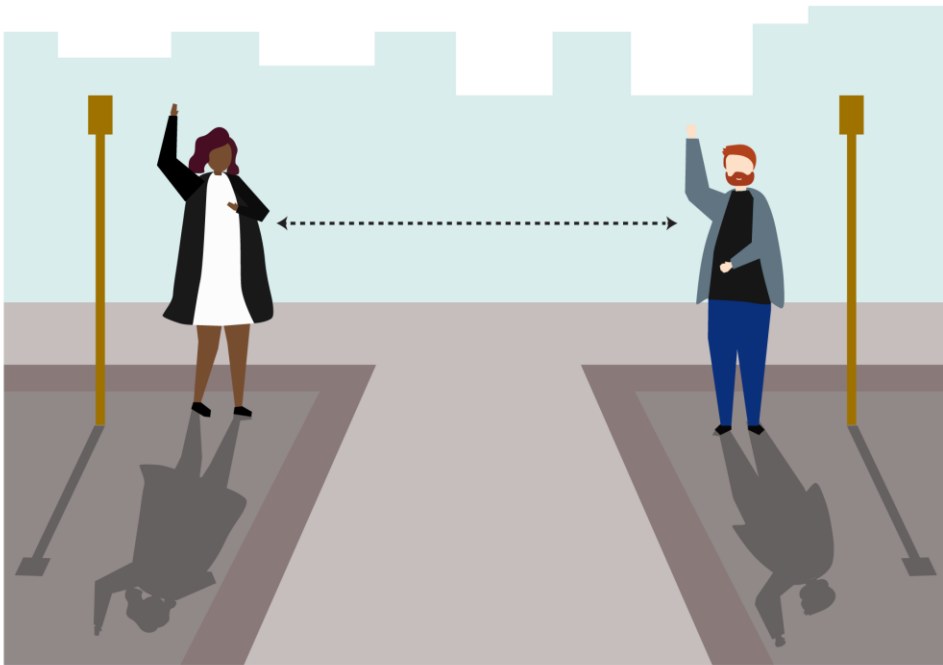


Drop it at the door?

Interest Generation in an Age of Social Distancing

The world has changed. Maybe for a moment; maybe longer. Either way, we now live in a time of heightened fear and disruption of daily habits. Historically, this would be a perfect time for evangelistic activity. But when authorities have closed public meetings, and social distancing has become the norm, how do our evangelistic practices need to change?



Interest Generation

Traditionally, an interest generation campaign consisted of a Bible study card mailing, with a tear-off response card mailed back. This led to a Bible worker or volunteer going to the door with the Bible study, initiating an in-person relationship.

There are two problems with this traditional approach. First, these days more people have internet access at home than have stamps laying around to put on a return card. So over the time, our Church created Bible study tools and reaching out programs suited to the current environment.

The second problem, however, is more serious. Today, you are not welcome at the door. A face-to-face relationship is crucial to building the heart relationship required for effective evangelism. That must be the ultimate goal. But what steps can we take to engage people now, even in this new climate of social distancing?

Engaging with Bible Study Interests Today

Here are three ideas for how to build your Bible study interest leads during the current COVID-19 restrictions, and even beyond.

- 1. If you are offering a physical resource, drop a small care kit at the door.** The goal of introducing yourself to a Bible study interest is to build a relationship. Typically, this is a physical meeting, but in the current climate we can't pressure people with a physical meeting immediately. At a minimum, your care kit should include the offered resource—whether a book, DVD or Bible study—along with a card or short letter introducing yourself that includes the volunteer's personal phone number and offer to pray with them by phone. If you'd like to add other gifts or online resources, you could give them a URL to an online meeting or just let them know that you'll be dropping off something else in a week.
- 2. Offer a free online resource to start.** Utilizing a Facebook ad campaign, you can secure interests that want to receive a free online Bible study or other online-only resource. Then you can start an email dialogue with them or invite them to an online Bible study through a Zoom meeting or a one-on-one FaceTime meeting.
- 3. Offer prayer or community through the phone or an online environment.** Many people will be home alone with little to do. In a time of anxiety like this it could be a great blessing to have someone to talk with about spiritual matters.

A Timely Message

People need Jesus now more than ever, so it's not the time to hold back. Searches across America have increased up to 5x for searches line *end times* and *second coming*. During this extraordinary moment in history, we all have an obligation to be reaching out and offering hope to our neighbors. Every church member can reach people in the community who are ready to hear our biblical message of hope and wholeness. They may not welcome a pastor or an ordained minister, but they will be willing to open up to you through prayer and personal and consistent contact.

I believe God will use this crisis to reach the hearts of the stubborn and prideful, to pique new curiosities and engage the minds of people no longer distracted by the modern culture. God has prepared our active church people for this moment, to be messengers of hope and healing. The time is now not after the pandemic. Go ye...

Helpful materials:

<https://www.adventist.org/study-the-bible/>

<https://itiswritten.study/home>

<https://www.bibleschools.com/courses/17/lessons/276/steps/1768>

<https://www.amazingfacts.org/media-library/read/c/2/t/bible-study-guides>