

Meagan Ranson ([00:02](#)):

Welcome to the church field podcast, insanely practical conversations with real pastors and real church leaders to equip you to lead healthy and growing churches. Before we get started, we have our partner gloo here, hanging out with us today. So we wanted to take a moment to let them tell you what they're all about. Thanks Megan, and Hey church leaders, super excited to be hanging out with you all on the podcast today. So we've been working with glue for a little while now, can you tell us really quickly, Ooh, gloo is absolutely we're a tech company based in Boulder, Colorado, and our mission is to serve the champion above all else. So we call the churches and the organizations that we partner with champions because you champion the growth of others. So first of all, thank you so much for everything you do to serve our communities as leaders, especially during this time. That's awesome. How can church feel podcast listeners learn more about glue for sure. Just head over to [glue.us](#). We have tons of free resources available, and plus, if you want to check out insights plus new church fuel users can use the code blue 10 CF for a 10% discount. That's awesome. So once again, that code is Glu 10 C F. Yep. That's correct. Looking forward to listening to the podcast.

Meagan Ranson ([01:34](#)):

Hello, everyone. Welcome to the church field podcast. I'm Megan Ranson. And today we're going to hear a conversation between Michael and Stephen Brewster about how to reach people online for Christmas. Now this year is gonna look different no matter where you are. Steven has really great ideas and suggestions on how to make the most of it and how to reach the most amount of people and the most impactful way this Christmas season let's get to it. So thanks for hanging out. How are you? Things are good.

Stephen Brewster ([02:08](#)):

Things are great. God is very kind to us. And so we're very thankful for, for where things are at in the season of life. For sure. I love it. So listen, as we talked about planning Christmas, one of the big things that we're obviously focusing on churches are, are thinking through like planning these Christmas services. Now it's actually kind of refreshing, you know, it's like something to plan that we get a new target for a season. Yes. I love it. Yeah. So you're working with tons of churches. I mean, I feel like you've got the pulse of kind of what's going on. And so as churches are starting to think through how they should plan their Christmas experiences, their services, I mean, what approach should we be taking right now? Yeah, I think there's such a good question. And thank you for serving people with this content, because I think it's, I think all of the rules that we are in that we've known for years out the window now, like we didn't, we no longer get to operate.

Stephen Brewster ([03:03](#)):

There's no standard operating procedure ever again. So, so one of the things that I would tell you is you've got to talk about Christmas earlier than you've ever talked about it before I was in Dallas, Texas three weeks ago, drove by a billboard that said all Christmas music all the time already. Wow. Okay. That was in August. So like, like people are so ready for this year to end. Right. We feel like, we feel like there are two magical moments, the election, which is magical one way or another, however you believe. And then January 1st and the truth is science is not bound to either of those dates. But, but we have as humans, this innate desire to find a finish line. And so let's start making sure we're communicating about Christmas earlier than we've ever communicated before. It is not out of the realm of reality for you to start talking about your Christmas events in October this year, just because of the way that the world is revolving around, around needing a distraction.

Stephen Brewster ([04:09](#)):

I work in with a lot of artists and churches in the music business as well. And all of the Christmas music is, is going to be released in October of this year. And that's normal. It's about two or three weeks earlier than normal. Right? And so, so as a church leader, as a creative leader, communications leader, your responsibility is to communicate earlier than you've ever communicated before. I think it's going to get really noisy. And so that's the first thing. I think the second thing is we've taken the last six months to teach people and beg people to tune in online. And I feel a lot of my friends and a lot of the churches that we get to partner with are starting to go back, right. But even going back, it's not going to be the way it was. And so when we go back into these services, there's no way we're going to be able to pack people in at Christmas.

Stephen Brewster ([05:02](#)):

Like we normally pack them in. So we have the runway. If we start right now to make sure that we are creating two distinct lead different experiences, we create a broadcast experience and an online experience. And the truth is the truth is that the churches that are very innovative and are going to use COVID as a launching point to scale into a huge level of impact and influence in their local communities in the future are already thinking about how when the world gets back on its axis and spins properly, how do we create the broadcast experience and the live experience? I don't think the days of just putting a camera in the auditorium and someone speaking from a stage or singing from a stage is the solution anymore. All of the data shows us what we've already known. 80% of the people are watching here. And so what are we doing to make sure that we're our Christmas experiences are crafted in a way that we can invite our community to tune in to this awesome moment and watch it on their TV or watch it on their phone, or have a moment in their, in their personal lives with this content.

Michael Lukaszewski ([06:11](#)):

Yeah. So that's a good, that's a good challenge. I actually have not heard that articulated that way before, but the, but I mean, is there an application of this literally where we create an in-person experience for those that are coming in person and, and then a separate, I mean, literally a separate video file, a separate experience for the online crowd. Like it's two separate things. Maybe it's the same, whatever, whatever.

Stephen Brewster ([06:31](#)):

Yeah. And, and, and, and you use your storytelling videos the same way, but we, as a church have to think about ministry we've we have left allowed ministry to stay analog for too long. Okay. Even the most digitally savvy churches are still analog. We are not creating. We have to think about ourselves like good morning, America, not like Billy Graham crusade. And I love Billy Graham. Like, I'm a, I'm a fan, but those days are over. And people tune into content in shorter bit bites. And they want the content in ways that are on demand and accessible and there it's going to be accessible through their phone. So your pastor writes a message. That same message can be told in both places. Now let's capture it in two places. Right. Let's capture it. And we wouldn't, we wouldn't do we wouldn't bring in all of our lighting gear if we were doing it outside middle of the day service, right.

Stephen Brewster ([07:30](#)):

That's kind of what we're doing right now because we're like, Hey, tune in online tonight online, make sure you give online, make sure you join a zoom community group, our students and our kids program online, blah, blah, blah, online, online. And then all of a sudden we're going to like, just pull the

plug and now come to this room that you're not comfortable coming to in the first place wear a mask, don't wear a mask be six feet separated. I was at a conference last week, Michael 1100 worship leaders in a room of 4,500 people. Wow. That's built for 4,500 people. Yeah. It doesn't feel great, right? No. Yeah. All the people on the stage, you've got to hate it. Right. Right. And as a communicator, you're like, I can't see what people are feeling or doing. So why would we not create multiple opportunities for people to connect? Like it just makes sense.

Michael Lukaszewski ([08:19](#)):

Yeah. I love that. I literally just had Jay, we just published an article about church's contextualizing ideas and like that what you just said. It completely reminds me of that. A lot of times, you know, an ordinary sized church would hear something like this and go, well, yeah. If you've got a big budget and you've got, you know, all this stuff, they, here's the thing, there's a principle here. You make that applicable toward your budget, towards your church, toward whatever principles, the principle. And if you can't do this all the time, which I mean, we can talk about that later. You probably can. And maybe you just don't realize it, but let's just say, you're not doing this all the time. You can definitely do it for Christmas.

Stephen Brewster ([08:53](#)):

Right. Standard. And here's where God was so wise. He gave all of the people at Apple, so much wisdom that you can take your phone, put it on a tripod behind a ring light and look professional. Yup. Right. So even if, even if your church is in a place where you don't feel like you can execute this for \$15, you can let me see about for less, less than \$15, you can get a tripod on Amazon. Okay. And you can put your phone in the tripod and record yourself doing your message. And, and, and if you, you may not be able to go from what you normally do to good morning America or to, to Quimbee or whatever the new technology is that allows you to broadcast on your phone, but take a Christmas song. Having somebody play it acoustic in front of an iPhone, deliver your message on an iPhone, then have your editor take that and drop in your host moments and the stories that you're telling during your Christmas service and who knows. Okay. Just try it.

Michael Lukaszewski ([10:01](#)):

Yeah. Let's try it. What's the worst that's going to happen

Stephen Brewster ([10:04](#)):

In addition, try it. Yeah. Blame blame me. You can email me and blame me. Okay. But, but what, what, what does it hurt us to have both versions and see how people engage more? And here's the other thing. And Michael, this is one of the things, this is not Christmas related. This is just digital ministry created by related. You need a lower third, like scroll on all of your broadcasts, whether it's from the stage or or you've created a separate content because people are watching on their phones more than they're watching anywhere else. And when you're watching on your phone or watching on your TV, you don't see the chat, the chat box. Okay. And so any calls to action that you have need to be on a scroll that goes across the bottom of the screen. If we watch CNN or Fox news or ESPN, if you watch MSNBC, you can almost not see the anchor. Cause there's so many things around them, right? And so why are we not borrowing from this proven technology? Have a scroll thing across the bottom to find out more about our church, Texas, number two if you're new here, email this person if you want to give to this next campaign, text this number, we have the ability. It's so funny. I watch, I watch hundreds of churches a month and none of them do it. It's amazing. Is anybody doing it? I don't, I've not seen one per one church to do it.

Michael Lukaszewski ([11:31](#)):

I think pastors would be like, well, we don't want to distract people, but we don't realize that they're just that they're distracted. It's like they're in their kitchen making eggs while traveling.

Stephen Brewster ([11:41](#)):

And I would say, I would say, we don't want to distract them, but do you feel distracted when you watch the news? Right?

Michael Lukaszewski ([11:47](#)):

It's like, if they're going to be distracted, so we might as well distract them with our own stuff.

Stephen Brewster ([11:51](#)):

At least distract them with calls to action, move right. In their faith. Yeah.

Michael Lukaszewski ([11:54](#)):

That's a, that's a, that's a really good lesson. I love that idea. Okay. So talk about some ideas that you're hearing of what churches are doing or thinking as, as the churches you're already planning is getting ready to come out with stuff.

Stephen Brewster ([12:09](#)):

Yeah. So one, one thing that I would tell you is this is the year. If there's every year, you're going to care about your community at Christmas. This should be the year that you care about your community. Okay. So don't think about how I, I remember, I don't know, it was probably 10 years ago. Everybody was like Gaga over the idea of the iPad, little drummer boy thing. I'm sure we all remember that moment. Right? I think North point did it. And it was like this moment. Right? So what if instead of that moment, we could have every church that, that, that has influenced in their community told a story of how they cared about their community for Christmas this year. Right? Because we need some good news, right? We need some, we need some really encouraging moments in our life. And, and I think that churches that are going to win Christmas this year are the churches that are going to find ways to serve their community. And then tell that story better than they've ever told it before.

Michael Lukaszewski ([13:08](#)):

Yeah. So, so make it, make it about your community, not about your church, which is probably gonna get a flat anyway, but

Stephen Brewster ([13:15](#)):

It's a good principle. Anyway, it's, it's actually probably a kingdom principle. But we get in, we get trapped in, in trying to create this wow experience, which I love allow experience. Yeah. But sometimes the most wow. Is that we get \$1,500 to a single mom who wasn't going to have Christmas. And then we told that story.

Michael Lukaszewski ([13:31](#)):

Yeah. Are you seeing churches kind of lean back in, maybe, you know, you mentioned that the community is probably more hungry for Christmas to hurry up and get here. Are you seeing maybe a stronger pull back to some traditions? And, and even like the traditional even branding and like, you

know, home for Christmas, like stuff, that's not way out there, maybe it doesn't seem all your creative. I would say that, that the trend is

Stephen Brewster ([13:57](#)):

More than traditional, but avoiding, avoiding the word home as much as possible. Okay. That's good. That's very cause because we've all felt like we'd been locked at home for a long time. Right. And so, so I want to get out of home. I want to get out of home right now. I want to go congregate with my friends. But nostalgia, nostalgia wins every Christmas, but this Christmas specifically take people back to a moment when they really enjoyed life. And, and do that through your branding, through that, through your, your packaging and even your programming.

Michael Lukaszewski ([14:32](#)):

That's a good, that's a good word. Nostalgia. Over tradition, tradition,

Stephen Brewster ([14:38](#)):

Nostalgia. I would say like, and this is something that I've seen as a win through COVID as well is make sure that you take get your church database out and you bring some of your most friendly volunteers and call every person on your register and just wish them a Merry Christmas. That's good. You will be blown away at how people respond to that. So that's not a, that's not a, that's not digital. That's not scalable. That's not like all the things that we, you know, we're trying to do, literally call people and wish a Merry Christmas call people and tell them, Hey, we love you. We know it's been a tough year. Merry Christmas. How powerful would that be? Oh my gosh. Could you imagine? It's like, that's like pastoral side of pastoring, right? And you're not asking for anything. It's not Merry Christmas and tune into our thing and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Stephen Brewster ([15:34](#)):

No, we're just calling to tell you. We love you Merry Christmas. Is there anything we can pray for you for great for you? That's a great idea, dude. This is a couple of golden golden nuggets here. That's a casino thing, but these are the, I like it. I like it. And I call them nuggets. I think it's a chocolate bar. Isn't it. Let's go with it. I should have thought of that first and not the casino. Hey, listen. We all know where your mind's at. Okay. Thanks for hanging out, man. This is good stuff. Oh, it's my pleasure. Thank you guys so much

Meagan Ranson ([16:10](#)):

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