Touchstone
Best Practices to Expand Your Reach

Prison Fellowship International

Best Practice (BP) | Best practices are specific, discrete ministry activities that measurably increase program scale, effectiveness, and/or efficiency, and can be replicated by other National Ministries. Best practices should be supported by evidence (data).

BP#8: Develop a Digital Presence

Benefits:

Digital presence is our shop window through which the world gets to know us. Developing a digital presence has the potential to grow your ministry. Having new mediums to tell the story of your ministry and those you serve could lead to increased profile, volunteer applications, donations, and growing your network. A digital presence means that you can regularly update your content and keep your message fresh.

Planning Considerations (*How* to do it):

1. Establish the end goal of each web page and each social media post.
- What do you want to accomplish?
- What do you want the end-user to do?

2. Review the following resources from PFI:
- [Optimizing digital communications – a quick guide to the essentials](#)
- [Marketing prison ministry – an alternative way of thinking about communicating our work](#)
- [Online payments – a quick guide](#)

3. Create a plan for your website
- What information do you want to display?
- How will users interact with the site?
- How will the most relevant/helpful content be prioritized on the site?

4. Determine on which social media platforms you will develop a presence.

5. Determine what audiences are likely to connect with your digital presence and design and write with them in mind.

6. Develop content.

• Solicit stories of volunteers, prisoners, pastors, etc., that have had contact with your ministry.

• Incorporate facts and statistics to give context to prisoners' challenges in your country.

• Tell the story of how your organization meets the need.

• Incorporate a volunteer application form.

• Incorporate a secure method to accept donations online.

7. Ask for help.

• Engage volunteers, community members, and tech-savvy people in the process. Ask them to give you feedback as you build out content.

8. Optimize the content.

• Make sure that it is easily accessible and fits the format of the digital medium.

9. Utilize your existing network to tag your posts, send links to contacts, etc.

10. Take your time developing your presence, remembering that you do not have to do it all simultaneously.

• Thinking through how someone would engage with each medium will help your launch to be successful and give it the best chance of being productive.

11. Create a schedule to update content.

• Stale content will stall momentum.

• If you cannot regularly post on social media sites, it is better not to have them.

• If you have limited time, then focus on one – probably Facebook would be the best option.

12. Create content that people will want to share; offer something that people will find valuable.

13. Assign someone to check any forms of feedback – comments to the website, direct messages in social media, questions that tag your organization – and respond in a timely fashion.

14. Measure results using analytics and adjust accordingly.

Required Resources (What you *need* to do it):

1. Human Resources.

• Someone will be required to plan and create a digital presence.

• Someone will need to create content in-line with the goals of the digital presence.

• Someone will need to regularly update the site used.

• Someone will need to engage stakeholders to solicit feedback in the design process.

• Someone will need to respond to feedback.

2. Systems.

• You need to determine where your website will be hosted.

• You will need to determine what systems will be used for donations.

3. Collateral.

• Adding digital presence address to print materials.

3. Time.

• Planning and creating a website.

• Updating content.

• Reviewing metrics and executing any changes.

4. Space. You will need space to hold meetings.

5. Cost. The cost varies. Considerations include hosting, software purchases, launch materials.