

Here are some ways to increase the effectiveness of “Come and See” outreach events:

Planning

- Start with a big picture that has a clear mission and purpose for the ministry.
- Be able to communicate succinctly the vision for the ministry.
- Formulate a calendar of things that need to be accomplished for the ministry to go well.
- When choosing a date(s) on the calendar, gather information from school calendars, community calendars, etc. that might have bearing on your event.
- Prayerfully consider any point people, speakers, leaders that will be needed.
- Decide what logistic needs exist such as venue and technical issues.
- Decide what financial needs exist.
- Determine a point person or team from which information and decisions will flow.
- Order any necessary materials.
- Determine any person or groups that will have special responsibilities and establish communication with them.
- Create a schedule for the event and any flow charts that will aid in organization.
- Have your team dream of the desired response.
- Have the team discuss if your church has the foundational elements to meet the needs of the target audience and to continue ministering to them as they assimilate.
- Formulate follow-up procedures. Now is the time to work on follow-up, not after the event has taken place.
- Inspire and equip groups to the follow-up plan. Have them committed and ready for when the event is over to reach out to any visitors.
- Identify and train key leaders to conduct follow up.

Promotion

- Make the ministry outreach a focus of prayer. Have it on the prayer lists for several of your groups that come together to pray.
- Determine the target audiences for the ministry and how to build relationships and communicate with those particular people. In other words, establish lines of communication into target audiences.
- Decide what mass media can be used for promotion such as flyers, social media, print, announcements at various groups, website, etc.
- Build trust with those that receive your promotion. Do not overpromise and under-deliver. Do not hide intentions for the event.
- Communicate clearly the “who, when, where, what, why, and how” of the event details.
- Have all representations of your event remain consistent in theme, logos, printed materials, color schemes, etc. in order to build consistency.
- Make a schedule accessible for those considering being a part and stick to that schedule.

Implementing

- Create a team whose sole responsibility is to welcome guests, help them become acclimated, and introduce to members.
- Have proper signage to direct guests to necessary locations.
- Have parking lot hosts who know how to smile and voice directions.
- Take special care to all aspects of the building’s appearance.
- Have a program or schedule for all guests to understand happenings during the event.

- Have elements that will lighten an atmosphere for strangers such as door prizes, giveaways, refreshments, etc.
- Think through any necessary seating arrangements and how to best help guests feel welcome.
- Have volunteers (various ages and gender) ready to concentrate on guests. Consider training them in having an introductory conversation and how to highlight the ministries of your church. Make sure those volunteers know where relevant information can be found in case of questions concerning the church's ministries.
- Make name tags available for everyone. If one wears a nametag, all wear a nametag.
- Do any necessary introductions during the program not assuming that attendees will know key people.
- Determine if a gospel message will be presented and carefully detail how to handle responses including having decision materials available.
- Make sure there are good ways of gathering contact information in order to do effective follow up.
- Offer an evaluation process where members and guests can give feedback. If someone has a bad experience, you want to know about it.

Follow Up

- Discover how your church can best minister to those affected by your event. Make it a pointed effort to discover and meet needs of those particular people.
- Assign visitors to groups with which they are most naturally affiliated. Enact the plan that was formulated in the beginning to have that group follow-up.
- Have a strategy for accountability to make sure each person is doing his/her part.
- Have a "welcome" letter or email ready to be sent. Have a newsletter or church information packet ready to be sent.
- Make a rapid response team ensuring that contact is made within 48 hours.
- Offer a Discovery Class to help interested visitors understand more about your church.
- Invite guests to a "get to know us" party immediately following one of your established services.
- Celebrate the success of the outreach with your church. Have photographs, testimonies, decision information, etc. available for the church. Enthusiastically over-communicate how the church was impacted by the ministry.

For more help and ideas, contact the Church Health Team at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at 501.376.4791.