Digital (Online) Ministry Evaluation Guide

Step One – *Pray*

Begin by asking God to show you what He has been doing in your church and ministry over this last year. Spend time praising God for His goodness and His faithfulness. Ask for God's wisdom in planning the future as well as for the courage and boldness to do whatever is needed to move the mission forward.

Step Two – *Reflect*

- Review your church/ministry's mission and vision statements. How did you move the mission and vision forward in this last year? How do you see digital as part of your future in moving the mission and vision forward?

- Use a whiteboard or large Post-it notes to list all the ways you have seen God at work in this last year. Spend ample time doing this. It will helpful as you evaluate, and it will encourage you and your team in the process.

- On a separate part of the whiteboard or different Post-it notes, list all the new digital skills you have learned and digital platforms you have adopted. Again, this will be both informative in the process and encouraging to you and your team.

- Spend a few minutes listing all the ways the world and culture have permanently changed.
    - How have relationships, learning models, entertainment, cultural practices, worship practices, and family routines changed?
    - Now consider which of those changes are temporary and which changes are permanent?

- Now refection on your pre-Covid ministry. A year ago (pre-Covid) if you were to identity ministries and programs that weren't effective, what would they be?

Step Three – *Evaluate*

On a white board or large Post-it notes, record your answers to the following:

- What were you doing pre-Covid, that you should consider not starting again when we can meet in-person?
- What are you doing digitally that you need to keep doing when you are able to meet again in-person?
- What did you do digitally that you need to stop doing (out of ineffectiveness, redundancy or lack of priority)?

    Part of the reason innovation was so easy and effective for churches during Covid was we stopped doing things. When you do less of one thing, you can do more of another. As I mention in book *Digital Mission*, one of the reasons I think churches struggle with

innovation is because they are really bad at stopping and ending things. We like ministry dedications and hate ministry funerals. Yet, we only have so much time, money and people and if we keep things going without evaluation, we end up tending a cemetery rather than a garden.

- What are you currently doing digitally in your ministry that you need to change moving forward (you will still do them but maybe change how they are done, the frequency in which you do them or the format or platform in which they occur)?
- Are any of your digital ministries guilty of transliteration (taking in-person methodologies and just doing it digitally without considering the uniqueness of digital culture)? Do your digital (online) ministries reflect the *Four Shifts of Digital Culture* (Experience as Story, Experience as Participation, Relational Authority and Tribalism)? For more information on this read Digital Mission or take the Digital Mission Course.
- What are you not doing digitally now that you need to do digitally (in part or in whole) in the future?
  - o Do you have a digital dimension to your community engagement and outreach strategy?
  - o How are you helping disciple people digitally (kids, youth, and adults)?
  - o How is your prayer ministry engaging digitally?

Step Four – *Dream & Plan*
Ideas without action are a distraction. Begin planning your ministry by asking the following questions:
- Given the answers above, as you move forward into a "new normal," what concrete things do you need to do or not do (be as specific as possible)?
  - o What will you stop doing?
  - o What will you keep doing?
  - o What will you change?
  - o What will you start doing?
- Review the answers to the above questions and then place the name of the person on your team who will take responsibility for it with a date on when they will do it by and report back.

Additional Resources by Dr. Bryce Ashlin-Mayo on Digital Ministry