



CREATING A STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
TO REACH ACROSS
GENERATIONS

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CITY CHURCH: CREATING A STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION PLAN TO REACH
ACROSS GENERATIONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

City Church, located in Anaheim, CA, launched over 15 years ago. The church has grown since then and has operated a social media presence primarily through the Instagram account @lovehopecity. City Church leaders are managing the social media output of the church in addition to their other day-to-day responsibilities. In addition to the need for a social media plan to help manage the strategy and work involved in running the account, church leaders identified a desire to alter their content to attract more members of Gen Z to their audience. A client consultation was held on November 14, with work beginning on the project with the start of the semester in mid-January. Using Relationship Management Theory as a framework, research and planning resulted in a comprehensive social media plan that was presented to the client on April 16. Informed by research and feedback from church members, the plan contains a priority list, a post breakdown, and suggestions for the future. The outcome of this campaign was that a social media plan was created with research support that provided the client with recommendations on how to alter the social media communication of the church going forward. If implemented, this plan will allow City Church to operate and expand their social media ministry in a way that is sustainable given their limited resources to devote to it.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	5
Background	5
Selection and Consultation	7
Research	8
Theory	9
Organizational Framework	11
SWOT Analysis	12
Conclusion	14
Chapter 2	16
Local Demographics	16
Current Social Audience Demographics	17
Survey Demographics	18
Key Audiences	19
Personas	21
Chapter 3	24
Strategy and Mission	24
Case Study	25
Campaign Goals	26
Action Steps	27
Chapter 4	28
Resources	28
Timeline	28
Challenges	29
Chapter 5	30
Campaign Outcomes	30
Social Media Plan	31
Chapter 6	34
Benefits to the Client	34
Suggestions for Next Steps	35
Appendices	39
Appendix A - Gantt Chart	39
Appendix B - Billable Hours	40
Appendix C - Client Agreement	42
Appendix D - Survey Results Report	45
Appendix E - Promotional Reel	64
Appendix F - Social Media Plan Presentation	65
Appendix G - Sample Form Submission	75

Chapter 1

This chapter will establish the background information needed to understand why this project was chosen for this particular organization. It will discuss the problems this project hoped to solve, provide the theoretical framework that was used, and perform a situational analysis on the current state of the client's communication.

Background

Although any survey results need to be given proper analysis due to the difficulties in assigning quantitative data to such a nuanced and personal subject, there have been clear signs that Christianity has largely been receding in the United States. In the fifty years spanning from 1973 to 2023, the number of Americans who identified as Christian has fallen from 87% to 68%.¹ Other surveys have measured the religiosity of Americans by asking about how important religion is to them or how often they have attended a church service. There is no one way to measure the results, but the numbers have been largely trending downward by any metric, although there have been some recent signs of plateau.²

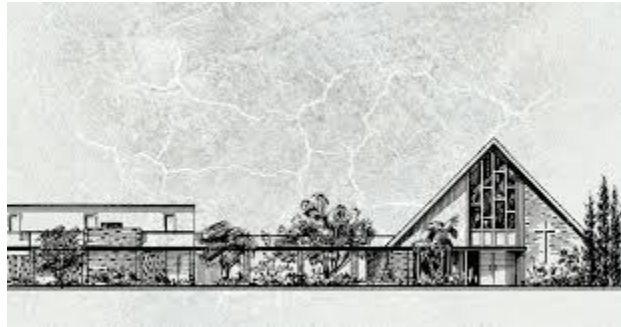
According to the Hartford Institute for Religion Research, there are approximately 370,000 religious congregations in the United States. Of that number, 322,000 are estimated to be Protestant Christian churches.³ To compete in this crowded marketplace, modern churches

¹ Gallup, Inc. (2024, March 29). *How religious are Americans?* Gallup.com.
<https://news.gallup.com/poll/358364/religious-americans.aspx>

² *Survey shows U.S. Christian population leveling off after declining for years.* (2025, February 26). PBS News.
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/survey-shows-u-s-christian-population-leveling-off-after-declining-for-years>

³ Hartford Institute. (2024, December 13). *Fast facts on American religion - Hartford Institute.* Hartford Institute for Religious Research.
<https://hrr.hartfordinternational.edu/fast-facts-on-american-religion/>

are expected to have robust social media accounts - although, as will be addressed later, social media for religious organizations is not always about competing.



An illustration of City Church campus in Anaheim, CA; sourced from the City Church Facebook page

City Church is a Christian church located in Anaheim, CA. It was founded around 15 years ago and has slowly grown in size over the years, under Lead Pastor Kyle Bonenberger. Their campus is located at 701 W Broadway. City Church has had and operated social media accounts for many years, operating under the handle @lovehopecity on Instagram, which will be the primary account this project focused on. Through client consultation, two primary problems were identified:

Although the church has pastors on staff and volunteers who are talented at content capture and creating social media content, there is no one person dedicated to the role of managing it. As a result, the posts have been on the sporadic side and without a strong internal structure to support a successful social media output. The church does consistently post sermon clips to Instagram reels on a weekly basis with occasional other posts in between, but, again, without a staff member dedicated to running the social media accounts, they rely on volunteers and the few hours that the pastoral staff have to spare each week. The account has largely stagnated and the team could use some extra structure to maintain a consistent output.

On top of the needed internal support, the church has a desire to reach younger audiences. According to its Instagram analytics, its posts are regularly drawing the most views and engagement from users age 35-44. As discussed previously in this chapter, it is an

oft-noted phenomenon that church attendance in the United States is trending downward,⁴ but recently there has been a noticeable uptick - or at least a slowdown of decline - of younger people attending church,⁵ although this is disputed by some researchers.⁶ Because of this phenomenon, and the desire to have a church that is continually growing, City Church leadership has identified the goal of reaching more young people, which they defined as Gen Z and below, with their social media posts, and, by extension, their ministry.

Selection and Consultation

City Church was selected as the client for this project because, as someone familiar with the organization, I had seen the ways in which it could use some additional help creating an effective social media strategy. In late 2025, I approached Lead Pastor Kyle Bonenberger to propose working together on this project.

In November, I met with Pastor Kyle and Tech Ministry Director Cameron Luke for the initial consultation. After explaining the requirements and purpose of the project, we agreed that

⁴ *Religious change in America - PRRI*. (2025, May 15). PRRI.

https://prri.org/research/religious-change-in-america/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=21130567347&gbraid=0AAAAADuUdk9X_QEABLMTPB1W6j8dmyQQK&gclid=CjwKCAiAkbbMBhB2EiwANbxtba74g25a7iWlrF_58N0g6du6U7dhhrPpcG8zGYGLb94DjVXJ4XpdVhoCnK4QAvD_BwE

⁵ Smith, G., Cooperman, A., Alper, B., Mohamed, B., Rotolo, C., Tevington, P., Nortey, J., Kallo, A., Diamant, J., & Fahmy, D. (2025, October 28). *Decline of Christianity in the U.S. has slowed, may have leveled off*. Pew Research Center.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2025/02/26/decline-of-christianity-in-the-us-has-slowed-may-have-leveled-off/#the-narrowing-gender-gap-in-american-religion>

⁶ American Institute of Boys and Men. (2026, January 5). *The religious gender gap: Are young men more religious? - American Institute for Boys and Men*. American Institute for Boys and Men.

https://aibm.org/commentary/are-young-men-really-returning-to-church-the-data-says-not-so-fast/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=22498437300&gbraid=0AAAAA9mP0WeR8S07hqbisFycJcPNixWf_&gclid=CjwKCAiAkbbMBhB2EiwANbxtbTHSZfkZEJqLbRVETvWGLHZQVFweX5S1uO1NuaTf4n_b5Xuy3Fih3hoCsakQAvD_BwE

it would be a good fit. Based on previous experience and professional practice,⁷ I suggested creating a social media plan to help guide the strategic communication of the church going forward. During the course of the conversation, Pastor Kyle also explained that they were hoping to alter their target audience to attract younger people. Pastor Kyle was the primary point of contact for this project, but Cameron and Associate Pastor Obie Obien received updates as well.

Research

Some churches are resistant to change and still need convincing of the value of introducing social media into their organizations.⁸ In reviewing much of the research, however, it becomes clear why many churches view social media as an integral part of modern ministry. If the mission of the church is to reach out to those in their community, and most churches would agree to some version of that goal, then it is important to reach those people in the places where they spend a lot of time, i.e. social media.⁹ Social media is also a way that churches can establish their “brand” online, allowing public insight into the type of institution that each individual church is.¹⁰ However, there are many factors that can influence a church’s presence on social media, including their size and staff resources.¹¹ To synthesize these points, social

⁷ Concordia University, Nebraska. (2022, April 29). Why is Strategic Communication Important? *Concordia University, Nebraska*.

<https://www.cune.edu/news/why-strategic-communication-important>

⁸ Holthaus, S. (2024, July 9). *How to develop a social media strategy that enhances your Ministry*. Lewis Center for Church Leadership.

<https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/how-to-develop-a-social-media-strategy-that-enhances-your-ministry/>

⁹ Cullum, M. (2025, May 20). *Your church’s biggest entry point: Why social media matters*. Lewis Center for Church Leadership.

<https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/your-churchs-biggest-entry-point-why-social-media-matters/>

¹⁰ Kokkonen, L. (2022). Established churches on social media: The case of the Finnish churches. *Religions (Basel, Switzerland)*, 13(7), 587. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13070587>

¹¹ Lee, Y. (2018). Is your church “liked” on Facebook? Social media use of Christian congregations in the United States. *Nonprofit Management & Leadership*, 28(3), 383–398. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nml.21291>

media can allow churches to reach those in their communities and share who they are, but resources can be a limiting factor for their ability to do so effectively.

This understanding has led to an entire industry of social media experts providing resources for churches to use (often by buying or subscribing) to streamline their social output and attempt to deliver results. Providing a lot of these resources is Brady Shearer, the creator of a website called Pro Church Tools which shares social media tips to churches. Shearer's recommendations encourage climbing the "Social Ministry Mountain" - his strategy that involves consistent posting in hopes of achieving long-term success.¹² Shearer also advocates for what he calls "social media policy" for churches - in practice he seems to be using "policies" in much the same way that others may use the term "priorities."¹³ That is, his policies are guiding principles for how to decide what types of content belong on the church's social media account and further, how to effectively manage the account.

Theory

In the field of communication, it is important that strategic work be grounded in theory. Communication itself is the process of making meaning; theories help understand that meaning through a psychological, sociological, or cultural lens.¹⁴ In grounding a communications project in theory, the author can demonstrate how their work fits (or sometimes does *not* fit) into a broader school of thought regarding the ways in which we relay or interpret a given message.¹⁵

¹² Shearer, B. (2024, May 15). *How small churches actually grow using social media — pro church tools*. Pro Church Tools.

¹³ Shearer, B. (2024, July 5). Social media policy for churches: The definitive guide. *Nucleus Church*. <https://www.nucleus.church/blog/social-media-policy-churches>

¹⁴ van Ruler, B. (2018). Communication Theory: An Underrated Pillar on Which Strategic Communication Rests. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 12(4), 367–381. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2018.1452240>

¹⁵ Levine, T. R., & Markowitz, D. M. (2024). The role of theory in researching and understanding human communication. *Human Communication Research*, 50(2), 154–161. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hcr/hqad037>

The theoretical framework of this project will be Relationship Management Theory. This theory, founded by Mary Jo Grunig, Linda Hon, and James E. Grunig in the 1990s,¹⁶ reframes communication as not simply managing messaging, but managing relationships.¹⁷ The emphasis on relationship quality, building trust, and pursuing mutual goals found within Relationship Management Theory lend themselves to application in a church setting. Studies have also found that by leaning into relationship building strategies in communication, organizations can shift from one-way to two-way communication over time.¹⁸

For an example of Relationship Management Theory in practice, consider Maxwell and Carboni's 2014 article, which uses the theory as a lens through which to examine the nonprofit sector.¹⁹ This paper looks at the various subgroups present within the stakeholders of a nonprofit organization, and how differences in the strategic communication can reach different audiences; they were looking at things like how messaging on social media differs from face-to-face or phone conversations when it comes to effective communication strategies. This aligns with a common use of Relationship Management Theory among nonprofits and religious organizations, as these organizations are looking to get people to join their groups, either as donors, volunteers, or members; building relationships with those audiences is vital to achieve those goals.

¹⁶ Hon, L. C., & Grunig, J. E. (1999). *Guidelines for measuring relationships in public relations*. Institute for Public Relations.

¹⁷ The Comm Spot. (2025, October 24). *Relationship management theory - the Comm spot*. <https://thecommspot.com/communication-basics/communication-theories/relationship-management-theory/>

¹⁸ Golan, G., Morehouse, J., & English, A. E. (2021). Building relationships with the faithful: examining church communicators perceptions of social media influencers in their OPR strategy. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 33(4), 250–266. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2021.2011729>

¹⁹ Maxwell, S. P., & Carboni, J. L. (2014). Stakeholder communication in service implementation networks: expanding relationship management theory to the nonprofit sector through organizational network analysis. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 19(4), 301–313. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1506>

Organizational Framework

In addition to Relationship Management Theory, the organizational framework of this project was influenced by the devotional-promotional engagement model. This communication model follows a three-entity structure, exploring the relationship between the brand, the audience, and the object of devotion.²⁰ In the case of City Church, these would represent the church, the congregation, and God. Studies on this communication model have found it to be an effective framework for application in church communication methods.²¹

Utilizing this organizational framework helped guide the communication strategies that were developed for the client. As will be discussed in chapter 3, City Church does have some goals it would like to achieve regarding social media benchmarks. However, its ultimate goal as an organization is to reach people. The vision statement of the church is to “[m]ake disciples. Build God’s Kingdom. One life at a time.” This is unlike, for example, a business that is looking to make sales. The potential success of a social media campaign serves the ultimate goal of building relationships with people and, in the church’s view, leading them to God.

²⁰ Morehouse, J., & Saffer, A. J. (2021). Promoting the faith: Examining megachurches’ audience-centric advertising strategies on social media. *Journal of Advertising*, 50(4), 408–422. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2021.1939202>

²¹ Morehouse, J. (2020). *The networked devotional-promotional engagement model: Examining congregant engagement and religious public relations*. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.



Two church members greeting attendees outside of City Church on a Sunday morning; sourced from @lovehopecity on Instagram.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis was performed to analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that may be relevant when establishing the communication strategy for City Church. A SWOT analysis is a common tool, particularly in communications projects that are looking to solve a specific problem, as it can help define the relative position of the organization.²²

Strengths Existing social accounts Great audio/visual team to provide content Defined goals	Weaknesses Lack of internal strategy Inability to reach intended audiences No dedicated social media staff
Opportunities	Threats

²² Harrison, K. (2024, January 25). *Make the most of SWOT analysis for communication planning*. Cutting Edge PR.
<https://cuttingedgepr.com/articles/swot-analysis-for-communication-planning/>

Potential renewed interest in religion	Declining church membership
Capabilities to positively influence younger viewers	

Strengths

City Church already has an established social media account with a decent following. It is regularly posting content, and has had some posts that are quite successful in terms of reach and engagement. It also has a talented group of staff and volunteers to capture photo and video content that is eye-catching and professional. Finally, the church as an organization has a clear mission and goals, which makes it easier to set communication goals that are in alignment.

Weaknesses

Some challenges that City Church is facing is the lack of internal strategy; currently it attempts a social media trend when it captures the attention of the pastors or when they find that they have time to work on something. However, due to some recent staffing changes, it no longer has a dedicated person to handle the social media work and it is difficult to find consistent time to devote to it. Additionally, the church has a desire to reach younger audiences, and its current content is not doing that as successfully as the leadership team would like.

Opportunities

As mentioned, there is a lot of discussion about recent trends in the religiosity of Americans. Although overall levels have been trending down for over 50 years, there have been surveys notating a recent change. The exact phenomenon is still emerging; some studies are stating that young men are more interested in Christianity²³ (or are at least more interested than

²³ Reeves, J. (2025, September 18). Why young men are coming back to church. *The Gospel Coalition*. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/young-men-coming-back-church/>

young women²⁴), while others are observing that the levels have not increased, but have at least stagnated.²⁵ While the findings aren't yet conclusive, there does seem to be a change in trends that is beginning. Additionally, studies have shown that young people are extremely susceptible to being swayed by the content they see on social media - whether that be positive or negative content.²⁶ This means that the potential is there for City Church to positively impact the lives of the audience they would like to reach with encouraging content.

Threats

One of the major threats facing City Church is one that is facing churches at large: declining attendance rates.²⁷ Although City Church has a net growth attendance rate at the moment, and despite the aforementioned trends in religiosity, church attendance rates among younger people specifically can be a challenge.

Conclusion

Based on the research that was done and the discussions with the client, it was determined that a short and structure communication project would assist City Church leaders by providing them with the tools they needed to continue with managing the social media output

²⁴ Ogden, S. (2026, April 25). Denver 7 Colorado News (KMGH). *Denver 7 Colorado News (KMGH)*.
<https://www.denver7.com/news/local-news/a-new-gallup-poll-reveals-a-dramatic-increase-in-religion-among-young-men-across-the-united-states>

²⁵ Smith, G. A., Cooperman, A., Alper, B. A., Mohamed, B., Rotolo, C., Tevington, P., Nortey, J., Kallo, A., Diamant, J., Fahmy, D., Smith, G., Cooperman, A., Alper, B., Mohamed, B., Rotolo, C., Tevington, P., Nortey, J., Kallo, A., Diamant, J., & Fahmy, D. (2025, October 28). *US Christian decline may be stabilizing: 2023-24 Religious Landscape Study (RLS)*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2025/02/26/decline-of-christianity-in-the-us-has-slowed-may-have-leveled-off/>

²⁶ Fahad, A., Mustafa, S. E., & Luqman, M. (2025). Religious-Political Discussion on Instagram and WhatsApp and Perception of Religion among Youths in Delhi. *Journal of Asian and African Studies (Leiden)*, 60(3), 1812–1826. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096231200592>

²⁷ Hartford Institute. (2024, December 13). *Fast facts on American religion - Hartford Institute*. Hartford Institute for Religious Research. <https://hrr.hartfordinternational.edu/fast-facts-on-american-religion/>

in a way that will achieve their goals as an organization. As someone outside of the City Church organization, I would be able to contribute the time to research and strategize about their communication and provide a direction for the future.

Chapter 2

This chapter discusses audience demographics for City Church as an organization and, by extension, as a social media account. Additionally, it discusses the key audience that the church is looking to reach. This chapter will also review the survey that was distributed and its demographic results, providing more insights on the specific audience of the account.

Local Demographics

City Church is located in Anaheim, CA. Anaheim is a mid-size city, the second largest in Orange County. As demonstrated in the chart below, the median age is 36.1, with 30-39 being the highest age-range category.²⁸

Age

36.1

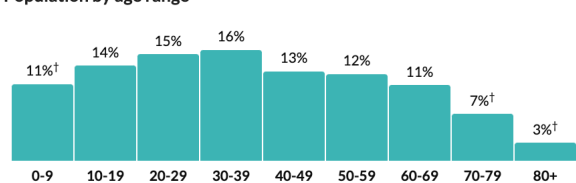
Median age

about 90 percent of the figure in the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA Metro Area: 39.2

a little less than the figure in California: 38.4

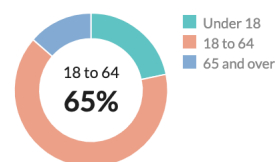
about 90 percent of the figure in United States: 39.2

Population by age range



[Show data](#) / [Embed](#)

Population by age category



[Show data](#) / [Embed](#)

Population demographics for Anaheim, CA; sourced from censusreporter.org.

The 2020 census numbers show that Orange County has 1,503 individual religious congregations.²⁹ It also has non-denomination Christian churches as the second highest in the number of adherents, behind only the Catholic Church.

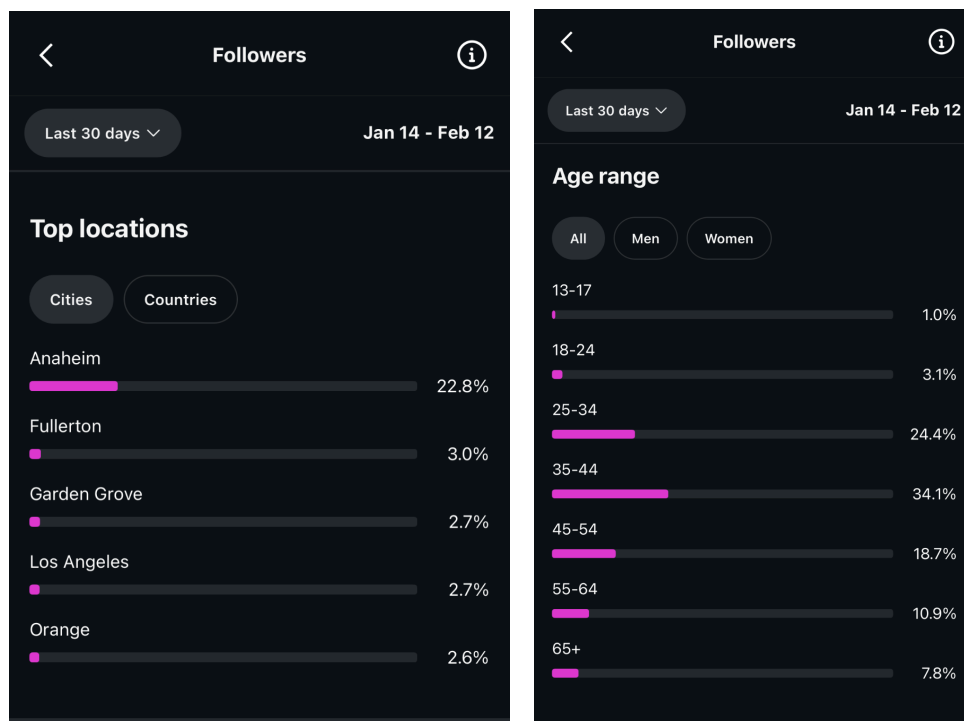
²⁸ Census Reporter. (n.d.). *Census profile: Anaheim, CA*.

<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0602000-anaheim-ca/>

²⁹ theARDA. (n.d.). *Membership reports*. The Association of Religion Data Archives (the ARDA). <https://www.thearda.com/us-religion/census/congregational-membership?y=2020&t=0&c=06059>

Current Social Audience Demographics

Based on the analytic data from the @lovehopecity Instagram account, there is demographic information that can be used to identify current audiences.



Screenshots of analytic data from @lovehopecity as viewed on February 13, 2026.

In viewing the demographic data for the account's new followers for the past 30 days (as of February 13, 2026), a few trends become apparent. First, the primary location of followers is Anaheim. This does make a lot of sense, as most churches, including City Church, primarily market to the nearby community. Figure 2 displays the breakdown of followers by age, and the largest category is people aged 35-44 at 34.1%. Although this statistic roughly aligns with the demographic data for Anaheim that was previously discussed, according to the most recent U.S. census data, that same group of the total population of the country is 12.7%.³⁰ Additionally,

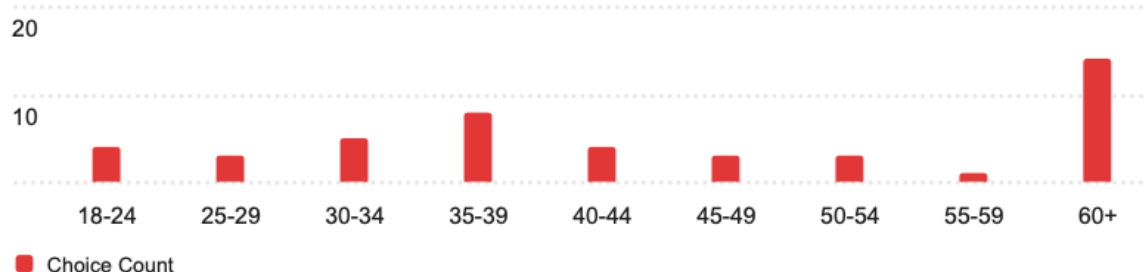
³⁰ US Census Bureau. (2025, February 12). *Age and sex composition in the United States: 2020*. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2020/demo/age-and-sex/2020-age-sex-composition.html>

35-44 year olds make up just 16% of total Instagram users.³¹ Given that information along with the fact that the second-largest age group in the demographic data is 25-34 at 24.4%, one could interpret this data to mean that the social audience for City Church is currently disproportionately millennial.³²

Survey Demographics

As will be discussed further in subsequent chapters, an audience survey was distributed to members of City Church. Full results can be found in Appendix D. The survey was first distributed via email newsletter; at that time, nearly all respondents were on the higher end of the age range. Two days after the newsletter, the survey was shared on social media, with a reel posted to the @lovehopecity feed (see Appendix E). The link to the survey was shared on story posts and in the link tree found in the account's bio. Once distribution on social media began, the age range of survey respondents filled out further.

Q3 - What is your age?



Graph showcasing the final response data for the age of the survey respondents.

³¹ West, C. (2025, June 10). *23 Instagram demographics marketers need to know in 2025*. Social Media Marketing & Management Dashboard. <https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-demographics/>

³² Dimock, M. (2025, April 24). *Defining generations: Where Millennials end and Generation Z begins*. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>

Additionally, respondents were asked about which city they lived in. The results were as follows:

- Anaheim (32)
- Garden Grove (3)
- Buena Park (1)
- Tustin (1)
- San Clemente (1)
- Apple Valley (1)
- Fullerton (1)
- Westminster (1)
- Orange (1)
- La Mirada (1)
- Placentia (1)
- Corona (1)

Key Audiences

City Church has defined increasing its reach among members of Gen Z as one of its goals for their Instagram account. Research has found that when it comes to charitable giving to nonprofits, this generation wants to feel personally connected to the organization, and they highly value the recommendations of their peers.³³ Research also shows that co-creation, or involving young people in the creation process, is important to foster a sense of belonging and

³³ Konstantinou, I., & Jones, K. (2022). Investigating Gen Z attitudes to charitable giving and donation behaviour: Social media, peers and authenticity. *Journal of Philanthropy and Marketing*, 27(3). <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1764>

genuine engagement.³⁴ Although this project concerns a church rather than a charitable organization, it may be safe to assume that similar desires may be present for a Gen Z-er who is looking to join a church, as there is also research showing this group's willingness to engage with religious content on social media³⁵. There is not much in the way of academic research on how churches can reach Gen Z audiences, but there are subject-matter experts speaking about the topic; they largely conclude that to reach this group, the content has to be authentic, genuine, and engaging.³⁶³⁷

Turning to the wealth of church social media management content, there are many organizations and websites that offer their perspectives on how to gain Gen Z audiences. Many sources agree that young people are looking for authenticity and interactivity, to see that the churches they support are speaking out about injustices, and to have representation of other young people in the content they consume.^{38 39 40}

³⁴ Teunenbroek, C., Wymer, W., & Čačija, L. N. (2025). Fostering, Promoting, and Encouraging Philanthropy: Mechanisms to Attract Younger Generations of Donors and Volunteers. *Journal of Philanthropy*, 30(2). <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.70018>

³⁵ Ouyang, D., & Xie, J. (2025). Buddhism Without Belonging: Functional and Digital Forms of Religious Engagement Among Chinese Youth. *Religions (Basel, Switzerland)*, 16(9), 1108. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16091108>

³⁶ Kolarski, A. (2024). Utilizing social media to reach Gen Z. *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, 18(2), 24–31.

³⁷ Sani, S. E. A. (2025). Analysis of Digital Content that Captures Gen Z Interest in Marketing Campaigns. *Journal of Public Representative and Society Provision*, 5(2), 281–287. <https://doi.org/10.55885/jprsp.v5i2.478>

³⁸ ministrypass.com. (2025, December 11). *How to use social media to reach Gen Z effectively*. <https://ministrypass.com/how-to-use-social-media-to-reach-gen-z-effectively/>

³⁹ McNeil, R. (2025, January). *Reaching Gen Z through digital platforms in 2025* | ResourceUMC. ResourceUMC.

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/reaching-gen-z-through-digital-platforms-in-2025>

⁴⁰ Dunagan, C. (2026, January 26). *How to reach Gen Z: A Church Leader's Guide* | Tithely. <https://get.tithe.ly/blog/reaching-gen-z-church-guide>

Personas

To aid in the exercise of tailoring communication tactics to particular audiences, personas are often developed to represent the actual audience members that the content is attempting to reach.⁴¹ Personas are an amalgamation of demographic data and social trends, presented in the form of the ideal consumer of the messaging in question. What follows are three examples of personas that may reflect audience members for City Church communication.

Persona 1 - Long time member



Stock image sourced with permission from Unsplash.com.

- Man, age 55. Married with children.
- This person has attended City Church for more than 10 years.
- He uses social media, but only checks it a couple of times a day.
- This person is a long time member of the church, so there's not a big worry that he will disengage from services, but there is a risk of alienation if the content shifts too hard towards younger audiences. He will appreciate a well-executed post, but won't always

⁴¹ Toluna. (2025, April 25). *Developing personas that guide your communication & messaging* - Toluna. Toluna.
<https://tolunacorporate.com/developing-personas-that-guide-your-communication-messaging/>

understand the reference of a social media trend being repeated since he spends much less time online.⁴²

Persona 2 - Young woman, raised in church



Stock image sourced with permission from Unsplash.com.

- Woman, age in the mid- to late-twenties. Single or dating, but not married.
- This person has been raised in church, but, as an adult, is now examining her own choices regarding religion as an independent adult.
- She is frequently on social media.
- This person is actively analyzing the nature of the church, and deciding what she believes.⁴³ Like many members of Gen Z, she has grown up with a level of awareness of the world around her through social media. She is interested in social causes and cares deeply about how the organizations she supports impact the local community.

⁴² Winslow, G. (2025, December 1). Survey: Younger Gen Z consumers spend 5.1 hours a day on social media. *TV Tech*.
<https://www.tvtechnology.com/news/survey-younger-gen-z-consumers-spend-5-1-hours-a-day-on-social-media>

⁴³ Reporter, G. S. (2025, March 4). 'What is my faith? What am I doing?' The American evangelicals 'deconstructing' their religion to save it. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/oct/21/evangelical-christianity-deconstructing-religion>

Persona 3 - Young man, new to religion



Stock image sourced with permission from Unsplash.com.

- Man, age 20. Single or dating, but not married.
- This person may have grown up without religion being a main focus; perhaps he attended church on holidays with family and was invited to some high school youth group events, but never committed to religion on his own terms.
- He is a frequent user of social media.
- This person is aware of Christianity, but primarily due to the social content he has been exposed to from a young age. As with many young men, he has seen influencers sharing “manosphere” content, and has subconsciously absorbed some of the tenets of that philosophy. He cares about improving his life, learning the truth, and feeling that he is part of a group.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Yang, J., & Lane, S. (2025, July 30). Why “manosphere” content is appealing to some young men. *PBS News*.
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/why-manosphere-content-is-appealing-to-some-young-men>

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 will discuss strategy, goals, action steps, and communication tools to be utilized in the completion of this project. Although City Church does have an active social media account, it lacks an updated communication strategy that aligns with its current goals, which is a vital first step to successful messaging.⁴⁵ Given the limited nature of both this project and the resources that the church can devote to social media, the plan of this project is to establish attainable but significant communication improvements.

Strategy and Mission

In creating a strategy for City Church communication, the biggest consideration was the church's mission, as defined by their vision statement: "Make disciples. Build God's Kingdom. One life at a time." It is important to note that while communication campaigns look to increase viewership and audience engagement with the social media content being shared, in this case with this particular client, the point of reaching people on social media is to eventually get them to come to the church and, ultimately, to reach them for Christ.



Attendees at City Church; sourced from @lovehopecity on Instagram.

⁴⁵ Milde, K., & Yawson, R. M. (2017). Strategies for Social Media Use in Nonprofits. *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, 18(1), 19.

This also aligns with the Relationship Management Theory and the devotional-promotional engagement communication model. As City Church aims to reach people for its mission, it does so by building relationships with its audience. Social media becomes a tactic in service of this goal. As this project book continues, it is important to note that these implications are resting behind every reference to growing the Instagram account's reach or engagement; the entire account is a tactic in service to the church's mission.

Case Study

To use a case study as an example of a similar campaign, let's look at Vala Parede and Qastharin's examination of social media strategy for subsidized housing in Indonesia.⁴⁶ Although the context is quite different, the authors present an informative set of recommendations for tailor a social media campaign for Gen Z audiences. They first conduct a survey to determine the best time to post, the most successful platforms to use, and what type of content works best. Then, they begin to optimize their social media communication accordingly, with a goal of increasing sales.

Naturally, this is a very different organization type, but it does establish a percent of the type of social media plan and strategy work in this project. Their conclusion emphasizes the need to tailor social media content to Gen Z audiences to reach that demographic, which is another vital aspect of this project.

⁴⁶ Vala Pardede, G. D., & Qastharin, M. S. (2024). Designing Social Media Marketing Strategies Targeting Generation Z for Subsidized Housing in Indonesia (A Case Study of Pt. Graha Putra Asido). *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 7(7). <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V7-i7-89>

Campaign Goals

The purpose of this project is to provide the client with a framework that allows them to deliver social media content aimed at attracting a younger audience with a structure that is sustainable given the limited resources the staff can allocate in a given week. In order to achieve this, the following goals and objectives were developed:

Goal 1: Create a comprehensive social media plan by the end of the project that streamlines the work of maintaining the account going forward.⁴⁷

- **Objective 1-1:** Create a set of messaging priorities that can help determine if a post is a good fit for the account.
- **Objective 1-2:** Develop a content plan that recommends an ideal number of posts per week and per month, broken down by post type.⁴⁸

Goal 2: Develop and implement a strategy to attract more Gen-Z viewers to the Instagram account, and in a broader perspective, to the church, aiming for a growth rate of 5% of viewers under 30 by the end of the year.⁴⁹

- **Objective 2-1:** Identify the types of posts that would attract a younger audience and incorporate them into the content plan at a regular cadence.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Clauser, J. (2024, October 17). *Creating an effective social media strategy for your church*. Church Communications Group.
<https://churchcommunications.com/creating-an-effective-social-media-strategy-for-your-church/>

⁴⁸ Carboni, J. L., & Maxwell, S. P. (2015). Effective social media engagement for nonprofits: What matters? *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 1(1), 18–28.
<https://doi.org/10.20899/jpna.1.1.18-28>

⁴⁹ McNeil, R. (2025, January). *Reaching Gen Z through digital platforms in 2025* | ResourceUMC. ResourceUMC.
<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/reaching-gen-z-through-digital-platforms-in-2025>

⁵⁰ Steele, J. (n.d.). *Four people-focused tips to increase your church's social media effectiveness* | ResourceUMC. ResourceUMC.
<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/four-people-focused-tips-to-increase-your-churchs-social-media-effectiveness>

- **Objective 2-2:** Develop a research-based profile of Gen Z that will aid the church in its future outreach planning.

Action Steps

In support of these goals, the following action steps were conducted:

1. Created and distributed an audience survey to the congregation. This survey was used for demographic data, and to develop a baseline for what the audience as a whole would like to see on the Instagram account. The survey results were also separated out by age group in order to determine what Gen Z church members are specifically looking for. Additionally, the survey served as a way for volunteers to state their interest in helping on future social media projects.
2. Based on the survey results, wider research, and consultation with the client, a list of communication priorities were developed to guide the strategy going forward.
3. Finally, a content plan was created. This plan included the breakdown of posts per week and per month, research on reaching Gen Z audiences, as well as exploring ways to manage the staff and volunteer workforce in a way that can create shared responsibility for the work and allow it to move forward consistently.

These goals and action steps are consistent with professional practice. Strategic communication plans allow for the organization to have a roadmap for accomplishing their communication goals. The plan serves as a guide that allows everyone contributing to the communication output to stay focused on a common goal.⁵¹

⁵¹ Elmore, S. (2024, March 7). *Why a Strategic Plan is the First Step to Communications - Elmore*. Elmore. <https://elmorepr.com/why-a-strategic-plan-is-the-first-step-to-communications/>

Chapter 4

This chapter will discuss the resources and timeline for this project to follow as it progresses. Additionally, there will be discussion of challenges that came up over the course of the semester and impacted the timeline.

Resources

There were no financial resources provided for this project. Primarily, the resources involved in the completion of this project were related to research. Over the course of the semester, over 105 hours of labor were logged (see Appendix B). Much of that time was spent researching and analyzing data. Source materials were found by utilizing the California State University, Fullerton's library system, as well as broader web searches for non-academic material.

Additionally, much of the direction of this project was informed by the experience I have gained, both academically and professionally, over the last couple of years. In the completion of this Masters degree, I have taken multiple courses concerning social media, audience research, research methods, and more. Additionally, in 2025, I completed a year-long internship with the Disneyland Resort's Internal Communications team, which provided prolonged experience with the professional practices behind social media strategy. Much of the work of this project was informed by the skills I gained in this position.

Timeline

This project leaned heavily into audience research and strategy development, with implementation primarily occurring at the hands of the client after the project concludes. A Gantt chart was used to assist with time management for this project, although, as described below, it was shifted throughout the semester (see Appendix A).

After the initial consultation, the project began with the proposal and initial research. Much of this time was spent developing a plan for the semester. At that time, the timeline contained a more aggressive plan that involved a period of implementation of the social media plan with an additional period of revision and evaluation. Once the project got underway, it became clear that this was not a feasible plan. At that point, a pivot was made to focus primarily on the social media plan as a final deliverable that the client would have to implement on their own moving forward. A meeting was scheduled on April 16 in which the finished social media plan was presented to all three of the City Church staff members who had been involved with the project: Pastor Kyle Bonenburger, Pastor Obie Obien, and Cameron Luke (see Appendix F).

Challenges

There were some challenges that came up. The primary challenge that was unexpected to me was the timing of Easter. As the client is a church, I should have considered that delays may arise during that exceptionally busy time. Unfortunately, right as the initial timeline should have gained momentum, the client was largely unavailable for three weeks, due to a conference followed by two weeks of holiday events for the church. The result is that I pivoted to work on additional research support for that time, which led to a revised timeline that no longer accommodated a period of implementation for the social plan I created.

One thing that also poses some challenges is measuring the effectiveness of the strategy due to the short duration of the project, as, again, implementation has shifted beyond the scope of this semester. While the suggestions provided in the social media plan are informed by research, there is no data at this point by which the success of the plan can be measured.

Chapter 5

This chapter will discuss campaign outcomes. A detailed description of the social media plan will expand upon what was contained in the presentation that was discussed in the previous chapter.

Campaign Outcomes

The outcome of this campaign was that a social media plan was created with research support that provided the client with recommendations on how to alter the social media communication of the church going forward in a way that is sustainable given the limited resources the staff have to devote to the account.

As a reminder, the campaign goals as stated in Chapter 3 are as follows:

Goal 1: Create a comprehensive social media plan by the end of the project that streamlines the work of maintaining the account going forward.⁵²

- **Objective 1-1:** Create a set of messaging priorities that can help determine if a post is a good fit for the account.
- **Objective 1-2:** Develop a content plan that recommends an ideal number of posts per week and per month, broken down by post type.⁵³

⁵² Clauser, J. (2024, October 17). *Creating an effective social media strategy for your church*. Church Communications Group.

<https://churchcommunications.com/creating-an-effective-social-media-strategy-for-your-church/>

⁵³ Carboni, J. L., & Maxwell, S. P. (2015). Effective social media engagement for nonprofits: What matters? *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 1(1), 18–28.

<https://doi.org/10.20899/jpna.1.1.18-28>

Goal 2: Develop and implement a strategy to attract more Gen-Z viewers to the Instagram account, and in a broader perspective, to the church, aiming for a growth rate of 5% of viewers under 30 by the end of the year.⁵⁴

- **Objective 2-1:** Identify the types of posts that would attract a younger audience and incorporate them into the content plan at a regular cadence.⁵⁵
- **Objective 2-2:** Develop a research-based profile of Gen Z that will aid the church in its future outreach planning.

Goal 1 was achieved and will be discussed at length in the next section. Discussions of Goal 2 do require a bit more nuance. Both objectives informed the conclusions drawn in the social media plan and the audience profiles discussed in Chapter 2. However, due to the delays explained in Chapter 4 and the time constraints of this semester-long project, it is not possible to quantitatively measure the outcome of this goal within the scope of this project. Action steps have been completed in service of this goal, but final outcomes will develop over time.

Social Media Plan

The social media plan presented to the clients had three primary components: a priority list, a post breakdown, and suggestions for the future. The priority list was structured to showcase “ins” and “outs,” or things to focus on and things to avoid. This model was shaped off of a similar list that was utilized during my time at Disneyland, which we found very helpful when deciding on a concept for a social media post idea. The “ins” category included the following:

- Storytelling.

⁵⁴ McNeil, R. (2025, January). *Reaching Gen Z through digital platforms in 2025* | ResourceUMC. ResourceUMC.

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/reaching-gen-z-through-digital-platforms-in-2025>

⁵⁵ Steele, J. (n.d.). *Four people-focused tips to increase your church's social media effectiveness* | ResourceUMC. ResourceUMC.

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/four-people-focused-tips-to-increase-your-churchs-social-media-effectiveness>

- Inclusion.
- Authenticity and transparency.

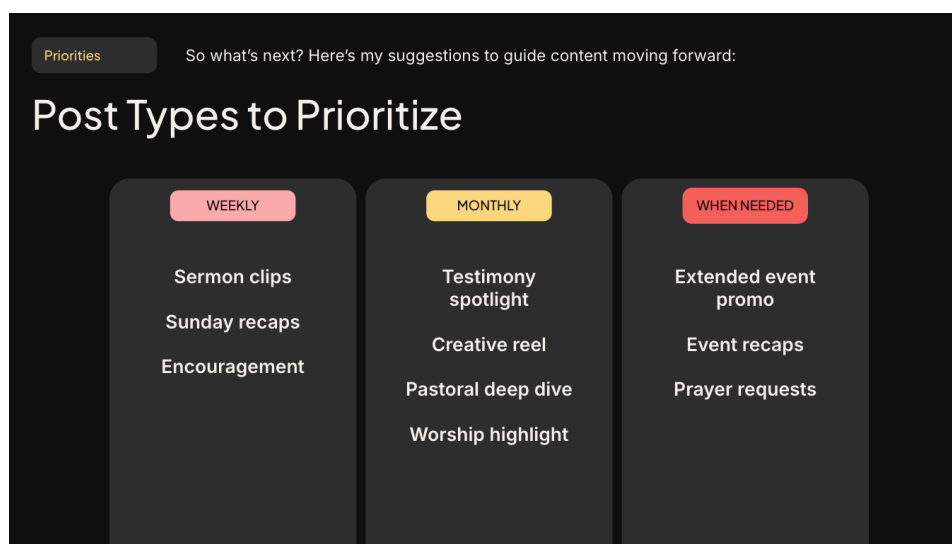
I suggested that they get more people from the church involved and sharing their stories. I also advocated for getting young people involved in the content creation process, as well as placing “content creation” on the weekly rotation of volunteer positions.

Next was the “outs:”

- Chasing social trends.
- Editing gimmicks.
- Community information.

I suggested avoiding social trends in favor of the types of content that flows naturally. I encouraged them to keep their editing simple and to keep everything focused through the lens of how the church is impacting or interacting with the community.

The next element of the social media plan was what I called a priorities list. Essentially, this a social media calendar, but structured in a way that will hopefully allow the City Church team to effectively manage their limited time by prioritizing the most important posts, while leaving room for flexibility.



This slide was created as a reference point for the client.

The first priority level is weekly posts. These are the pieces of content that are most important, including sermon clips, encouragement, and Sunday recaps. Pastor Kyle and other church leaders are already in a rhythm of posting Sunday sermon clips at a regular cadence. Sunday recaps were defined as either look forward at what the upcoming service will contain, or a look back at the previous week, using videos and/or photos. This is similar, but considered distinct from an event recap. Finally, encouraging content was something that emerged from the survey results as something the audience wanted to see more of, and would be easily accomplished without too much additional work. Encouragement could be shared on reels or stories, consisting of a quick video message from one of the pastors or a Bible verse or quote.

The second priority level is monthly posts. As the name suggests, these are posts that should be created regularly, but don't need to be every single week. In this category sits testimony spotlights, creative reels, pastoral deep dives, and worship highlights. Again, these categories are informed by the survey results. Testimony spotlights would feature stories submitted by church members; this could be presented as a video interview or as a photo with an accompanying caption with a quote from the subject. Creative reels leave room for more playful and fun video ideas, including those that the youth group of the church contribute to. While, as mentioned before, chasing trends is not advised, there are still opportunities for more lighthearted content. Pastoral deep dives would feature members of the pastoral staff delivering an explainer on a theological topic, while worship clips would feature the music performed each Sunday morning.

Finally, there is an as-needed content category. This is primarily based on current events - upcoming holidays or events at the church or urgent prayer requests for the congregation. This is the type of content that doesn't fit neatly into a calendar, as the needs for it vary wildly throughout the year.

The final element of the social media plan was a series of suggestions for the leaders of City Church that will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

This chapter will be discussing the success of the project. Due to the nature of this project, there is not much quantifiable data to show success. Instead success is measured by the benefit to the client that was provided by the execution of this project.

Benefits to the Client

Many experts agree that consistency is key when it comes to success on social media.⁵⁶ If that is true, then the outcomes from creating a social media plan for City Church will allow for more consistency moving forward in its social media practice. Social media growth is never going to happen if it is not achieved sustainably, and the hope is that this strategy will be sustainable for City Church. Upon presenting the plan to the clients, the response was overwhelmingly positive. All three staff members present (Kyle, Obie, and Cameron), were engaged with the presentation. Many questions were asked, and the meeting became a thought-provoking discussion of the future of social media at City Church.

If the goal of attracting a younger audience to their social media feed is achieved, the benefit of that to the client is ultimately that more Gen Z-ers will be attending church. Although the social media plan will be implemented after the conclusion of this project, research and elements were included to make strides towards increasing Gen Z viewership and engagement.

⁵⁶ Shearer, B. (2024, May 15). *How small churches actually grow using social media — pro church tools*. Pro Church Tools.
<https://prochurchtools.com/blog-post/how-small-churches-actually-grow-using-social-media>



City Church members of various ages mingle after a Sunday service; sourced from @lovehopecity on Instagram

Returning to the theoretical framework of the project, Relationship Management Theory reframes communication as building relationships rather than just sending and receiving messages. The ultimate benefit of a successful social media presence for City Church is that they are able to reach more people - and not just social media reach. As evidenced by the survey results, people have come to the church based on finding it on social media, and even those who are already church members or regular attenders look to this content to learn more about their church community. For City Church, a successful social media campaign is not about views, clicks, sales, or followers. Instead, the ideal end result would be more people joining the church and being a part of the community that it houses, which is predicated on the relationships being formed.

Suggestions for Next Steps

At the conclusion of this project, the implementation of the social media plan is in the hands of City Church leaders. Whether or not the final result matches my plan in whole or in

part, I hope that it helped create a strategic framework that works to make social media content creation both successful and sustainable for the client.

At the end of the social media plan presentation, there were three primary suggestions that I gave for the client to consider moving forward:

First, City Church already uses the app Services to create and maintain volunteer schedules for other aspects of Sunday services such as greeters, production teams, and band members. I suggested building a position for content creation into that volunteer rotation at least every other week. There are two primary reasons for doing so, with the first being that the City Church pastors and staff members are generally busy on Sunday mornings doing all of the various work it takes to run a Sunday morning service, which is not often conducive to also capturing content needed for the week's social calendar. The church has already identified this is a problem, asking for others to record video on an as-needed basis. Building this into the volunteer schedule ensures that someone is prepared and available to capture content on a regular basis. Secondly, having a rotation of volunteers assisting will allow the team to move closer to the identified priority of getting more church members involved, so the same faces are not featured in the majority of social media posts. Having a diverse group of volunteer content creators will help ensure that social content is being created for as wide of an audience as possible. Crucially, this structure will also allow for the youth group and younger church members to have a hand in content creation. By scheduling them regularly, the result will be that the target Gen Z audience will see more social media output created by them and for them.

The next suggestion for the leadership of City Church is that they create a forum for church members to share their stories. This suggestion was informed by my time on the Disneyland Internal Communications team, as they maintain a database of pictures and stories submitted by Disneyland Resort Cast Members that they use to create user-generated social content. That team's audience and goals are very different, but there is a common thread, which is that some of the best social media content comes from giving the audience a chance to tell

their own story. I suggested that church leaders create a simple form entry on a platform they maintain that will allow church members to submit their own story (see Appendix G for the sample form that was created). I did not create this for them, as anything created under my student account would not be something they have continual access to. The form could be announced to the congregation as part of the announcements that already occur every Sunday, with access to the form on the church's website, in the regular email blasts that are sent by Pastor Kyle, and/or with QR code flyers posted on the church's campus. Occasional reminders about the form can encourage church members to submit. Several survey respondents indicated that they wanted to see a wider range of church members featured in social posts and to hear more of their stories. This form gives church leaders a tool for collecting those very same stories, which would then be used to create encouraging content that the wider social audience would benefit from.

Finally, the last of the three suggestions I made was that the team get into the habit of content banking. The example I gave during the presentation was regarding sharing Bible verses. If they wanted one Bible verse to be shared per week, it would not take much time for someone to create four posts with four different Bible verses. This represents a month of content. It was a simplistic example, but by banking or stockpiling some evergreen social content, the team would have a reserve to dip into on weeks when they find themselves too busy to create something new. This strategy could help keep the posting frequency consistent even on weeks when the staff find that their time is in higher demand. I suggested that the team have templates ready to go for both in-feed and story posts that can easily be customized with a Bible verse, prayer request, or a snippet of a testimony shared through the form suggested above. Cameron did share that he has a version of a social media template that has already been created; my suggestion was that they get into the habit of relying on those tools to create the maximum output possible with the resources that are available.

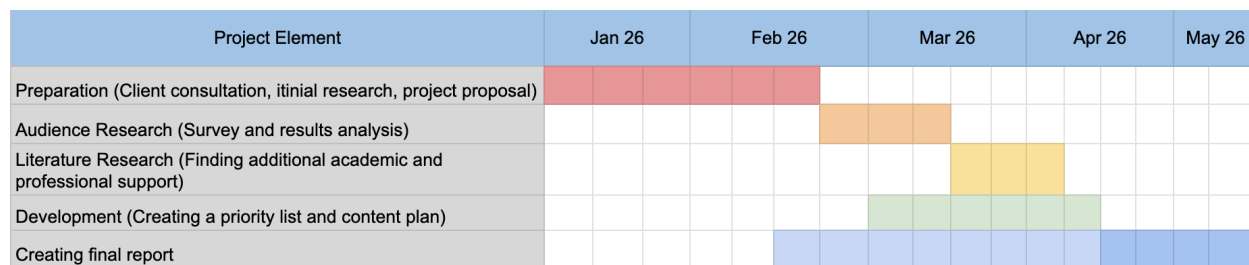
If the provided social media plan and outlined next steps are implemented, I do feel that the future of social media ministry at City Church will improve, both in the ability to manage the work behind the scenes, and in the measurable growth on the @lovehopecity account.



Inside of City Church during a service; sourced from @lovehopecity on Instagram.

Appendices

Appendix A - Gantt Chart



Appendix B - Billable Hours

Tr	Activity	Activity type	Date	Start time	End time	#	Total time (hr)
	Initial meeting with Kyle and Cameron	Client Meeting	11/14/2025	11/14/2025 12:00:00	11/14/2025 13:00:00		1.00
	Progress meeting with Kyle	Client Meeting	1/27/2026	1/27/2026 17:30:00	1/27/2026 18:30:00		1.00
	Document set up and planning	Admin	1/30/2026	1/30/2026 15:30:00	1/30/2026 16:00:00		0.50
	Annotated Bibliography	Research	1/30/2026	1/30/2026 15:15:00	1/30/2026 16:15:00		1.00
	Annotated Bibliography	Research	2/7/2026	2/7/2026 19:45:00	2/7/2026 21:00:00		1.25
	Annotated Bibliography	Research	2/8/2026	2/8/2026 20:00:00	2/8/2026 22:00:00		2.00
	Proposal	Writing/Creating	2/12/2026	2/12/2026 19:45:00	2/12/2026 22:30:00		2.75
	Proposal	Writing/Creating	2/13/2026	2/13/2026 10:00:00	2/13/2026 11:45:00		1.75
	Proposal	Writing/Creating	2/13/2026	2/13/2026 12:45:00	2/13/2026 15:45:00		3.00
	Proposal	Writing/Creating	2/13/2026	2/13/2026 16:15:00	2/13/2026 17:30:00		1.25
	Proposal	Writing/Creating	2/13/2026	2/13/2026 19:00:00	2/13/2026 23:00:00		4.00
	Proposal	Writing/Creating	2/15/2026	2/15/2026 8:45:00	2/15/2026 13:00:00		4.25
	Proposal	Writing/Creating	2/15/2026	2/15/2026 15:45:00	2/15/2026 18:45:00		3.00
	Proposal Slide Deck	Writing/Creating	2/15/2026	2/15/2026 21:00:00	2/15/2026 21:45:00		0.75
	Survey	Writing/Creating	2/24/2026	2/24/2026 21:30:00	2/24/2026 22:30:00		1.00
	Revision Plan	Admin	3/1/2026	3/1/2026 22:00:00	3/1/2026 23:00:00		1.00
	Survey	Writing/Creating	3/3/2026	3/3/2026 21:00:00	3/3/2026 22:00:00		1.00
	Filming content	Writing/Creating	3/8/2026	3/8/2026 7:00:00	3/8/2026 12:30:00		5.50
	Editing	Writing/Creating	3/10/2026	3/10/2026 21:00:00	3/10/2026 22:30:00		1.50
	Editing	Writing/Creating	3/13/2026	3/13/2026 20:00:00	3/13/2026 21:45:00		1.75
	Reviewing survey results	Admin	3/13/2026	3/13/2026 21:45:00	3/13/2026 22:00:00		0.25
	Posting/updating socials	Admin	3/14/2026	3/14/2026 10:00:00	3/14/2026 10:15:00		0.25
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	3/22/2026	3/22/2026 17:00:00	3/22/2026 19:30:00		2.50
	Posting/updating socials	Admin	3/23/2026	3/23/2026 12:30:00	3/23/2026 12:45:00		0.25
	Social plan deck	Writing/Creating	3/23/2026	3/23/2026 17:45:00	3/23/2026 18:30:00		0.75
	Interview	Research	3/29/2026	3/29/2026 10:30:00	3/29/2026 11:00:00		0.50
	Social plan deck	Writing/Creating	4/4/2026	4/4/2026 14:00:00	4/4/2026 20:00:00		6.00
	Social plan deck research	Research	4/11/2026	4/11/2026 11:15:00	4/11/2026 16:15:00		5.00
	Social plan deck	Writing/Creating	4/14/2026	4/14/2026 21:00:00	4/14/2026 22:30:00		1.50
	Social plan deck	Writing/Creating	4/16/2026	4/16/2026 9:00:00	4/16/2026 16:15:00		7.25
	Social plan presentation	Client Meeting	4/16/2026	4/16/2026 17:00:00	4/16/2026 18:00:00		1.00
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	4/18/2026	4/18/2026 10:00:00	4/18/2026 12:00:00		2.00
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	4/18/2026	4/18/2026 16:00:00	4/18/2026 19:00:00		3.00
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	4/23/2026	4/23/2026 19:00:00	4/23/2026 22:15:00		3.25
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	4/24/2026	4/24/2026 20:00:00	4/24/2026 23:00:00		3.00
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	4/25/2026	4/25/2026 9:00:00	4/25/2026 16:00:00		7.00
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	4/26/2026	4/26/2026 20:00:00	4/26/2026 22:30:00		2.50
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	4/27/2026	4/27/2026 18:00:00	4/27/2026 22:00:00		4.00
	Final book writing	Writing/Creating	4/30/2026	4/30/2026 20:00:00	4/30/2026 23:30:00		3.50

Final book writing	Writing/Creating	5/1/2026	5/1/2026 20:00:00	5/2/2026 0:00:00	4.00
Final book writing	Writing/Creating	5/6/2026	5/6/2026 19:00:00	5/7/2026 0:00:00	5.00
Final presentation deck	Writing/Creating	5/8/2026	5/8/2026 18:00:00	5/8/2026 22:00:00	4.00
+ Sheet1					Sum: 105.75

Appendix C - Client Agreement



COMM 597 / Master's Project – Client Agreement

Client organization name	Mailing address	Telephone
City Church	701 W Broadway Anaheim CA 92815	714-795-3945
Authorized contact person	Contact e-mail	Website
Kyle Bonenberger	kyle@lovehopecity.com	lovehopecity.com

Parties to the Agreement

This agreement confirms that the above organization (hereafter referred to as Client) has retained MACKENZIE MOTSINGER (hereafter referred to as Student) to provide communication services.

Communication services will be provided by Student while working under the guidance of the COMM 597 instructor during a semester-long campaign. The campaign is designed to benefit the Client and provide a strong conceptual and hands-on learning experience for the Student. There is no compensation involved. The project is a M.A. program completion requirement and not "internship" or "employment."

Timeline

Communication services will be provided during academic term SP2020 and Student cannot extend any services beyond a cutoff date two weeks prior to the end of the term.

Consultation, Proposal, and Project

Communication services and/ or event planning work for the Client will be contingent upon a timely initial consultation between the Client's authorized representative and the Student. It is expected that this consultation will take place as soon as possible but no more than three weeks after the start of the academic term. If the Client is unable to participate in a consultation within this time period, the project cannot be undertaken.

Based on the results of the consultation and additional research and development, the Student will develop a professional quality, theory-based, research-supported proposal for services. The proposal will be presented in a timely fashion to the Client for approval. It is expected that the Client and Student will agree on a proposal that is *within the capabilities of the Student and Client* so that work can begin quickly and demonstrable results can be achieved before the end of the academic term. It is understood that the proposal will be framed in a communications context and

may include a variety of related genres of work (e.g., advertising, event planning, feature writing, marketing, publicity, promotions, etc.).

Students may create the communication to facilitate fundraising or sales, but students are prohibited from engaging in the act of fundraising or solicitation, or handling the proceeds of fundraising or solicitation, whether those proceeds be cash, checks, credit card transactions or valuable merchandise. This is for Student and Client protection.

Once approved by the Client, Student, and instructor, it is expected that the proposal will immediately transition into an operationalized project. Any in-progress changes should be minimal and consistent with the findings of formative evaluation conducted during the campaign. Client-requested changes that are excessive or unreasonably burdensome for Student as determined by instructor (e.g., *'throw out the whole concept and request something new'*) are likely to result in the immediate termination of this agreement.

The Student will make a written and oral presentation at the end of the academic term, at a meeting date/ time to be established. The Client will be notified of the date, time, and place for this presentation and a representative is expected to attend. A copy of the written project report will be presented to the Client.

Client Commitment:	Student Commitment:
• Recognize the project is a learning experience for Student. • Review and sign the agreement. • Participate in timely initial consultation. • Review and approve Student proposal. • Support/ meet with Student as needed. • Notify Student of any organizational changes that affect the campaign. • Attend campaign presentation, if possible.	• Complete the agreement with the Client. • Prepare for, schedule, and conduct initial consultation. • Prepare research-based proposal for Client approval. • Following approval, complete project as promised. • Keep constant communication with Client and instructor about progress. • Provide Client with final report in sufficient time for report to be read before scheduled presentation. • Invite Client to campaign presentation.

Ownership of Product

Client retains ownership of any written copy, graphic images, electronic content, or creative concepts developed by Student. Instructor reserves the right to retain copies of work produced on behalf of the Client for CSUF academic, non-commercial use (e.g., display or use for teaching, academic research/ presentation, promotion/ recruitment for the Communications Department, or for public service).

Non-Disclosure

The Student agrees to use the Client's proprietary and confidential information in strict confidence, to protect the security and integrity of such information. Student will not permit unauthorized access to or unauthorized disclosure, publication, or dissemination of confidential information except as approved by the Client. Information that will be kept confidential includes Client strategy, business activities, customer lists, communication initiatives, names of and information about management, employees, and investors, technical processes, trade secrets, and any other information of any of whatever kind and nature that the Client desires to maintain confidential. Discussion of this issue with Student is strongly encouraged.

Waiver of Liability

The Client agrees to hold harmless the Student of, and from any and all claims, fines, losses, damages, costs, expenses, payments, judgments or settlements, (including reasonable attorney's fees and costs of court) arising out of the services performed by Student for the Client under this agreement. Services include any and all written, electronic, or broadcast communication, event planning, or related advertising/ PR proposals or services on the Client's behalf.

Miscellaneous Expenses

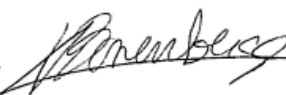
The Student provides labor, computer hardware and software support, and basic office support materials to conduct communications work on behalf of the Client.

CSUF Financial Services policies prohibit the Student from making purchases on behalf of any Client. Student policy prohibits our students from expending their personal funds on behalf of the Student or any Client.

Therefore, these guidelines must be followed:

- **The Client must assume any out-of-pocket supply costs in advance.** Additional costs would include such items as: advertising/ media purchases, business letterhead or envelopes, photography services or supplies, postage, long-distance telephone charges, necessary subscriptions, special computer software, subcontractor fees, etc.
- **The Client must assume any non-routine student travel costs in advance.** Client consultation is a routine requirement of Student service. Student is aware of needing to make one or more on-site Client visits. At the same time, requests on Student time must be reasonable and made in consideration of other academic and family life responsibilities.

Please sign and date:

CLIENT REPRESENTATIVE  2-1-26

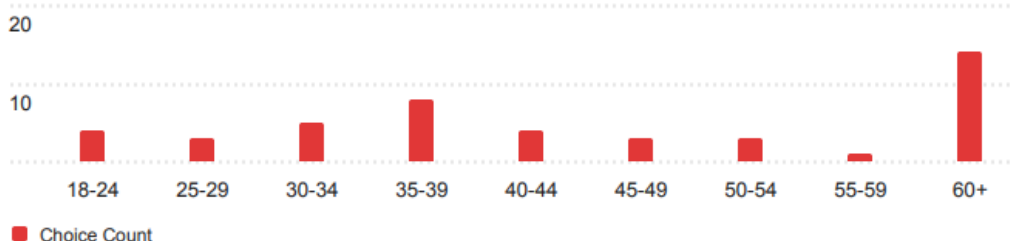
STUDENT  02/01/26

INSTRUCTOR  2/2/26

Appendix D - Survey Results Report

1

Q3 - What is your age?



Q4 - In what city do you live?

anaheim

garden grove
placentia
orange
valley
brea
fullerton
costa mesa
tustin
westminster

Q5 - How often do you attend City Church?



Q6 - How long have you been attending City Church?

How long have you been attending City Church?

3 months

3.5 years

I just started this past Sunday

13 years

2.5 months

2

3 yrs

Approximately 11 years

1 year

5 years

12 or 13

6 months

5 years

2 years

4 years

11 years

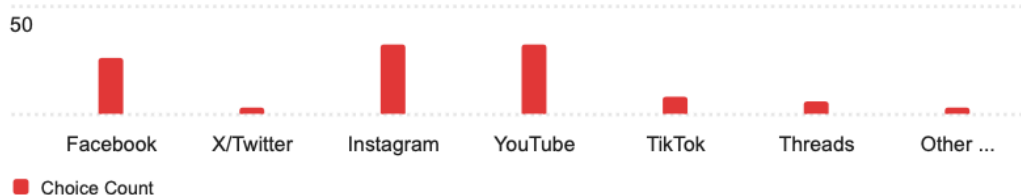
About a year

8 plus years

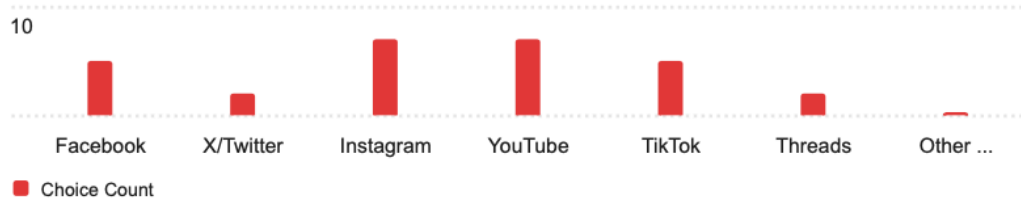
4 years

10 years

Q7 - Which social media platforms do you use? Check all that apply. - Selected Choice



Q7 - Which social media platforms do you use? Check all that apply. - Selected Choice (Gen Z Respondents)



Q7_7_TEXT - Other (please specify) - Text

Other (please specify) - Text

Reddit

I don't use social media

Websites

Q8 - Which social media platform is your favorite and why?

Which social media platform is your favorite and why?

Facebook

Fb and Ig i enjoy viewing things learning etc

Instagram! I love seeing peoples faces and adventures and projects

Instagram cause everything looks more in place and easy to use as well

Facebook

YouTube it's all I use

You tube. I love learning about people, things, the Lord

I don't really use social media at all but YouTube is my current favorite

Instagram. All my friends are on it and I like to see their updates.

Don't have a favorite

Facebook, for the layout

FB. I'm just used to it and most my friends are there

Instagram easy access quick view of friends and family

To be honest I wish I didn't have social media, but probably Instagram because I feel like I can stay informed and updated on long distance friends

Insta

Instagram. It's easier to use.

TikTok, the diverse

Ig easier

instagram because it's what i use the most

Tik Tok, I prefer the short form videos

Q9 - What is some of your favorite content on social media? (Please describe content type and/or creators/accounts)

What is some of your favorite content on social media? (Please describe content type and/or creators/accounts)

I loce cooking baking creative content

Hair/makep, DIY, inspirational/spiritual

Cooking vlogs, Personal growth accounts, inspirational accounts (theschoolofhaedknocks)

Tutorials, funny stuff,

Sermons, preachings, Bible verses

Short videos

Funny videos that I can relate to, recipes, and clothing suggestions.

Funny/clever insights or sketches

Just updates with friends

Family and friends

Anything wholesome :) I am a 23 year old who lives like an old lady

Funny videos

Cooking videos & home renovations.

Nursing school content, Church/word of God content

Authentic none scripted

skits etc

I like watching artist interviews and daily vlogs. I like seeing high production quality and aesthetically pleasing. I also am very much on booktok. Fav creators - anna sitar, various book accounta

TED talks, information/interviews (Heather Cox Richardson, Diary of a CEO, Becket Cook), comedy news shows

Travel and food content

Live music artists & Entertainment

Q9 - What is some of your favorite content on social media? (Please describe content type and/or creators/accounts) (Gen Z Respondents)

What is some of your favorite content on social media? (Please describe content type and/or creators/accounts)

Anything wholesome :) I am a 23 year old who lives like an old lady

Cooking videos & home renovations.

Nursing school content, Church/word of God content

skits etc

I like watching artist interviews and daily vlogs. I like seeing high production quality and aesthetically pleasing. I also am very much on booktok. Fav creators - anna sitar, various book accounta

i like consuming light hearted content, stuff that makes me laugh, and things that are relatable so i have an endless amount of "that's so us" DMs to send to my friends

My algorithm is all over the place, but some of my favorite content are memes or like wholesome reminder or affirmations!

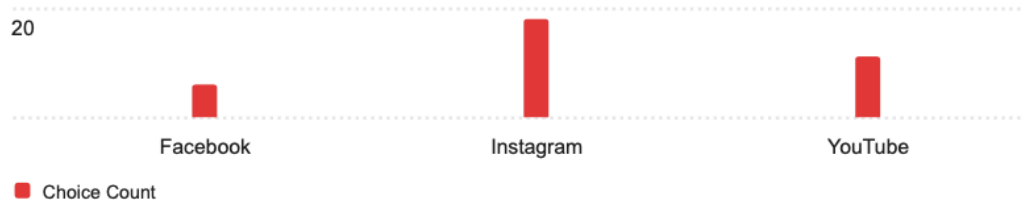
Q10 - Do you follow City Church on social media?



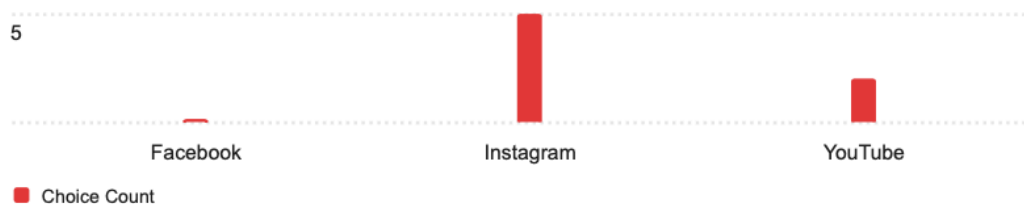
Q10 - Do you follow City Church on social media? (Gen Z Respondents)



Q11 - On which platforms do you follow City Church? (Check all that apply)



Q11 - On which platforms do you follow City Church? (Check all that apply) (Gen Z Respondents)



Q12 - What types of posts do you like seeing from City Church?

What types of posts do you like seeing from City Church?

Updates

All of them!!

Things about out reach, events and our church staff

Reels on verses so it's shareable to others

Video

Updates on special events, Sunday recaps on YouTube, funny videos, touching videos about the good that's happening at the church

What's happening and services if I miss a Sunday morning same

Sunday recaps (video or photo)

Updates, what is going on. Pictures of events

All of them upcoming events are helpful

Anything and everything! I love seeing clips of Pastor Kyle preaching and other things happening at the church

All

Photos of the attendees

Any

More PK

ones like the post it note and hello peace hello joy one

photo carousels of people i know

Kyle's updates/invitations, sermon clips, pictures from Sunday, humorous informational vignettes from Kyle and Obie. (His weekly emails are really good too.)

Updates about what is going on at church.

Inspirational posts

Q12 - What types of posts do you like seeing from City Church? (Gen Z Respondents)

What types of posts do you like seeing from City Church?

Anything and everything! I love seeing clips of Pastor Kyle preaching and other things happening at the church

Photos of the attendees

Any

ones like the post it note and hello peace hello joy one

photo carousels of people i know

all of them

I like all of the community content! Seeing what the church is up to or what's coming up.

Q13 - What types of posts would you like to see more of from City Church?

What types of posts would you like to see more of from City Church?

To be able to live stream service wh3n I cant attention in person

Worship/encouragent/ funny videos

Clips from Sunday messages, easy to share info about events, or images I can screenshot to share via text

All of the above, and maybe some small snippets from the sermon so I can recall what was said and continue to carry it with me throughout the week.

Same

Candid, scripture-based reflections from pastors

Can't think of anything that's not already posted

Mini testimonies

I would love to see random interviews with people from the church, almost like snippets of people's testimonies. Something I've been learning and reflecting on is how our testimony is truly God's testimony/story and when we share even a small portion of that with others (whether you feel like it is "big" or small) we are saying look what God has done for me and I know he can do it for you, too. A testimony is a demonstration of God's work in our lives not a list of what has happened to us.

Events

Not sure

More PK

more posts like that

funny/lighthearted content that does feel like ads

Events

Happy with current posts

more funny memes and videos!

Shorts about what God is doing in individual's lives.

Stuff for the youth to follow and share

Q13 - What types of posts would you like to see more of from City Church? (Gen Z Respondents)

What types of posts would you like to see more of from City Church?

I would love to see random interviews with people from the church, almost like snippets of people's testimonies. Something I've been learning and reflecting on is how our testimony is truly God's testimony/story and when we share even a small portion of that with others (whether you feel like it is "big" or small) we are saying look what God has done for me and I know he can do it for you, too. A testimony is a demonstration of God's work in our lives not a list of what has happened to us.

Events

Not sure

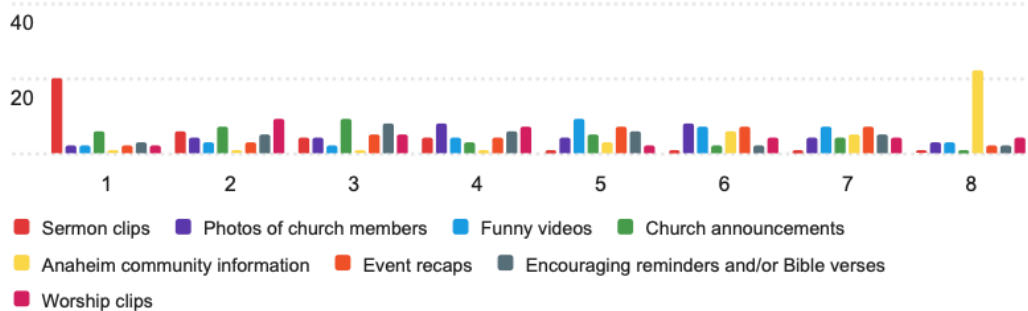
more posts like that

funny/lighthearted content that does feel like ads

more funny memes and videos!

I like when Pastor Kyle drops little nuggets of information or wisdom! I remember he did one about Lent and how we can apply it to our own walks.

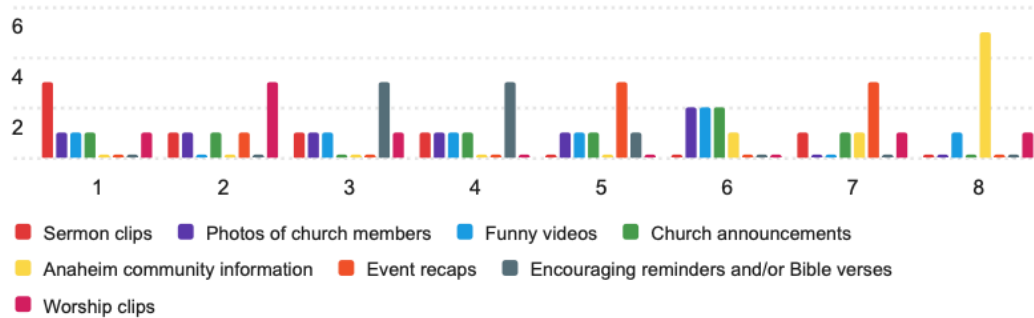
Q14 - Rank the following types of City Church posts in order based on how importa...



Q14 - Rank the following types of City Church posts in order based on how importa...

Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sermon clips	20	6	4	4	1	1	1	0
Photos of church members	2	4	4	8	4	8	4	3
Funny videos	2	3	2	4	9	7	7	3
Church announcements	6	7	9	3	5	2	4	1
Anaheim community information	0	0	0	1	3	6	5	22
Event recaps	2	3	5	4	7	7	7	2
Encouraging reminders and/or Bible verses	3	5	8	6	6	2	5	2
Worship clips	2	9	5	7	2	4	4	4

Q14 - Rank the following types of City Church posts in order (Gen Z Respondents)

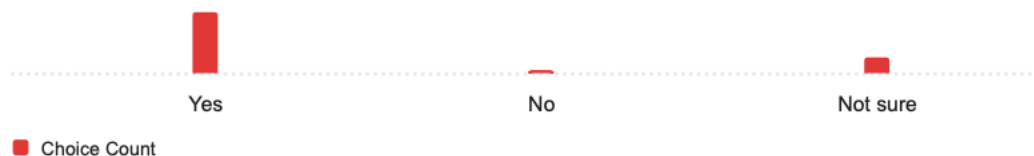


Q14 - Rank the following types of City Church posts in order (Gen Z Respondents)

Field	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sermon clips	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Photos of church members	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	0
Funny videos	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	1
Church announcements	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	0
Anaheim community information	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
Event recaps	0	1	0	0	3	0	3	0
Encouraging reminders and/or Bible verses	0	0	3	3	1	0	0	0
Worship clips	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	1

Q15 - Do you feel that the City Church Instagram account (@lovehopecity) presents an accurate representation of the church?

50



Q16 - Why or why not?

Why or why not?

It was what led me to want to join seeing them on ig watching the reels then going to the site and watching more. And more.

Shows our people and our staff in authentic moments with Christ

It keeps with the city church vibe. It's friendly and inviting.

Don't have Instagram

High priority on production and quality

In real time, not rehearsed

I love how real people at City Church are and the love they show is truly reflected in the content shown.

It shows how community based the church is.

I think the photos and videos show a wide array of the church body.

Never seen that

I love the community and love for Jesus

Accurate and inclusive of everything that's going on

there's so many faces i see in church that i don't see in socials

I really do not use it much.

It feels real!

Practical

I do not use instagram

I believe the Instagram Account demonstrates that the church is alive and well, which will encourage more people to attend.

Yes but wish they would post more throughout the week. I like to see members of my church and all the joyful smiles. I also wish the sermon clips would not be cut so short in mid message.

It shows real people experiencing community. But we need more youth activities to bring in the next generation of disciples! If we show how much the youth is having fun, it will encourage to the youth who do not know Jesus yet to attend. Let them know that it is free! The younger generation is searching for belonging and acceptance. It might make them interested to come. They usually have parents at home and small siblings that they could probably bring along for future events. They need to promote that all the youth activities are free and covered by the church.

Q16 - Why or why not? (Gen Z Respondents)

Why or why not?

I love how real people at City Church are and the love they show is truly reflected in the content shown.

It shows how community based the church is.

I think the photos and videos show a wide array of the church body.

there's so many faces i see in church that i don't see in socials

It feels real!

Q17 - What do you think is going well on the @lovehopecity account?

What do you think is going well on the @lovehopecity account?

Gives me updates on church events

All of it good lay out good posting.

I feel personaities portrayed are accurate no one is trying to be someone or something they are not and I appreciate the authenticity

It's warm, Inviting, and allows people to see the community of the church.

Showcasing the Sunday experience in a way that's compelling

Announcements, recaps, events

I enjoy it all

Q17 - What do you think is going well on the @lovehopecity account? (Gen Z Respondents)

What do you think is going well on the @lovehopecity account?

Love how real and engaging the posts are

I think the post are very informed for events.

Their content is user friendly

Frequent posts highlight what's going on at the church

it's always active

I love that all the videos have subtitles! There's a good range of clips!

Q18 - What would you like to see improved?

What would you like to see improved?

Nothing

Would love to see more church members on video sharing about their testimony or about their experience at City Church

Can't think of anything

Can't think of anything

I'm excited to see God continue to reach more people!

N/a

more content

Sometimes photo editing styles feel a little outdated.

More events to have new people come

Nothing needs to improve

more faces and more funny videos - the pastors are kinda funny when they want to be

I just do not see all that has been taking place at City Church.... What happened to the Women's Event?

17

I think at the end of clips, it'd be nice to have a little end screen to share where people can learn more (or bring attention to the link in bio/spotify + youtube, sermon title, etc), especially if it gets organic non-follower views! Feels more complete and less of an abrupt ending.

Bible hyperlinks

Not sure, do not use instagram

N/A

More community events

The worship team is amazing! There's no history to show how much time and effort they've put in. There's hardly any recordings of the team's FULL performance. Other churches show their worship team and they have a special name for their worship team/band. City church doesn't have one yet and is not recorded permanently to show the history and hard work that they've put in. I'm able to search other churches and type in a song. I can watch their full song being covered by their band & vocalists leading. It will play the full song that they've covered. This makes me want to pay tithes to their churches. City Church doesn't have that even though there's so much talent, but it is not captured for some reason. There are shorts/clips of partial songs, but not full songs/recordings. What made me start going to city church was listening to the worship when I first walked into the sanctuary. Praising and worshipping brings the Holy Spirit and draws more people to attend. It's great to see faces with those songs. I wish there was a way we can search "city church worship", and it will show how cool the covers are of songs that people know. All the songs that have been covered by City Church are getting lost in history. The band deserves more credit!

simple, unpolished content that relates to the reality of the people attending the church. I dont think things need to be perfect. Just relevant.

Q18 - What would you like to see improved? (Gen Z Respondents)

What would you like to see improved?

I'm excited to see God continue to reach more people!

N/a

more content

Sometimes photo editing styles feel a little outdated.

more faces and more funny videos - the pastors are kinda funny when they want to be

I think at the end of clips, it'd be nice to have a little end screen to share where people can learn more (or bring attention to the link in bio/spotify + youtube, sermon title, etc), especially if it gets organic non-follower views! Feels more complete and less of an abrupt ending.

Q19 - Would you be open to being contacted to provide further input? If so, please provide your name and your email address.

Would you be open to being contacted to provide further input? If so, please provide your name and your email address.

McKenzie.lee95@gmail.com

Robyn- robynrocca@gmail.com

Kottman42@gmail.com

Rayleen. Rayleenbarragan@gmail.com

No

714-743-1640 lanaxmin@gmail.com

Linda Ramos kidram@sbcglobal.net

no thank you

Looks like I found the Women's event hidden within a community event video. Open for further input, yes.

Kimberly McDonald: tictackim@yahoo.com

Debbie

herstdebbie@gmail.com

Of course! Debbie Schroeder -- djschroeder3@gmail.com .

yes

No thank you.

Q19 - Would you be open to being contacted to provide further input? (Gen Z Respondents)

Would you be open to being contacted to provide further input? If so, please provide your name and your email address.

Kottman42@gmail.com

Rayleen. Rayleenbarragan@gmail.com

no thank you

Q20 - Are you interested in being more involved with City Church's social media ministry? If so, please provide your name and your email address.

Are you interested in being more involved with City Church's social media ministry? If so, please provide your name and your email address.

Robyn- robynrocca@gmail.com

Rayleen. Rayleenbarrgaan@gmail.com

virginia virginiacespedes058@gmail.com

Yes lanaxmin@gmail.com Lana Min

no thank you

I am currently doing a lot of ministries, but if there are simple ways to be of help, let me know.

Not at this time, but I would love to become more involved in the future.

No thank you.

Q20 - Are you interested in being more involved with City Church's social media ministry? (Gen Z Respondents)

Are you interested in being more involved with City Church's social media ministry? If so, please provide your name and your email address.

Rayleen. Rayleenbarrgaan@gmail.com

virginia virginiacespedes058@gmail.com

no thank you

Appendix E - Promotional Reel



Scan to view!



Appendix F - Social Media Plan Presentation

City Church
Anaheim, CA

Social Media Plan



Welcome to the social media plan

This plan is going to provide suggestions on how City Church can create a sustainable social media ministry that reaches new audiences for the church.



Primary Goals



Create a sustainable social media plan for the church:

- Communication priorities
- Social calendar
- Volunteer coordination



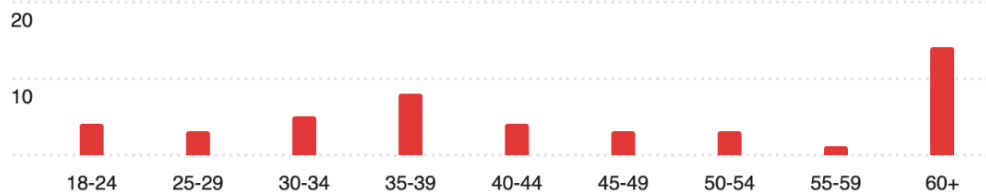
Aim to attract more members of Gen Z to the church through social content:

- Tailored messaging
- Inclusive content creation

Survey Results

Demographics

Q3 - What is your age?



anaheim

garden grove
placentia
orange
tustin
brea
costa mesa
newport beach
san Juan Capistrano
fullerton
daly city

Survey Results

Demographics

Q5 - How often do you attend City Church?



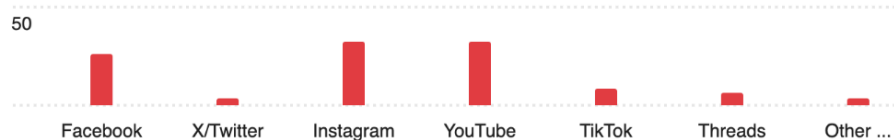
How long have you been attending City Church?

Ranged from "I just started this past Sunday" to "13 years"
 4 less than a year
 10 between one and five years
 6 over five years

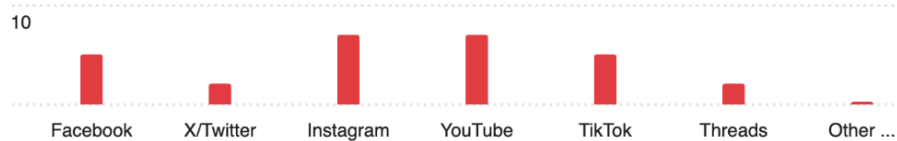
Survey Results

Social Media Use

Q7 - Which social media platforms do you use? Check all that apply. - Selected Choice



Q7 - Which social media platforms do you use? Check all that apply. - Selected Choice (Gen Z Respondents)



Survey Results

Q: What is some of your favorite content on social media?

All Respondents

- Cooking and baking
- Personal growth and inspiration
- Sermons and Bible verses
- Humor
- Live music and entertainment

Gen Z Respondents

- Cooking and baking
- Vlogging
- Humor
- Bible content
- "Wholesome" was mentioned twice
- Interviews

Survey Results

Q: What type of posts do you like seeing from City Church?

All Respondents

- Outreach and events
- Sermon clips
- Church announcements



Gen Z Respondents

- Sermon clips
- Photos of attendees they can recognize
- Reels (Post-it Notes and Hello Peace were mentioned)



Survey Results

Q: What type of posts do you want to see more of from City Church?

All Respondents

- Worship
- Encouragement
- Funny clips
- "Scripture-based reflections from pastors"
- Testimonies

Gen Z Respondents

- Event recaps
- Funny clips
- Lighthearted content
- Pastoral nuggets (Lent video was mentioned)

I would love to see random interviews with people from the church, almost like snippets of people's testimonies. Something I've been learning and reflecting on is how our testimony is truly God's testimony/story and when we share even a small portion of that with others (whether you feel like it is "big" or small) we are saying look what God has done for me and I know he can do it for you, too. A testimony is a demonstration of God's work in our lives not a list of what has happened to us.

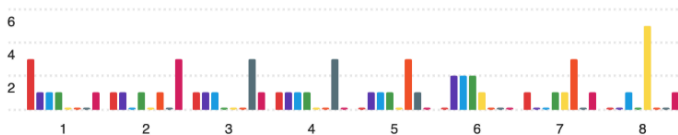
Survey Results

Ranking post types

Q14 - Rank the following types of City Church posts in order based on how important...



Q14 - Rank the following types of City Church posts in order (Gen Z Respondents)



Highlights:

Sermon clips overwhelmingly ranked first; no one ranked it last

Anaheim community information overwhelmingly ranked last; no one ranked it higher than fourth

Worship clips was the highest for second choice

Survey Results

Q: Do you feel that the City Church Instagram account presents an accurate representation of the church? Why or why not?

Q15 - Do you feel that the City Church Instagram account (@lovehopecity) presents an accurate representation of the church?

50

Accurate and inclusive

Yes

No

Not sure

not rehearsed

friendly and inviting.

community based

authentic moments with Christ

It was what led me to want to join

I love how real people at City Church are

there's so many faces i see in church that i don't see in socials

It shows real people experiencing community. But we need more youth activities to bring in the next generation of disciples! If we show how much the youth is having fun, it will encourage to the youth who do not know Jesus yet to attend. Let them know that it is free! The younger generation is searching for belonging and acceptance. It might make them interested to come. They usually have parents at home and small siblings that they could probably bring along for future events. They need to promote that all the youth activities are free and covered by the church.

Survey Results

Q: What would you like to see improved on the City Church accounts?

All Respondents

- More church members sharing testimony
- Seeing more of what's taking place at church
- More worship clips

Gen Z Respondents

- More content
- Editing feels outdated
- More faces

I think at the end of clips, it'd be nice to have a little end screen to share where people can learn more (or bring attention to the link in bio/spotify + youtube, sermon title, etc), especially if it gets organic non-follower views! Feels more complete and less of an abrupt ending.

simple, unpolished content that relates to the reality of the people attending the church. I dont think things need to be perfect. Just relevant.

Research

Research was conducted on studies about churches, social media for nonprofits, and reaching Gen Z via social content. Here are some examples of the key takeaways:

1

Teunenbroek, C., Wymer, W., & Čačija, L. N. (2025). *Fostering, Promoting, and Encouraging Philanthropy: Mechanisms to Attract Younger Generations of Donors and Volunteers.*

- Younger generations are looking for transparency from organizations they give time and money to
- They are less likely to volunteer out of religious obligation, favoring the sense of helping others or self-satisfaction as a primary motivation. Social connections and friendships are crucial motivations.
- Co-creation is important to foster a sense of belonging and genuine engagement

2

Ouyang, D., & Xie, J. (2025). *Buddhism Without Belonging: Functional and Digital Forms of Religious Engagement Among Chinese Youth.*

- Youth in China are desacralizing Buddhism, looking to traditions and practices as coping with stress, making wishes, or connecting socially rather than genuine belief.
- Digital platforms have been home to youth-led movements of interpreting Buddhist scripture and livestreaming rituals.

3

Fahad, A., Mustafa, S. E., & Luqman, M. (2025). *Religious-Political Discussion on Instagram and WhatsApp and Perception of Religion among Youths in Delhi.*

- Young people are susceptible to extremist religious views on social media because they are still shaping their views and identities.
- If they are faced with more favorable material, that could be equally as influential.
- Young people without strong religious beliefs are more likely to be swayed by the content they see on social media - positively or negatively.

4

McNeil, R. (2025, January). *Reaching Gen Z through digital platforms in 2025*

- Gen Z is prioritizing authenticity over a sales pitch.
- Highlight community impact and personal testimonies.
- Younger generations are deeply concerned about social issues and want to see how the church is creating positive impacts.

Priorities

So what's next? Here's my suggestions to guide content moving forward:

INS:

- Storytelling.
- Inclusion.
- Authenticity and transparency.

Get more people involved. Invite Rev crew to do takeovers. Add content creation to the volunteer rotation. Encourage the congregation to share their stories.

OUTS:

- Chasing social trends.
- Editing gimmicks.
- Community information.

Don't force something trendy or funny if it's not happening naturally. Don't over-rely on fancy editing tricks when simplicity would work. Keep everything focused through the lens of how the church is interacting with or impacting the community.

Priorities

So what's next? Here's my suggestions to guide content moving forward:

Post Types to Prioritize

WEEKLY	MONTHLY	WHEN NEEDED
Sermon clips	Testimony spotlight	Extended event promo
Sunday recaps	Creative reel	Event recaps
Encouragement	Pastoral deep dive	Prayer requests
	Worship highlight	

What needs doing

Add content creation into Services and start a volunteer rotation. Maybe every other week would be a good cadence. I already have a starter list of people interested from the survey. Spontaneity is good but structure is consistent.



What needs doing

Create a forum where members of the church can share how God is moving in their life. I imagine this as a Google form, with the option to be anonymous or not. It can be added to the social media linktree and a QR code could be printed in the worship folder or on a flyer. If you hear someone share something, encourage them to submit it.

8

What needs doing

Have a template for social posts that allows you to easily content bank and plug & play. Story/post templates for Bible verses, prayer requests, and testimonies.

8



Thank you!



Appendix G - Sample Form Submission

Share with us!

Let us know so we can share with others.

What has God done in your life? What is he doing now? What do you need prayer for?

Your answer _____

Would you like to remain anonymous?

☐ Yes

☐ No

[Next](#)[Clear form](#)