

A Church Leader's Guide to the Best of the Online Social Galaxy

There are lots of ways to invest your time and resources in social media. We created this guide to help understand how you can BEST leverage these sites to accomplish your mission. **March 2010**



Good	OK	Not So Much
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Website	Communication with Adherents	Creating Community	Learning Environments	Church Brand Exposure	Traffic to Your Website/Blog	Getting Found via Search	Mgmt. Tools
<p>twitter</p> <p>This is a real time microblogging site that enables users to send 'tweets', or messages of 140 characters or less</p>	Great way to communicate in real time with short bursts. Especially for prayer, event reminders, encouragement and brief insights.	Little mixed here. Can create a sense of connection and provide sneak peeks into people's lives, quick notes, or updates. Not very deep.	Due to the brief and real time nature of the site it does not lend to much, but can link to blogs, sites or other environs that do.	Provides a unique opportunity for Web site integration and to engage with people in a viral way, helping you stand out.	Potential can be huge, but promotion is an art form—need to balance marketing with personal insights and value sharing.	Value to helping search engines find your website is limited, but tweets will rank high in search results—good for ranking your profile name.	Hootsuite, SocialOomph
<p>facebook</p> <p>A social networking site where users can add friend, send messages and build their own profile, share videos and pictures</p>	Great for engaging people who are connected to the church and want to connect with other attendees, events and interact with each other.	This site provides the means to connect, engage with, and really see more into people's lives than most other sites.	Site has a note feature and you can post video and pictures people can interact around, but it is not really set up for it.	Fan pages are great for brand exposure. You can increase exposure through the ad platform, or hire a consultant to help.	Provides a good social on-ramp for your website and can lead people who are curious. Not a huge generator.	Not so much, aside from blogs picking up and featuring your posted links. However FB is becoming a big search leader.	Hootsuite, SocialOomph
<p>LinkedIn</p> <p>A social networking site for business professionals</p>	Not the primary focus, but engaging and connecting professionals in your church is possible.	Provides a group feature that would allow professionals who attend to connect and communicate around business issues.	Has forums and discuss groups, but is not really the place to engage people deeply in "religious" discussions.	Great for personal branding and demonstrating a connection to your professional community. A complete profile could strengthen your reputation.	Not likely to bring any significant traffic to your site. Though you never know who those few visits might be from.	Extremely high page rank—almost guaranteed on the first page of search results—especially for your name.	Hootsuite
<p>YouTube Broadcast Yourself™</p> <p>A video sharing website where users can share and upload new videos</p>	Good way to communicate creatively and visually to adherents, not so much as a dialogue.	You can build subscribers to your channel and it allows for some comments on your videos, but not much additional interaction.	Entertain or inform, or both, video is a powerful channel for quickly engage people and a great way to get your message out there.	This is a powerful branding tool. Build your channel, promote via local high-traffic sites, and brand your videos.	Traffic stays with the videos. Add a hyperlink in the video description or creating a channel can bring some traffic back to the site.	Good for building links back to your site because videos rank high. Also a good way to build brand exposure.	
<p>flickr</p> <p>An image and video hosting website where community members can share and comment</p>	Good place to share event photos and share with adherents.	Helps connect people especially around event or people photos.	Not really a forum for education, but certainly can tell visual stories with good photos	Connecting with other churches and group may give the church more visibility, but not so much.	This site has not shown a high click through rate even when photos get lots of views.	Highly findable via search engines, and page ranks. Images tend to rank higher in Google Images.	