

Notes on How to Improve the Design of Your Church Communication Materials

Take a moment to think about all of the communication materials that your church produces. It's a lot, especially when you think about both printed material and social media. Gather up everything including bulletins, newsletters and posters. Print pages from your social media pages and your website. Even take pictures of the signage around your church.

Now, hang them all on one wall. Do they look professional, consistent and compelling. Now, if you're like the majority of churches who lack a professional designer on staff, the answer is probably no.

To help you, here's a process to improve the design of your church materials.

1. **Understand who you are trying to reach.** The church exists to reach those outside the four walls of the church, not those who are inside it. Take the time to understand them and what they care about most.
2. **Understand the character of your church.** What's the feeling of the church and its people to an outside observer? Think about this both from what you can see but also feel (its culture and calling).
3. **Find the intersection between who you are trying to reach and the character of your church.** This is where you should focus your design efforts to create a authentic representation of who your church is and how it's relevant to the people you wish to reach.
4. **Follow this process:**
 - a. **Select a main color and several supporting colors.** Colors affect our emotions so choose carefully. Select a main color. You may need to experiment to find the look you want. Sometimes, paint store color palettes or photographs can provide inspiration.
 - b. **Select two fonts.** One for headlines and one for subhead and body copy. Remember that fonts evoke feelings just like colors. UMCOM podcast #20 focuses on [Typography 101](#) if you want to dig deeper.

Some places to explore fonts include: [Google Fonts](#), [dafont](#) and [fontquirrel](#), but there are many others.

Here are some rules for fonts:

- i. Combine a Sans Serif Font with a Serif Font.
- ii. Combine a Serif Font with a Sans Serif Font.
- iii. Do not combine two similar looking fonts.
- iv. Pick two contrasting fonts.
- v. Stick to TWO FONTS only. You rarely need THREE.
- vi. Don't mix moods.

- vii. Some fonts should be avoided. (Comic Sans, Curlz MT and so on.)
 - viii. Try before you buy (and make sure you are legal).
- c. **Pick a consistent visual element.** Think about a shape or graphical approach you can use to act as a common element across all of your communication materials.
- d. **Combine all 3 elements of color, fonts and visual elements into a design template.**
5. **Follow simple design techniques as you create your materials.**
- i. Contrast: Avoid similar elements on the page.
 - ii. Repetition: Create a visual language for people to follow.
 - iii. Alignment: Align elements and don't always center everything.
 - iv. Proximity: Group like items together to create one unit. Whitespace is your friend!
6. **Take the time to redesign your communication materials.** It often requires trial and error, but it can both help improve the impression of your church as well as make it easier to create new materials.

If you have any questions, post a comment below or contact me at eric@brokensheep.com.