Websites for Ministries

by David Durksen

A website is about being present to those you serve and wish to serve when they cannot be physically present with you. It is a way of drawing the circle larger to bring in those who will allow you to express your mission and vision to change our world for the better.
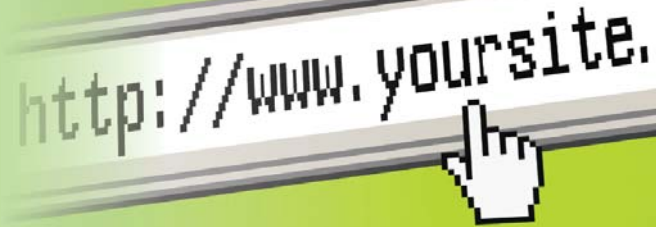
Websites for churches are now easy to set up and a very cost-effective way for both staying in touch with your current members and for reaching out to those you would like to serve. Most sites now allow for regular updating by individuals who have only basic typing and computer skills, so it is now easy for a ministry to have an excellent web presence.

The keys to an effective web presence:
Knowing whom you are trying to reach
The answer involves a clear, concise statement of who you are and how you make a difference in our world. This statement reminds those you already serve why they are a part of your ministry and how their support transforms our world into the world we all desire to live in.

Knowing what you want to tell those you reach
The answer to this statement lets you know how simple or complex your site will be. [A quick diversion—your website will be a group of pages linked together. At any one moment you must limit the information to what can be placed on a half sheet of paper (5½ X 8½ inches). Web sites work best when they contain pearls of information on each screen rather than tomes of verbiage.] If your only goal is to let people know your services and activities, with instructions on how to find you, this may be offered on a single page. However, you likely have a diverse spectrum of interests represented by both those you currently serve and those you desire to reach. This will involve creating a template that will have a central screen for reading the pearls with outer borders that allow the viewer to select items or topics of interest that will then appear in the central screen. You can present a large volume of information in a user-friendly environment that allows the viewer the security of always knowing where he/she is on your website.

Knowing how you will measure the effectiveness of your site
Time, finances, and energy are all precious resources. If the efforts placed into a website, or any endeavor, do not move you toward your goals and objectives, you are far better off doing something else. Therefore, you will want to have ways of monitoring the effectiveness of your web site. You may include: forms on your site to be filled in; documents and audio/video files that may be downloaded; host-monitored or open discussion, and much more.

David Durksen began working with the Internet in the early 1990's while serving Unity Church of Victoria. David now works with Unity Internet Ministry to assist ministries—ministers, boards and congregations—to create the dynamic spiritual communities for the 21st Century that will fulfill Charles Fillmore's dream that Unity become the reincarnation of the 1st century church.