

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

# How Sun Valley Church is Building Their Digital Strategy – Episode 187

## *What Digital Ministry Really Looks Like (Part 2)*

How important is data and what role should data play in your ministry strategy?

In this week's conversation, we sat down to talk with the team from Sun Valley Church about the data they're tracking, how they're measuring attendance and whether their digital strategies are affecting their in-person attendance numbers.

### *Why Data Matters for Sun Valley*

- At Sun Valley, they are data-informed but not data-driven. Churches need to be data-informed to know what to invest in and when to pivot.
- Sun Valley tracks things like: baptism, volunteers, volunteer leaders, how many people are in groups and how many kids are in the kids ministry.
- They use data because they want to know if they are being successful in stewarding the gospel that Jesus has entrusted to them.
- If you're not keeping score, how do you know if you're winning? This "game" is too important not to measure.
- Measure what matters. If it's not actionable, don't pay too much attention to it.

### *How is Current Data Informing Future Strategies?*

- By looking at the data for online engagement, they were able to adapt and make sure the most important information was shared when the most people were joining.
- Data helps inform what content is shared on which platform. Sun Valley edits their messages to tailor the content format to the audience's preferences based on the analytics.
- Example: The data shows that viewership drops a little bit after each sermon in a series. So instead of sharing the title plus "part 3" or "part 4", Sun Valley titles each sermon as a stand-alone so that people can jump in regardless of which week they join in on.
- Data helps churches make better decisions. But most churches aren't listening. They aren't looking at the data to see what people actually want.

## *Where Should Churches Focus?*

- Look at the metrics channel by channel.
- Pay attention to new contacts. Are we making connections? (Names, email addresses.) And how are we following up with those people to build a connection?
- Views: decide what you “count” as a view. Sun Valley looks at people who have viewed content for at least a minute.
- Sun Valley does not use a multiplier to estimate online attendance. Using a multiplier may make us feel better, but it doesn’t really help us solve anything at the end of the day.
- Behind every number is a person and a story. The end goal is connection.
- Eventually we want to pay attention to the data around online groups, baptisms online, digital next steps – but that data isn’t really worth looking at until we are investing in changing/growing those numbers.
- We’re trying to help as many people as we can meet, know, and follow Jesus – that can happen online and in-person. It’s a both/and scenario.
- At the end of the day, to ignore digital ministry is to ignore people. If we don’t meet people where they are, we’re missing the opportunity to introduce them to Jesus.

## *Next Steps*

- Download our [FREE](#) resource The Ultimate Guide to Digital Ministry Strategy.
- [Why Your Discipleship Path Is More Important Than Ever](#)
- If you need help with your digital ministry strategy and structuring your staff to support it, take a look at our [Strategic Planning Process for Digital Ministry](#).

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