

Getting Ready for Fall: 7 Steps to Success

Yes, it's currently blazing hot in most parts of the country. But fall will be here before we know it, and with cooler weather comes an attendance surge for most churches. Families are returning from vacation, people are getting back into routines, and church parking lots and pews are fuller than they were during summer. At our church, we typically see a 30-35% attendance bump from the end of July to mid-August (there was one year that it hit 52%).

So how can you take advantage of the next few weeks in order to be prepared for the influx of guests? Here are seven ways:

Refresh your volunteer training.

Go back to the basics with your current vols. [Remind them why your team exists](#). Whether you're meeting with them in person or sending out text / email updates, spend a few minutes over the next few weekends helping them get their heads back in the game. **[Related post: [Need an Inexpensive Option for Team Training?](#)]**

Invite new people to serve.

New guests mean new opportunities for your members to step up their game. Invite all of your current vols to shoulder-tap their friends. If your attendance numbers bump by 1/3 like ours, make it a personal goal to bump your volunteer numbers by the same. **[Related post: [20 Ways to Get More Volunteers](#)]**

Review your systems.

Sure, you remember last Easter or fall when a lot of people showed up and you had to seat them in the lobby or park them at the business down the street. But now, how will you prepare based on what you know? Now is the time to pull out the playbook and talk to your team about what will happen *when* (not *if*) additional space is required (and please, let's not call it *overflow*. That's what toilets do.) **[Related post: [10 Ways to Make Your Seating Team More Effective](#)]**

Practice your language.

How will you greet your guests when they arrive? Sure, you may cover this with your volunteers...but what about the people on stage? How will your worship leader encourage people to scoot in once worship has already started? How will your lead pastor greet the throngs, acknowledge the bump, and invite them back? How will your announcement guy give

practical next steps? [Related post: [Six Times to Talk to Your Guests](#)]

Check your supplies.

Do you have enough first time guest gifts? Worship guides? Information cards? Communion cups? Now is the time to order them. [Related post: [First Time Guest Bags: An Intro](#)]

Clean it up.

Don't neglect your facility or your parking lot. Take a minute to walk around this week and spot what needs to be fixed or freshened up: remove those VBS posters. Weed that flower bed. Windex that lobby door. [Related post: [Pick Up Your Junk](#)]

Pray.

This isn't the last resort, but the first. If we believe for a moment that the guest experience rises and falls on a clean facility and well-trained volunteers, we deceive ourselves. No, we must pray for the Holy Spirit to compel people to come, to open their eyes to the gospel, and to woo them into a relationship with Jesus. [Related post: [Is Your Guest Service Team in a State of Desperation?](#)]

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