MEDIA STRATEGY HANDBOOK
FOR CHURCH PLANTERS
Evangelism, Discipleship, and Production Strategies

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The Holy Spirit works through believers to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to every person and people with the purpose to persuade the lost to come to salvation and be discipled. The effectiveness of an evangelistic, discipleship, and production media strategies depend on several factors such as:

- the media sophistication of your intended audience.
- learning preferences and decision-making processes.
- potential for reaction from groups hostile to the cause of Christ.
- varying seasonal conditions and celebrations during the year.
- access to players, power sources, and personnel.
- availability of Scripture in the heart language or at least trade language of the people.

Introduction

This handbook addresses the need for believers to respond to the Acts 1:8 Challenge to take the Good News to all peoples. The Evangelism and Discipleship Tools included in this manual provide expertise and resources that facilitate a church’s mission to their community, state, North America, and the ends of the earth. Many of the ideas and tools were designed to help churches establish an influential presence when time is limited to a matter of days or weeks.

The word “communication” encompasses more than a dozen topics—drama, research, advertising, products, hardware, software, etc. Generally, media fall into three categories: print (books, periodicals, newspaper), electronic (audio, video, digital), and traditional (drama, stories).

Media do two things very well:

1. Help people evaluate a new idea objectively and from a safe distance.  
   *Delineation, counting the cost, risk assessment, and value determination*

2. Reinforce relationships and confirm decisions made in the past. *Promote loyalty, recruit others to try it, and assist explanations for actions taken*

Media do two things poorly:
1. Push into places where they are not welcomed, endangering the sender.

*Distort viewpoints, distort biases, and jeopardize the faithful*

2. Alienate people with a media tool instead of a personal relationship

*Throw up shields, adds distance, and can inoculate against future attempts*

Witnesses and on-mission volunteers make some very important decisions. Should they work quietly with hand-to-hand distribution or in a much more mass appeal? A public launch of Christian media in a local language lends "credibility" among a people where they do not know Jesus as Savior. If a news article, magazine feature, or public figure discusses the actual title of the resource or event, then the non-Christian will likely receive the resource with fewer barriers. The authority conveyed to the new Bible translation, *JESUS film, God’s Story*, Christian radio program (or station!), or TV spot campaign will generate a new idea that will be newsworthy in the both the press and in other congregating places. Even promotion by an ad in a newspaper, poster series, or loudspeaker can carry a certain amount of “preparing the way” for receiving Christ into their culture. Among the most rural and “closed” people groups, it might be necessary to tell amazing stories that you know to establish credibility as a storyteller. If they happen to be from the God’s Word, then so much the better!

Some tools are used of the Lord to work all by themselves. A policeman in Nepal found a tract on a park bench and was saved after a school-aged child read it to him. Other tools need to work in concert to evangelize a wider number of people. A Chronological Bible Storying radio program in India was used to plant almost 1,000 new churches almost simultaneously. There are fringe people in every society that may come quickly to faith in Christ as compared to those at the very core of the culture who reject changes that the Gospel would bring. These tools all have one thing in common—they brought people together to forming into churches where they worship and mature in their walk with the Lord.

In Romans 10:14-17, Paul not only called for preachers, he also focused on the importance of "hearing" or "understanding." In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus offered no condemnation on the Sower for getting some seed among the thorns, in with some rocks, or a sprinkling strewn along the pathway. This does not mean that the Sower wasted 75% of his seeds, either! Every listener to Jesus could easily imagine a prepared field with bad patches and walkways. They would have likely assumed that the majority of the seed fell into fertile soil. The harvest of nearly one hundred times (or sixty or thirty) resulting from what was planted referred not to the actual crop, but to the additional seeds within the "fruit" which could be used for future planting.
Media that work together

An evangelistic video showing or gospel tract use reminds one of a fireworks show. The crowd stands around patiently and gives their ooohs and aaaahs. But spectators can be fickle. They expectantly wonder, “What is next?” or “What else do you have?” Marshall McLuhan is credited with saying, “The medium is the message.” Christians believe that the Holy Spirit is the one that convicts and not the manipulation of some media tool. However, the axiom is true, “The medium can affect the message.” Stated plainly, the communications tools may be used or misused.

Think river, not fireworks. When a person steps into a river, they quickly feel the flow of the current. Multiple entry points all lead the same direction. Whether far upstream or way downstream, the strength of the current varies, but the movement is in one direction.

Since media work together over time to create powerful effects, then the lost will begin to respond. The “response stream” begins as an important trickle. While some quickly entering the river are innovators (2.5%), others just seem to take forever. They are whom we label as laggards (16%). The majority are somewhere in between. Social “diffusion” models forecast that when 24% to 28% of a population segment has waded into the river of desired responses and adopted the new behavior, then the movement will become self-sustaining. Change also happens quicker among those who have nothing to lose. Leaders and others in authority are often the most resistant to change—and receiving the Gospel message. Christians can trust that everyone responds as the Holy Spirit works to convict and to save.

PART ONE: EVANGELISTIC MEDIA STRATEGIES

Precision Harvesting

Where is God at work? Precision Harvesting highlights responsive groups of people. Mapping or recording responses helps Christians pinpoint where to concentrate their work. Seekers are guided in their response to the Holy Spirit’s prompting by calling a phone number, requesting a Bible or cassette, attending a movie presentation, or other “first-response” indications. Evangelism-minded Christians can map response a couple of ways. They can mark on a town map where God is at work. This can be useful in determining where to start a new church. Responses can also identify a person by some demographic characteristic—youth, senior citizen, economic, or educational status. Christians using media can then not only evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts, but understand the five W’s of investigation: who, when, where, why, what, and how. For example, an ad is run for six months in a newspaper covering a broad geographical area. People call the number and request the free Bible offer. A courier delivers the Bible while the dispatcher marks the address on a map. Over 18 months, six responsive areas emerge. Visiting the neighborhoods reveal many of them are the most conservative places in
town, yet there is clearly a spiritual hunger. Follow-up invitations are made with those who responded in the area. Small group Bible studies are started and in another year, there are six new churches and nearly 100 baptisms.

Blitz Campaigns
Blitzes are most effective in places where people are compacted—urban areas, wharfs or bus terminals where people arrive, and sports events. Put literature and audiovisuals in plastic bags. After prayerwalking specific areas, distribute massive amounts of evangelistic media in a short amount of time. Follow-up addresses, phone numbers, and other contact information must be included in the bags. In some places known for being resistant to the Gospel, follow-up should include an initial screening. Backpackers may also evangelize in villages they encounter on a certain trail. Follow-up is vital, so most blitzes include several months of training and workers who are equipped to tell the Good News, share their testimony, and boldly call for a response—but then confirm and follow-up being culturally sensitive along the way.

Library or Reading Room
Organizations such as BookLink provide English books that augment literacy training and ESL/EFL classes (English as a Second Language or English as a Foreign Language). The seeker identifies certain literature in their language that they will want to read. Track individuals who may have common interests to be grouped into Bible studies or invite to local churches.

Listening Groups
Use the local or cable broadcasters (radio, TV, cable, satellite TV, or Internet) to tell listeners how to form their own listening groups composed of their circles of influence. The broadcasts should intentionally address bridges and barriers to the Gospel within a specific culture. Program content can vary, but should include Chronological Bible Storying or other oral-friendly media such as heavily edited Bible recordings, including Faith Comes by Hearing. Encourage groups of listeners to identify themselves by writing the station or by attending special local events advertised in the broadcasts (such as a health clinic, JESUS film showing, or other one-time event). Use trained workers to meet the representatives and follow-up with their groups by conducting Bible studies or inviting them to their church. Broadcasting may be augmented by audiocassettes or CDs for long-term reproducibility.

Training for Trainers (T4T)
T4T is a highly personal mass evangelism tool. The curriculum encourages two trainers to use invitations within their oikos (circle of influence). When about ten people attend the meetings, a Christian movie may be shown and the Gospel discussed. People who respond are confirmed in their decision and grouped into discipleship groups that can become a church.

Video Loans
Distribute a Christian movie (like God’s Story or The Hope) door-to-door, moving systematically through several neighborhoods, city blocks, or villages at a time. Offer to
loan the video for free for seven days. Trained workers return to pick up their videos and receive comments. Seekers are invited to a neighborhood Bible study or to their church.

**Viral Vectors and Sneeze Chambers**
Advertise a seminar or workshop. The topics are promoted that best intersect with a felt need. Viral ideas include business training (Zig Ziglar seminar), parenting (Focus on the Family), teen celibacy (True Love Waits), agricultural innovations (BOOST), etc. Bring people together into a meeting room for an event like a weekend self-improvement / management conference, parenting class, or farm implement demonstration, so that participants catch the idea and want to share them back in their circles of influence. Meet participants and conduct local meetings in areas of greatest response that can quickly form Bible studies and engage churches. Online forums and chat rooms are one emerging, but effective, variation on this idea.

**Joining God on mission**
Plan, implement, and follow-up are the key points. See the section “Putting it all together” for help putting together a detailed plan.

1. **Plan**: Pray for wisdom. Make good decisions for your target audiences. What messages will work best across a number of media tools? Test small before going large. Never work alone, but involve as many local believers as possible in every aspect of the distribution.

2. **Implement**: Pray for impact that brings about desired results. Use a media mix that gains a hearing, makes people address their most deeply held values, and clusters them together.

3. **Follow-up**: Pray for the lost to come to Christ. Seekers must interact with believers. Be ready with discipleship tools that accelerate the Christian maturity growth cycle, so that the lost become believers that want others to know the Lord as they do.

**TOP 10 IDEAS THAT MOOOOVE PEOPLE!**

1. **Go to school!** Presentations, gifts, or special events at day schools or primary and secondary schools: 35% of the world's population is under the age of 15. In some countries almost 50% are under 18. Bonus idea: Make a presentation in a school during the day and have the students bring their parents to a public showing at night. Seek out the best colleges and universities, especially the religion and English classes.

2. **Go to work!** Get inside factories during lunch hours over several days. Find work leaders and meet with their departments or teams. Leadership can open doors to their circle of influence even after hours, too.

3. **Go to church!** Among some people, you may find that churches quietly exist. They may be too quiet and have become discouraged and the gospel is not preached.

4. **Go to bed!** Meet people in the hospital, nursing homes, retirement centers, rehabilitation centers, orphanages, or other places of need and stop to meet each person before a
showing in the break room or distributing media.

5. Go clubbing! Rotarians, Lion’s Club, Kiwanis, etc., are social clubs that span the globe. Arrange for a visit on your next trip. Leave evangelistic gifts with all the members.

6. Go directly to jail! Do not collect $200. You just might “monopolize” an inmate’s time for the Lord.

7. Go home! (their home) Have people you meet volunteer to open their homes and throw a party for their family and friends. Give them your media “gifts” at the party or together watch a Christian video at some point. Volunteer to come back the next day to discuss the video or other media that is distributed. Leave the video and materials and offer to pick them up the next day.

8. Go house-to-house! During “rainy months” or sandstorms show videocassettes and have house-to-house showings where there are VCR’s in the homes.

9. Go native! Sit around late at night telling Bible stories. Find a comfortable hammock and just ask anybody walking by, “Hey, did you hear the one about the time a guy...(walked on water, was swallowed by a fish, etc.)?” When you have an audience, tell them the Big Story. When it’s late, say you’ll do the same thing with more stories. Story chronologically through the Bible.

10. Go shopping! (also called “Drop while you shop”) Festivals, religious holidays, block parties, and open air markets are great places to distribute Christian media or make presentations. Slip a cassette into a bag. Print the gospel over and over again and give it to the guy to wrap fish or sandwiches in. Put a tract with a cassette in a plastic bag under the top log in a family’s woodpile. Just hand a Bible to an outstretched hand in a market and keep moving. (Limit this activity to one hour and make it the very last thing you do in a city hostile to the Gospel before your bus leaves town!) IMPORTANT: This “Drop while you shop” method requires another team to come cautiously behind you in two weeks or less to answer questions and follow-up. Do not do this without follow-up planned!

Media Tools: Cow Seeds or Gospel Seeds?

Have you ever seen a bag of Cow Seeds? They’re white rocks with black splotches. Instructions say, “Plant at least six feet apart to start your own herd. Moo softly while watering.” Cow Seeds sharply contrast to the Gospel Seeds that Jesus described in the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-8, Mark 4:1-9 and Luke 8:4-15). The four soil types depicted four types of people who hear and respond in different ways to the Good News. Cow Seeds may look great, be durable, and have wonderful packaging, but cows don’t grow that way. As sowers of God’s Word, we are called to seed hearts. Today’s Christian media—whether tracts, business card-size CDs or other person-to-person tools—are like seeds carrying the Good News of Jesus Christ. Which type of seed works best in what soils? What will it take to nurture the Gospel in their hearts over time?

When you are selecting your media for evangelistic purposes, consider those that work best on an interpersonal basis first and mass media second. Mass media tend to be more expensive and require large scale follow-up. Interpersonal (hand-to-hand) media are recommended for volunteer mission teams on their first visits with an unengaged people group.
### TABLE OF SELECTED MEDIA DIFFERENCES AND POTENTIAL USES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA TYPE</th>
<th>PROS</th>
<th>CONS</th>
<th>USAGE</th>
<th>WAYS TO RESPOND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brochure/Newsletter/Mag</td>
<td>Audience size varies</td>
<td>No updates; literacy skills</td>
<td>Handout or mail</td>
<td>Printed contact info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books / Workbooks</td>
<td>Guided study</td>
<td>Literacy requirements</td>
<td>Group discussion</td>
<td>Printed contact info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassettes, CDs, &amp; Radio</td>
<td>Easily reproducible and relatively inexpensive</td>
<td>Novices read text rather that gearing for orals</td>
<td>Broadcast or distribution; group or solo</td>
<td>Easily duplicated for quick pass-along; passivity overcome by good scripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoint® / Slides</td>
<td>Mass Audience and Projector Portability</td>
<td>Stereotyped experience</td>
<td>Group presentation</td>
<td>Usually passive, but interaction is possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling / Pictures</td>
<td>Reproducible by everyone; memorable</td>
<td>Takes time to provide an &quot;oral Bible&quot;</td>
<td>Groups with interaction</td>
<td>Interpersonal channels with quick feedback primarily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video, DVDs, &amp; VCDs and TV (including cable and satellite)</td>
<td>Audience size varies; experiential; authoritative</td>
<td>Expensive; need playback equipment</td>
<td>Limited minutes</td>
<td>Usually passive response to showing(s) or listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website (includes podcasting, blogs, etc.)</td>
<td>New; Individualized</td>
<td>Time consuming; no access to poor</td>
<td>Interactive</td>
<td>E-mail gives immediate feedback and response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter/E-mail</td>
<td>Personalized mass mailings</td>
<td>Limited pass-along</td>
<td>Usually a one shot exposure</td>
<td>Requires personal response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Stay away from campaigns that seek to distribute the Gospel, but do not follow-up. This creates “scorched earth” where nothing is able to be planted or grown for a long time. People are grateful for letting them know about Jesus, but if they are not shown how to grow in their new faith, they become bitter and resentful of Christians and Christianity. –The JESUS Film Handbook

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### Brochures, Newsletters, and Magazines

Think niche. Literate audiences and even some oral preference learners are interested in large pictures, heartwarming stories, and the lighter side of life. There is the place and time for using a Gospel tract—even a bi-lingual Gospel tract. When meeting with literates, tracts work best when they relate to some aspect of a non-Christian’s life. Event promotion works very well through brochures or pamphlets and flyers. A follow-up newsletter helps the event participant receive a constant reminder (monthly or quarterly) that reminds them of their positive experience. Magazines are the ultimate niche tool. Think both teen magazines featuring beauty tips, comic books, and Christian news packaged in outstanding slick magazines, but also consider Sunday School quarterlies and a church’s monthly newsletter. How can these be positioned for maximum pass-
along value? Most brochures are read in less than 30 seconds and then thrown away. A bookmark or something that is torn off and used as a reply card extends the life of these media. In a literate environment, niche printed pieces like brochures, newsletters, and magazines offer the ultimate media for cultivating and nurturing segments of a people group.

**Books / Workbooks**

Get serious. Take literate leaders very deep. Decision making information among literates usually involves some printed book or workbook that a person keeps and in which they invest considerable time. In the USA, most books are not read past page 18. However, in other parts of the world, carrying a book is a sign of status and personal identification, even if the person does not have good reading skills. Books are relatively expensive print media and most workbooks require the highest levels of literacy. However, these media are used among the most deeply interested and the highest educated strata in society. Books and workbooks are often used with leadership. Evangelistic-minded Christians sometimes overlook Christian children’s books—tomorrow’s leaders. Workbooks may vary in degrees of literate difficulty, but require quality editors to be age-specific. Developing writers in a local people group takes time, but can be worth it over time. The same Holy Spirit that helps well-known leaders write is also available within that local people group to inspire and assist godly writers.

**Cassettes, CDs, & Radio**

The world of audio is alive and well in many missions contexts. Radio penetrates behind various barriers where reception is clearest in the dark of night. Even some listeners put their radios in their dining room because they feast on God’s Word despite lack of food. Audio formats are best when they are geared for a listening audience. That may sound absurd, but recorded text is just “print made loud.” Strive to locate audio resources that are geared for oral preference learners. You’ll find that dramas, storytelling, songs, proverbs, and poetry come alive in “the theater of the mind” that the Lord uses for His purposes. Cassettes and CDs are easily duplicated and scattered like feathers on a blustery day. The pass-along value cannot be underestimated!

**PowerPoint® / Slides**

Multi-media projectors have revolutionized the slide industry. Digital cameras and clip art software make PowerPoint® type presentations common place. Business settings and classroom presentations of the Gospel can use slide shows to augment their training. Today’s technology allows for video clips and audio files to be played during a slide show at the click of a mouse. The presenter must be aware of visual literacy nuances when working across cultures. Colors, left-to-right orientation, fonts, and other elements used in a slide show must be understood or an incorrect non-verbal message may be communicated.
**Storytelling / Pictures**

Bible stories should be used with those who can’t, won’t, or don’t read. Educational attainment is a strong indicator for using a Chronological Bible Storying methodology. Crafting and telling a series of Bible stories sequentially is important. The Following Jesus series (http://fjseries.org) contains more than 400 entire storying sessions. It is also important to know the worldview of the people and select the best stories that identify barriers to the gospel or those things in the culture that reinforce some bridges to accepting the Bible truths in the stories. Teaching pictures, flannelgraph, chalk talks, and wall murals depicting Bible scenes illustrate events or elements within a story that would be difficult to understand. In an evangelism context, good storytellers, pictures, and especially artists, attract and hold the attention of those whom God is drawing to Him. Colors, left-to-right orientation, fonts, and other elements used in illustrations and pictures must be understood for effective communication. Possibly the state of the art in flipcharts is now available from God’s Story Project in their tri-level version that easily fits in your lap with the script on one side and pictures on the other.

**Video, DVDs, and VCDs**

Showing Christian movies such as God’s Story or JESUS film indoors or outside will determine the type of audience on which you focus. When you move indoors, the crowds tend to be smaller and more promotion is needed, unless there is a group that regularly meets in the facility. People who attend showings of the film, who accept Christ as Savior and Lord, are encouraged to participate in follow-up small group Bible studies for new Christians. They are then discipled to establish churches where none currently exist. Among a group without prior knowledge of Jesus, it is best to use a video or audiocassette that introduces God and the Old Testament stories that help the audience know why it was necessary for Jesus to come in the first place. Using videos that deal with the life of Christ are great to use to help people visualize what Jesus did for us, especially in His teachings and suffering on the cross. The JESUS film has a manual that is very helpful to maximize that extremely effective movie. Audiocassettes are great for use in cars, taxis, and even buses. VCDs, audiocassettes and CDs can be easily copied and distributed. Encourage recording Christian radio programs that are broadcast on a regular basis for encouraging believers to share with their circle of influence.

**Website / Social Media**

Web evangelism is red hot right now for those working in about 10 languages: English, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, and Spanish. Yes, there are other languages online, such as Arabic and Farsi, but access to the Big 10 dwarfs all others. Flash presentations of the gospel are attractive and carry both credibility and crispness. Blogs allow for personal witnessing and a long-term online record of your faith. Freeware, such as Audacity, provide easy ways to podcast and edit audio files for online streaming. Other social media such as Facebook and MySpace further help connect people so that evangelism and discipleship happen in real time. The Web is providing a conduit for literates in major trade languages. Prior to starting your own evangelistic Web site, do thorough research for the uniqueness of your site and its contribution to the Kingdom. It is possible for immigrants to evangelize “back home” via
Web connectivity. Although some anti-Christian governments can block a single Web site that it finds troublesome, hundreds of clones might provide an opportunity for techno-savvy online crowds—primary young males and university students. Internet sites often give credibility to organizations such as churches or events when online information can add to the information available to a seeker.

**Letter/E-mail**

Pen pals, chat rooms, Instant Messaging, and the everyday e-mail response can reinforce established relationships. There are expectations and etiquette driving this intimate communication. Except for the occasional “forward,” there is little pass-along value to emails. However, it is a tool for staying in touch for those seeking to develop long-term relationships across cultures and across the miles. Just ask the dating services about their love matches with couples separated by continents. The handwritten letter is still the best way to express personal concern for a person, including their salvation.

**Unique media**

EvangeCube doesn’t fit neatly into a list of media resources for evangelism. It is proving highly effective for generating a crowd and introducing Jesus to them. It is recommended that EvangeCube be prefaced by using some other media that introduce why it was necessary for Jesus to come in the first place.

Literacy training curriculum ranges from using easy-to-read primers in the local or trade language to English as a Second Language classes. Thinking creatively, it is possible to use Christian recorded media, such as the English version of the JESUS video to teach English. Literacy training works best as an evangelism tool when it builds personal relationships that encourage interaction with the teacher. Using Bible-based training curriculum can have an effect similar to Chronological Bible Storying in that it uses a series of stories to make a case for a personal relationship with Christ.

Telemarketing: A group of Christians in Singapore called 720 businesses in mainland China, offering a free media packet that they could evaluate in research project. A reduced time JESUS film called "Hao Xiao Shi," (Good News) was then sent along with a book called "Jesus Loves (Name of City)" printed with a beautiful color photo of the city on the front. The content of the book was a gospel presentation with illustrations and the books of Luke and Acts. Personal follow-up was handled by visits to the businesses requesting the media packet. Follow-up Bible studies for new believers helped to start new small group Bible studies and eventually churches.

**Putting it all together**

**What not to do** – More than 240 Christian publishers and audiovisual producers worldwide are cranking out materials that are begging to be used. However, they would be the last to desire generating the wrong response when using their tool.
CONTEXTUALIZATION: The media messages must be the most relevant possible to a local believer or non-believer. “Often times, the subtle shift from proclamation to real communication triggers a response that was previously absent. Effective communication requires understanding the language and worldview of the people you are trying to reach.”\footnote{David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements: How God is Redeeming a Lost World*, WIGtake Resources, 2004, p. 179} The ideal is to keep media locally-relevant and avoiding generic media tools. Language and heart-specific tools work at the heart level to win people to faith in Christ.

REPRODUCIBILITY AND SUBSIDY: Some technology is inappropriate because the batteries cannot be bought locally, or nobody understands how to work the VCR, or if it is broken, it may never be repaired. Tools that cannot be easily obtained, duplicated, or used without outside assistance must be avoided! Creating dependence upon something that is not inherently indigenous or common to the group creates problems in the long term. Future churches being planted will always have a rear-view mirror approach where their default is the method that was used with them. In other words, if their church was started by using a videotape, then they will want to use a videotape, too. If outsiders need to continually fund the evangelistic tools, then the methodology needs to be revisited and placed into an appropriate scale. Otherwise, the movement will never start while the locals stand around with their hands out wanting money or resources that they can never provide.

DECISION-MAKING INFORMATION: Media tools are relatively expensive and frequently not as reproducible within a culture as some would prefer. That is why decision-making information is so valuable. Communications research is a multi-million dollar a year industry. Christians may not have the money, but they have manpower to care about the River of Life that needs to flow through a people group. Your media can work together to lead them to the Source! Christian partners in evangelical churches are great sources of concerned believers who can assist in tracking where the Lord is moving so that Christians can join Him on mission!

**What to do (D.E.L.I.G.H.T.)**

Develop messages to communicate that are based on needs, values, outcomes, and opportunities. Tony Wales, Lion Publishing once said, “Scratch their itch before you unwrap the gift.”

Establish budget and controls such as reporting, accountability to the partner church(es), feedback, etc. Creativity tends to go up as money goes down. Never stop working due to lack of resources, but always treat each penny as a precious resource from the Lord! Personnel also need to know their limits and need to conform to expectations, while not “squelching” opportunities for the Lord to work. Leadership is both influence and an art.

List the best communication channels that punch through the clutter for each audience (research facilitates your decision-making accuracy). The average
Westerner receives more than 3,000 “message exposures” each day. While the number may not be that high among a remote people group, they still have many distractions competing for their attention.

Identify a realistic timeline for implementation--usually 18 months to 2 years are required for a media saturation campaign. Keeping a timeline in mind is often better than goals and objectives because of the production and distribution elements in real time. However, the main issue is to use your media strategically, which means creating a river of possibilities rather than the occasional firework.

Get a situation analysis of people and the environments within which your messages are being conveyed. Ask smart questions to probe into the heart and never be content with superficial information.

Hold, adapt and re-deploy communications media. Media are tools. If something doesn’t work, drop it and try something else. Experiment with small samples before investing time and resources into full blitzes without knowledge of the desired outcomes or potential consequences.

Take feedback periodically to evaluate response, public opinion, levels of participation, and overall effectiveness. Checkpoints are the media strategist’s friend. They act as a lighthouse that the Lord can use to keep you on course and away from danger.
PART TWO: DISCIPLESHIP MEDIA STRATEGIES

Follow-up is used to confirm decisions made about Jesus and “draw the net” for new churches to start. Extending an invitation is every Christian’s responsibility. The Holy Spirit convicts hearts and people make their decisions to turn from their sins and “take up their cross daily and follow.” (Luke 9:23) Confirming decisions and nurturing first steps of faith helps new Christians feel secure, loved, and healthy in their new relationship with God and the local Body of Christ.

Tools are available to equip new believers to take the next steps, and continue with enough resources to stay fed. Power, equipment maintenance, technology exposure, and cultural appropriateness for the Christian message are all factors to consider when evaluating a potential media tool for discipleship strategies.

Media tools amplify your ability to disciple many at once. Discipleship must be planned and structured to conserve the harvest. Follow-up with respondents leads to discipleship and incorporation into a local church. It can also lead new converts to be called into ministry.

*The goal is to build relationships that can reap eternal benefits.*

The JESUS Film leaders believe in follow-up so much, they say, “If you can’t follow-up, don’t show.” Here are several places that the Nazarene Church found that they could follow-up after showing a JESUS Film.

- Door-to-door.
- Invite to a location (film showing location, house, public building, church, schoolroom, cinema, etc.).
- Invite to home Bible studies.
- Invite to groups learning more about “Jesus” rather than to “church” or “Sunday School”.
- Invite to ESL classes using the JESUS Video curriculum.
- Invite to play on soccer (sports) teams that would have a draw and would have a spiritual component.
- Invite to view another video.
- Invite to a meal.
- Invite to a drama.
- Invite to a birthday party for those just born again.
- Invite to a [conference], clinic, Nazarene school, etc.
- Invite to a layperson’s business.
- Do a survey of those who do not accept Jesus, and ask, “What did you think of the film?” “If you died tonight would you go to heaven?”, etc. to focus eternity for them and to keep them talking.
- For radio, TV, and mass evangelism strategies follow-up is handled through response or correspondence centers. Correspondence courses may be all the contact we can have in some creative access countries.
- If the local respondent requests a visit from a Christian worker, one is sent to the country or area to make contact.
- Art contest—where people view the film, do a religious art piece, and offer prizes.
Drawing the net

Jesus invited His disciples to be “fishers of men.” Evangelism gathers new believers into the net—meeting places, small groups, and churches. They make a decision to repent of their sins and trust Jesus for eternity. Baptizing, making disciples, and teaching them to obey were the three things that Jesus had in mind in the Great Commission (Matthew 28). “Bearing much fruit” is great (John 15:8), but “bearing fruit, fruit that will last” is what Jesus wants. (John 15:16) We lead as friends of Jesus; we can’t do it alone. Disciplers will need a clear vision, appropriate skills, inspiring incentives, reproducible resources, and to be held accountable to affecting change to achieve the lasting results as the Lord leads. Now that’s bearing sweet fruit to the glory of God!

In the “Making Disciples Grid” below, lasting results are the ultimate goal. The scripture under “God’s Way” provides a biblical solution to the gaps that might exist in a discipling effort. If any of the results in the “Lasting Results?” category sound familiar, what missing element(s) needs attention?

### THE “MAKING DISCIPLES” GRID

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<tr>
<th>Vision +</th>
<th>Training +</th>
<th>Incentives +</th>
<th>Tools +</th>
<th>Accountability =</th>
<th>Lasting Results?</th>
<th>GOD’S WAY</th>
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<td>Accountability</td>
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<td>Anxiety</td>
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<td>Gradual Change</td>
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<td>Vision</td>
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**Discipleship and Leadership Training**

When you use any discipleship tool, keep two things in mind:

**TOMMORROW’S LEADER TODAY:** When you train even a brand new believer, you
are also training a future leader. However, most media tools will often be designated for specific purposes. There are tools for new believers, maturing believers, leader training, and those involved in mission work. But learners watch and learn good and bad habits from their leaders. Come to think of it, sometimes non-Christians even know how a Christian leader acts. This behavior shapes tomorrow’s leaders right now. Think of media tools as links in an unbroken chain of experiences. Christian leadership starts much earlier than people think. In fact, tomorrow’s leaders might not yet even be Christians right now. This is what has led thought-leaders in missions, such as Curtis Sergeant, to say, “The resources are in the harvest!”

NON-LINEAR VS. LINEAR: Christians do not necessarily learn in a straight line; first this, then that. Like a scene from a science fiction movie, your leaders may “download” just enough information to help them be a leader to accomplish a specific ministry or other discipleship task. You may not exactly be like the movie heroine who “learned” how to fly a military helicopter in a few seconds, but by the Holy Spirit’s guidance, a Christian leader with a servant’s heart may take a class online, read a book, or listen to a podcast lecture about some godly leadership aspect and be implementing those biblical principles in a few weeks. Yet, they still may lack being a Christian role model in their own home. And that’s okay. That’s also why Jesus said to “take up your cross daily.” We are living every day “dying to self” and “following Jesus.” (Luke 9:23) While there is nothing wrong with preparing a learning track, never make the assumptions that the believer or leader track is somehow oil and water and totally separate! Christian leaders are “perpetual learners,” but they may move slowly or quickly and in some areas, but not in others. Even though you prepare a “curriculum” of training materials, don’t be surprised to experience the non-linear use of tools and resources as people learn at their own pace or as a situation puts demands on the learning leader.

Considering discipleship tools

The same media issues presented in the Table of Media Comparisons (page 7) apply to discipleship and leader training. Tools vary in discipleship, so several considerations are important:

USING FAMILIAR TOOLS: Try to re-use the same evangelistic tools and methodology with new believers, especially “babes in Christ” in the confirmation and early discipling training. For instance, if you have used God’s Story or the JESUS film, then show portions of the movie and discuss what is heard and seen. Review the stories told initially in a Chronological Bible Storying evangelism track to help a Bible-less people take the first steps toward an “oral Bible.” T4T (Training for Trainers should continue their sessions in an intentional continuum.)

LITERACY: If a non-literate approach was used in the evangelism process, then avoid switching to literate approaches. In other words, if you used Bible Storying, then switching to a Bible study curriculum may be very difficult for an oral preference group. Keep in mind that some 60% to 70% of the least reached people in the world have an oral
learning preference. The US Department of Education (DOE) now divides literacy into four groupings: below basic, basic, intermediate, and proficient. (Gone are illiterate, functionally illiterate, etc.) A 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) survey of more than 19,000 people in their homes or in prison estimates that one in seven adults (about 30 million people) fall in the “below basic” category for handling basic prose in English (like in the Bible). This means some—but not all—could sign their name or find dosage levels on a medicine bottle. As reported in 1992, the 2003 interviews confirmed that about half of all US adults (about 93 million people) fell into the Below Basic or Basic reading categories. Although there were more college graduates in 1992 than in 2003, fewer were reading at the “proficient” level, falling from 40 percent in 1992 to 31 percent in 2003.2

DISCIPLESHIP ISSUES: An evangelist addresses worldview issues when approaching someone – or a group of people – who do not have Christ as their Savior. These may be bridges or barriers to accepting the Gospel message. Think of Discipleship Issues as worldview issues for believers. When a person from a certain culture accepts Christ, they face several issues as a new believer. Muslims, for instance, need to know what Heaven is like and how to address dietary restrictions. Those coming to Christ where ancestor worship is common need help living for Christ in that context. Off-the-shelf discipleship guides are recommended in this handbook, but those seeking to be obedient to Christ will seek to address unique discipleship issues. In other words, using Survival Kit or Training for Trainers in the Middle East will not address “survival” essentials necessary in that context since it was written for an American audience. Discipleship tools developed for believers in every context is recommended instead.

INDIGENOUS REPRODUCIBILITY: The word indigenous is defined as “literally, generated from within. Refers to churches or movements that have their driving force from within the group itself rather than from outside funds or outside direction.”3 If your efforts were a rocket, then evangelism would be the booster to get the ship into orbit. However, just as evangelism brings a person to that point of faith, what will sustain the momentum so that the new believer doesn’t fall away or backslide? In the example of the rocket, since the disciple has escaped earth’s gravitational pull, what will keep the maturing believer making mid-course corrections on their way through space?

OPEN AND CLOSED GROUPS: Sunday School or small group meetings provide an “open class” environment that makes it very easy to add members. The studies are very general in scope and developed to be as inclusive as possible. Many seekers are evangelized in open Bible studies. The “closed” study usually lasts three months (or less) and is intended to address specific discipleship needs. A typical school or seminary classroom is a good example of a closed group. Trying to blur the two discipleship styles rarely works. After a group starts, new people feel left out, especially in the middle to end of the class. Those that try to join late in the “semester” cannot catch up with the others.

3 David Garrison in Church Planting Movements, (Midlothian, VA: WIGtake Resources) 2004, p. 344
Those seeking to “plug in” feel left out. Both open and closed discipleship studies should be offered.

CHURCH PLANTING: Discipleship and leader training should never become an end into itself. The purpose of missions is to win an individuals and people groups to faith in Christ and see them become part of a quickly replicating church. Members of a discipleship group might be the leader of some other new church start. Growing in Christ should overflow into mentoring others and being mentored by others.

Tools for discipleship

Brochures, Newsletters, and Magazines
Christian living, models of exemplary behavior, and encouragement for maturing in the faith can be reinforced with print media. Christian magazines such as “Home Life” (LifeWay) address needs in English in the USA. Magazines, like evangelism uses, are excellent “niche” resources addressing topics ranging from Christian men, families, singles, parenting skills, financial management, purposes in life, etc. Ministries such as jail ministry, urban ghetto missions, and other organizations can keep needs before its constituents through brochures, newsletters, and magazines. Catalogs are a type of magazine that opens doors for myriads of resources waiting to be selected and used. Locally-published devotional guides, indigenous Sunday School quarterlies and a local church’s monthly newsletter provide excellent tools for new and maturing literate believers. Software is available from Shellbook that helps Third World publishers print even the simplest of primers.

Books / Workbooks
Books and workbooks facilitate a “closed class” study among a very few believers for a specific unit of study. Books and workbooks are used among the most deeply interested and also include textbooks, Bible atlases, biblical encyclopedias, Bible commentaries, and courses for church leaders. Unfortunately, many books used in discipleship were written in a Western context and do not relate to the needs of local believers. Working to develop local writers and being aware of discipleship and leader-training resources produced by overseas publishers is highly encouraged. Materials tend to be more expensive, but the materials are frequently kept because they contain personal observations. Workbooks require the highest levels of literacy. Workbooks may also be written as part of a larger series and in a third-world context may be lacking in certain areas. Today’s multi-media training kits can actually use the “outsider” experiences to great effect. Videotape clips or audio segments can bring the experiences of others around the world into a discipleship or worship setting. For instance, many studies, such as “On Mission with God” use a videotape that illustrates a point being made in that week’s study.
Cassettes, CDs & Radio

Audio formats can be very important for discipling believers. MegaVoice encased audio players, Galcom’s solar powered earbud radios, and a number of other tools are expanding discipleship opportunities for Christians. The Hope, God’s Story, JESUS, and a number of other Christian movie-makers also have audio derivatives. Christian radio and audio programming carry sermons, training, songs, testimonials, and Bible studies. Trans World Radio’s “Discipleship on the Air” (Dota) is one example of broadcasting into places, such as Iran, where missionaries are prohibited. The thousands of Christians in that country can listen to the programs, record them for their personal use, and teach what they learn. Dota is also one of the series that uses the Internet to broadcast, too. One country’s government attempts to block Christian broadcaster’s signals, but fishermen take their boats out far enough to listen to that day’s lesson on radio. They return to tell their small groups and churches what they have learned while simultaneously earning a living! While Southern Baptists may not generate the programming, they should know about broadcasting in a trade language or some other dialect understood by a number of believers. By passing along radio frequencies and schedules, discipleship and leader training is available in the volunteer team’s absence. One letter received from Afghanistan during the Taliban rule said, “I listen to your [Christian] program in my dining room. I have very little to eat, but I feast on the words of God.” Correspondence, including correspondence courses, augments what is airing across borders. As was mentioned in the Evangelism Section, creating resources expressly for audiences with oral preferences is very important. Just because someone comes to Christ is not an excuse to slip back into a literate mindset! Oral learners comprise a vast majority – some 70% by some counts – of the unreached in our world. Keeping oral-friendly resources flowing to them is possible, but takes efforts as so many productions are already being distributed around the Third World that use hard-to-listen-to literate-world techniques. Exposition, analysis, word studies, and outlines cannot be reproduced by oral peoples. Literate Christians bear the full responsibility to help their lowest literacy and oral preference learners (not always the same thing) peoples to be discipled, become quality church leaders, and even pastor churches. Ethnic music written within the vernacular of a people group is very effective for communicating the Gospel, learning doctrine, and even memorizing Scripture. Ethnomusicology is now a viable mission assignment and is a great resource for people groups.

PowerPoint® / Slides

Multi-media projectors enhance a group learning experience. Literates appreciate the use of visuals to illustrate teaching points. Slides are often used during worship to facilitate the song service and project Scripture passages for those who do not have Bibles. Good slide presentations use a 36 point to 40 point font size and use bulleted outline points rather than complete sentences to reinforce a thought. Quotes and definitions may be projected most effectively when portions of the sentences can be revealed a little at a time or highlighted for emphasis.
Storytelling / Pictures
In a discipleship context, good storytellers, pictures, and especially artists, bring Bible characters and certain details alive. What does a chariot look like? How did the disciples fish with nets? How did the Tabernacle (Tent of Meeting) differ from Solomon’s Temple? What is a lamb? Simple or elaborate teaching pictures or flannelgraph kits (cut-outs on felt) help believers to better understand and relate to the Bible stories and situations that they are studying. As with the evangelism resources, keep in mind that colors, left-to-right orientation, fonts, and other elements used in visuals must be understood or an incorrect non-verbal message may be communicated. 121 teaching pictures are available free as .pdf files as a part of NAMB Tools (www.sbcmissioneducation.org). Remember, Bible stories should be used with those who can’t, won’t, or don’t read.

Video, DVDs, and VCDs
Showing Christian movies such as God’s Story or JESUS film can bring a great harvest. But it also requires great follow-up! Using these videos in discipleship makes good sense. It is the story that the new believers know. Mature believers and leaders will find that the clips provide good visuals and biblically accurate contextualized soundtracks. That is why the JESUS film includes a discipleship portion in its training manual. Audiocassettes and CDs are great for mastering Bible stories, learning new songs, and passing along as one of their first witnessing tools. Lengthy videos such as Genesis, Luke, and Acts include every word from Scripture. VCDs, like audiocassettes and CDs, can be cheaply copied and distributed. Translating videos are often difficult because of syllable counts being much longer in most languages than English. Music videos are very difficult to reproduce cross-culturally. Just ask the guys in the Middle East that tried to tackle VeggieTales in Arabic! However, music videos that depict Bible stories can be very effective – even being used as karaoke videos in places!

Website
The Internet is a terrific discipleship training resource for literates who have the access and can afford to plug in. Those seeking to use the Web to provide discipleship need to keep in mind that the Internet is extremely expensive. In many places in the world, people pay a connection fee, then metered service rates (think per-minute long distance rates), and then are subjected to very slow modem baud rates (28k or slower). Governments can block single Web sites that it finds troublesome, but hundreds of clone sites provide alternatives. Another issue with the Web is finding a way for the believer or church leader to gain trust with your Web site. Many evangelicals refer to the Lausanne Covenant or set of beliefs that has been used for decades, not for alignment or stating a creed, but as a trusted basis of evangelical Christian beliefs that anyone visiting a site can read for verification. Web discipleship ministries provide excellent sources for downloading group curriculum and also individual study ranging from basic discipleship to online degrees, such as is available at the William Carey International University (www.wciu.edu).
Look, Listen, and Live: A series of 8 audiovisuals is excellent for systematic evangelism and Christian teaching. There are 24 pictures in each book. This series gives studies of Old Testament characters, the life of Jesus, and the young Church. It is particularly suited to bring the Gospel message and basic Christian teaching to non-literate people. The pictures are clear and brightly colored to attract those who may not be used to visual teaching presentations.

1. Beginning with GOD (Adam, Noah, Job, Abraham),
2. Mighty Men of GOD (Jacob, Joseph, Moses),
3. Victory through GOD (Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Samson),
4. Servants of GOD (Ruth, Samuel, David, Elijah),
5. On Trial for GOD (Elisha, Daniel, Jonah, Nehemiah, Esther),
6. JESUS - Teacher & Healer (From Matthew and Mark),
7. JESUS - Lord & Savior (From Luke and John),
8. Acts of the HOLY SPIRIT (The Young Church and Paul).

Published by Gospel Recording Network.
(http://globalrecordings.net/resources_looklistenlive.php)
PART THREE: PRODUCTION STRATEGIES

The International Space Station has an interesting perspective on the world. At night one can easily see the places in the world without electricity. Think about what it takes for a village to have electricity: billing systems, generators, poles, wires, paying customers, and the financial wealth to purchase appliances that use electricity. Yet, a view of the earth from space shows much of the world--especially the Southern Hemisphere--lacking electricity. Meanwhile, places like the USA, Western Europe, and Japan are well-illuminated in the darkness.

Assessing details like electricity availability is only one of a dozen or more details in deciding what should be produced on the village level. Should it be for evangelism or discipleship and leader training? Print or electronic? Will local artists or a local writer be available? Can the people read what is published? Why not just dump Christian media that doesn’t sell in America in Third World bookstores? (For a missions-specific Communications Assessment Questions, see Appendix 1.)

Keep in mind that everyone’s resources are limited. The most cost-efficient media productions are those that fit within an overall plan. Rarely will a single type of media work, but rather it usually takes a number of media used over time within established relationships to bring about desired results. Changes in behavior can be tracked over time.

So, you want to produce something in missions? Strategic production and publishing issues BEFORE you begin work…

*This part of the Church Planter’s Media Handbook takes into consideration that you understand a thing or two about the people with whom you are working. It also assumes that a church-based team will work, possibly with others, to provide media for the target people group.*

**Network First**

Does a resource tool already exist? Use concentric circles to ask those you know if something like what you need has already been published, produced, or implemented. Can you imagine how many commentaries have been written on the Gospel of John? In our world of high security, respect levels of trust. Find someone who will introduce you to someone else who has the resource that would work. Never produce anything if networking will suffice. Bartering is a part of networking. Don’t be afraid to exchange services that you can provide in exchange for enhancing your production capacity. One cable TV repairman was able to refurbish equipment in a local video production studio in exchange for production time on the equipment he had serviced. Networking relies upon relationships and time to wisely cultivate them!

**Reproducibility**

Technological advances are not always affordable or reproducible within the local culture, but should be based on local need and weighed against catalytic measures needed to initiate and sustain Church Planting Movements among a people. A well-meaning seminary student was dumbfounded to learn that nobody used a handheld PDA (Personal
Digital Assistant such as Blackberry or Palm Pilot) in an unengaged people group. He truly appreciated the hours of planning that were saved because he learned that this people was actually very rural and rarely used any electronic appliances. Many are surprised to learn that advanced technology does reach many parts of the world. Sat-7, for instance, is a Christian satellite TV network whose two satellite “footprints” cover the Middle East, North Africa, southern Europe, and the western parts of Central Asia.

**Constant Improvement Environment**

Distribution and promotional (marketing) communications tools should be understood as flexible, dynamic, and responding to local church planting needs. Media selection, product development, and quality are not to be determined by the media developers, publishers, or producers. Cultural appropriateness is key to a people’s understanding and ownership of the medium as well as the message. If the product works, use it. If it fails, “bug out” and start over again. For example, in certain places in India, sound systems are expected to run so loud that the voices become fuzzy. A trained technician tried to put a sound limiter on the sound board, but the people expressed frustration. Only when he restored the distortion did the people relax. All “improvements” depend on local tastes, not yours! This relates to all elements of production values from actors to music to pacing.

**Response Mechanisms and Follow-up**

The readers, viewers and listeners should constantly be provided with response mechanisms to allow for both a measured response and to determine communications (media strategy, media or medium) effectiveness. What do you want the user to do next? If this resource were seen or heard, what is the likely next step? In a city in Kazakhstan, early follow-up plans depended upon a local phone number for people to call a counselor. The problem was that since most people lived in huge apartment complexes, the only phones were at the end of each hall. It was quickly realized that someone would not likely speak about matters of their heart while standing in such a public space. Other follow-up plans were implemented. No resource should be a “dead-end,” but facilitate transformation. (See Appendix Two for a checklist of Response Mechanisms.)

**Institutions versus Meeting Need**

Media centers, publishing houses, Internet Web site developers, radio stations and TV (satellite, broadcast, broadband, etc.) production centers house the necessary equipment and skilled personnel to provide media for your evangelism and discipleship needs. However, they should not always to be owned and operated by volunteers, small groups, partnering churches or local believers. Meeting local needs should always err on the side of rapid reproducibility by the local believers rather than holding out unrealistic expectations for production gear and available production personnel. A Southern Baptist volunteer can easily carry enough production technology on a single laptop to make it appear something easy to do on a local basis. Consider two people: (1) A missionary in Guatemala had a desktop publishing set-up, owned two camcorders, three cameras, a number of audiocassette recorders, a duplicator, and was seeking to put a satellite dish on his roof. (2) When an Associated Press writer moved to Tanzania as a missionary, she said that she was much more concerned about information withdrawal than culture shock!
Both examples described well-meaning cross-cultural workers that tried to live in the West and also in a very low-tech culture. However, both tried very hard to keep their media production knowledge to themselves when among the people they cared to see come to faith in Christ. Around the world, the most effective cross-cultural workers are finding ways to leave an “institution mentality” behind in favor of using the communications technology available on a local basis. The long-term benefits outweigh the initial startup.

Arts
Performing and graphic arts should be included with media strategy planning. Their use should especially be noted for advantages when communicating with non-readers. Visual design elements are often overlooked when providing catalytic media for evangelism and discipleship tools. Keep in mind that many people groups associate some art forms – such as puppets, mime, or carvings – as evil, possibly associated with sorcery, or greatly offensive. Muslims have defaced thousands of statues through antiquity in the name of “not making graven images” as instructed in the Qur’an (Koran). However, photographs and movies are well-accepted around the world. It is the rare, isolated people that view movies as works of magic (or very thin actors!). A local investigation can prevent making mistakes. Continually seek for ways to use resources within the local setting because it is possible to know what works and what does not! An American artist once visited a market in West Africa. That night at her workshop, she displayed Christian artwork that she had crafted in just a few hours. The people were amazed that everything was constructed out of discarded fabric, paper, and even brightly-colored candy bar wrappers—all available free from their own market.

Five Media Strategies to Try

ONE AT A TIME – 1 Samuel 17
Like David throwing a divinely guided stone at Goliath’s skull, distributing tracts, loaning Christian videos, distributing Bibles, and running a 30-second spot on radio all have their impact. A Christian movement in a Nepali city was credited with a policemen picking up a Gospel tract laying on a park bench. He had his child read it to him that night and He gave His heart to Christ. Countless thousands in the world have given their lives to Jesus after viewing the JESUS film or a Billy Graham Crusade on their television.

MULTIPLE MEDIA – 2 Samuel 5:6-12 & 1 Chronicles 11:4-9
Like David taking Jerusalem through a united army, information about access points, and using an incentive, multiple media work best with multiple exposures over time. Among the Makua in Mozambique, radio invited people to events where they received a cassette or tract which promoted a Chronological Bible Storying class where they encountered Christians. In 18 months, more than 1,000 Makuwans were baptized and 21 churches started.
EXPECT VARIED RESPONSES –
Shimei never wanted David as his king and taunted him when Absalom had David on the run. Later, when Absalom was dead, Shimei embraced David. The diffusion of innovations is a sociological phenomenon that helps Christian planners to estimate the varying response levels from among a people group. Shimei was a good example of a laggard. Try targeting the innovators in a people group first. Although that would only be about 2% of the most educated and possibly fringe people, other adopters often watch them to see if there is something worth investigating. When about one-fourth of the people exhibit desired behaviors of winning their own people to the Lord, discipling them, and starting new churches, then a movement is most-likely to be sustainable.

MAKE THE MESSAGE COUNT – 2 Samuel 18:19-33
When Absalom was killed, Joab sent a Cushite runner to inform King David. Another popular runner named Ahimaaz also wanted to go. Ahimaaz ran out in the open and reached David first. He only told part of the story—that the war was over. The Cushite ran carefully and told the king that his son was dead. Bearing a message of great importance carries with it a tremendous responsibility. Communications messages must be conveyed with the right content at the right time. It may not be the quickest or cheapest way to deliver it, but it will carry the Gospel and make disciples with all the power intended by God’s design and plan.

--Mark Snowden is a part of the Church Planting Group, North American Mission Board, SBC. He has trained thousands of church planters in media strategies.
APPENDIX ONE

Communications Assessment Questions
A dozen questions used on initial cross-cultural encounters

Orality & Literacy
1. What fables, myths, or legends (stories carrying a meaning) are famous among the people?
2. What language do the people speak at home? Are media available in those languages?
3. What local iconography is visible? (specific colors, cultural images, representative art, religious symbols (overt and covert), ancient vs. modern writing styles, etc.)

Electronic Media
4. What are the favorite radio and TV stations of children, youth, and adults?
5. Is it common for adults to gather by radios or TV sets for news or sporting events? How long do they stay afterward to discuss what they experienced? When do groups form through the day?
6. How many Internet cafes are available, and if so, what time of day are they the busiest?

Print Media
7. Does a reliable mail distribution system exist? [Mail something from another city in-country or across town to a Christian friend or to your own hotel room to verify.]
8. How are books, newspapers and magazines acquired—delivery, purchased on the street, or read at an institution such as a library or at work?
9. What magazines are popular and why? (consider comic books, too)

Christian and Church Media
10. What media attracted non-believers who are already present in a local church to attend or possibly to want to know more about Jesus?
11. What media help church members grow in their faith each day/weekly, etc.? (consider access to the radio, Internet at work, etc.)

Reference Media
12. Treasure hunt (collection to bring home):
   - Newspapers—news, financial, and sports
   - Magazines—youth, women’s, sports, and business
   - neighborhood flyer
   - business brochure (not tourist)
   - representative pirated media (VCD primarily—may not play on American systems, but the cover art presentation quality is important)
   - maps, books about the people (with pictures preferably)
   - sample recordings you make of radio programs and spots
   - photocopies of up-to-date telephone directory Yellow Pages for places that make copies, news, cable, & broadcast organizations, satellite TV/Radio companies, and
printing companies (do not take the directory from your hotel room or rip from public stand)

- other examples of marketing media, especially government-sponsored social campaigns (well-baby clinics, health, SARS or AIDS prevention, anti-terrorism, political propaganda, reducing social ills, etc.)
- Photos! Groups of people and also “portraits,” street scenes, market places, families and neighborhood scenes, and transportation facilities (buses, train stations) that may be used by subsequent teams.
APPENDIX TWO
Response Mechanisms
These “triggers” are all intended to build relationships. It is arranged as a checklist.

1. Brochures, pamphlets and small printed items (including prayer guides, calendars and introductory information)
   ___ tear off "clipping" & mail back?
   ___ referrals to web sites?
   ___ phone numbers for more info?
   ___ enclosing postage-paid envelopes?

2. Web sites
   ___ hotlinks to other sites?
   ___ auto-reply forms?
   ___ e-mail? (security vs. public)
   ___ capture for direct mailings?
   ___ donor database management with reminders?

3. Videos
   ___ phone numbers, web sites and other info on screen?
   ___ where placed (beginning, end, middle, all three)?
   ___ mail-back card enclosed?
   ___ contact info printed on box cover?
   ___ onsite discussion groups?

4. CD-ROM or other software
   ___ print out form included?
   ___ automated link to available website via ISP (internet service provider)?
   ___ resource listings with hotlinks?

5. Telephone
   ___ voice mail site?
   ___ caller gets audio automated stepped options?
   ___ answering machine?
   ___ toll-free number?
   ___ 900 number service with earnings as support?

6. Audiocassette or CD
   ___ printed case or cassette/CD with contact info?
   ___ audible mention of contact information in the "program" (beginning, middle or end, or all three)?
   ___ incentives for passing copies along?

7. TV or Radio programs and spots
   ___ verbal toll free phone number that's easy to remember?
   ___ verbal web address that's easy to remember?
   ___ on-screen information that includes contact information?

8. Fax Attacks
   ___ coupons for offers?
   ___ fax-back service for questions that might arise?
   ___ concise information for other contact or offers?

9. Newspaper (press releases, ads and free PR features)
   ___ use of color whenever available?
   ___ linkage to other media in style, content and image?
   ___ specific messages clearly communicated?
   ___ follow-up potential present?

10. Other media?
    (Blogs, Podcasting, etc.)