

**Project:** Breakthrough Ministries Uses Customized Mailer to Encourage Return Visits

**Vertical Market:** Not-for-profit

**Business Application:** Direct Marketing/Traffic Generation

Breakthrough Ministries, a large Christian church fellowship, wanted to find a way to follow up with first-time visitors that was cost effective, yet personal. The ministry developed a three-touch mailing project to acknowledge visitors and encourage them to return.

#### Program Objectives

- Encourage return visits to Breakthrough Ministerial Fellowship Churches
- Follow up with first-time visitor consistently and in a cost-effective way
- Contact visitors within five days of visit

#### Significant Results Reported by User

- More than 60 churches have enrolled in the program
- Approximately 400 offers for free gifts have been redeemed
- Churches continue to use the program
- Program allows churches to do marketing, which they did not do in the past

#### Description

Breakthrough Ministries' leaders wanted to find a way to communicate with first-time visitors within a few days after their visit to a church. The leaders know that timely follow-up can go a long way toward encouraging a visitor to return to the church and possibly lead to church membership.

Working with Marketing Services by Vectra, Chief Operating Officer Don Corder and other ministry leaders developed a follow-up plan that involved communicating with the visitor using several postcards. Visitors receive a card during their visit that invites them to fill out their contact information and list prayer requests, and ushers collect these cards at the end of the service.

Within one day, church staff members enter the information, which is sent to Marketing Services by Vectra where the initial follow-up card is printed and mailed. Within a few days, the visitor receives a personalized postcard signed by the pastor that thanks them for their visit. It also mentions the prayer request information and offers the visitor a free gift related to their prayer request. For example, if the request is related to marital problems, the gift might be a tape developed by the ministry about marriage. The visitor can pick up the free gift during their next visit to the church.



Two more postcards are mailed whether the visitor returns or not. The mailings are timed so they arrive at one week intervals after the initial visit. The copy on the cards indicate that the church has not forgotten about the visitor.

The variable data information on the initial follow-up card includes the church name, the pastor's name and signature, and the day of the week of the visit. Other information includes copy related to the visitor's area of concern, a photo of the free gift related to their area of concern, and church contact information and visitor mailing address.





Corder explains that it was important to the ministry to find a way to follow up with visitors on a consistent basis within a short period of time after their visit. "It is very important that the visitor receive the piece in less than five days of the visit." Prior to developing this program, the ministry found it difficult to conduct the follow-up in a personal and timely fashion.

The program started in the middle of 2005, but, within a few months, more than 60 churches have signed up to use the program. It gives them an easy way to market themselves and encourage return visits. Many lack the resources to do any marketing without the program and thus were not doing it at all until the Breakthrough Ministries commissioned it.

Marketing Services by Vectra is currently developing additional mailing products that will be made available to the churches.



<p><b>Dear Randy,</b></p> <p>We wanted you to know that we have been praying for you.</p> <p>We look forward to worshipping with you again soon.</p> <p>To learn more about this week's activities and services, please call.</p> <p>God Bless You,</p>  <p><b>Paul D. Young</b> 503-463-5441 young.p.d@att.net</p>	<p><b>Word of Life Fellowship</b> 4705 Portland Rd NE Salem, OR 97305</p> <p><b>Randy Dix</b></p> 
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