

**Title: Church Websites 101: Set Goals**

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Summary: If you don't know where you're going, you'll never get lost. And you'll never get to the places!

Setting goals is all about knowing where you're going and knowing when to get there. You've probably heard about S.M.A.R.T. goals - now is the time to put them to work. Goals must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound. Let's see how that applies to your church and the strategy you are developing.

This additional step away from the technology for a bit, because it is actually more difficult to master than the technology.

Around New Year, everyone (Almost everyone. Some people. A few people.) makes resolutions, or goals, or a wish list. A typical resolution sounds something like, "I am going to lose 3 pounds." They rush ahead with great intentions, excited to start their soon efforts fade and the resolutions become a thing of the past.

Let's do a quick overview of the differences between goals, strategies, objectives, and tactics.

**Goals** are the broad outcomes

**Strategies** are the approaches you will take

**Objectives** are the measurable steps to achieve the strategies

**Tactics** are the tools you will use and how you will use them

Let's look at the resolution to lose weight. Losing weight is an outcome. "I will live a healthier lifestyle" Or, "I will improve my quality of life."

Do you even have goals for your online ministry? What are they? Who knows? What is keeping you focused on them? Some of the more common goals I've seen are:

*We will post the bulletin on the website every week*

*We will upload the sermon audio/video/notes by Monday every week*

*We want 100 subscribers to our devotional emails in the next 100 days*

*Be the first search result for \_\_\_\_.*

There is nothing wrong with having this kind of list - the items are action-oriented, measurable, reasonable, and have a deadline. But, these are objectives and tactics, not goals.

What would some goals for church websites look like?

Be the top resource for \_\_\_ in our community (or around the world)  
Help our community grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ  
Go, teach, lead  
Extend our community to the other 6 days

Ambiguous, aren't they? Not what you're accustomed to setting. But, these are some of the most powerful statements you can make for your church website. Are any of these measurable? Do they have a deadline? No. In our new view of the world, they are not S.M.A.R.T.

For those that are analytical (like me), numbers and metrics drive a lot of decisions. I went back and take a wider look at my goals and how I measure them. Here's a list of goals (necessary when trying to meet your goals) that often get mistaken for goals.

More 1st time visits,  
more repeat visits,  
higher repeat frequency,  
longer time on site,  
more pages visited,  
more visits to a specific page,  
more visits from (search, direct, referral),  
more 'Likes',  
more 'Shares' and Tweets,  
more bookmarks,  
more back links,  
faster page loads

As you work through your goals, ask how each of these fit into achieving your overall goals first.

What goals do you have for your church website?

Also in the series:

[Easy, Not Simple](#)  
[Fix the Easy Stuff](#)

.Not Always Easy, But Should Be.