategy

COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE EVENT

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During the event itself

- Everything you do communicates
- IMPORTANCE of SIGNAGE
  - Have a visitor walk through and critique
- Every member a greeter, ambassador for Jesus



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During the service or events

- Explain EVERYTHING
- Don't let your traditions be a stumbling block
- Tell guests what you do regularly because you probably aren't doing the same things on holidays or even meeting at the same times you regularly do
- Also provide clear, specific overviews of ministries and an invitation of what to do next



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### Simple Bulletin Insert or flyer

Thank you for sharing Easter with us

WELCOME TO OUR EASTER SERVICE

WELCOME TO OUR EASTER SERVICE

A separate piece much better than a notice in the bulletin!

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### Also bookmarks or cards

Christ is Risen! Rejoice!

Christ is Risen! Rejoice!

Christ is Risen! Rejoice!

Christ is Risen! Rejoice!

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### Individual ministries

Men's ministry

Women's ministry

Men's ministry

Single's ministry

ALL should invite people to the next meeting and/or give overall ministry and contact information.

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## Children's ministry

- Many will visit because of events for children
- But unchurched people have no idea what you do on a regular basis
- Tell them, invite them back, give contact info



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## An overall church brochure



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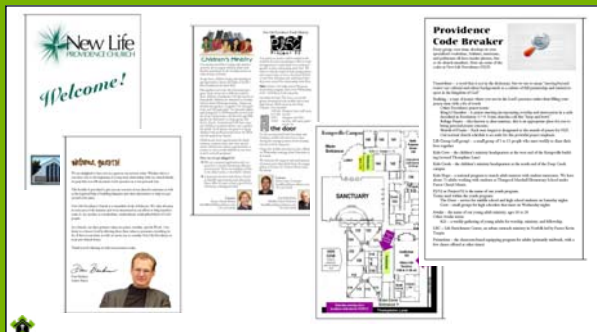
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## Begin a connection with Jesus

- People today who don't go to church regularly know little about the Christian faith or the real Jesus
- Don't assume anything
- Recognize it takes time and multiple exposures
- Honor privacy
- But be available



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## Bulletin insert or flyer

- On the back websites to explore
- Invitations to discussion or studies
- Respects the privacy of people to explore on their own and you can invite them for interaction when ready



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## Introduce upcoming events: sermon series

- *Week one:* What does Jesus' resurrection mean to me?
- *Week two:* Will we recognize our loved ones after death?
- *Week three:* Will people be bored in heaven?
- *Week four:* Can people get kicked out of heaven?



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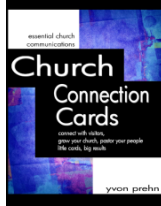


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## Most important of all

- Connection Cards and Prayer Cards
- At all events
- Intentionally present them
- Have immediate follow up in place
- Samples follow



Print and Kindle at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)  
By Yvon Prehn

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## Registration, Connection, and Prayer Cards

- At Events: Door-prize drawing
- At services: People sitting down, explain, take up with offering
- *Tips to get the most filled out*
- Need these so you can take the next step....



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## Don't stop now!



*The end is in sight, but to continue your relationship with seasonal guests, there is one more set of communications you need to create!*

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Successful Seasonal Strategy

COMMUNICATIONS AFTER THE EVENT

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For successful follow-up

- Create your connection cards and follow-up material as soon as possible in event planning, both in social media and print
- Preferably after you do “BEFORE” and invitation materials
- You may run out of energy, creativity, and time if you don’t
- Then they will be ready for the event and ASAP after your event



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Social media follow up

- Be sure all website/social media links are on EVERY communication that goes out discussing or advertising the even
- Repeat social media links in handouts at events and in any media used
- Email, social media follow up—
  - Use Auto responders with caution
  - But use them—have the basics in place
  - Make it personal—have a team & staff commitment to interact



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## Having an account isn't enough

- Make sure your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, any others you use make sense to outsiders
- Don't send out lots of pics without captions (boost engagement studies)
- Lots more work but incredibly important
- You want to use your social media to include, not make people feel like outsiders



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## Print Follow-up

- Postcards with invitations to study, links to websites and....
- Invite people for casual Q & A at a coffee shop or other comfortable location; latte with the pastor or other believers
- Much better than generic "come back to church"



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## Follow-up study, Q & A time—plan ahead

- Seeker, apologetic, informational studies
- Make non-threatening, but with solid content
- Explain the faith
  - About the Bible
  - About Jesus
  - About the Resurrection
- Your seasonal event will help make it easier to invite and for people to attend
- Essential for discipleship growth for current members



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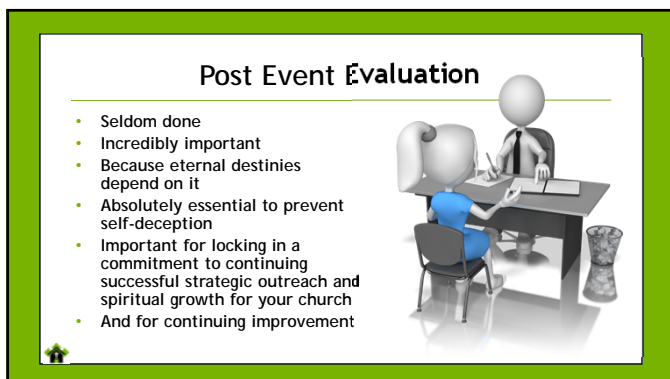
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## Think ROI (return on investment)

- A constant concern of business—are they making money on their time and effort
- Our ROI much more important
- Salvation of souls
- Spiritual maturity of our people
- We invest a LOT in seasonal events, what are we getting out of them?
- Evaluation will tell you



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## Evaluation must be paired with Encouragement

- THANK workers, commend the church from the pulpit and in communications
- Challenge congregation with self-evaluation:
  - What can you praise God for?
  - How can you continue to follow up with friends?
  - Who can you bring to the next event?
- Look ahead to the next seasonal celebration or outreach event



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## Evaluating doesn't mean

- Recounting how people loved the decorations or graphics
- All the nice things people said
- How many hot dogs you cooked (or similar statistics)
- How hard you worked
- Or even....*event* attendance



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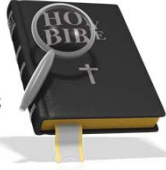


# Successful Seasonal Strategies

Yvon Prehn, [www.effectivechurchcom.com](http://www.effectivechurchcom.com) and [www.churchcomtraining.com](http://www.churchcomtraining.com)

## Use Biblical Standards for Evaluation

- Back to initial motivation, Acts 1:8 and Matt.28:18-20, Summarized:
- Introduce people to Jesus
- Grow them into mature disciples
- These are valid criteria for honest evaluation



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## Forms that will help

- Objective numbers
- Spiritual impact
- ALL available as downloads

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## A quick and easy one

Event:
Date & Location:
Summary of attendance:
<b>Communication &amp; Marketing Evaluation</b>
Successes to repeat:
Changes, modifications:
Overall comments:



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Yvon Prehn, [www.effectivechurchcom.com](http://www.effectivechurchcom.com) and [www.churchcomtraining.com](http://www.churchcomtraining.com)

Church Communication People Response Analysis				
Event	Active	Passive	Event Response	Observations about attendance
Communication at [event]				
<p>Feedback and action plan</p>				
<p>At this Results</p>				
<p>Final Analysis—How many new people are regularly attending the church?</p>				

[illegible][illegible]

- Need a number of events with varying communications for the most helpful data
- Using a form like this prevents arguments about what is the “best” way to communicate
- *Because there isn't one for every church*
- Record honestly, discuss calmly, and make decisions based on facts

[illegible]

- Use a form to answer these questions:
  - What did we do well to represent our church and Jesus?  
*(ideas for next time)*
  - What did we do well to link people to our church and Jesus?  
*(ideas for next time)*
  - What did we do well to grow our people in service to the church and Jesus?  
*(ideas for next time)*
  - What did we do well in follow-up to promote a connection to the church and Jesus?  
*(ideas for next time)*
- ***Affirm positive behaviors***
- ***PRAY for the IDEAS FOR NEXT TIME and incorporate into your planning***

Post-event Evaluation	
<b>Item 8/10</b>	
How often do you go to a support group about this event?	
How often does this:	
How often do you read or flip through the new record and notes?	
How often does this:	
How often do you read or flip through the new record and notes?	
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How often do you read or flip through the new record and notes?	
How often does this:	


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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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### You did it!!!

- You've completed the basic training in Successful Seasonal Strategy!
- Next is a brief review and recommendation of resources for what to do next



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*Successful Seasonal Strategy*

## REVIEW AND RESOURCES

Yvon Prehn  
[www.effectivechurchcom.com](http://www.effectivechurchcom.com)



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### Goal: Make Successful Seasonal Strategies part of the DNA of your church

- Build in congregational anticipation
- Seasonal events will be times:
- You can consistently grow your church in numbers
- Your people in spiritual maturity
- Turn self-serving traditions into traditions of evangelism, service, and spiritual growth
- That's what makes a—  
**Successful Seasonal Strategy**



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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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## To reach this goal, a review

- **INTENTIONAL PROCESS** for Communications before, during, and after
- **ALL CHURCH TEAM** including Leadership, Communication Creators, Congregation
- **MULTI-CHANNEL COMMUNICATIONS** to get the job done
- **EVALUATION & ENCOURAGEMENT** to make it a core, ongoing process of your church



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## RESOURCES

- Following this lesson is a **BONUS** Application lesson on: How to Adapt this material for a Year of Seasonal Celebrations
- For more on this topic:
- Strategy and Templates: [www.effectivechurchcom.com](http://www.effectivechurchcom.com)
- For additional classes in church communications [www.churchcomtraining.com](http://www.churchcomtraining.com)
- One more resource. . . . .



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*What you are asked to do for truly Successful Seasonal Strategies is a almost impossible challenge, so take a few minutes and. . . .*

Strengthen yourself  
in God's Word



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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

Yvon Prehn, [www.effectivechurchcom.com](http://www.effectivechurchcom.com) and [www.churchcomtraining.com](http://www.churchcomtraining.com)



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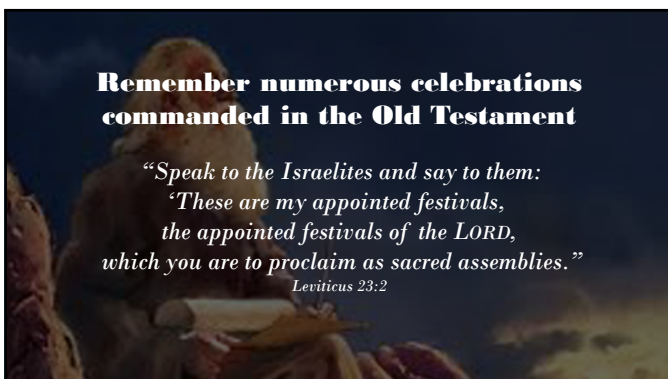
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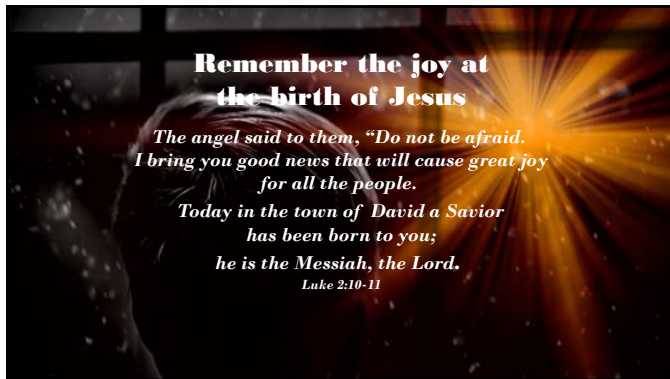
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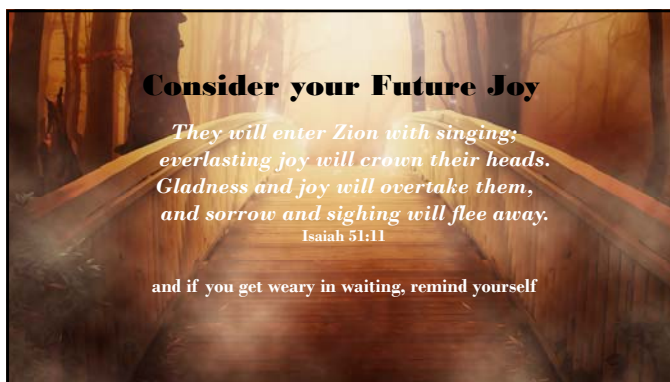
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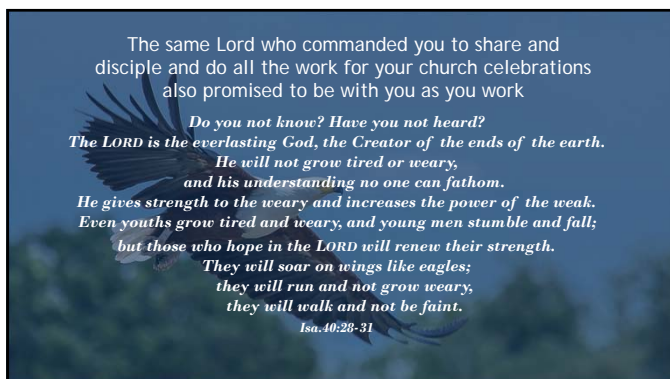
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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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## Successful Seasonal Strategy consists of:

- INTENTIONAL PROCESS
- ALL-CHURCH TEAM
- MULTI-CHANNEL COMMUNICATIONS
- EVALUATION & ENCOURAGEMENT
- All resting on a Biblical Core of Acts 1:8 and Matt. 28:18-20



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## What follows

- A Year's worth of Holiday Strategies
- Starting with the traditional start of the Christian year—Christmas
- Many not part of church calendar, but ministry opportunities for all
- Be sure to sign up for newsletter for strategy and template notification
- [www.effectivechurchcom.com](http://www.effectivechurchcom.com)



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## Print Emphasis in examples

- Easy and ready to go!
- Don't ignore other aspects of multi-channel communications
- These templates can also be used on websites and many in social media
- Blog, tweet, share, use these ideas in any and everyway possible to share the message of salvation in Jesus!



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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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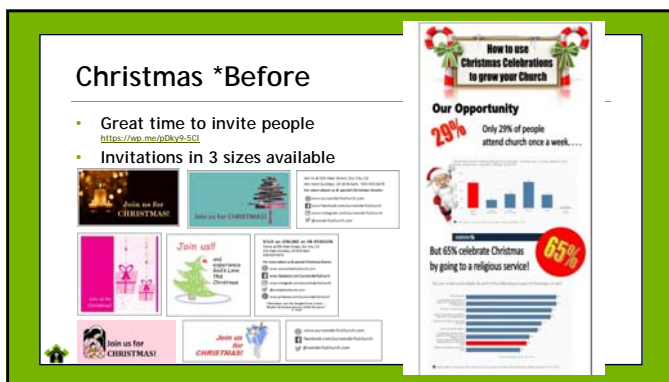
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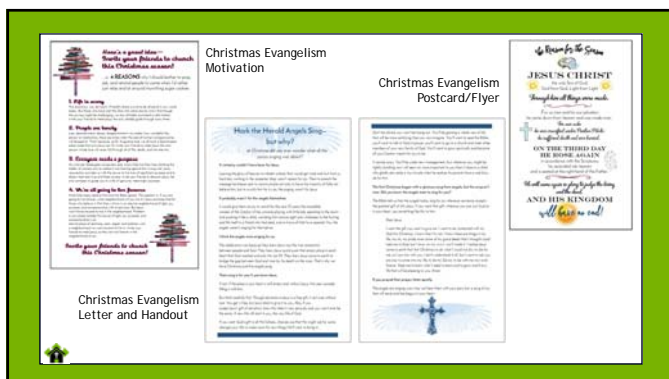
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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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## Postcard invitations

- Church creates; congregation sends and gives out

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## Christmas \*During

Event & Door-Prize Registration

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## Church Event Bookmarks

To invite people back to church by telling them what you do regularly.

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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

Yvon Prehn, [www.effectivechurch.com](http://www.effectivechurch.com) and [www.churchcomtraining.com](http://www.churchcomtraining.com)

## Christmas \*After

- Follow up postcards
  - 
  - 
  - 
- Thank you cards
  - 

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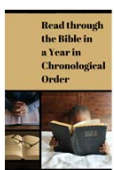

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## New Year

- Challenge for new spiritual growth habits
- Read through the Bible motivation, schedules, booklets
  - 
  - 
- <https://wp.me/pDky9-6Gy>

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## Valentine's Day

- Create communications that remind people of God's love
- Don't only hold parties to celebrate people already in relationships
- Think about those without the love of Jesus
- Singles, seniors, those alone
- Have a party for them and demonstrate the love of Jesus (Chocolate always works)

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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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## Lent

- Focus on congregation
- Challenge that the coming Easter season isn't about them
- Challenge for prayers to reach out



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## Easter

- Reminder to all that Easter Sunday should be a **CONNECTING POINT**, not the destination—see details in previous lesson



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## Mother's Day

*Celebrate Mothers, but. . . .  
Remember who the real audience is.  
It's a great time for evangelism!*



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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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## Also a time to grow ministries

- Women's Ministry
- Recruit volunteers for Children's
- Challenge to pray for all parents, biological and spiritual




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## Father's Day

- Celebrate fathers
- Challenge for godliness
- Promote men's ministries




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## Great time for Men's Ministry




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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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## Summer events

- Reminders to come to church during the summer—special studies, activities on the back
- National or regional holidays



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## Fall Festivals and Halloween

- Assured success as parents want a safe time for kids
- Spiritual opportunities of Halloween



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## Community Outreach Events



- Movie nights
- Community parties
- Acts of Kindness and service
- PLEASE let people know who is responsible and why
- Invite them to your church for more
- *What does it profit a community if they have a great time, but lose their souls?*



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## Church related

- Back to Church Sunday
- World Day of Prayer
- Denominational Celebrations—great teaching times
- Reformation Sunday
- Other religions, e.g. Ramadan



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## Silly holidays for serious purposes



- Fun and outreach opportunities
  - National Ice Cream Day, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in July, proclaimed by Ronald Reagan
  - Good Neighbor Day, Sept. 26 or 24<sup>th</sup> proclaimed by Jimmy Carter
- Teaching ministry opportunities
  - Helen Keller Day: June 27
  - National Adoption Day: Third Saturday in November
- Hundreds more!

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## For every holiday or celebration

- Keep your focus Biblical, Acts 1:8, Matt. 28: 18-20
- A seasonal event isn't simply a party for your people—reach out, be a witness, train your people
- Communications before, during, after
- Involve everybody: staff & congregation
- Create products that best reflect you, your church, and community
- Pray without ceasing
- *Repeat* and keep growing your church in numbers and your people in spiritual maturity!



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# Successful Seasonal Strategies

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### Finally—Remember

*"Joy is the serious business of heaven"* C.S. Lewis

- And we work hard now so that as many people as possible can join us in that celebration that will never end!



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**For more:**  
**Strategy, Resources, Templates:**  
**[www.effectivechurchcom.com](http://www.effectivechurchcom.com)**

**Training courses:**  
**[www.churchcomtraining.com](http://www.churchcomtraining.com)**

from  
Yvon Prehn

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