



Episode 56: Digital Makers | 15 Things to Enhance your Brand

Featuring: Mingo Palacios & Mark Miller

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Transcript:

Mingo Palacios: [00:05](#)

Hello and welcome to the PD Podcast where we dialogue with some of today's most insightful ministry leaders on topics relevant to the next generation. I'm Mingo Palacios, your host and Pastor of Evangelism in Culture at Saddleback Church. Every episode you'll meet a future focus leader who's changing the face of ministry from millennials by simply observing the past. It's our hope that these conversations challenge you to dream bigger, lead better, and intentionally make time to honor those who let us stand on their shoulders. Thanks for joining us.

Mark Miller:

[00:48](#)

Although he did a great job setting me up talking about a personal narrative. I have very little of that because I am kind of more of the guy behind the guy and I'm going to run through 15 points that I've kind of learned over my career, in both communications, marketing, branding and ministry, that transcend brand your personal leadership and digital strategy. So hopefully this is helpful for where you're at in some tangible things that you can take away. Real quick, as Mingo mentioned, I'm a partner at Historic Agency. We do branding and digital marketing for lots of clients that you may know. Again, I'm the guy behind the guy, so usually people don't realize who we work with, but some large ministries. I am also, I think the only speaker, not from California. So I thought I'd give some street cred that I am a hipster. I shoot eight millimeter film, so that's got to count for something. I have a three year old hacker and a wife who has more degrees than I do, so she's super smart. All right, moving on to point number one, who is your audience and where is your audience? Those are really common brand concepts, right? Understanding who your audience is and where they are, but when it comes to the digital strategy and leadership, sometimes they get confused or left out or misplaced. So, when we talk about who, I think Anthony had mentioned earlier, you may have multiple audiences, so understanding that, what do they like, what do they don't like, where are they, what channels they use, what channels they don't use and then the data behind those things you can get from Facebook or

google or are doing other research online is super important.

Mark Miller:

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We had a client a few weeks ago that we were meeting with and they thought, "Hey, we know our people are on Facebook. Okay, so let's do Facebook." Okay, can we actually target them on Facebook is a whole other conversation. And we did a bunch of research to show that it actually was really difficult to target their specific audience because of the interest. So we had to do more behavioral studies on their key demographic to understand how to create content for them. So, it's not as easy when you start looking at the data, making sure that you're building strategies that are sound. So we asked a couple of these questions. What does the data say about where your audience is or where they are? Can you actually backup your thoughts with actual hard concrete data that says we have this audience on this channel? And then what does the data say about how easy it is to communicate with your audience in the places they are? So, can you find out the interest that they have? Can you message around those interests? So using data to actually back up your assumptions, super important. And then when it comes to leadership, we all lead, whether we realize it or not, you're either leading up horizontally, so people next to you and leading those who might be looking up to you that you manage teams, and so who your audience is and what are their needs, what channels they prefer. It's really important to understand that when you're

actually leading. So that's something that not everyone kind of does intentionally. And I've learned the hard way that if you don't know who your audience is, sometimes what you wear, what you say, how you say it doesn't come across the way you need it to kind of move your project forward.

Mark Miller:

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So think through those brand concepts, but also as it pertains to your leadership, which brings me this story about Kraft singles, which I will tell in my next point which is 'go there'. So go there. I've been in ministry a long time, served in some large churches and have seen countless leaders understand the theory of who and where but never actually experienced those who and where. And so we recommend that if you are a building a brand or digital strategy or even leading those you serve those that you're trying to reach out to, are you actually going and experiencing what they would experience online? So are you following the things that they would follow on Instagram or on Facebook or on Twitter? Are you going to the places that they hang out in real life? Are you, if you say, "Hey, we're a church for the city and a majority of your population takes public transit." Are you actually taking public transit? Have you ever been on a bus? So we've seen ministers not ever experience that, but say they're about their city. So what places can you actually experience so that you can build better stories, that you can use your content in a more effective way? So that it goes back to my Kraft singles story. I'm not a fan of American cheese, but I was

working in a large church in Arizona and needed budget for a new project. Who always would love to have a bigger budget? The CFO of the church, didn't have a relationship with him, so I asked him, "Hey, let's go to lunch. You pick out the place, what's your favorite place? And let's hang out there." And little did I know that this place, he loved the salad because it had Kraft singles on top of the salad, which is the most disgusting thing, but no joke real deal.

Mark Miller:

[06:30](#)

I thought, I had a great experience, we built some trust, we hung out. He also was a car guy, so that was a little bit more up my alley. I can kind of appreciate the craft of a car, not the Kraft in singles. And so, that ended up landing, understanding for the value of what I was doing and funding for the projects that we needed. So that's kind of an extreme project, or extreme example, but understanding sometimes you have to kind of experience their world to develop relationship and value. Next point, point number three, 'split your personality'. So each brand has a personality in different what we'd say attributes of their personality. So if you can, Anthony talked a little bit about this earlier as well, understand and define your brand and their personality attributes.

Mark Miller:

[07:28](#)

What we'd like to recommend is once you've done that, is chop them up and spread them across your marketing or your digital channels. So Facebook is a representative of one component of your brand. Twitter could be another and line that up with the audiences. When it comes to your leadership, similar

to knowing your audience as you interact with different groups, again, as you lead up horizontal and below you, are you intentionally using the different personality attributes that you have as a leader to those audiences to be more effective? Point number four, which this is an overstatement, but I wanted to throw it in here anyways, 'claim to be the best at something obscure and own it'. So I am really good at two sports. One is bowling and the other one is semi-professional laser tag.

Mark Miller:

[08:26](#)

Some people would say that those are sports, but I can tell you that that girl is holding the gun wrong. She's standing wrong. I can get real nerdy into that. The reason I say that is when you're thinking digital or your brand, what is it that you're doing uniquely that is part of your mission, who you are, your vision that you can own? We've worked with other ministries and I've seen them really use Instagram in creative ways. So there's a church in L.A. that has a deaf population that they serve. And so they've been creating really amazing Instagram videos. Everyone see the little scripture images? Well they actually do it in video, in sign language? And so they, they've kind of owned that little niche and so it's a way to kind of differentiate and again, when it comes to leadership and trying to build rapport, what is the thing that you're unique that you can share with others like laser tag or whatever hipster thing you guys are all in to?

Mark Miller:

[09:35](#)

'Make deposits not withdraws'. So point number five, when we talk about brand digital strategy and

leadership, are you adding more value than you're taking away from your audiences? This is a little free library. You've probably seen those in neighborhoods, an example of adding value to your community. So there's a bunch of different ways to add value across channels. We kind of break them into four different areas, resourcing, providing wisdom, inspiration and fun when it comes to your digital channels. And then same with leadership. Are you providing more value to the people that you're leading up? Which is usually sometimes a challenge because we're saying, "Hey, I need stuff to do my job better." Horizontally and then those, that you are over. Point number six, 'what is the point'?

Mark Miller:

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So this is my favorite conversation to have with new clients. When they say, "Hey, I got this new thing that we want to do." I don't care. So can you answer that question? People really don't care to some extent about what it is that you have. Everyone has something that they're pushing or trying to hustle. So we go through questions, why should I care? Again, fundamental question you have to answer when you're building your brand strategy, digital strategy. And then as you lead as well, before you engage in a meeting or a conversation with those above you and around you, can you answer that question before you start talking? And then another part is who else cares? So in ministry, we find that ministry leaders like to be the second person to do something.

Mark Miller: [11:21](#) And so whether it's your pastor or other church staff, um, who else cares right there? They want to see that ministry or that thing that you're trying to push done by somebody else. Why would they care? They don't want to be the first ones and it helps build a bridge to the gap that you might be presenting them. So who else cares? All right, point number seven, 'always be testing'. So lots of digital people say they're digital. That's great. Are you using data to derive a strategy? So why should you be testing everything? Because demographics change, culture changes, vision changes, lots of technology changes. There's lots of changes that go on. So as you measure and are always, always testing. You can show those you lead those around you, and even your strategies that you build, you can focus on what is effective and not what's relevant, right?

Mark Miller: [12:26](#) Because there's lots of things that could be relevant, but if they're not effective, are you actually moving your ministry forward or your projects forward or your mission forward? So, effectiveness over relevance. Point number eight, 'value your values'. Again, this might sound simple, but it's a little bit more challenging when you actually have to put it into practice. So again, another ministry that we've worked with a loves baptism in their church, they baptize thousands of people a year, but when we started working with them on social, you would not know that they baptize people at all. So, can you look at your channels and your brand and understand the values

that are a part of your mission, your organization, your church, your ministry, whatever it might be, and are they shaping how you communicate and what you communicate?

Mark Miller:

[13:24](#)

A point a number nine, 'remember it's a marathon' so it takes time to build a brand. It takes time to build high engaging social channels that convert and it takes time to be a better leader. So again, there's this rush in our instant everything and that 30 seconds that brevity to provide as much value and do the new thing right away, but it's a marathon if you want to see high performing and high converting, what we'd say in marketing, converting channels. Point number 10, 'events are not content'. So someone else had to soap box. This is my soapbox. Events are not content. We work with ministries and organizations all over the country. And they're like, "Oh, we have tons of social content. Just put events, tell people, come to this, come to this, come to this, come to this, come to this, come to this, come to this, come to this, come to this, and at a point when you keep asking, again, you're not providing a value. You basically become that relative who is selling essential oils or vitamins or whatever it might be.

Mark Miller:

[14:47](#)

And so events are not content and that again, it goes with not just your brand, your digital strategy, but leadership. If you're pushing, 'Come to my thing' instead of helping other people and serving other people, you create challenges for yourself. So events are not content. 'Community over influence,' point

number 11. Mingo and I have talked a little bit about this so, you know, there's this guy, Jesus who loves people, right? And sometimes we push social or digital or our own thing, to kind of grow ourselves. So there's, here's a couple of questions for you to be thinking as it relates to, are we really building community over influence? And by the way, the bigger your community you grow, the more influence you have so see how that works? So the question, how does your brand prioritize people is when you think about everything your brand is doing, is it prioritizing people over products?

Mark Miller:

[15:49](#)

What does that look like? How are you creating community among followers? So a lot of people try and get as many followers on Instagram with whatever selfie stick you're using but what are you doing to engage the people who are following you with each other because then you're going to start providing more value. And this other question, what did you do last to create community versus advancing your agenda? So in ministry and leadership, sometimes, we're really concerned about the next thing that we're working on and less concerned about creating community with the ones we serve. So hopefully that's helpful. Point number 12, 'inbound is the new greeter'. Anyone familiar with inbound marketing lead generation? So when it comes to ministry, that's still kind of a foreign concept and so I'm going to give you an example of a church, they have an amazing first time guest experience online.

Mark Miller:

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So before people even attend your church, they're checking you out on social media and on your website. And so they have on their homepage plan your visit, you can register and they save a parking space with your name on it. They have someone meet you there, they walk you through the campus, give you a tour. They help you get your kids checked in, they introduce you to other families that are similar to your life stage. And so before people even step onto your campus, this is a great example of investing in the digital and creating an experience before they even show up. So, how are you doing that for your brand, on your digital strategy. And then again, leadership, even those you serve, they're checking you out outline whether you realize it or not. And are you being intentional, through how you serve them back? Point number 13, 'create cross channel FOMO'.

Mark Miller:

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So this is what we talk about, it's branding and digital strategy and again, a leadership, are you creating exclusive content unique to channels that you use? This will help create FOMO or fear of missing out. So I'm doing something exclusive to Instagram and doing something exclusive to Facebook. I'm doing something exclusive to Twitter, Youtube, whatever it might be. In the same way, think about how you lead and what you're doing exclusive to various groups as you create exclusive experiences for those you lead and serve and serve with, again, you're going to build that same hype that, "Oh, I want to be a part of that

movement that you're building. Point number 14, 'include old people'. So this whole room right here, I don't think there's a single person, I mean Mingo might be the oldest in here.

Mark Miller:

[18:58](#)

This is my great grandmother who passed away. I used to take her and play skee ball, a little Japanese lady. She was about this tall. But we talked a little bit about storytelling and developing stories and getting inspiration for those incredible challenges in life. They offer a huge amount of experience and sometimes we forget how valuable they can be. So my great grandmother was relocated from San Francisco during World War II and put it into Japanese internment camp in Arizona during World War II. And so just kind of her view on the world is very different and what she went through was very different than most experiences that we would have today. And so being able to take that and use it and learn from it, again, as you look to how you shape your brand. Even on the digital side, we've worked with ministries that have a large multigenerational congregation and how do we take the older generation and connect it with the younger generation? We've done that through podcast development where they're having real conversations between generations and doing interviews that way.

Mark Miller:

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So there's very tangible things that you can do to integrate that generation but also learn from them. Even on the leadership side. Again, the experience they offer will help you not make the same mistakes

and be a little bit better the next time around. And point number 15 and this last one is 'mentor someone'. At some point in your life, hopefully someone has taken a risk on you personally to help you get where you are today. We encourage and I've seen again, in what we do in brand digital and how we lead, mentoring other people investing in other people not only makes you better because you have to kind of teach and understand really what you know. Then you also then get to develop other people that can go on and move things forward and in a way that you might not be able to. So, that's all I got.

Mingo Palacios: [21:19](#)

We'd like to thank Purpose Driven Church for making this podcast possible. If you've been feeling burnt out or plateaued in your ministry, we invite you to join us for Purpose Driven Church conference happening this June right here in Southern California. You can learn more and register by visiting PD.church. We hope today's insights left you feeling inspired and propelled towards your greatest potential. Thanks again for joining us for another episode of the PD Podcast. Until next time.

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