



# Episode 103: Social Media Makeover Part 1

**Featuring:** Mingo Palacios & Robert Cortes & Angie White

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## Transcript:

Mingo Palacios:

Hey, in this episode you're going to hear Part 1 of Social Media Makeovers with Angie and Robert. Enjoy the episode, and stay tuned for the second part after this.

Hey, everybody. Welcome to the PD Podcast. My name is Mingo, and on every episode we promise to give you something practical that you can walk away with in your own ministry or inside of your own church.

Today we're talking about giving yourself a social media makeover or reassessing your social media rhythms. Today I've got in studio Angie White, social media manager for the Rock Church and several other platforms. She's also managed lots of Purpose Driven Church gatherings, like Purpose Driven Conference. The brains and skill behind the platforms, Angie. Also I've got Robert Cortes – Robert, what are you guys called?

Robert Cortes: StoryBrand Guide.

Mingo Palacios: A StoryBrand Guide. That's so trendy.

Robert Cortes: It's such a nice hat to wear once in a while.

Mingo Palacios: You're a guide for others, StoryBrand being the Donald Miller framework, right?

Robert Cortes: Yep.

Mingo Palacios: Two incredibly savvy absolute veterans inside of the social media world. Angie's a young adult, so she's born into the social media world. Robert owns a digital media agency, so he's got inroads with several companies and ministries, helped several churches rethink the way they execute through social media.

So, everyone, welcome to the conversation. I'm taking copious notes myself because everybody needs to be keen that social media is arguably the widest part of the funnel. It is the largest front door for people who have yet to come your way. They're probably going to find you on social first, if not a friend talking to them about the ministry that they're a part of. Social media is probably the second largest front door, if not the first, for people to discover what it is that you're trying to do ministry-wise or church-wise.

What are some of the things we should be thinking about when considering a social media makeover for our ministry, our personal platforms, or our churches at large?

Angie White: Yeah, thank you.

Mingo Palacios: Welcome to the conversation.

Angie White: Thank you.

Mingo Palacios: Woot woot!

Angie White: I think it's good, like what you said, people are looking at your social media. I know when I'm meeting someone, I'm like, "What's your Instagram handle?" because when you leave the conversation with them,

their social media still exists for you to go and look at. So when someone leaves your church on Sunday, your social media still exists for them to go and look at and learn more about your church even if they're not there physically.

Also, I know for myself and many of my other friends who are in transition, looking for a new church, or just came to know Jesus, looking for a new church, they go to social media and they're going to look at what are some churches in my area versus googling "San Diego churches" or whatever city you're in. They're going to go to Instagram, at least for my demographic, which is the young adult.

So it's good to keep that in mind. Now people aren't really visiting your website. They're visiting your social media account just as much as your website.

Mingo Palacios:

If not more, I imagine.

Angie White:

Right. Your Instagram is more like, who are you really? Like, "Oh, you have a really cool website, but who are you really?" I think it's good to keep in mind, does my social media account reflect who we are as a church and our website? That's the first thing. Always keep in mind your branding. That's one thing I always ask churches and talk to them when it comes to how to make our social media better. I'm like, your account doesn't really look like your church's brand. You're not using a lot of the same colors or the same wordage. Usually it's because they have a volunteer doing the social media account.

Mingo Palacios:

With very little guidance.

Angie White:

Yeah, someone who's not familiar with the church brand. And some churches don't really use their brand that well either, as a whole. I think it's good to consider, is our social media account reflective of our brand? And that's not just aesthetically; that's culture and the voice and what we look like as a church. What do we physically look like as a church, and does our social media reflect that?

In San Diego we like to post palm trees and beachy stuff because that's the city we live in. You want people to feel your church when they look at your social media, so I would say look at your overall feed, not just – I see some churches post, like post to post, and they don't consider the overall feed.

Mingo Palacios: Like taking a wider snapshot.

Angie White: Yeah, the big picture of your social media. Could you confidently say it reflects who you guys are as a church?

Mingo Palacios: Maybe some people look at their church and they're like, "I don't know that I want my social media to reflect our church." They're using their social media as a pivot, as a hope to become something new. Is that a false practice?

Angie White: As long as it's communicated to leadership. If that's a strategy that you are doing with your leadership because leadership is like, "We want to go in a new direction with our church; let's start with social," then that makes sense. But if someone's managing social and they're putting something out and it's not reflective of their church and that's not something that is a family-agreed decision, then I feel like you're almost catfishing a little bit. [laughs]

Mingo Palacios: Key words for new people. Some people are listening from the Midwest and they're like, "I love catfish." [laughter] You're presenting as something that you're not. That's the idea of catfishing. You're putting something out there that is false.

Angie White: That's the other thing, too. Honestly, be proud of who your church is. If it's not what you want to be and it's growing, though, I feel like embrace who your church is now and let your social media reflect that. I see a lot of churches trying to be Transformation, trying to be Elevation on social media. It's like, that's not who you are as a church, though, so don't try to make your social media that because it's not reflective of who you are. Some people need who your church is. Some people don't need an Elevation Church. They need who your church is.

Mingo Palacios: That's good. Be true to who you are and let your social reflect that.

Angie White: Right.

Mingo Palacios: Robert, you were talking before we hit record on the podcast about two of the most underrated or two things that everybody seems to be overlooking. Can you unpack that?

Robert Cortes: Yeah, we were talking a little bit about that earlier. What I said was that a lot of us – brands, businesses, organizations – we rely so heavily on images.

Mingo Palacios: On the imagery.

Robert Cortes: The imagery, the graphics, the video. There's this thing that's being punted away, like "it doesn't really matter, people don't understand it well," and that's context and copywriting. I think it's underutilized, so I think it's like an underdog.

If we could figure out how to use it more correctly – and the reason why a lot of people don't copy write is, one, it's a skill, and two, what do you say other than "Hey, my event's at 6 p.m. on Friday and this is how much it costs and this is what you get"? It's more of a brochure type of social media post if we're talking in the context of social media, versus express copywriting, like thinking through a formula of "what story am I inviting people into?"

Then when you invite someone into a story, you have to create what's called a story loop. A story loop is me saying in my social media post, let's say, "A lot of churches struggle with representing their church on social media." Right there, what does that say to you? It's already opening up, "What do you mean, pastors and churches struggle with representing themselves on social media?"

Then the next line would be the problem or the plan that you have to solve that problem. "A lot of churches struggle with representing themselves authentically on social media, but we decided to do A, B, and C so

that your church has an authentic, real feel on social media.” Then you get the engagement you want.

Mingo Palacios: Let’s boil that down to something that every church will do. Everybody does a men’s event or a women’s event. Presenting the problem would say, “A lot of people have a hard time meeting people at a larger church.”

Robert Cortes: There you go.

Mingo Palacios: That’s the problem.

Robert Cortes: Yeah, the problem.

Mingo Palacios: “We created this men’s event so that you could get connected with other men,” and the outcome would be that “when you come to church, you’re known and you aren’t alone.”

Robert Cortes: Exactly. That’s the “what would my life look like if I engage your service or product?” If I can’t say, “that’s me” – that’s me in the post, that’s me in the calendar – then it kind of looks like something flying by you, like an ad. Like, “Oh, cool.” But if something comes in front of you and it engages you – because you’ve only got 3 seconds to engage somebody. Goldfish is like seven, human beings are three.

Mingo Palacios: But your goal is to try to get that person to see themselves in that equation.

Robert Cortes: Correct. Also, the problem is when we’re talking about an event or something we’ve solving, we’re talking about ourselves more than we’re talking about other people. It’s just a default, I think, human nature thing. We present ourselves as the hero versus the guide, the mentor, the coach, the hero maker. I think if you reposition your brand to be the guide, not the hero, then you’re engaging them. You’re listening from their perspective, like “what do they want?”, and then re-engineering it backwards.

Mingo Palacios: It’s definitely a skill you have to relearn. I’ve been thinking about all the things that I post when it comes to our church and the things that we want people to

come to or be aware of, and it's a skill. You've got to develop it. You've got to really retool the way you present information.

Thinking about the launch of this new service that we've got at Torrey Pines, the church that I pastor, all I want to do is put out this really dreamy photo of the dinner service. The idea is that we're going to be having dinner and a service combined together. StoryBrand language would suggest that we say, "A lot of people have been bored with traditional church services. Our dinner service is completely rebuilding the way you experience God through community connection and content."

Whatever the outcome is, I've yet to probably – I don't know.

Robert Cortes:

You're there. You're getting there. You know the problem, you know the solution, you know what life would look like. It's just distilling it into a few words so that people get engaged into what you're saying.

Mingo Palacios:

There's this really great – there's an outcome that happens when you use that framework. Speak to your target audience, articulate the problem, speak to what it is that your thing can solve, and then describe the preferred outcome when they engage with it. That's the equation for what you're talking about.

You can actually apply that to your ministries when people talk about your ministries also. It totally leaves social media. You can utilize that kind of one-liner for ministries at large. For a youth ministry, it's like, "Most kids don't have a compelling reason to come to church. We try to create engaging, memorable, and spiritually significant programs so every student feels like they're learning something new."

Robert Cortes:

I wish I could critique that. That was perfect. [laughter] That was good.

Mingo Palacios:

But then you can tell all of your leaders, "Hey, this is what we do." When you describe something that you're hoping everybody has a chance to say what this is about, like when Angie and I talk about this

p.m. service, I want everybody to have the same response. What is it? This, this, this. This is the problem we're trying to solve, this is how we're solving it, this is the outcome when people interact with that service.

Robert Cortes:

What you're speaking to is a three-part formula. That's all it is. Don Miller basically dissected it from what's called a logline for a movie. We call it the one-liner. All these screenwriters, when they wrote a screenplay, they'd have to condense their words to make it compelling and engaging so that it would get sold. A screenwriter always knew that they could make between \$50,000 and half a million dollars if they sold their screenplay, but they had to catch those people's attention really quick.

The one-liner really takes that process and distills it down for brands to talk so people actually engage.

Mingo Palacios:

Some people know it as the elevator pitch. It's like, can you get your thought out or your thing out –

Robert Cortes:

It's very similar to an elevator pitch, but it's distilled even –

Mingo Palacios:

Even tighter.

Robert Cortes:

It's really unique. It's distinct but unique. But yes, it turns into an elevator pitch. It could easily move that direction.

Mingo Palacios:

Angie, you were talking a little bit about underrated or undervalued platforms. Everybody already knows that Facebook and Instagram are kind of like king and queen of platforms. You should be on both of those. Is there value in having different content distributed between those platform? Is it okay to have the same posting to both? What's your two cents on it?

Then you've got Stories, then you've got IGTV. There are other platforms the young kids are on. Should churches be thinking about that? Should there be separate platforms for youth ministries? Unpack your thought on that for a ministry leader.



Angie White:

First, I never want someone to feel overwhelmed, like they have to do all these different platforms. Like you said, Instagram and Facebook is the place to start. Then once you hone in on that and you feel confident and you have a rhythm going, then I think you can start exploring other platforms.

I met with a church last week and I asked their lead pastor, "Who's your target? Yeah, I get it, everyone, the lost, everyone who doesn't know Jesus. But actually, you must have a target, right?" He was like, "A lot of people who come to our church are young families, and we notice that we appeal to that." I was like, "Okay, cool, that's probably going to be Instagram, because the majority of these blogger moms and these young moms are on Instagram. Let's focus on your Instagram, grow that, make that look nice, and then we can start moving to other places."

So if you're a younger church or you're a youth pastor listening, consider who your target is or whatever ministry you're doing – if you're in ministry and you do older men, then Facebook and stuff like that. You really have to understand who you're trying to reach, and then based off of that, you move into that platform.

But if you feel confident in a lot of those platforms, I think it'd be fun to explore places like Pinterest. We were talking about Pinterest and how I –

Mingo Palacios:

Speaking of young moms.

Angie White:

I live on Pinterest. That's where I spend a lot of my time. Not on Instagram. Instagram is boring me now. It's the same thing. I like Pinterest because it's like a different world.

But I'll come across Jesus quotes and all this inspirational stuff, and the only church I see utilizing it well is Elevation. They push out a lot of pins of – not videos, but they're literally just graphics and quotes of what Pastor Steven said.

Mingo Palacios:

They end up intersecting where you're already digging.

Angie White: Yeah, and the cool thing about Pinterest is you don't have to follow somebody. Someone's pins can just naturally come up on your board if you're pinning similar stuff. So it's a cool way to reach new people, Pinterest. Then you're also feeding your congregation as well if you're posting out inspirational stuff like that.

Then Snapchat, I don't even care about Snapchat. [laughter] But my cousins are all about it.

Mingo Palacios: Wait, give me an age – how old are you, Angie?

Angie White: I'm 26.

Mingo Palacios: You're 26. So you're saying Snapchat is noise to you?

Angie White: For my age group, 100%. But my cousins who are in high school, all about it. They never post on Instagram, barely catch them on Facebook. They're always on Snapchat. Just because I don't care about it, doesn't mean another generation doesn't care about it. So I asked him, "Why are you so about Snapchat?" He was like, "I don't know, it's just what my age group is used to."

Mingo Palacios: They're going to be where their friends are.

Angie White: Yeah, that was the explanation. "We're just used to it." He's like, "I don't know how to use Instagram." Literally. He's not that much younger than me, either. He's a senior in high school. He said a lot of kids his age use Instagram, but all of them are on Snapchat.

So now it's like, okay, how do we use Snapchat? My friend's a youth pastor and she was like, "It's definitely a more private app." You can only have certain friends and you can send private Snaps and whatever.

Mingo Palacios: Messages, Snapping.

Angie White: But how can we utilize that platform if you're a youth pastor? Consider jumping on that and finding out ways that you can be engaged. You don't have to be messaging your students, but at least putting up a

devo so while they're in the midst of seeing all this trash that other people are posting...

Mingo Palacios:

You can catch them with something that has value.

Angie White:

Exactly. Just having strategy with the different platforms that you use.

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