

## 7 Reasons to Incubate Your Next Campus Launch

In elementary school, one of my daughter's classrooms held an egg incubator. Over the course of a few weeks, the children learned about eggs and were able to watch their hatchlings emerge. This transparent case, with heat lamp and straw matting, became critical to the life of those little chickens, protecting them from rough handling and carefully controlling environmental conditions until the birds could begin to fend for themselves.

The multisite church movement no longer exists as a revolutionary approach to church multiplication. Campus launching is now standard practice for reaching new geographic areas and extending the gospel impact of congregations large and small. Despite the commonality of this model, it remains helpful to remember that new campuses could also benefit from the protection of an incubator early on. **Holding at least two weeks of worship services on-campus at the sending church, alongside existing worship services, can be critical to the development of volunteers, leaders and staff.** Carefully controlling environmental conditions in a secondary venue of worship brings benefits to both the team being sent, and those doing the sending.

***Here are seven reasons to hold at least two incubator services before launching your next multisite church campus:***

**To Build Campus Identity** by bringing the early adopters all together in worship and establishing the core team's identity as pioneers months prior to launch.

**To Sample Message Delivery** by forcing communicators to think through their content and the context of their sermons. If preaching live to each campus, early incubator services help campus pastors practice applying local context in each campus or environment. For video communication, an incubator service serves as a lower-risk way to alleviate the fears of screen-driven sermon delivery.

**To Bring Everyone Together** by leveraging existing childcare and gathering space, usually a choir room or fellowship hall, at the sending campus. An incubator service may be the only time everyone on the launch team will worship as one body. Once launch happens, ministry volunteering and multiple services dissipate core team connectivity each week.

**To See Who's (Really) In** by allowing leaders to get a feel of who is on the team and recruit or steer direction as a result. Seeing everyone in one room, without the immediacy of launch looming, brings cohesion to every one-on-one conversation. Savvy campus leaders will use an incubator to make those elusive personal connections that they have been missing.

**To Share Launch Ownership** by reminding the entire church body that they are being sent as one to this new frontier, represented by this group of launch pioneers. Minimizing the "them" and "that new church" language must begin as soon as possible. Incubator services reinforce a one church multiple locations mindset before launch even happens.

**To Test Parallel Systems** by replicating worship service processes in a controlled environment. Developing multiple teams for concurrent worship, delivering technology in a portable setting can be daunting. And while preview services on-site are helpful at debugging systems, incubator services at the sending campus can help everyone know what questions to ask in the first place.

**To Train New Volunteers** by creating excitement across the congregation. Seasons of launch are a natural time to bring new volunteers to the team at both the sending and multisite campus. Incubator services are effective in providing opportunities to shadow existing volunteers and learn the systems in a known environment.

WHETHER 2018 IS THE YEAR YOU ARE GOING MULTISITE FOR THE FIRST TIME, OR SENDING YOUR SEVENTH CAMPUS, CONSIDER HOLDING ONE OR TWO INCUBATOR SERVICES BEFORE YOU LAUNCH.

AT AUXANO, WE CREATE BREAK-THROUGH CLARITY FOR MULTISITE CHURCH TEAMS THROUGH A UNIQUE PROCESS OF LAUNCH EXECUTION PLANNING THAT FULLY INTEGRATES YOUR UNIQUE IDENTITY WHILE STRENGTHENING A WHOLE-CHURCH VISION. WE KNOW THAT MOST CHURCHES NEED MORE THAN ANOTHER GENERIC STRATEGIC PLAN OR NOTEBOOK OF MULTISITE BEST PRACTICES, AND HAVE HAD THE HONOR TO WORK WITH MULTISITE CHURCHES FROM 200 TO 20,000 DURING SEASONS OF LAUNCH AND GROWTH.

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