

December 2017



A Christian Steward is:
One who receives
God's gifts gratefully,
cherishes and tends them
in a responsible and
accountable manner,
shares them in justice
and love with others,
and returns them with
increase to the Lord.

WISDOM

from ICSC strategic partners

This month's contributions come from the following ICSC Strategic Partners:



Each month ICSC sends you practical information, whitepapers, and tips, as well as other insightful information from our Strategic Partners to assist you with your responsibility as stewards of the Church.

In this edition ICSC provides for you:

- * six hacks for savvy online conversions with Facebook ads provided by **Blackbaud**.
- * four key factors for creating a far-reaching crowdfunding campaign offered by **J.S. Paluch Company**.
- * five ways to use key nuggets in your parish census courtesy of **Lynch Development Associates**.

For additional information and resources from our strategic partners visit the ICSC website at:

<http://catholicstewardship.com/our-partners/strategic-partners/>

ICSC promotes and supports Catholic teaching on stewardship by providing education and resources for dioceses, parishes, and institutions of the Roman Catholic Church. We are very grateful to our Strategic Partners for their partnership and commitment to ICSC, and their professional wisdom is a wonderful gift to ICSC members.

TIPSHEET

Digital Life Hacks For Organizations of Faith

Six Hacks for Savvy Online Conversions with Facebook Ads®

Now more than ever, it's critical for faith-based organizations to have a cohesive marketing campaign that includes social media. In this *Digital Life Hacks* tipsheet, [Mike Snusz](#), digital guru and Blackbaud principle consultant, discusses creating and delivering engaging social content through Facebook ads to expand your reach and boost your online conversions.

1 Choose quality over quantity.

Of course we want to stand out on every social network, but when it comes to social media, it's more important to build a robust presence on a few networks than a meager presence spread across many. There are a lot of options to choose from, so start with Facebook, and gradually add on without spreading yourself too thin.

2 Connect with Facebook ads.

Your Facebook presence is a gateway for your organization to connect with prospective visitors, existing and lost members, and donors. Consider setting up Facebook ads to target these unique audiences. You can reach the right people at the right time both quickly and easily.

3 Go to your audience.

Following your website, your Facebook page is the next most likely place that visitors will look at to get information on your organization. Donors want to keep up with all the good things you're doing, and current supporters want to keep up with your news. Be sure that you're creating and delivering engaging social content for all of your audiences.

4 Pick leaders. Set guidelines.

Build a social media team with a dedicated manager, craft a social media policy, and set guidelines for social media administrators to follow. With a team and strategies in place, you are sure to provide a more cohesive and consistent brand experience for your followers.

5 Consider social listening.

With all of the posts and promotions flooding our social networks, it's important to find relevant topics that matter most to your audience. With the help of a social listening tool you can identify your social influencers to share your messages with their own like-minded social networks.

6 Measure your efforts.

Measure your results based on the goals you've set, and don't let your original goal get lost. Whether it is interactions, donations, or a mixture of both, make sure you're continually looking at performance metrics and making any necessary adjustments to reach your goals.

There are more digital hacks where these came from!

Catholic Crowdfunding 101

Peer-to-Peer Fundraising, commonly known as Crowdfunding, is a great way for your parish to tell your story and broaden your stewardship efforts. Crowdfunding engages your parishioners and their online and offline network of family and friends in a meaningful, effective way. Before getting started, make sure to keep these 4 key factors in mind to help your campaign reach its goal.

4 Key Factors for Creating a Far-Reaching Crowdfunding Campaign

1. Develop your story.

Crowdfunding success depends on how effectively you can tell your story. Unlike many other parish collections and funds, crowdfunding relies on the “why” rather than just the “what.” Use real-life examples of how funds will be used and how much of a difference they will make for the parish. Explain why your teen group is going on a trip and what they plan to learn. Include the teens’ own words. Explain why your church needs a new sound system. Have choir members and lectors explain how it will improve participation at Mass. Tell your story in creative ways. Use social media to spread your story to the largest audience possible. The story inspires action.

2. Consider how your chosen crowdfunding platform actually works for churches.

Not all are created equal. Most have fees. Be sure that the fees you are paying are minimal and reasonable. Does the platform you use allow for tax-deductible donations? Donations made on many crowdfunding sites to campaigns are considered to be personal gifts and are not guaranteed to be tax-deductible. Choose a platform where donations are made directly to your parish as a non-profit and not to a third party — and are likely tax deductible.

3. Use great photos and videos.

Online contributors respond to photos and videos. Record interviews with those who will benefit by a contribution. Include facility photos and walk-through videos showing equipment that needs replacing. Embed the video right on your campaign page. Your video doesn’t need to be a Hollywood production; one recorded with your mobile phone video camera is all you need. Pictures and videos are worth a thousand words!

4. Set an attainable goal.

Consider all of the costs of the project you need to fund. Don’t set your goal too low. Be realistic about how much money you need to raise. But, be honest and don’t set a goal too high, thinking that you can just use excess contributions for something else. Crowdfunding relies on trust.

Today, raising funds for your parish is no longer just about pledge sheets, order forms, coin jars, and collection baskets. Our online networks allow us to reach neighbors, friends, and family through email, social media, and mobile devices more easily than ever before. Harness this power and the benefits of crowdfunding to help your parish thrive.



***Questions about crowdfunding?
Contact us today!***



A Gold Mine of Information!

FIVE WAYS TO USE KEY NUGGETS IN YOUR PARISH CENSUS



There are many benefits to keeping your data clean, up-to-date and in one central database. Though many recommend a major parish census be conducted every 7 - 10 years or so, regular maintenance and input is key. This maintenance data can come from many sources including sacramental records, offertory giving, ministry rosters, religious formation and school registration, returned mail and envelopes, bounced emails, community welcome wagons, parish social ministry records and more!

Collect and record as much data as you can, as soon as you can.

You may not use each nugget every day, but you never know when you will need them!

Occupation & Skills

Recording occupations and individual skills can be valuable when looking to tap experts to form special committees and matching gifts and talents to ministries!

Particular Family Needs

Requesting and recording info for *each* family member, including special needs, can aid ministries and enhance service. Knowing if a family member is homebound, in assisted living, speaks another language or has celiac disease will help you to better serve your community!

Milestone & Special Dates

Keeping track of special dates gives you the opportunity to send acknowledgements or invites to events such as a new parishioner welcome, one year after Baptism party or even discover your parish history!

Phone, Cell & Email

Enhance your communications by adding very cost effective tools like robo-calls, push notifications and other messages. This data is invaluable for communicating Holy Day Mass schedules, special events and even capital campaign outreach!

Analysis of Data

In addition to using your census data for individual inquiries, you may wish to look at your data as a whole. An analysis can pinpoint changes in demographics and uncover pastoral needs such as which groups or geographical areas are not attending. These groups can be targeted for evangelism efforts!

There is no doubt that being a good steward of your census and database can help you maintain healthy relationships with your parishioners thereby being a good steward of your entire parish community!

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LYNCH DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES

LDA is a nationwide Catholic development firm that specializes in assisting dioceses, parishes, schools and other entities with their development needs. Our directors are intimately involved in every aspect of your campaign enabling us to maintain a 98% success rate in meeting our goals. Decades of experience allows us to give clarity to your vision and together, make your dreams a reality.

Contact us for a free consultation:

631-351-1368 | info@lynchdevelopment.com | www.lynchdevelopment.com

