How to Make a Communications Manual & Style Guide

CHURCH COMM
HELP!

How to Make a Communications Manual & Style Guide

General Tips

- Avoid long paragraphs. Make your communications manual easily scannable.
- Include a Table of Contents & Index for easy reference.
- Study a few other church's communications manuals to make sure you include everything you want to cover.

Start with Mission & Vision

- Explain the mission of the church and how adhering to a communications manual will help you accomplish that mission.
- List your communications values (how do you prioritize communications, your time, etc?) and how they help you serve the ministries of the church and the greater church mission.
- Explain the purpose of the communications manual.

Style Guide

- Start with the most important thing first (brand consistency).
- Are you a house of brands or a branded house?
- It ultimately doesn't matter too much what your branding style is. What matters is that everyone agree and stick to one style consistently.
- List the basics: how you are going to list your campuses, how you are going to list dates, times (am, a.m.), etc.
- Include a list of things to watch for (abbreviations, etc.).
- List any internal conventions that you're going to use as a staff.
- Provide a quick glance guide of proper/improper usage.
- Give some tips for writing for various mediums (web, email, print bulletin, video, etc.).

Visual Standards

- Logo Guide
- "Corporate" Colors
- Tell people how to download or access logos in various formats if they need them.

Communications Frequency

- Can any ministry send a mass email at any time?
- How often should folks expect to have their event or ministry included in the platform announcements, etc?

Social Media

- Can each ministry have their own social account or is there only one for the church?
- When can exceptions be made?
- What voice/style does the church use for their social accounts?
- Do you have any templates staffers can use for graphics?
- Any other requirements (like always include the church logo on the corner of the graphic)?
- Any rules for staff posts on their personal blogs?

How to Request Help from Communications

- What are your request forms and where can they be found?
- How much lead time is required for various requests?

Other Church Communications Standards

- Email Signature - give an example of how you'd like everyone's email signature to be formatted.
- Voicemail Message - give an example of what you'd like everyone to say on their voicemail message (and how often to check church voicemail).

Other questions & references

- AP Style Guide
- Sample Response Library

Example Communications Manuals & Style Guides

- Calvary Church - [PDF]
- Life.Church - [PDF]
- Christ Community Church - [PDF]
- Dawson Family of Faith - [PDF]
- North Hills Community Church - [PDF]
- Saddleback Church Style Guide - [WEB]
- The Village Church Style Guide - [WEB]
- [InDesign Template]