

STAGE: WITNESS

ONLINE EVANGELISM

BEST PRACTICES — COMPREHENSIVE EXPANDED EDITION

Real Testimonies. Radical Transformations.

Platform Strategies, Content Calendars, Digital Discipleship, and Scaling Your Gospel Reach

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Online Evangelism Best Practices

Complete Guide to Digital Outreach: Strategic Social Media Evangelism, Platform-Specific Content, Digital Discipleship, and Reaching the Connected World. A comprehensive blueprint for effective online evangelism — including platform strategies, content calendars, engagement tactics, digital discipleship, and scaling your Gospel reach across all major social media platforms. For churches doing digital outreach, Christian leaders building online presence, content creators sharing faith, and anyone wanting to reach people where they actually are — online.

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INTRODUCTION

Why Online Evangelism Matters

Here's the reality: **Where people are online is where the Gospel needs to reach them.**

In 2025:

- 96% of evangelicals use social media
- 4.6+ billion people use social media globally
- Most people now encounter faith online before in church
- Digital evangelism is no longer optional — it's essential

The Great Commission doesn't pause online.

"Go and make disciples of all nations. — Matthew 28:19"

That includes digital nations. Every platform is a mission field.

The Digital Reality

Current statistics:

- Facebook: 2.7 billion monthly active users
- YouTube: 2.5 billion+ monthly active users
- Instagram: 1.2 billion monthly active users
- TikTok: 700+ million monthly active users
- 58% of evangelicals believe social media is more harmful than helpful

But the issue isn't social media itself — it's **who's using it.**

If Christians abandon social media, it becomes a space of darkness without light. If Christians engage strategically, it becomes a channel of Gospel influence.

The Opportunity

Social media offers unprecedented opportunities:

- **Direct Access:** Reach people in their pockets, not requiring them to come to you
- **Relationship Building:** Create genuine connections before asking them to believe
- **Story Sharing:** Testimonies travel further online than in person
- **Community:** Build virtual communities that strengthen faith
- **Accessibility:** Remove barriers for people to encounter the Gospel
- **Authenticity:** Real people sharing real faith resonates more than institutions

PART ONE — FOUNDATIONS OF DIGITAL EVANGELISM

Understanding Digital Culture

Digital culture has its own rules:

- **Speed:** Information travels instantly
- **Authenticity:** Fake resonates poorly; real connects powerfully
- **Community:** People crave belonging
- **Visual:** Images and video dominate
- **Participatory:** People want to engage, not just consume
- **Personalized:** Generic doesn't work; personal does

To evangelize digitally, you must understand digital culture.

Biblical Basis for Online Evangelism

2 Timothy 2:2:

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”

Paul established principle of passing truth through multiple generations across multiple channels. Online is simply a new channel.

1 Corinthians 9:22:

“I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.”

Paul's principle of cultural adaptation applies to digital spaces. Online evangelism is cultural adaptation, not compromise.

Meeting People Where They Are

Jesus model:

- **Woman at the well:** He went to the well (her location)
- **Tax collector in tree:** He looked up (unexpected place)
- **Disciples on shore:** He got in the boat (their workplace)

Jesus met people in their space, not always by making them come to His.

Online evangelism applies the same principle: meet people on the platforms they inhabit.

PART TWO — THE MAJOR PLATFORMS (EXPANDED)

Facebook Strategy and Best Practices

Why Facebook

Characteristics:

- Oldest major platform (established trust)
- Highest user age range
- Best for community building
- Neighborhood-based algorithm
- Strong for events and announcements
- Excellent messaging capability

Facebook Best Practices

Profile Optimization:

- Verify your church/ministry page
- Complete all sections (about, website, hours)
- Use clear profile and cover photo
- Enable messaging
- Add church address (for local targeting)

Content Strategy:

- Post 1–2x daily (not more, or algorithm deprioritizes)
- Mix content types (video, image, text)
- Live Stream weekly or monthly
- Encourage comments (Facebook prioritizes engagement)
- Use calls-to-action (“Share this,” “Comment below,” “Click link”)

Community Building:

- Respond to all comments within first hour
- Create Facebook Group for deeper community
- Host Q&A sessions
- Pin important posts to top
- Create events for all gatherings

Sample Facebook Content Calendar

Day	Content	Time	Format
Monday	Motivation/encouragement	8 AM	Graphic + caption
Tuesday	Question/discussion	12 PM	Text with call-to-action
Wednesday	Worship/praise	6 PM	Video
Thursday	Testimony/story	10 AM	Photo/carousel
Friday	Event reminder	4 PM	Announcement
Saturday	Announcement	9 AM	Link/details
Sunday	Service/celebration	10 AM	Live stream

Instagram Strategy and Best Practices

Why Instagram

Characteristics:

- Younger demographic (85% of under-30 evangelicals use it)
- Highly visual platform
- Stories provide daily connection
- Reels algorithm priority (competes with TikTok)
- Strong for behind-scenes authenticity

Instagram Best Practices

Profile Setup:

- Clear profile photo (logo or leader)
- Bio with call-to-action (“DM for prayer requests”)
- Link in bio (use Linktree or equivalent)
- Consistent visual theme
- Contact information

Content Strategy:

- **Reels:** 3–4 per week (algorithmic priority)
- **Stories:** Daily (shows consistency)
- **Feed posts:** 2–3 per week
- **Captions:** Deep, thoughtful (Instagram audience reads)
- **Hashtags:** 20–30 relevant ones

Storytelling:

- Behind-the-scenes content

- Day-in-the-life posts
- Personal connection photos
- Vulnerable moments
- Ministry impact stories

YouTube Strategy and Best Practices

Why YouTube

Characteristics:

- Second largest search engine (after Google)
- Highest watch time
- Best for longer-form content
- Testimonies perform exceptionally well
- Highly searchable
- Builds long-term authority

YouTube Best Practices

Channel Optimization:

- Complete channel description
- Professional banner image
- Clear profile picture
- Organized playlists
- Custom links
- Community tab engagement

Content Strategy:

- Upload weekly (consistency matters)
- Thumbnail optimization (bright, contrasting colors)
- Title optimization (first 60 characters crucial)
- Description with timestamps and links
- End screens with calls-to-action
- Playlists for organization

Recommendation Strategy:

- 30–40 second hook (first 30 seconds critical)
- Captions/subtitles (50% watch with sound off)
- Pattern interrupts (keep viewers watching)
- Clear call-to-action at end

- Subscribe prompt (early and often)

TikTok Strategy and Best Practices

Why TikTok

Characteristics:

- Fastest growing platform
- Under-40 demographic dominance
- Viral potential highest
- Algorithm favors discovery (not just followers)
- Short-form video native
- Trend-based content thrives

TikTok Best Practices

Content Strategy:

- Hook in first 3 seconds (make them watch full video)
- Niche focus (too broad fails)
- Trends are your friend (use trending sounds)
- Post 1–2x daily for growth
- Use captions and text overlays
- Authentic over polished

Gospel Content on TikTok:

- Life advice from biblical principles
- Relatable Christian struggles
- Felt-needs first, Gospel second
- Humor that's appropriate
- Testimonies of real change
- Short Bible teaching
- Prayer content
- Q&A format

Critical: Don't preach. Don't be preachy. Connect first, Gospel second.

LinkedIn for Gospel Influence

Why LinkedIn

Characteristics:

- Professional audience
- Thought leadership platform
- B2B network
- Older demographic (but growing)
- Perfect for faith-in-work content
- Strong for partnerships

LinkedIn Best Practices

Content:

- Vulnerability about faith and work
- Leadership lessons from Jesus
- Professional challenges from Christian perspective
- Articles (200+ word posts)
- Your story professionally told
- Industry-faith intersection

Platform Selection Guide

Choose based on:

Goal	Platform	Why
Reach most people	Facebook	Largest and most diverse
Reach young people	TikTok	Viral potential, youth demographic
Build long-term	YouTube	Searchable, builds authority
Daily connection	Instagram	Stories, Reels for consistency
Thought leadership	LinkedIn	Professional, influential
Testimonies	YouTube	Best format for full stories
Quick tips	TikTok/Reels	Best short-form format
Community building	Facebook Groups	Designed for community
Real-time events	Facebook Live	Best streaming quality

PART THREE — CONTENT STRATEGY (EXPANDED)

Types of Evangelism Content

1. Testimonies

- **Power:** Personal story beats preaching
- **Format:** Video, written, interview
- **Frequency:** 1–2x per week
- **Best Platform:** YouTube, Instagram

2. Bible Teaching

- **Power:** Direct Word of God
- **Format:** Short teaching, explanation, context
- **Frequency:** 2–3x per week
- **Best Platform:** YouTube, TikTok

3. Inspiration/Encouragement

- **Power:** Meets emotional need
- **Format:** Quote graphic, video, story
- **Frequency:** Daily
- **Best Platform:** Instagram, Facebook

4. Questions/Discussion

- **Power:** Creates engagement
- **Format:** Ask question, wait for response
- **Frequency:** 2–3x per week
- **Best Platform:** Facebook, Instagram Stories

5. Educational Content

- **Power:** Provides value
- **Format:** How-to, explanation, tutorial
- **Frequency:** Weekly
- **Best Platform:** YouTube, TikTok

6. Behind-the-Scenes

- **Power:** Builds authenticity and connection
- **Format:** Video, photo series, story
- **Frequency:** 2–3x per week

- **Best Platform:** Instagram Stories, TikTok

7. Humor/Relatable Content

- **Power:** Builds connection through shared experience
- **Format:** Meme, funny video, relatable moment
- **Frequency:** 3–4x per week
- **Best Platform:** Instagram, TikTok, Facebook

8. Prayer Content

- **Power:** Meets spiritual need directly
- **Format:** Guided prayer video, prayer request, group prayer
- **Frequency:** 2–3x per week
- **Best Platform:** YouTube, Instagram Stories

Creating Shareable Content

Shareable content has these elements:

1. Emotional Impact

- Makes people feel something
- Joy, hope, inspiration, humor
- Touches the heart

2. Relatability

- People see themselves
- “That’s my struggle”
- “I needed to hear this”

3. Value

- Provides something useful
- Wisdom, encouragement, information
- Worth sharing with others

4. Clarity

- Simple message
- Easy to understand
- Doesn’t require context

5. Authenticity

- Real, not polished
- Genuine, not corporate

- Human, not institutional

Sermon Repurposing

Your pastor spends hours preparing — make it last!

Repurposing Timeline

Sunday, Sermon Delivery:

- Live stream sermon
- Record video

Monday:

- Post full sermon video
- Create 2–3 key quote graphics
- Write blog post summary

Tuesday:

- Post key quote as image
- Create short clip (30–60 seconds)
- Encourage sharing

Wednesday:

- Post another quote
- Create discussion question
- Link to full sermon

Thursday:

- “Next steps” post
- How to apply
- Call to action

Friday:

- Behind-scenes photo from sermon
- Personal connection
- Teaser for next week

PART FOUR — CONTENT CALENDAR CREATION

Purpose and Benefits

A content calendar:

- Ensures consistency
- Reduces decision fatigue
- Allows scheduling
- Balances content types
- Aligns with ministry goals
- Prevents last-minute scrambling

Monthly Planning

Step 1: Identify Major Events

Upcoming events:

- Holidays (Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving)
- Church events (baptisms, baptisms, outreach)
- Awareness days (Mental Health Day, Disability Day, etc.)
- Sermon series themes
- Seasonal changes

Step 2: Define Content Buckets

Content categories:

- Encouragement/Inspiration
- Bible Teaching
- Testimonies
- Prayer
- Community Events
- Behind-the-Scenes
- Questions/Discussion
- Educational
- Holiday/Seasonal

Step 3: Plan Weekly Themes

- **Monday:** Motivation Monday (encouragement)
- **Tuesday:** Teaching Tuesday (Bible content)

- **Wednesday:** Worship Wednesday (praise/worship)
- **Thursday:** Testimony Thursday (stories)
- **Friday:** Faith Friday (application)
- **Saturday:** Service Saturday (community/outreach)
- **Sunday:** Sunday Service/Celebration

Step 4: Create Your Calendar

Use tools:

- Google Calendar (free)
- Later (social scheduling)
- Buffer (automation)
- Hootsuite (multi-platform)
- Canva (content creation)

Sample 30-Day Content Calendar

Week 1 (October 1–7)

- **Monday 10/1:** Motivation graphic — “You are enough in Christ”
- **Tuesday 10/2:** Bible teaching — Philippians 4:13 explanation
- **Wednesday 10/3:** Worship video — 5-min worship clip
- **Thursday 10/4:** Testimony — Sarah’s story of healing (post 1/3)
- **Friday 10/5:** Discussion — “What verse sustains you?”
- **Saturday 10/6:** Community event — Food bank volunteer photos
- **Sunday 10/7:** Live stream — Sunday service (9:30 AM)

Week 2 (October 8–14)

- **Monday 10/8:** Quote graphic — “God is faithful”
- **Tuesday 10/9:** Teaching — How to pray effectively
- **Wednesday 10/10:** Encouragement — Reminder God loves you
- **Thursday 10/11:** Testimony — Sarah’s story part 2
- **Friday 10/12:** Q&A — Ask anything about faith
- **Saturday 10/13:** Behind-scenes — Team meeting photos
- **Sunday 10/14:** Live stream — Sunday service

[Continues for full month with similar patterns]

PART FIVE — ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES (EXPANDED)

Building Community

Community is built through:

1. Consistency

- Regular presence
- Predictable posting
- Reliable responsiveness

2. Authenticity

- Share real struggles
- Admit when you don't know
- Be vulnerable
- Show personality

3. Responsiveness

- Reply quickly to comments
- Ask follow-up questions
- Thank people for engagement
- Address criticism gracefully

4. Inclusivity

- Welcome all questions
- Celebrate diverse voices
- Create space for struggle
- Don't pretend perfection

Creating Dialogue

Don't broadcast. Dialogue.

Engagement Tactics

Ask Questions:

- Open-ended (not yes/no)
- Personal (about them, not you)
- Specific (not vague)
- Regular (create habit)

Respond to Comments:

- First hour matters most
- Show you read fully
- Ask follow-up
- Thank them
- Use their name

Share Struggles:

- Don't only share victories
- Talk about doubt
- Discuss challenges
- Show the journey
- Create space for honest conversation

User-Generated Content**Invite people to create:**

- Share their own testimonies
- Tag your ministry
- Use hashtag
- Submit prayer requests
- Share how content helped

Feature their content:

- Repost on your page
- Credit generously
- Make them feel valued
- Create community of creators

PART SIX — PLATFORM-SPECIFIC TACTICS

Facebook Groups for Community

Creating a Group

Purpose: Deeper community beyond page followers

Setup:

- Private or public (private for accountability)
- Clear group name
- Detailed description
- Group rules/guidelines
- Welcome post
- Pinned resources

Group Management

Daily involvement:

- Post daily question or devotional
- Welcome new members
- Facilitate discussions
- Moderate comments
- Remove spam/inappropriate

Building engagement:

- Weekly challenges
- Monthly studies
- Prayer requests
- Celebrations
- Community events

Instagram Reels Strategy

What Works on Reels

Hook in 1 second:

- Movement
- Text
- Question

- Surprising moment
- Trending sound

Content:

- Trending sounds
- Relatable moments
- How-to content
- Motivation
- Humor
- Testimonies

Best practices:

- Post 3–4x weekly
- Use captions (no sound watching)
- Calls-to-action at end
- Trend-jacking (use trending sound with your message)

YouTube Shorts vs. Long-Form

YouTube Shorts Strategy

Same as TikTok:

- Trending sounds
- Hook fast
- Vertical video
- Call-to-action
- Post frequently

Advantage: YouTube users may move to longer content

Long-Form YouTube Content

Best for:

- Testimonies (15–40 min)
- Teaching (20–40 min)
- Bible studies (30–50 min)
- Q&A (20–45 min)

Monetization: Long-form enables YouTube Partner Program

TikTok Trends and Sound Strategy

Using Trends Effectively

Don't:

- Force faith into trending sound
- Be inappropriate
- Look desperate
- Ignore context

Do:

- Find align with your message
- Use trending sound authentically
- Add unique value
- Test and iterate

Sound Library

Use:

- Trending sounds (discovery)
- Consistent sounds (branding)
- Original music (ownership)
- Relatable sounds (connection)

PART SEVEN — VISUAL AND PRODUCTION STANDARDS (EXPANDED)

Video Quality Standards

Minimum Standards

- **Resolution:** 1080p minimum
- **Frame rate:** 24–30fps
- **Audio:** Clear, no hum, balanced levels
- **Lighting:** Well-lit, no harsh shadows
- **Focus:** Sharp, crisp image
- **Aspect ratio:** Platform-specific

Phone Video Quality

If using phone:

- Clean lens
- Stable (use tripod/stabilizer)
- Good lighting (natural or artificial)
- Quiet location (no background noise)
- Horizontal for most platforms (vertical for TikTok/Stories)

Graphic Design Principles

Effective Graphics

Typography:

- Readable font
- High contrast
- Appropriate size
- Consistent style

Color:

- Your brand colors
- High contrast (readable)
- Emotional appeal
- Consistent palette

Image:

- Relevant

- High quality
- Authentic
- Attention-grabbing

Layout:

- Clear hierarchy
- Balanced composition
- White space
- Purposeful arrangement

Thumbnail Creation

YouTube Thumbnail Formula

Elements:

- Contrasting colors
- Clear face/emotion (if using people)
- Large text (readable at small size)
- Minimal text (not cluttered)
- Consistent branding

Best practices:

- Bright, saturated colors
- Facial expressions (surprise, curiosity, joy)
- Text (main idea only)
- Simple design
- A/B test different styles

PART EIGHT — DIGITAL DISCIPLESHIP (EXPANDED)

Moving Followers to Disciples

Conversion pathway:

Awareness Stage

- See content on feed
- Find you through search
- Friend recommendation

Interest Stage

- Watch multiple videos
- Follow your account
- Engage with comments

Consideration Stage

- DM you
- Attend live stream
- Join email list
- Visit website

Decision Stage

- Online conversion
- Join small group
- Visit in person
- Make commitment

Disciple Stage

- Active in community
- Serving/volunteering
- Mentoring others
- Growing spiritually

Building Discipleship Pathways

Email List:

- Collect emails
- Send weekly devotional

- Invite to events
- Share resources

Online Small Groups:

- Zoom meetings
- Discord community
- Facebook group
- Email-based study

Mentorship:

- Formal pairing
- Informal relationships
- DM conversations
- One-on-one video calls

Creating Online Small Groups

Group Format**Weekly meeting:**

- Opening prayer (5 min)
- Video watch (20 min)
- Discussion (20 min)
- Prayer requests (10 min)
- Closing prayer (5 min)

Between meetings:

- Daily prayer prompt (email)
- Discussion question (group chat)
- Scripture challenge
- Accountability check-ins

PART NINE — ANALYTICS AND METRICS

Key Metrics to Track

Reach Metrics

- **Followers:** Total audience size
- **Reach:** Unique people seeing your content
- **Impressions:** Total times content appears
- **Growth rate:** Monthly follower increase

Engagement Metrics

- **Engagement rate:** $(\text{Engagements} \div \text{Followers}) \times 100$
- **Likes/reactions:** Response to content
- **Comments:** Conversation depth
- **Shares:** Content passing value
- **Saves:** Content they want to return to

Action Metrics

- **Clicks:** Links clicked to your website
- **Website visits:** Traffic from social
- **Email signups:** Conversions to email list
- **Event attendees:** From online to in-person
- **Conversions:** Online decisions for Christ

Platform-Specific Metrics

Facebook:

- Post reach
- Video play count
- Click-through rate
- Messenger inquiries

Instagram:

- Story completion rate
- Reel plays
- Saves
- Profile visits

YouTube:

- Watch time
- Average view duration
- Click-through rate (thumbnails)
- Subscription rate

TikTok:

- Video plays
- Completion rate
- Engagement rate
- Follower growth

Data-Driven Adjustments

Monthly review:

- What content performed best?
- What time got best engagement?
- What type of posts convert?
- Which platforms drive action?
- What changed month-over-month?

Quarterly strategy adjustment:

- Pivot based on data
- Double down on what works
- Stop what doesn't
- Test new content types
- Adjust posting schedule

PART TEN — BUILDING A TEAM

Essential Roles

Content Creator/Leader:

- Oversees strategy
- Creates main content
- Community interaction

Content Coordinator:

- Manages calendar
- Schedules posts
- Organizes content

Video Editor:

- Edits video content
- Creates graphics
- Technical production

Community Manager:

- Responds to comments
- Manages messages
- Facilitates engagement

Analytics/Growth:

- Tracks metrics
- Identifies opportunities
- Suggests optimizations

Volunteer Recruitment

Seek people with:

- Passion for ministry
- Social media skill
- Consistent availability
- Attention to detail
- Communication ability

Compensation:

- Volunteers (faith-motivated)
- Stipends (thank you amounts)
- Free training/tools
- Public credit

PART ELEVEN — COMMON CHALLENGES

Low Engagement

Causes:

- Inconsistent posting
- Wrong audience
- Poor content quality
- Wrong time posting
- Algorithm changes

Solutions:

- Audit current strategy
- Post at optimal times
- Improve content
- Increase posting frequency
- Test different content types

Negative Comments

How to respond:

- Don't attack back
- Assume best intent
- Answer factual questions
- Offer grace
- Remove if hateful/spam

Prevention:

- Clear community guidelines
- Moderate proactively
- Build positive culture
- Celebrate good comments

Burnout

Signs:

- Dreading posting
- Missing deadlines

- Loss of creativity
- Resentment toward role

Solutions:

- Take planned breaks
- Share workload
- Simplify strategy
- Remember purpose
- Build in fun

PART TWELVE — SCALING YOUR REACH

Growing from 100 to 1,000

Focus: Content quality and consistency

Tactics:

- Post weekly without fail
- Optimize titles/descriptions
- Engage every comment
- Share to personal networks
- Ask for shares
- Collaborate with other creators

Timeline: 3–6 months

Growing from 1,000 to 10,000

Focus: Community and engagement

Tactics:

- Host monthly challenges
- Create community group
- Develop recurring series
- Cross-promote platforms
- Guest collaborations
- Email list building

Timeline: 6–12 months

Growing from 10,000+

Focus: Systems and partnerships

Tactics:

- Build team
- Systematize production
- Create multiple shows/series
- Strategic partnerships
- Paid advertising (targeted)
- Affiliate relationships

Timeline: Ongoing

CONCLUSION

Your Digital Evangelism Journey

Online evangelism isn't the future — it's the present.

4.6 billion people live online. The Gospel needs to reach them there.

You're not abandoning the Church. You're extending it.

You're not compromising faith. You're meeting people where they are.

The Commission is: "Go and make disciples of all nations."

That includes digital nations.

"I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. — 1 Corinthians 9:22"

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