



# Episode 104: Social Media Makeover Part 2

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

<https://thepodcast.com>

## Transcript:

Mingo Palacios: Hey, in this episode you're going to hear Part 2 of Social Media Makeovers with Angie and Robert. Enjoy the episode, and stay tuned for the second part after this.

Angie White: YouTube is another one.

Mingo Palacios: YouTube is massive.

Angie White: Another one I waste hours on is YouTube. I love me some vlogs. So that's another fun thing. If you're a pastor and you're like, "I want to try something new," check out vlogging.

Mingo Palacios: What happens when one of your teammates – let's say I get a 26-year-old in my camp and they're saying, "Hey, I'm going to start vlogging." How do I leverage that as the pastor? Because that's going to mean – my assumption is that there's going to need

to be time out of my schedule for a vlog to be created. Can I hand that away, and do I need to worry? What's the best way to manage somebody who says, "Hey, I can try that"? What's my process as a pastor, in your opinion, to see that come to life?

Angie White:

There should be trust there with the person who's going to be doing it. I know Elevation's youth pastor vlogs, and he's not their main pastor, but he's one of the pastors there. He has a YouTube channel that they do. So I think it depends on the trust that you have with the person.

Also, what are they even vlogging? Are they just an attendee? They're going to be vlogging their lives? How does it connect to your church and your mission of who you guys are as a church? If it's your surf ministry leader, that would be cool. What does church look like from his perspective? Or even your youth pastor or something like that. I think it just depends on the content that they're vlogging and their connection to the church.

Mingo Palacios:

You've got some content loaded up on your phone right now. I'm curious to know what it is. Is this like three steps somebody can think through quickly and apply instantly?

Angie White:

I'm honestly trying to figure out a way to help churches with all different levels of social media, like "we just made ours yesterday" to "we've been doing this for 5 years and we're growing; what more can we do?"

This is what I have. It's three things to consider in understanding what purpose your social media serves. I see a lot of churches just posting whatever and there's really no purpose behind it.

First, obviously, you need to understand the purpose. Social media is relational. It's not your website. It's not a place to just feed information. It's relational. It's where people connect to the *who* of your church and not the *what*. Who are the faces, the voice, your pastor, your ministry leaders, your volunteers.

The second one is intentionality. Make sure each post is intentional in supporting your church's goal. Every church has a different mission statement. It's all the same thing as for people to meet Jesus and know Him, but the way churches do it looks differently. How is your social media supporting the uniqueness of who your church is?

The third one is strategy, understanding your design. How does your social media look overall? That also includes photography and videography.

Posting times, being intentional with that, and then what I call social media outreach or your community engagement. I have one girl and her only job is to respond to comments, respond to DMs, and then go and find other people's accounts who live in San Diego and just blow up their notifications. Like their stuff, comment on their stuff. Not following, but engaging with their content so people are like, "Who is this account that keeps hitting me up? It's a church? What?" That's just a different way to get somebody's attention.

Mingo Palacios:

That has to be one of my favorite, least anticipated strategies for reaching people with your church's social media. I heard it described that there's one practice where if somebody tags or checks in or they use one of your church's hashtags, then the church would go and like that post or they would comment on that post, if first somebody was brave enough or bold enough or whatever to feature you on their feed.

They said, man, how self-centered is that as a church? You're waiting for somebody to post about you before you like their thing. The ultimate flip is to use your church's platform and go and find people who are in proximity to your church or who have visited that you know, maybe, and then you go with your church's Instagram account or your church's Facebook account and you start commenting on their stuff that has nothing to do with their church.

Like their mom's walking group, and you post, "How awesome is it that we live in the city that we do and we can do this all year round?"

Angie White: That's the thing. You comment like you're a person. Don't comment, "Love this post" or "This is awesome." There's robots that already do that.

Mingo Palacios: "Come to our thing at 9:00." [laughter]

Angie White: We should be commenting on what they're doing. There's this girl who posted a picture of her outfit. As a church, we were just like, "Love this look on you!" You can be a voice, and we should embody the voice of our church over social media.

Mingo Palacios: So more personal, less programmatic.

Angie White: Yeah. Another thing that we did is we looked at – we have multiple campuses, so we were like, what are some local businesses around our campuses? We follow those businesses and we grow relational equity with them through social media. We'll always be commenting on their stuff. Moniker is a big one. We're always commenting, "Can't wait to try this new coffee drink!"

Mingo Palacios: Moniker is a coffee shop in close proximity to the church that Angie goes to.

Angie White: Right, yeah. So we're always commenting to show support for that local business. Then people will naturally see their comments and be like, "Who's this person who is always commenting on their stuff?" Then we go into who follows those businesses, and that's how we find people. We just go and blow up their stuff.

Robert Cortes: I love it. You're like stalking nicely.

Mingo Palacios: Holy stalking. [laughter]

Angie White: Yeah.

Robert Cortes: I like the strategy.

Angie White: For someone who wants to join social media, but they don't have a lot of experience and you're not ready to hand them the camera, that's a great first thing for them to do.

Mingo Palacios:

Manage engagement.

Angie White:

Yeah. I'm like, "Hey, you want to be a part of social media? Do this, and once you do it really well, then we can start having you do other stuff." So that's what I use that role for.

Mingo Palacios:

So good. That's something that instantly I think any church can add to their toolbox of social media engagement, just having people help engage outward. That can be somebody in the administrative office, that can be somebody who just showed up that has a little bit of savvy. It can be a great way to engage the next generation, like kids younger than you or your staff is.

Talk to me about reviews as we round out this. Do reviews matter today? Should I be chasing reviews on Yelp? Should I be going after Google because it feeds my phone? What are your thoughts on reviews? Or is it overrated?

Robert Cortes:

Well, I don't think it's overrated, but I do believe reviews should be part of your engagement strategy. Like Angie was just talking about, engaging with businesses like Moniker and other people to build relational equity. I think that's really critical. Reviews is another way to engage people.

From a small business perspective or organization perspective, we do review-gathering campaigns. We monitor, manage, respond. That's part of our local business packages we offer.

But a lot of times – let's say for Google, for instance – Google gives you equity. They give you value to rank better when you get reviews on Google. But what's even better is those are human beings responding and posting. If they leave you a 5-star review, why not respond to them?

Let's say they leave something like "Had a great experience over at the church. The lady at the front door gave me a hug and I really needed that hug." You could respond back, "So glad we could be there for you. We're a church that loves people well." You

could respond that inside the Google platform, and then that builds more engagement, just like on a social platform. Same thing with Yelp. I think Yelp, Facebook, and Google are the three dominant factors for reviews in terms of local businesses.

Mingo Palacios:

What do you do with hate mail? What do you do with crap reviews, like when somebody says “I tried to bring my kid into the auditorium and they booted me. They don’t even love Jesus. I question whether or not this church is Christian.”

Robert Cortes:

Those are the biggest opportunities you can ever have. Think about this. The fact that they’re even commenting says something. They’re actually saying something, they’re actually commenting. Yes, there is that small, small, small percentage of crazies. They’re there, but they’re human beings.

But those people, the fact that they actually said something and left a review – platform-wise, Yelp, you can respond privately and then publicly if you want. Google, you can respond, they get a notification that you said something, so they’re –

Mingo Palacios:

Aware.

Robert Cortes:

They’re aware. And then Facebook obviously is more social, so it’s easier to tag them and get seen.

But yeah, we always reengage people for our clients. I have over a 70% hit rate in reengaging people and getting them to up their review or remove their negative review.

Mingo Palacios:

Oh wow.

Robert Cortes:

That came over years of doing it for clients at multiple locations, and dealing with really pissed off people. “My soap ruined my clothes” or “The attendant was 15 minutes late.” Whatever the case was, I look at it this way: I think you build raving fans if you drop the ball – everyone drops the ball, but if you pick it up and you run down and make a field goal, you turn people into raving fans. Everybody makes mistakes.

Mingo Palacios: Right, where you correct the mistake and you use it as an opportunity to make good on someone's disappointment.

Robert Cortes: A lot of times people just want to be heard, just like the brain chemistry about love and listening. It's the same thing with content online if you respond. That's why engagement is so valuable right now.

Mingo Palacios: Yeah, it's huge. It's so much more than just putting out content. It has to do with engaging with people's own individual content also.

Robert Cortes: I would say respond. I have access to a lot of church backdoor admins for social media, and some of them actually just remove comments without engagement. I find that to be important – yes, there are times where that guy's just absolutely nuts, what they're saying.

Mingo Palacios: Right, there's no way to remedy the situation.

Robert Cortes: It's a troll. [laughs] But if it's a human being who has a serious problem, you have to have that – what do you call it, sixth sense or intuition or gut feeling.

Mingo Palacios: Yeah, you've got to have discernment and you have to have a plan, still, also.

Angie, anything else you can think of when talking to people about their own makeover, adjusting their social media, as we close down this episode?

Angie White: I actually wanted to jump in on that topic real quick. We get comments not so much on pastors, which you think we would, but it's the organization. I feel like people are braver to come at an organization versus a person sometimes.

We have this guy who comments all the time, and he just criticizes things that we do, but he tries to do it lovingly. I'm so tempted to just delete his comments because I'm like, I don't even know how to respond to this. It's not even necessary. Then I was like, no, he keeps commenting for a reason, and I see a lot of people just deleting comments they don't like.

One of them was a worship night. He said something along the lines of, “We need to bring this outside of the church. Why are we always just worshipping inside?” Instead, I was like, let me use this as an opportunity to tell him about a ministry that we have in our church. I was like, “Well, we do. We have Microsites, which every single week, we bring worship into the streets of San Diego.” Microsites are like pop-up campuses.

Mingo Palacios:

Tell me more, Angie. [laughter]

Angie White:

So I tagged our Microsites account and our Microsites pastor, and then she responded. She was like, “I love your heart to see worship being brought to our city. We would love to have you a part of our team,” turned it into –

Mingo Palacios:

An opportunity.

Angie White:

An opportunity. It was criticism, but it was like, “Wow, this must be a burden for you if you’re commenting on it. So let’s use that and let’s have you join what we’re doing.” So I try to take criticism in the perspective of they just want to help, and it helps responding a little bit differently.

I’m on this Facebook group, Church Social Media Managers, and there was this big debate about this post that went out, and it was a quote by John Calvin. Someone commented and basically was like, “I don’t agree with blah, blah, blah.” The woman was like, how do I respond to this? It created this huge debate in the comments. Everyone’s like, “delete, block, ban, just block them.” I was like, wait, what? Then people are commenting, “But then you’re not being the church if you’re just blocking.” So it was this huge thing.

I was like, how would I respond to that? If we get hateful comments, that’s different. We want to address that. If we get someone who’s coming at the theology of our church, I think we need to be able to respond well.



Mingo Palacios: Yeah, Scripture would say always be ready with an answer.

Angie White: Yeah. When we're deleting, it's like, why are you deleting? Are you trying to protect our followers? That's not protecting them. That's living in this Christian theology bubble. We get comments like that where people challenge the theology of our church, and I keep them up, because if people are seeing them, they need to see that there's people out there who believe different things, who have questions.

As Christians, we need to be able to think for ourselves and not as social media managers, just deleting all this negative stuff, thinking we're protecting our followers. Unless it's slander and there's demonic sayings and stuff like that. That's different. But if someone's voicing their opinion and challenging what we're doing as a church, I think it's important for people to see that.

Robert Cortes: It actually makes your feed more believable. Have you seen these businesses that have hundreds of reviews – you'll always notice that nobody can keep a 5-star average all the time forever. It's impossible. So I question, in terms of brands, when they have hundreds of reviews and they're all 5-star, I'm like, there's no way mathematically you can keep that pace. You're hiding something.

Would I go to a restaurant that's 4.5 or 5 stars? I would go to a 4.5 because that registers to me as authentic and real.

Angie White: That's such a good point, because when I go to a nail place, I'm looking for the negative reviews. I'm not looking for the good ones. I want to know what the issues are.

Mingo Palacios: "My nail got put on crooked." [laughter]

Angie White: Or "they weren't talking to me while they were doing my nails." I'm like, I don't care about that, so I'll go. What is the negative stuff and do I care about those negative responses?

Robert Cortes: You're going to such a good place. What you're looking for is how do they engage when there's an issue? Are they the people who just say, "Deal with it. Forget about it, forget about you"? Or are they like, "You know what? Yeah, we're sorry, we made that mistake. Let's make it up to you"? Then your response is, if I ever have a problem with them, they're probably going to engage the same.

Mingo Palacios: Yeah, look how they've addressed the discrepancy.

Angie White: Yeah.

Mingo Palacios: I want to give people a next step. Great conversation. Thank you so much for the insights, the platform, awareness, some of the pressure releasers for pastors.

I know just thinking about all the things and opportunities that I want people to engage with across all the different sectors of our church, it can feel really overwhelming. But to be able to distribute the burden and to engage people in different parts of the process – you don't have to be a great photographer to be on the social team; you can just be a great responder. You can be somebody who cares and likes and comments, and that's just as valid and valuable as somebody who takes a beautiful photo.

Then also, the awareness that there is a need to pay close attention to the copywriting end of the context so that we don't just keep pushing out things about events and what time and what date, but we're actually creating a story loop so people can insert themselves into the ongoing story I think every church is trying to write.

If all of that is like "Oh man, we're not doing any of that," this is a great episode to dissect and listen to over and over again and really build a priority checklist of what you can implement right now, and maybe some of the things that you want to develop over time.

And invite other people to listen to the conversation with you, and see what stands out as opportunities for

your own church. That's probably the best way you can digest this particular episode, just because there's so much to take on. It's not something that you're going to be able to accomplish in one day, one week, or I would argue even one month. You're going to need to really build a plan to develop this well.

Now, if people want to get in contact with either one of you, maybe to ask for advice, to bring you in as a consultant, or just to follow you on social, what's a great place where they can do that? Angie?

Angie White:

My Instagram is @angiesuco, and my email is [angiewhitemedia@gmail.com](mailto:angiewhitemedia@gmail.com).

Mingo Palacios:

Robert, how can people find you?

Robert Cortes:

For us, if we're talking about Instagram, it would be @RebelFishLocal.

But the three-part formula, the one-liner we were talking about earlier, we'll make sure in the show notes we should probably add that, give them some information to go find that so that you can fix your social media with good storytelling. I think we could do that.

Mingo Palacios:

Yeah, that's great. If you're listening to this from a random spot, you can go to <https://thepodcast.com>, and on that website you'll find show notes. Robert will add some links to where you can find more details about how to develop a great one-liner and some of those formulas that will help you engage people better.

Thanks for listening. We love you. We'll talk to you guys soon, or the next time.

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