

When looking at what social action projects to run, a church tends to look at how best they can serve the local community. If there are lots of young families, maybe a toddler group would be sensible, if there is high deprivation, perhaps a foodbank would be useful. Knowing your audience allows you to best serve people

When thinking about your digital presence in the community, it's just as important to think of your online audiences: what you're offering them online and how you're speaking to them.

The first thing to ask yourself is: who do you want to talk to? Are you in a high student area? Do you hold a lot of weddings in your church? Are you a tourist destination? Before doing anything, it is worth thinking about the top three audience groups you would like to engage with online. This might be something you discuss with your PCC or your church communications group.

Once you've decided on your audiences, it's time to flesh them out a bit more. What age range are they in? What interests might they have? What reason would they be engaging with your church? Understanding the people you're talking to will help you talk to them in a way they will find engaging.

This work will inform all areas of your digital presence, from your website to social media. Our work centrally is focused around nine audiences. We interviewed 2,000 Christians and non-Christians to understand how the Church can harness the power of digital and social media. You can see these audiences in the [digital presentation](#) from February General Synod.

### **Things to consider when structuring a website:**

When building a website or restructuring the current content, use your audiences to decide where content sits. For example, your homepage should be for an audience group who don't know you yet. You can welcome them, provide service times, location details and other details relevant to newcomers. Information that caters more to your current church congregation, perhaps notices, rotas and the prayer diary, can be placed deeper in a clearly marked section.

### **Things to consider when posting on social media:**

Different social media networks have different audiences. For example, Instagram tends to have a younger audience than Facebook and Twitter. Think about the kind of information you want your primary audiences to know about and this will help inform your tone and style of posting. For example: if one of your primary audiences is families, you may want to post regularly about family-focused events, prayers to say with children and crafts ideas to help tell Bible stories. Take a look at what we're planning for families this [Advent and Christmas](#).

### **Language**

How you speak to each audience is going to be different. For example: the text on a page about the history of the church will be different to text on a page about the youth club. While you want the voice to remain constant – as if it were the same person speaking – think about the words and the tone you use on each webpage and each social media post.

## Other things to consider

- Think about audiences when designing posters. The colours you use will change depending on the people you're wanting to reach – bright primary colours are suitable for children's events, whereas light pastels are right for weddings.
- Your audiences evolve over time, so make sure you're thinking about who you are reaching and the role your mission action plan plays in this.
- Make sure everyone who posts to your social media accounts and website are all aware of your primary audience groups so you're all on the same page.

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