“Attracting and Assimilating Unchurched People in the 21st Century”

A Mission Portland Study

www.missionportland.org
Research Question #1

- What principles and practices used by these churches have been most successful in attracting and evangelizing unchurched people?
Interview Question #1.1

What are the primary reasons that unchurched people are attracted to your church?
Primary Reasons for Attraction
Church Leaders (N=15)

- Pray Them In: 1
- Cells/Small Group Outreach: 2
- Ethnic Ministry: 2
- Need-Meeting Classes: 3
- Servant Evangelism - Caring for Needs: 3
- Public Worship: 5
- Visibility: 5
- Outreach Events: 5
- Children/Youth Ministry: 6
- Friendly, Caring Atmosphere: 6
- Preaching: 7
- Personal Invitations: 7
What Attracted People to the Church?

New Christian Responses (N=45)

- Saturday Night Service Option
- Prayers of Family
- Preaching
- Friendliness of Church
- Advertising/Media
- Spiritually Seeking
- Big Events/Productions
- Concern for Children
- Visibility/Proximity
- Personal Invitations

Number of Responses
Reasons for Attracting Unchurched People

- **Advertising/Media**
- **Spiritually Seeking**
- **Public Worship**
- **Visibility**
- **Outreach Events**
- **Children/Youth Ministry**
- **Friendly, Caring Atmosphere**
- **Preaching**
- **Personal Invitations**

Church Leaders (N=15)        New Christians (N=45)
Interview Question #1.2

How would you describe the people your church is attracting? Do these people represent a "targeted group" that you are trying to reach?  __ Yes __ No
Describe Those You Attract

- People like themselves - Like attracts like
- Staff according to the target group
- Multi cultural
- Church represents community/region
- Hurting and broken people
- Seekers/Unchurched
- Previously churched
- Middle class – upper middle
- Families
Interview Question #1.2

How would you describe the people your church is attracting? Do these people represent a "targeted group" that you are trying to reach?

10 Churches said, “Yes”

5 Churches said, “No”
Interview Question #1.3

In what ways do you mobilize members for evangelistic outreach to the unchurched of your area?
Methods of Mobilizing Members for Outreach

Church Leaders (N=15)

- Organized Outreaches
- Light House Movement
- Need Meeting Ministries
- Personal Outreach
- Service Evangelism
- Relational Evangelism
- Small Groups
- Invitational Events

Number of Churches
Interview Question #1.4

How do you provide newcomers with an opportunity to respond to a clear presentation of the gospel?
Research Question #2

• How do these churches welcome and follow-up unchurched visitors and new converts?
Interview Question #2.1

What does your church do to prepare for and welcome visitors to worship services?
2.1 What does your church do to prepare for and welcome visitors to worship?

- Parking
- Greeters
- Staff and Lay Leaders
- Information Center
- Maps/Signs
- Quality childcare
2.1 What does your church do to prepare for and welcome visitors to worship?

- Ushers
- Bulletin
- Environment
- Public Welcome
- Welcome Gift
- Promote Small Groups
Interview Question #2.2

• What steps do you take to follow-up on first time visitors to your church?
2.2 What steps do you take to follow-up on first time visitors?

**Immediate Follow-up:**

- Welcome Letters
- Phone Follow-up from Volunteers
- Phone Follow-up from Pastors
- Promoting Small Groups
- Email
2.2 What steps do you take to follow-up on first time visitors?

**Short-term Follow-up:**

- Phone Follow-up
- Letters/Mailings
- Invitation to Newcomer Class
- Ministry Information Request
- Prayer Request Follow-up
2.2 What steps do you take to follow-up on first time visitors?

**Long-term Follow-up:**

- Care Ministry
- Quarterly phone calls
- City Care
- Shepherding Profile
- Connection Callers
Why The Unchurched Stay
New Christian Responses (N=45)

- Friendliness/Caring
- Preaching
- New Relationships
- Worship/Music
- Small Group Involvement
- Atmosphere of Excitement
- Bible Emphasis
- Children/Youth Ministries
- Spiritual Growth
- Respect for Pastor
- Involvement Opportunities
- Felt Safe
- Visitor Follow-up
- Identify With The Culture
- Marriage Help
- Need Meeting Ministries

Number of Responses
Interview Question #2.3

How do you follow-up on new converts in order to provide for their basic spiritual growth?
New Believer Follow-up for Basic Spiritual Growth

Church Leaders (N=15)

- New Believer’s Packet
- General Ministry Involvement
- Membership/Formation Classes
- New Believer’s Class
- Baptism
- 1-1 Follow-up
- Small Groups

Number of Churches
Research Question #3

• How do these churches provide an opportunity for new people to gain a sense of belonging?
Interview Question #3.1

How do you attempt to connect newcomers into vital relationships in the church?
Connecting Newcomers Into Vital Relationships

Church Leaders (N=15)

- 1-1 Discipleship
- Pastoral Team
- Dinners for Eight
- Individual Members
- Believer’s Service/Dinner
- Visitor Follow-up Ministry
- General Promotion
- Need Meeting Ministries
- Volunteer Ministry
- Adult Bible Classes
- Newcomer/Membership Class
- Small Groups

Number of Churches
Connecting Newcomers Into Vital Relationships

- Church Leaders (N=15)
- New Christians (N=45)

Bar chart showing the percentage of Church Leaders and New Christians participating in various programs:
- 1-1 Discipleship
- Visitor Follow-up Ministry
- General Promotion
- Need Meeting Ministries
- Volunteer Ministry
- Adult Bible Classes
- Newcomer/Membership Class
- Small Groups
- New Believer Classes

Key:
- Church Leaders (N=15) - Light Blue
- New Christians (N=45) - Red
Interview Question #3.2

Describe the process of becoming a member of your local church.
Interview Question #3.3

What are the commitments and expectations of members in your church?
Commitments and Expectations of Members

Church Leaders (N=15)

- Support Pastoral Leadership
- Filled with Holy Spirit
- Disciple Others
- Evangelism and Missions
- Beliefs
- Personal Spiritual Growth
- Commitment to unity
- Water Baptism
- Godly Living
- Saved
- Covenant/Commitment
- Ministry Involvement
- Small Group Participation
- Worship Attendance
- Financial Giving

Number of Churches
Research Question #4

How do these churches see that people are discipled into fully devoted followers of Christ?
Interview Question #4.1

In what way(s) do you help disciples become mature and grow in their faith?
Helping Christians Mature and Grow

Church Leaders (N=15)

- Counseling Department
- Recovery Groups
- Retreats
- Shot-gun Approach
- Financial Stewardship
- Christian Service
- Deliverance Course
- Church Seminary
- 1-1 Discipleship/Mentoring
- Christian Basics Class
- Leadership Training
- Preaching/Corporate Worship
- Adult Education/Electives
- Formation Path
- Small Groups

Number of Churches
What Has Helped With Spiritual Growth?

New Christian Responses (N=45)

- Small Groups
- Preaching/Corporate Worship
- New Believer Classes
- Membership/Formation Classes
- Adult Bible Classes
- 1-1 Discipleship
- Time with a Pastor
- Family Support/Accountability
- Tapes
- Missions/Service
- Personal Prayer
- Recovery Groups
- Bible Institute
- Tithing
- Deliverance
- Personal Bible Reading
- Personal Prayer
- Missions/Service
- Bible Institute
- Tithing
- Deliverance
Helping New Christians Grow

- Church Leaders (N=15)
- New Christians (N=45)

- Deliverance Course
- Church Seminary
- 1-1 Discipleship/Mentoring
- Christian Basics Class
- Personal Bible Reading
- Leadership Training
- Preaching/Corporate Worship
- Adult Education/Electives
- Formation Path
- Small Groups
Interview Question #4.2

What are the characteristics of someone who has been fully assimilated into the life of your local church?
Characteristics of a Fully Assimilated Person

Church Leaders (N=15)

Completed Membership Class
On Path to Personal Healing
Building a Strong Family
Filled with the Spirit
A Discipler
Committed To Church’s Vision
Equipped
Committed to Evangelism
Committed to Fellowship
Saved
Water Baptized
Fully Devoted Follower of Christ
Small Group Attendance
Worship Attendance
Financial Stewardship
Personal Ministry

Number of Churches
Research Question #5

• How do these churches help people take up the responsibility to serve in personal ministry?
Interview Question #5.1

How soon are newcomers encouraged to consider serving in the church?
How Soon are New People Encouraged to Serve?
Church Leaders (N=15)

- Entry Level Ministry:
  - Right Away
  - Brief Wait
  - Membership Required
  - Training Required
  - References/Checks
  - Didn't Comment

- Leadership Level Ministry:
  - Right Away
  - Brief Wait
  - Membership Required
  - Training Required
  - References/Checks
  - Didn't Comment
Interview Question #5.2

How are newcomers recruited for service?
How Are New People Recruited for Service?

Church Leaders (N=15)
Interview Question #5.3

What training or support is offered to those who serve?
Ministry Training and Support
Church Leaders (N=15)

- Short-Term Missions
- Retreats
- General Enrichment Training
- Appreciation Events
- On-the-Job Training
- Annual Training Emphasis
- Advanced Training Classes
- Leadership Community Gatherings
- Formation Classes
- Small Group Leader Training/Support
- Unique to Each Ministry

Number of Churches

0 2 4 6 8 10 12
New Christians In Volunteer Ministries

New Christian Responses (N=45)

Number of Responses

- Men’s Ministry
- Serve With Small Group
- Office Help
- Media Help
- Host
- Youth
- Missions/Evangelism
- New Believer’s Ministry
- Special Events
- Helps Ministries
- Greeter
- Children’s Ministry Helper

Number of Responses
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