Making a Lasting “First Impression”
Does Your Church Meet the Challenge?

“No Second Chance”
“We never have a second chance to make a FIRST IMPRESSION”

The Focus
The things that happen outside the worship center and educational facilities are every bit as important as the things that happen inside. The strength of first impressions directly correlates to the value your church places on these areas. It is imperative that all efforts to create a great first impression also align with the missions, vision and values of your church.

The General Questions
1. What is your Church’s Mission?
2. Can you state your church vision in ten words or less?
3. What defines your church?
4. How will you know when your church is successful?
5. What specific group of people are you trying to reach?
6. What experience do you want for your guests on campus?
7. What would you like for them to talk about on Monday?
8. What is the layout of your campus and church buildings?
9. How could improvements allow guests easier access to your facilities?

The Evaluation

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___  ___  Is the Mission and Purpose clearly stated?
___  ___  Has the Mission and Purpose been applicable to members?
___  ___  Do you think the Mission and Purpose will be evident to guests when they arrive?
___  ___  Do the defining qualities of your church show through your membership?
___  ___  Do the defining qualities of your church show through your facilities?
___  ___  Do you feel you are a successful church?
___  ___  Do you feel you have the resources to be successful?
___  ___  Do you feel your present location helps your success?
___  ___  Do you reach people with the gospel?
___  ___  Do they return several times before joining?
___  ___  Do they visit once and inquire about activities?
___  ___  Do you have a guest follow-up process?
___  ___  Do your members respond positively to guests?
___  ___  Do guests inform you of their likes/dislikes?
___  ___  Do you ask them to respond to a questionnaire?
___  ___  Totals for this Section
First Impressions

Yes  No

Does your church have a Web site?
Does the Web site stay current changing weekly?
Is there a visual map to direct guests to your church on the web-site?
Do you advertise in the newspaper?
Does your church invest in billboard marketing?
Does your church have directional signage leading to the campus from at least one mile away?
Do you have on-campus directional signage?
Do you have guest parking?
Do you have paved parking?
Do you have an inclement weather arrival canopy?
Do you have parking lot monitors/greeters/security?
Do they open the car doors and welcome guests?
Have you considered golf cart shuttles for overflow parking?
Does your parking lot accommodate one car for every two seats in the worship center?
Do you offer valet parking for guests?
Can guests visually recognize their best entrance from their parking location?
Do you have greeters at all doors to welcome them in?
Do you have a Guest Welcome Station?
Do you have greeters and guest receptionists to orientate guests to educational/worship locations?
Do you have a map and directory of your facilities?
Do you have guest information packets?
Do you offer refreshments to your guests?
Do your guests meet staff/key leadership immediately?
Is your facility well marked to all entrance areas?
When small children arrive, is there a greeter specialized in their age group?
A child in grade school?
A youth?
Are parents taken first to their children’s areas, then orientated to their adult area?
Are parents given the room numbers their children are placed in with a campus map and clear instructions on reconnecting with their children?
Are church members assigned to guests to escort and inform throughout the time?
Is the welcome experience upon entering the worship center equal to the guest welcome center?
Do you help assure Child Security to your guests?
Are your preschool, children, and youth leaders screened?
Do you have a Parent-Child Security identification system in place?
Are members trained to connect with guests in the worship service by sharing with the guests how God is working in their life and how the church is a resource for their spiritual development?

Are office personnel professionally dressed for weekday visits?

Are phones answered with a personal/human greeting?

Are voice message systems easily navigable?

Are printed materials well presented?

Are printed pieces mailed to guests and marginal attendees as well as church members?

**Totals for this Section**

### Exterior First Impressions

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Does your signage direct first time visitors to a specific location?

Does your signage direct guests and members to all options for parking (guest/handicapped, etc.)?

Does your signage include church logos and style printing that matches other church identities?

Is your parking lot paved?

Does your parking lot have curbs and is well marked?

Does your parking lot have shrubs/trees/flowers?

Are walkways from parking lot to facilities easy to see from the parking spaces?

Are there directional signs to help guests enter the facilities they need (office, worship center, restrooms, etc.)?

Is the landscaping healthy and well kept?

Is there ample and appropriate lighting to secure safe entrance to all facilities?

Does the church facilities appear clean of mold, mildew, and dirt?

Does the church have a fresh paint and window cleaned appearance?

Are the doors clean (glass and painted)?

Are the doors easy to open?

Is there carpet or mats outside and inside to assure safe footing upon entrance?

Are entrances well lighted outside and inside?

Does the outdoor sign look inviting and if it’s changeable, is it changed weekly?

Are all walkways free of low limbs and branches?

Are all walkways level and free of holes and cracks?

**Totals for this Section**

### Interior First Impressions

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Do you provide printed information to all guests to help them navigate your facilities?

Is the signage for directions located both at eye level and overhead?
Are all rooms numbered and do they correspond with the map?
Is the lighting bright enough to see the map and the signage?
Are restrooms readily available, well marked, clean and attractive?
Are the floors, walls and ceilings well maintained?
Do you use video monitors or kiosks to help inform guests (and members)?
Do you provide ATM service for everyone?
Are public areas free of stacked chairs, tables, etc.?
Are multi-dimensional displays set up and tied to events or emphasis?
Do the color schemes of your interior reflect relevance to a discerning guest?
Are stairwells clear (not used for storage)?
Are bulletin boards current and orderly?
Are hallways adjacent to worship center equipped with speakers piping in the services taking place?
Are offices neat and orderly?
Are bathrooms inspected regularly during peak times when guests are on campus?

**Totals for this Section**

**Sections Totals**

- The Evaluation
- First Impression
- Exterior Impression
- Interior Impression
- Total

**Evaluations**

- 90% + (80 + yes) = Good *First Impressions*
- 65%-89% (58-79 yes) = Fair *First Impressions*
- 50%-64% (44-57 yes) = Marginal *First Impressions*
- 49% - (43-0 yes) = IMMEDIATE ATTENTION NEEDED

**Think about the first seven minutes of opportunities. . . .**

1. A church has the first seven minutes of arriving on campus to impress the driver and passengers with signage and welcome.
2. A church has the first seven minutes, once entering the facilities, to impress the guests with a personalized welcome by several church members and assimilate them in their classroom or pew.
3. A church has the first seven minutes in the worship experience to impress the guest with a warm and sincere tone of worship and interaction with God.
4. A church has the first seven minutes in the website experience to impress the guest (prospect) with easy navigation of the site and current relevant information they need to explore the opportunities of involvement.
5. A church has the first seven minutes in a follow-up visit/contact to impress the guest to return and explore further the qualities of the church experience, or the need for a salvation experience.

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