



Websites & blogs

a foundation of answers to questions before you begin or revise a church website or blog

.....part of website & blog series

from yvon prehn

www.effectivechurch.com

Why do websites and blogs in your church

- Expected today for
 - Basic information
 - Current & correct
- In depth information
 - For the church overall
 - For events
 - Learning
- Most important
 - To fully fulfill the Great Commission
 - Acts 1:8: You will be my witness . . . to the ends of the earth



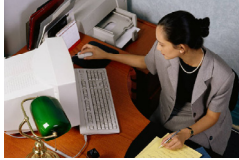
How to be a witness?

- Today.... Search Engines
- How can they find you through search engines?
- Address? or
- Faith, salvation, Jesus, the meaning of life, and community—



Why no church sites come up

- Few churches have this content on their sites
- But the **CONTENT** is in the church office in:
 - Sermons
 - Devotions
 - Articles
- Get it on your site with a system that makes it easy to add **CONTENT**—theme of this presentation & my approach



Content-Centric Container: Website or blog or both?

- **Website:** usually more complex, overview
- **Blog:** often one column, viewpoint
 - Started as a “web log”
 - Now journalism of all sorts
- “**Blogging software**” can be used to create a website



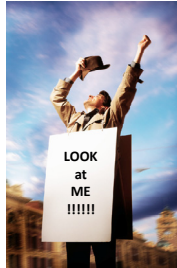
Why you might want more than one for your church

- **Expand a current website**
 - Ministries within church
 - Age groups, e.g. youth, missions
 - Pastor/staff
- **For seasonal content**
 - Provide Links to Answers



Some of the biggest misconceptions about websites and blogs for churches and ministries

- That how it looks is most important
- That images mean the same things to everyone
- That it has to be “cool”
- That only young geeks can create great sites

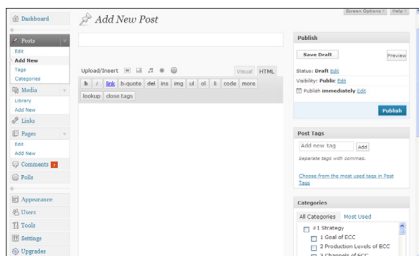


Reality, not misconceptions

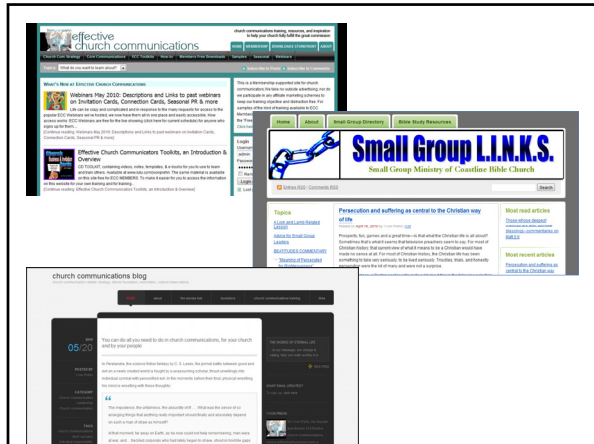
- **PRIMARY** value in **CONTENT**
 - That is easy to access
 - That is current and relevant
 - That answers questions, meets needs
 - *Creativity and looks can distract*
- **ANYONE** can create an excellent **CONTENT-centric** website or blog if:
 - You can use a computer
 - Know how to do word-processing
 - You have something to share



Simple content addition




Consider: *Blogging for Boomers –part of this series.*




The two primary ways to create websites

- Software in the office, load up to website
 - FrontPage
 - Dreamweaver
 - HTML build
- CMS—Content Management Systems
(confusion with Church Management Systems)



A Content Management System

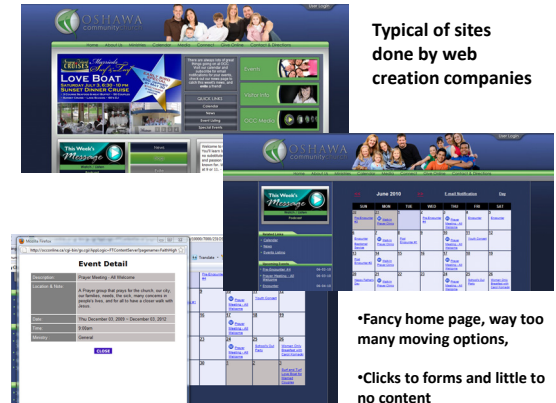
- Contrast with one created in church office by one person, this one hosted by a company elsewhere
- Can have anyone anywhere
 - Contribute
 - Comment
- Or not
- WordPress, Joomla, Drupal
- e-zekiel and all the for-sale services for churches are CMS systems, many built on WordPress



Hiring a paid company vs. you doing it

- Pro if a paid company...
 - You don't have to do it
- Con:
 - You have to pay for it
 - Design: few hundred to \$3,000 to over \$10,000
 - Hosting and Services: \$19 to \$199
 - Always dependant
 - Cookie cutter look
 - ***Limited content
 - You don't learn anything





Typical of sites done by web creation companies

- Fancy home page, way too many moving options,
- Clicks to forms and little to no content

If you do it

- Pro if you do it yourself
 - You'll spend less, can be NOTHING! FREE!
 - You learn how websites work
 - **communication language today**
 - You won't be afraid to add material
 - You'll have a more personalized site, no cookie cutter
 - You will feel/be empowered!
- Con
 - It takes time, commitment
 - But it is SO worth it!



Pros and cons of doing it yourself or with a team

- Just you—not a great idea, no back-up
- A team
 - You need someone in charge, Administrator, web-servant
 - Need a team to update it, keep current, add content
 - Changes, updates made by those responsible



What you need to have in place before you begin or revise them

- Content
 - What do you want to do with your site? Unlimited depth.
 - Make it more than a yellow page ad with pictures
 - *Your church: ministries, message, passion*
 - *Personality of church, audience or ministry*



Preview systems

- Different systems handle content in different ways
- If you fit **CONTENT** into a system it will save you a **HUGE** amount of time and money
- You may not get all you want, but you can create and maintain it



Weigh options carefully, you'll live with them for a long time.

Your choice



\$10,818,
plus hosting
& service

\$8,800 plus
hosting &
service



Or WordPress.com: 94 FREE Templates & hosting FREE, almost unlimited options



Andreas04

A three-column silver and blue theme with two sidebars on the right.

Tags: [gray](#), [three columns](#), [flexible width](#)



Andreas09

A three-column theme with customizable colors and sidebars on the left and right.

Tags: [gray](#), [three columns](#), [gray](#), [custom colors](#), [flexible width](#)



Banana Smoothie

A smooth two-column theme adorned with a banana. Very personal.

Tags: [two columns](#), [fixed width](#), [yellow](#)



Benevolence

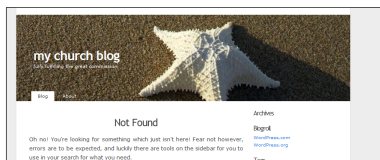
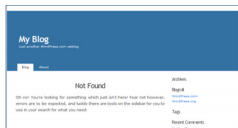



Black LetterHead



Blix

Custom header

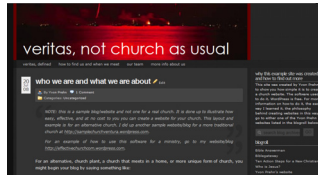




<http://samplechurchventura.wordpress.com/>

Sample sites, created, hosted for FREE

For very little cost, many additional features, including media of all sorts can be added.



<http://samplenotchurchasusual.wordpress.com/>

My favorite & strongest recommendation

- **WordPress**
- Next webinar: in-depth overview of WordPress, the two versions:
 - .com
 - .org





Final Review of foundational thoughts on Website and Blog creation

- We have the words (CONTENT) of eternal life
- We must focus on sharing content
- We need to be a good stewards of resources in money and people to do that
- There are cost-effective ways to create effective websites
- Collect, focus on CONTENT development
- Pray for wisdom & peace in implementation



from yvon prehn

**Lots of additional resources
on
Website & Blog
theory and creation
at:
www.effectivechurchcom.com
become a member
to benefit from all that is there!**
