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Bulletin boards

Bulletin boards: Every church has them – few churches use them to maximum effectiveness.

Recently, I had an opportunity to visit with a friend of mine in the outdoor advertising business. We began talking about all the “things to know” concerning billboards and the design of the posters. I found it to be fascinating. That discussion got me thinking about the similarities between church bulletin boards and billboards. Within the context of this type advertising, here are thoughts for a church to consider regarding its bulletin boards.

Know your traffic. Bulletin boards depend on foot traffic and you should understand the doors most often used by church members. Also, it’s good to know which corridors and stairwells are used, too. Don’t guess. Recruit volunteers who are willing to sit at external doors for two or three consecutive Sundays. Ask these volunteers to be at doorways before people arrive and as all people leave. It may require several hours of service. Record incoming and outgoing traffic counts by the hour. You can enhance this research with a similar survey for midweek activities. Further, researchers can note the age demographic per entrance. Can you determine entrances most likely used by families with babies, senior adults or teenagers?

If you have large, complicated floor plans, you will want to expand this research to include traffic counts for hallways and stairwells.

Knowing your traffic patterns, by specific groups, at specific times, will help you place bulletin boards in their best location and will help in the design of bulletin boards for key audience groups.

Locate your bulletin boards. Locate the bulletin boards in high-traffic areas. Locate bulletin boards on interior walls near external doors, in key hallways, in stairwells, and in restrooms. (Your restrooms are among the most used facilities on the property). Ideally, you want bulletin boards located where people will walk toward them. Do not locate bulletin boards on hallway walls, where people walk beside them. You want people walking directly toward your bulletin boards.

In placing the boards, it is a good time to ensure the boards are a consistent size. It’s pretty distracting to have a large bulletin board in one place, midsize boards in others, and very small boards in still others. I recommend a midsize board that can be easily designed.

Design consistency. Based on the church calendar, create standard designs for your bulletin boards, planning to change them out every six weeks. Design themes might promote new ministry, special church events or a call to support offerings or campaigns.

Sketch design themes on paper. Use markers or crayons to capture the colorful look of the boards. Keep the designs simple. Use no more than seven words, think about a

creative design border, use 2-3 colors, push people to act in some way, and promote the website for more information. Transfer the designs, on paper, to the bulletin boards.

Calendar the designs through a 12-month schedule and note the specific change dates for the boards. The goal is to strategically use the boards to promote upcoming church ministry, and to use a consistent theme throughout the board locations. This drives home the message and reinforces communication through other means like the church website or newsletter.

Aside from this design strategy, specific and separate boards can be created for youth or children's ministry areas as needed.

Recruit volunteers. Recruit volunteers to help with design and change-outs. <^><