

Executive Summary - PowerVisitor

A Senior Pastor's Welcome Letter from Allen Ratta, CEO ConnectionPower

I want to warmly welcome you and let you know that we consider ourselves your ministry partners in the vital task of connecting people to the Body of Christ. I and my staff are here to assist you in every way to utilize our revolutionary web-based solutions to greatest effect in growing your church. This overview covers a few basic points that will assist you, as the senior pastor, in the implementation of PowerVisitor.

The PowerVisitor Commitment

PowerVisitor (unlike other ConnectionPower ministry modules) requires the development of a *connection* ministry team that does not pre-exist in most churches. It takes people to reach people. You will need to assist in getting your people involved but the payoffs, in terms of church growth, are huge! Go high profile! You will maximize your success if you elevate the visibility of the ministry as you recruit and mobilize your people to the mission of connecting visitors. Your total buy-in, support and active promotion as the senior pastor is essential to the development of a connection team that can effectively create sustained church growth.

100% of Your Growth Potential

You might ask, is this level of executive involvement and commitment worth it? Every year I have the privilege to speak into the lives of thousands of pastors through our pastoral seminars on church growth and in national conferences. One of my key teachings, "The Seven Laws of Assimilation," is the distillation of over 20 years of working with thousands of churches in the business of connecting visitors and integrating newcomers from the crowd to the core. Law #1 simply states, "*Visitors represent 100% of your growth potential.*" And, as we say at ConnectionPower, "that's a pretty high percent!" Most pastors give immediate mental assent to the truth of law #1 but few demonstratively act like they really believe it. James, states, "Faith without works is dead." If visitors represent 100% of your church's future growth and your ability to impact the community to which God has called you, what are you *doing* that shows you are a true believer?

Stewardship

It amazes me how committed we can be to sending missionaries around the world at great cost to reach gospel resistant people groups (and rightly we should per the Great Commission). Yet we are unwilling to get downright serious about reaching the hordes of people that God, by His Spirit, is wooing to the very front doors of His House week in and week out. The underlying biblical motivation behind a connection ministry is stewardship. Our training materials emphasize that every call to a visitor is equally valuable regardless of the visitor's responsiveness. Stewardship demands that we make a responsible effort to demonstrate care. We have a slogan at ConnectionPower. "Our ministry is to reach the reachable and touch the touchable and not to aggravate the aggravatable." Once due diligence has been exercised, and we find an unreceptive heart, our obligation is complete and we move on.

The Journey

Churches that already have team members committed to reaching out to visitors have a head start with PowerVisitor. Churches that are just beginning the journey towards an effective Connection Ministry will need to do additional vision casting and recruitment on an ongoing basis to gather the required human resources to do a credible job. This takes due diligence and patience. A great Connection Ministry, like all ministries, takes time and ongoing attention to develop to full maturity. Once you have a mature and committed connection team you will find that they are worth their weight in gold as they will be a key to your ongoing growth.

The Value Proposition

A Connection Ministry can be aptly described as the ministry behind every other ministry of the church. It should not be viewed as "just another ministry." It is possible to have great sermons and congregational ministries and still not be effective at visitor retention. PowerVisitor drives the one ministry whose sole mission is to connect your visitors into every other ministry of your church. It is the pipeline of all new growth.

Velcro Factor

Some churches have a very high Velcro Factor while others are like a new Teflon pan. PowerVisitor unleashes a proven ministry process that doubles and even triples a church's visitor retention rate—what we call your Velcro factor. It incorporates a highly honed connection process and training materials that embed lessons learned and best practices from working with thousands of growing churches over the past 20 years.

Teamwork

The migration from what we call a passive inward focused church to that of a proactive outward focused church requires a fundamental DNA shift in a church. Many volunteers and staff will need to get involved at varying strategic levels. The priority of participating in “visitor connections” needs to be disseminated throughout every leadership level of the church. This is more than just raising up a team of connection partners to do the job. Staff pastors have a key role to play, as do ministry leaders and designated ministry contact persons. Involvement will need to permeate the church if the church is to become permeable to newcomers. This kind of team involvement will give you the Velcro results you desire. This is another reason why the total buy-in and support of senior leadership is so critical.

Layers of the Onion

Everyone has a story. Your Connection Partners will begin to garner more and more insights (like removing the layers of an onion) into the needs and interests of your visitors. Their story will begin to emerge. Once this process of discovery is underway, it is critical that your Connection Director has adequate care resources to direct towards a visiting family. For example, upon discovery that someone is going through a divorce; a contact person for that ministry must be motivated, trained and ready to respond to their needs. Only then is a church truly poised for growth with a proactive posture.

Quiver Full of Velcro Hooks

There is a direct correlation between a church's Velcro factor and the ready availability of contact persons to respond to needs. You will need to ensure that contact personnel have been recruited who can responsibly represent every ministry group of the church. Contact persons are not necessarily the group leader but at a minimum need to be group participants with a heart towards newcomers. Ask yourself, “What circles of belonging exist in the church where visitors could make friends?” Then recruit contact persons for those ministry groups as well as contact persons who are willing to represent broader church ministries like women's or children's ministries. In this way your Connection Director will have a quiver full of Velcro hooks to launch with the click of a mouse as the needs and interests of your visitors are discovered.

Recommended Reads

The following articles are recommended reading on the subject and can be downloaded and printed by going to the Information tab off our homepage and clicking on “PowerVisitor Related Articles” in the blue navigation bar on the left of the page. I think you will find them provocative and helpful. The Outward Focused Church; The 7 Laws of Assimilation; The Effective Guest Center; and the Mathematics of Church Growth

Final Thoughts

A Connection Ministry, when effectively and consistently promoted, in and of itself produces an important shift in the mindset of a congregation. The focus begins to gravitate more towards outsiders instead of the natural tendency to be exclusively preoccupied with internal matters and close friendships. This outward focus is a key to increasing the assimilation potential of your church. PowerVisitor™ unleashes a powerful process that *mobilizes* and *leverages* a relatively few volunteers into a powerful team that can effectively touch, track, and connect your visitors. As a pastor you now have a practical way to clone yourself as others pick up the vision to reach out and provide world-class visitor care.

It is my sincerest prayer that, like thousands of others, ConnectionPower will be a blessing to your church and give you the increase you pray and work for. This is our passion and our ministry.

Blessings,
Allen Ratta CEO ConnectionPower.com