

Helpful or Harmful?

Evangelicals and Social Media



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1** Only 4% of evangelical adults who are online say they have not touched any social media in the past month.
- 2** Evangelicals are similar to Americans in general regarding which social media platforms they use. Tops among evangelicals are Facebook (81%) and YouTube (71%), followed by Instagram (45%), TikTok (35%) and Pinterest (28%).
- 3** The younger the evangelical, the more social media platforms are used. Five different platforms are used by at least half of evangelicals 18–29. In the 30–49 age group, this falls to three, and then to two among those 50 and older.
- 4** The more spiritually engaged evangelicals are (regular Bible readership, worship attendance, prayer, etc.), the more social media platforms they tend to use.
- 5** Fifty-eight percent of evangelicals believe social media is more harmful than helpful to the Christian faith in the US, while 42% see it as more helpful than harmful.
- 6** Those who are more actively engaged in their faith are more likely to see it as helpful. This runs from 52% among those with Full spiritual engagement, dropping as engagement drops, to a low of 35% among those with Low/No spiritual engagement.

7 Fifty-four percent of evangelicals believe social media is more harmful than helpful to the Christian faith, but they use social media anyway.

8 The primary reasons social media is considered more helpful than harmful:

- Opportunities to use it for evangelism (47%)
- Easy access to Christian content for those who are not reached in other ways (18%)
- It helps connect believers and build community (16%)
- It provides encouragement and helps build their faith (11%)
- It provides opportunities/resources for study and learning (11%)
- Useful for Christian conversation and exchange of religious views (9%)

9 The primary reasons social media is considered more harmful than helpful:

- It is loaded with harmful/dangerous/worldly content (34%)
- Social media is harmful in general, not just to the Christian faith (29%)
- It can negatively influence people regarding their faith (15%)
- Concerns about bad teaching and/or false doctrine (14%)
- Filled with lies, gossip, and misinformation about Christianity (14%)
- Bullying/harassment/silencing directed at Christians (11%)

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INTRODUCTION

If you believe something is harmful, do you still continue to do it?

When it comes to social media, for a majority of evangelical Protestants, the answer is yes.

Fifty-four percent of all American evangelicals believe social media is more harmful than helpful to the Christian faith in the US, yet they continue to use social media.

In total, 96% of evangelicals who are online (which is about 95% of them) use social media at least once a month. This includes 94% of those who believe it is more harmful than helpful to the Christian faith.

[Grey Matter Research](#) and [Infinity Concepts](#) partnered once again on research to explore the evangelical Protestant population. This time, we measured how evangelicals think about and use social media, and why they see it as helpful or harmful to the faith.

96%

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Social Media Use

Just like most other Americans, evangelicals use social media. In fact, only 4% of evangelical adults who are online say they have not touched any social media in the past month.

Social media use is nearly ubiquitous among evangelicals. Even among older evangelicals, it is common—93% in the 55–64 age range, and 90% among evangelicals 65 and older.

Even in terms of which social media platforms they use, evangelicals look very similar to the overall US population. For both groups, **Facebook and YouTube are the dominant players.** However, in the US overall, YouTube is used by a greater proportion of the population than Facebook. Among evangelicals, it is the opposite, with Facebook the most commonly used social media platform.

Instagram is in third place among both groups, followed by TikTok and Pinterest. Pinterest is somewhat less popular among evangelicals than among Americans in general.

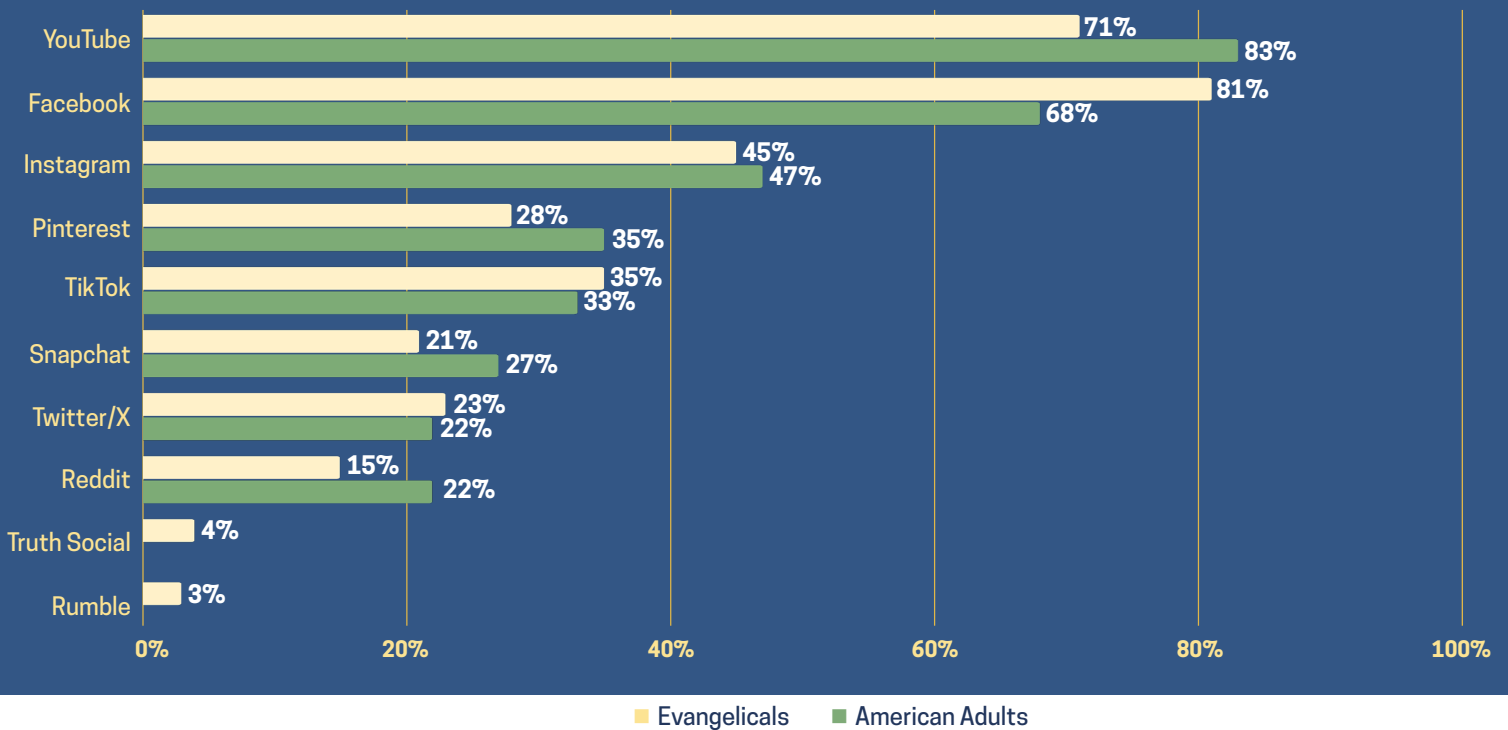
Next come X (formerly Twitter), Snapchat, and Reddit, although the latter two are also slightly less popular among evangelicals.

Truth Social and Rumble, neither of which was measured by Pew Research Center for the overall US population, are used by only tiny proportions of the evangelical population.

Not only do evangelicals show the same kind of overall usage of social media platforms as the general population, but the demographics of who uses which type of platform are also very similar.

90%
of evangelicals
65+ who are
online use social
media monthly
or more

Use of Social Media*



*Grey Matter/Infinity Concepts data records use of once a month or more; Pew Research Center data records "ever use."

By gender, women nationally are more likely than men to use Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, and Snapchat, while men are more likely than women to use X and Reddit. YouTube is used equally by both genders.

Among evangelicals, we see almost exactly the same thing. The one exception is the lack of a significant difference in the use of Reddit by evangelical men and women.

AMERICAN**		PLATFORM	EVANGELICAL	
MEN	WOMEN		MEN	WOMEN
82%	83%	YouTube	73%	70%
59%	76%	Facebook	75%	86%
39%	54%	Instagram	40%	50%
19%	50%	Pinterest	16%	38%
25%	40%	TikTok	31%	38%
21%	32%	Snapchat	17%	25%
26%	19%	Twitter/X	31%	16%
27%	17%	Reddit	17%	14%
N/A	N/A	Truth Social	3%	4%
N/A	N/A	Rumble	3%	2%

**From Pew Research Center

Bold indicates statistically significant differences between men and women.

Age groups show similar patterns. Among Americans in general, younger people use a far wider selection of social media platforms than do older people. Five different platforms are used by at least half of the 18–29 population. In the 30–49 age group, this falls to three, then to two among those age 50 and older. These numbers hold true for the evangelical population, as well.

One difference evangelicals have is that 82% of those 65 and older are on Facebook, compared to 58% in the American population overall. The popularity of Facebook among ages 50-plus is why evangelical use of Facebook is higher than it is within the US population as a whole.

AMERICANS*				PLATFORM	EVANGELICALS			
18–29	30–49	50–64	65+		18–29	30–49	50–64	65+
93%	92%	83%	60%	YouTube	85%	83%	66%	53%
67%	75%	69%	58%	Facebook	67%	84%	84%	82%
78%	59%	35%	15%	Instagram	68%	55%	43%	20%
45%	40%	33%	21%	Pinterest	39%	32%	26%	19%
62%	39%	24%	10%	TikTok	63%	47%	26%	12%
65%	30%	13%	4%	Snapchat	53%	29%	14%	2%
42%	27%	17%	6%	Twitter/X	27%	29%	21%	13%
44%	31%	11%	3%	Reddit	20%	21%	14%	5%
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Truth Social	3%	4%	3%	5%
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Rumble	2%	2%	4%	1%

*From Pew Research Center

The darker the shading indicates the degree of usage

One thing we can measure among evangelicals that Pew did not among Americans in general is their Spiritual Engagement Score. This is a measure developed by Grey Matter Research that amalgamates the frequency of prayer, Bible reading, Bible study, worship attendance, and small group participation. Depending on how often they participate in each of these five activities, they are scored as Full, High, Moderate, Low, or None. Thankfully, there are too few evangelicals scoring None to evaluate them separately in this study, so None and Low are combined into Low/None.

The more spiritually engaged evangelicals are, the more social media platforms they tend to use. Those with Full engagement are more likely than others to use Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, X, and Reddit.

PLATFORM	FULL	HIGH	MODERATE	LOW/NONE
YouTube	74%	76%	69%	69%
Facebook	91%	79%	81%	80%
Instagram	57%	47%	45%	40%
Pinterest	37%	32%	27%	23%
TikTok	39%	36%	34%	35%
Snapchat	23%	22%	20%	23%
Twitter/X	38%	24%	22%	16%
Reddit	26%	17%	16%	8%
Truth Social	6%	3%	3%	3%
Rumble	3%	3%	2%	2%

Attitudes About Social Media

In general, is social media more helpful or more harmful to the Christian faith in the US?

Even though almost all evangelicals use social media, **nearly six out of ten (58%) believe social media is more harmful than helpful to the Christian faith.** Forty-two percent believe there is more benefit than harm from social media.

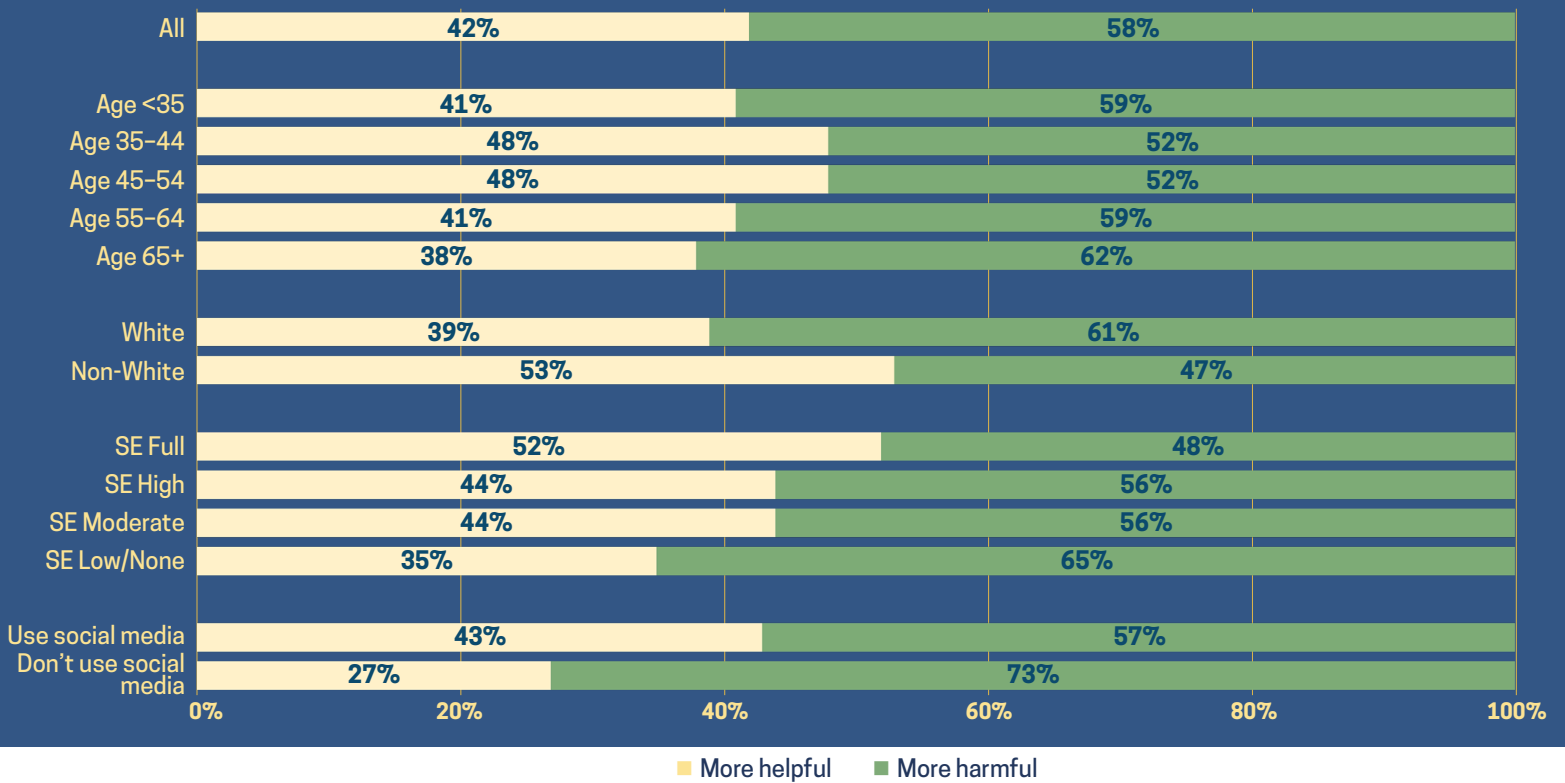
These attitudes are remarkably similar among various subgroups of evangelicals. There is a slight variation by age, with the youngest and oldest evangelicals being somewhat more negative toward social media. Evangelicals of color (Asian-American, Latino, Black, and American Indian) are more likely than White evangelicals to see social media as helpful to the Christian faith.

Not surprisingly, the few evangelicals who do not use any social media are more negative toward it than are users, but even there, 27% of them believe social media is more helpful than harmful to Christianity.

We saw earlier that the more spiritually engaged evangelicals are, the more likely they are to use various social media platforms. Now we can also see that the higher the Spiritual Engagement Score, the more likely evangelicals are to see social media in a positive light when it comes to Christianity. Fifty-two percent of those with Full spiritual engagement feel social media is more helpful than harmful to the Christian faith. This falls as spiritual engagement falls, reaching just 35% among those who are largely disengaged from spiritual activities. **Those who are really active in their faith are much more likely to see social media as a spiritually helpful tool.**

58%
of evangelicals
believe social
media is more
harmful than
helpful to the
Christian faith

Impact of Social Media on the Christian Faith



Why Social Media Is Helpful to the Faith

We asked people to explain their perspective on whether social media is more helpful or harmful, in their own words. We then grouped all these responses in similar categories.

EVANGELISM

Among the four out of ten evangelicals who consider social media to be more helpful than harmful to the Christian faith, by far the most common reason is **evangelism** (47%). Most say social media makes it easier to spread the Word, and/or it reaches a larger audience faster than other methods.

Evangelism is especially likely to be listed as important by adults under age 35 (70%).

What people are saying...

“Social media is a defining avenue for spreading the Gospel to the world.”

“Social media is a great tool for reaching out to others in posts and videos and spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The popularity of the Internet and social media seems even greater these days than television ministry and offers so many different ways to easily connect with churches and ministers with any question or help someone might need.”

“More young people are able to see religious postings than would otherwise be able to.”

“It can be a way to reach out to the unsaved and those in countries that persecute others in open worship.”

“I think anything that can help spread the Word and make it easier for people to learn and find out about churches is a win. So social media is great for that.”

“I think it’s more helpful because it helps share the Gospel of Jesus Christ faster and to a greater amount of people worldwide. The faith has a farther reach with the use of social media (people posting/sharing video sermons, streaming church services, and church social media accounts).”

“I use my testimony of God’s grace and love in my own life to share. I’ve had deep conversations with people about my faith (I’m always respectful) on social media. And it has allowed us to be part of a service even if we can’t make it in person. I also find fellowship with friends on social media. So, more helpful than harmful.”

“A wider group of people can receive the Word of God and it can be spread easier by individuals.”

“I see a lot of TikTok influencers using their platform to spread their faith.”

ACCESSIBILITY

A distant (but somewhat related) second category is the issue of **accessibility** (18%). These people talk about how social media is available so widely that it allows people to experience church services, fellowship with other believers, etc., without leaving their home. It is available 24/7 and sometimes allows Christians to reach people who probably would not be reachable in a more traditional manner. Evangelicals 65 and older, especially, laud social media for allowing people to experience church online.

What people are saying...

“You can share services and information with people who don’t already attend church regularly or are unable to attend for whatever reasons (homebound, health, transportation, or any other reason).”

“Social media allows church services to the homebound, those who wouldn’t be caught dead in a church, and everybody in between. Also allows shopping for a church that fits; finding a message that resonates. I attend three churches out of state; Oklahoma, New Mexico, Hawaii. Similar message, different styles of applicable studies.”

“It helps spread the Gospel to others who normally wouldn’t attend church. You can cover a wider audience to introduce more to Christ.”

“A lot of church members who physically cannot attend are able to still be part of the worship service on social media. And there are people who would never attend church in person but participate on social media.”

“I attend church through Facebook.”

CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY

Sixteen percent focus more on social media's ability to help **connect believers and build community**. They fellowship with other believers through social media and have built community with people in this manner. Some also note social media is a way to connect more closely with people who attend their own church, or with the church itself (staying aware of events, hearing from leaders, finding out prayer needs in the congregation, etc.).

What people are saying...

"Social media brings people together, even at large distances."

"Social media can help churches connect to their members and allows their members to connect more to each other."

"The platform gives people a community of individuals for prayer, empathy, sympathy, and support during trying times."

"It allows you to connect with people you normally would not connect with."

"People can connect with and support each other better using social media. You can reach out more easily and ask for help more easily. It is also a good way to know who to pray for. You can also have better access to Bible studies when you can't make it in person."

"When I want to socialize with the pastor, I use this option."

"You can share the belief and pray with others for their loved ones. It is unifying and glorifies God our Creator in Heaven. You can share your unconditional love; as the Word says, 'Love thy neighbor as yourself.'"

"Helps you be aware of special events or changes in worship times, tells us the topic of the week, who will be guests, and all other aspects of the workings of your church."

ENCOURAGEMENT AND FAITH BUILDING

Eleven percent describe how social media has **provided encouragement and helped build their faith**. Believers can encourage each other, share prayer needs and pray for each other, and find resources to help grow their faith. Women, especially, appreciate this benefit.

What people are saying...

“I am encouraged by seeing others similar to me living out their faith.”

“YouTube introduces you to Christians who have interesting experiences to share with the public.”

“It gives you a way to hear the Word, share with other believers and nonbelievers; you can post encouraging messages to lift someone up. Find interesting information about what is going on around the world. People pray for one another, when they see a need.”

“I think it is helpful because I belong to Christian groups and pages that offer devotionals, Bible studies, and prayer support in social media.”

“Post things about Jesus. Pray for one another. Encouraging posts that make me feel happy, loved, and cared for.”

“When the pandemic occurred, our church held services on Facebook Live. We can pray for people who mention they are having a hard time. We can use it for good when we want to.”

STUDY AND LEARNING

Another 11% feel social media is helpful at least in part because of opportunities it gives them for **study and learning**. They can connect with Christian leaders and experts, learn about different churches, and find helpful resources for Bible study.

What people are saying...

“You can easily find what denomination you prefer and also watch sermons, events, and postings faster than by word of mouth, staying up to date on all events.”

“I watch church pastors on YouTube daily to help me grow in my faith. Also, I watch for information on the Last Days as told by Jesus and many other Old and New Testament saints. I love prophecies about the End Times.”

“I have more preachers, teachers, and Bible studies to watch and listen to over social media. Without social media, I wouldn’t have the same access to Christian content and teachings. It’s helpful for me to watch YouTube teachings while traveling, as I don’t read well. It’s helped me mature in my faith.”

“Bringing the truth of the Bible to people. Many people like to interpret the meaning of Scripture on their own and get it wrong. Social media helps to define Scripture properly (depending on the source—known preachers that have a truth-based track record).”

“I feel like it gives Christians an opportunity to learn and study things that would otherwise be difficult for them to learn.”

“I got plugged into an online Bible study group three years ago with people who are serious about studying the Bible and living it out. I’ve gotten to know so many of them and it’s been not only such a fun community of like-minded people, but so many have encouraged me in my walk with Jesus Christ.”

CONVERSATION AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Nine percent note that social media is particularly useful for Christian **conversation and exchange of religious views**. They can share ideas and beliefs, learn different perspectives on their faith, and have access to more information about Christianity.

What people are saying...

“Social media is full of many different opinions. I find that challenges me to think critically and remember my experiences with God. So, we can have open conversations which help those people to think, therefore turning them to Christ, so it’s always a win.”

“Well, it does make it much easier to access teaching or reading materials for devotion and study time. It makes everything way more accessible.”

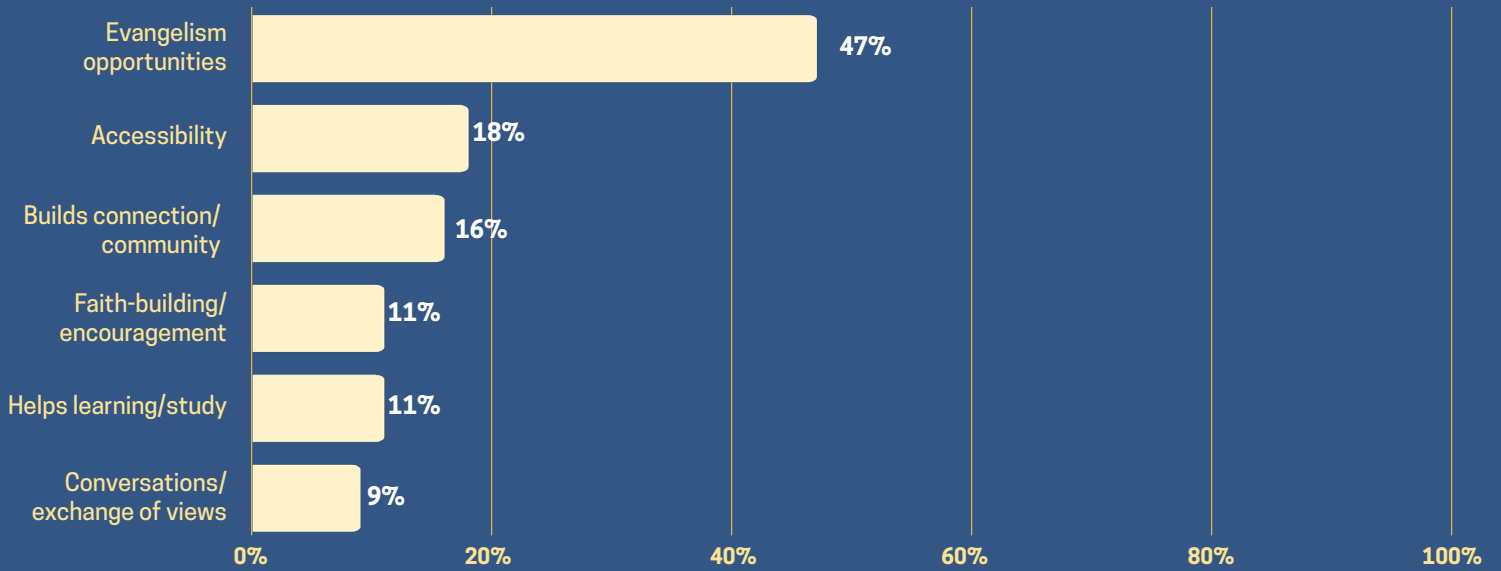
“Because you can post whatever you want out of the Bible and people can read it or not.”

“It’s helpful to promote interfaith dialogue and understanding.”

“It provides exposure to teachings and services, as well as providing opportunities to join Bible study groups, promote Christian music, and worship.”

“You can learn from others and learn more about the types of Christian faith out there.”

Why Social Media Is More Helpful to Christianity Than Harmful



Why Social Media Is Harmful to the Faith

Among the nearly six out of ten evangelicals who feel social media is more harmful to Christianity in the US than it is helpful, the single greatest concern is the type of content available (34%).

CONTENT CONCERNS

These believers are not just referencing material that lacks benefit for Christians, but for a wide variety of people. Most cite content that is unsafe, highly sexualized, full of hate and negativity, or harmful to impressionable youth, but 6% also complain that social media is worldly and lacks Christian content in general. As one person simply wrote, “Look at what’s posted.”

What people are saying...

“There is a lot of unsavory content posted on social media which undermines the teachings of the Christian church as well as Christian parents who try to direct their children on the right path.”

“Vulgar language, uncensored content for young adults. Nudity, profane language, cussing.”

“It sucks everyone in whether you mean well or not. It is also easy and free to spread hate or misinformation.”

“Too much exposure to extremist views, especially regarding politics.”

“Easy, unadulterated access and exposure to all sorts of sordid content for young children and young adults.”

“It glamorizes sin and normalizes it.”

“Most of the posts on social media don’t have a positive message; they lack significant content.”

“Horrible things are online; it has gotten really bad. Vulgar, porn, predators. Bad people in the world.”

“I feel like a lot of people using social media don’t really want to hear about Jesus, so it isn’t really that much of an asset for Christians, and a lot of really worldly things go on online.”

“Drama, temptations, pornography, blasphemy.”

“There are no filters to what is put out there, making it seem that the most outrageous things people can do appear to be the norm. Things that are hurtful lead in many cases to losing our moral compass.”

HARMFUL IN GENERAL

Also, fairly common (29%) is to believe **social media is harmful in general**, not just to the Christian faith. These are people who raise concerns that, in many cases, even secular experts have raised:

- All the lies and falsehoods promulgated on social media
- It is a distraction or a time-waster
- It encourages a focus on shallow things such as money, status, popularity, and attention
- There is too much arguing and venting
- There is fraud, abuse, and scams
- It can be isolating, as people connect digitally rather than in person

What people are saying...

“It tells us that all you need is to be happy, and to be happy you have to have expensive things and a pretty life. A Christian life is normally not super cozy and requires more focus on learning and growing than social media allows.”

“There’s so much misinformation. There’s so many fakes and swindlers. There’s so much hate and bullying online.”

“It makes people more self-centered and narcissistic.”

“I think social media adds greatly to one’s idea of individualism and comparison. The more I spend time on social media, the more I get consumed by thinking about myself, which makes it really hard to hear the voice of God and rely on Him. When I wake up and the first thing I do is go on my phone, I feel distracted and unable to focus well throughout the rest of the day. This is a really hard habit to get out of, and we can’t think about God when we’re thinking about ourselves.”

“Social media has proven to isolate people and increase depression with lack of personal interaction.”

“People spew all kinds of wrong information, and because people see it on the Internet, they think it’s Gospel.”

“It gives the individual an inflated sense of self, a barrier to true relational community, and feeds the belief that a person’s opinion is always right and has to be considered.”

“It is showing young people that vanity is the most important part of their identity.”

“Social media is full of false information about everything, including the Christian faith in the US.”

“It steals our time that we spend on it, and then we have less time to study the Bible and do Christian things.”

“Social media is harmful to society as a whole, not just the Christian community.”

“I never feel ‘better’ after scanning the posts.”

NEGATIVE INFLUENCE

Another reason many evangelicals consider social media harmful is they feel it has a **negative influence** over people when it comes to faith (15%). It spreads anti-Christian thought, encourages people away from Christianity, encourages division rather than unity, etc. Three percent go so far as to call it demonic or a “tool of Satan.”

What people are saying...

“There are so many influential sites and influencers that don’t align with Christian values and can have a negative effect on faith. There is such a saturation of inappropriate content online as well that can affect young people’s faith.”

“I believe it causes strife among Christians. People end up arguing more than they are edifying.”

“Social media encourages us to stray from God’s word and plan. It catalyzes negative energy and unfaithfulness. The amount of sacrilegious content I see on my feed is astonishing and really just sets the world up to stray from our holy Father.”

“Social media is the work of Satan. Nothing good has ever happened because of social media.”

“Social media sends messages that don’t generally align with the Christian faith.”

“Social media can be used negatively by spreading disinformation and creates a counterculture of beliefs pulling people away from Christian faith.”

“It opens the door to all kinds of nonsense teaching and the promotion of foolish doctrines. Anyone with a Facebook account assumes they are qualified to post garbage about the Bible, etc. In addition, Facebook Live and other streaming media have made it so easy for people to just stay home on Sunday and watch a service on the television.”

FALSE DOCTRINE AND BAD TEACHING

Fourteen percent worry about **false doctrine and bad teaching**. This can range from intentionally false teachings to the idea that “everyone with an opinion thinks he is an expert.”

What people are saying...

“Because there are many ways in which the true nature of the Christian faith and belief systems are misrepresented and misinformed. ‘Click on this post and receive blessings.’ It doesn’t work that way. Giving people false hope is dangerous.”

“Social media teaches people to take shortcuts, only read headlines, and believe without questions.”

“I think false teachings have been more easily spread.”

“It allows voices that do not honor the Word of God properly, and that teach things that are incorrect.”

“Too many different opinions and what people think instead of actual facts from the Bible.”

“A person can spout their own opinion and yet be perceived wrongly as a whole denomination’s mouthpiece.”

“It makes it harder to establish real relationships where you can lead others to Jesus. There is a lot of false doctrine easily available and wrapped in nice packages that can be tempting to believers.”

“Gives biased information. People comment on things that they do not understand. Lack of biblical wisdom in general.”

LIES AND MISINFORMATION ABOUT THE FAITH

While 14% worry about false teaching, another 12% worry about **outright lies, gossip, and misinformation spread about Christianity.**

What people are saying...

“It shines a light of negativity on certain pastors, churches, church members, and affiliates in a lot of cases. It makes churches look fraudulent and seem like their intentions are impure because it highlights behaviors that are unchristian-like.”

“Crackpots ‘debunking’ Christianity to the gullible. People, who don’t want to be judged by the group, judging all Christians by those who maybe don’t represent the spirit of Christianity as well as they could, and putting all Christians ‘on blast’ on social media.”

“It gives negative stereotypes which aren’t true.”

“I feel like there are things posted on social media that make Christians look bad, but more than that, the Christians themselves jump on extreme bandwagons and spread words and ideas that aren’t always true (they don’t check if it is legit before sharing).”

“Because it’s easy for people to spread misinformation and make true Christians look bad.”

“There are untruths being spread, about churches, about God, about Christians. It is unfortunately easy to get sucked into poor ways of thinking, gossip, and judgmental ways of thinking.”

BULLYING AND SILENCING OF CHRISTIANS

Eleven percent object to what they see as **bullying, harassment, and silencing of Christians** or Christian belief. They explain that Christians are silenced, Christian thought is called “hate speech” or offensive, they have been insulted or ridiculed on social media for their beliefs, and in general they feel there is a lot of hate and negativity specifically directed at Christians on social media.

What people are saying...

“There is a bias in the media against Christians who hold strongly to their beliefs. They are portrayed as ignorant or dangerous to the rest of society.”

“Social media is an easy place to get ridiculed and shamed for having strong beliefs.”

“Social media is just an outlet for more faith-based verbal and narrative-building attacks. Very small upside in social media for faith-based organizations, in my experience.”

“There is a strong trend in social media to promote ideas that are in opposition to Christianity, and there is a lot of criticism of Christianity.”

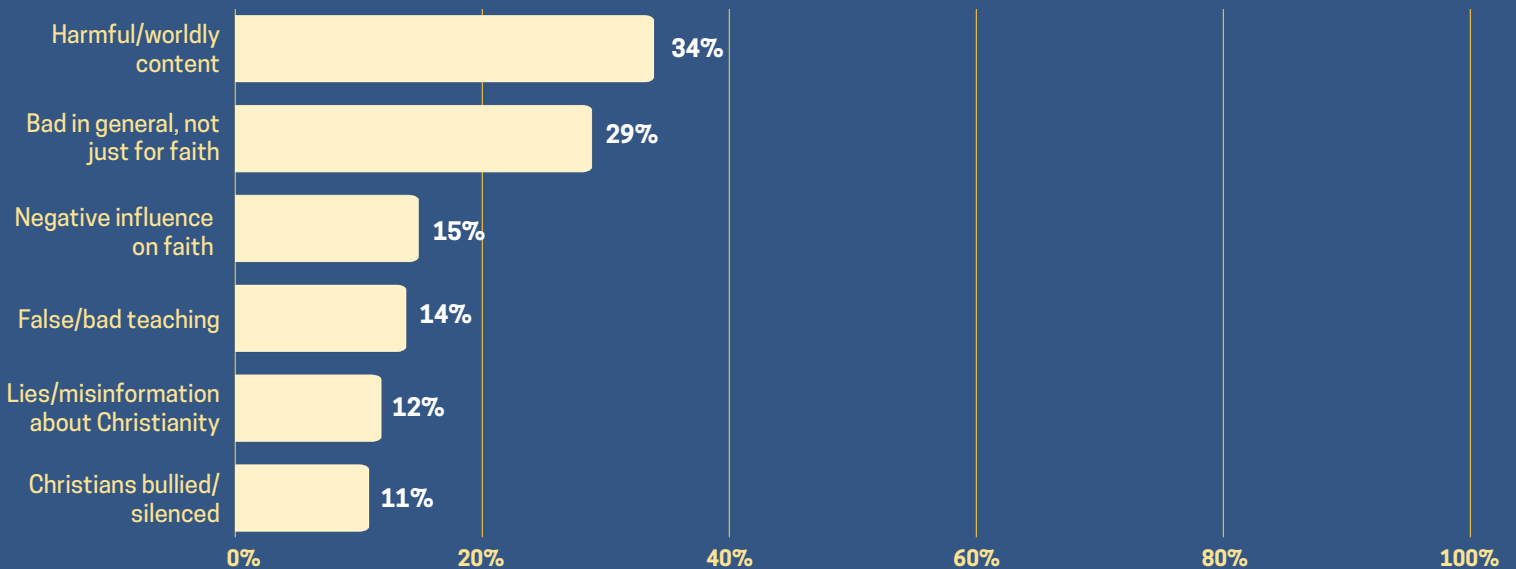
“It portrays Christians as hypocritical radicals.”

“Social media introduces a lot more negative people who have nothing better in their life than to denounce the existence of God. They don’t do anything against people trolling others like they do if you bash race or gender or talk about presidents. Those subjects are off limits, but Christians are fair game. It’s all discrimination, but only enforced for non-Christian ideas.”

“Many posts are anti-religious and contain angry, vicious verbiage or opinions; they’re completely devoid of the Christian faith.”

“Social media has become a tool for bullying and harassment. It’s easier for people to bully and persecute people for not believing the same things. People in general don’t respect the fact that not everyone believes the same. Everyone has the right to their own opinions and beliefs.”

Why Social Media Is More Harmful to Christianity Than Helpful



What Does It All Mean?

There are many things in this world that can be either good or bad.

Salt savors and preserves our food and is necessary for life; too much can kill. Opioids can relieve intense pain but are highly addictive and have destroyed many lives. Even something as basic as water is necessary for all life but flooding can devastate communities, and over 300,000 people worldwide drown each year.

From the responses we received in this study, social media is much the same. Some evangelicals talk glowingly of how it has allowed them to talk to others about Jesus, build their own faith through study or encouragement, and develop greater community with other believers. Others bash social media as shallow, distracting, untrue, seductive, and even evil.

It certainly seems that, in many cases, *both* perspectives are correct. **Social media is a tool that can both spread the Gospel and spread lies, encourage and depress, teach and distract.**

In their concerns and criticisms directed at social media, evangelicals are not alone. A 2024 survey by the organization More in Common shows:

- 71% of Americans believe not enough attention is paid to the dangers of social media
- 58% believe social media has a negative impact on children
- 62% support banning social media for children under age 15 (the same study shows support for this at 65% in Germany, 74% in France, and 76% in the UK)

What is rather puzzling is that **a majority of evangelicals believe social media is more harmful than helpful to the Christian faith in the US, yet they continue to use it anyway.**

Consider the following comments about social media:

- “Social media is the work of Satan. Nothing good has ever happened because of social media.”

- “People gossip. Spreading lies and deception. Don’t want to be involved in such a place.”
- “It’s too easy for propaganda to be spread. The faster it spreads, the more gossip it produces. The more gossip, the more confusion it adds, thus guaranteeing us a result of living in Babylon.”
- “It is a place for false information to proliferate without being questioned.”
- “More harmful because people can turn you away from the Christian lifestyle pretty quickly.”
- “It is flooded with anti-Christian propaganda.”

One might expect comments such as these from believers who avoid social media. But every one of those—and many more just like them—comes from an evangelical who uses social media. **Our results had 3% who call social media a tool of Satan, demonic, or from the devil. Eight out of ten of those comments came from social media users.**

Undoubtedly, there are various reasons so many evangelicals feel social media harms the Christian faith, but they continue to use it. Maybe they feel it is bad for other Christians, but they know how to navigate the problems. Maybe they feel their own faith is so strong they will not be affected by the pitfalls. Maybe they hope to contribute a little light to what they see as a vast darkness. Maybe they know the negative ramifications, but they just do not care.

No matter the reasoning, one is left to wonder whether the Church is providing sufficient guidance regarding social media—how to discern false doctrine, how to take advantage of opportunities to share your faith, how to avoid gossip and negativity, how to be truthful and genuine, how to avoid negative influences, etc. All of these issues come up in real life, but they have a different twist when arising digitally, in an environment where one can connect to nearly anyone and anything instantaneously.

Christian leaders can also provide guidance to believers to help them navigate to more beneficial content on social media. Churches can encourage their congregation to follow the church on Facebook (and give them actual reasons to do so), as well as creating online communities or forums where attendees can safely share in the lives of other congregants and build community. Teachers can provide a list of recommended YouTube channels where biblically solid teaching can be found. Leaders can provide encouraging content on Instagram or X, encouraging others to follow them for helpful content.

A hammer is just a hammer until you imbue it with action. You can pick it up to help build housing for the poor, or to smash a window in an act of vandalism. Social media is much the same.

What can your church, your ministry, or you personally do to help people proactively make social media more helpful than harmful to the Christian faith, as well as more helpful than harmful to their own lives?

While social media presents challenges, it also offers tremendous opportunities for evangelicals to shine the light of Christ in a vast digital landscape. With intentional guidance from church leaders, and a spirit of discernment, social media can become a powerful tool for spreading the Gospel, building community, and encouraging fellow believers. By using it thoughtfully and prayerfully, Christians can navigate its challenges while seizing the opportunity to make a positive impact for the kingdom of God in this digital age.

Methodology and Definitions

Researchers have defined “evangelical” in ways that have them representing 7%, 23%, and even 35% or more of American adults. For this study, we considered an evangelical to be someone who agrees strongly with all four of the following theological positions:

- The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.
- It is important for me to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- Jesus Christ’s death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.
- Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God’s free gift of eternal salvation.

This is the definition favored by the National Association of Evangelicals, which [Grey Matter Research](#) and Lifeway Research helped create.

Further, we limited this study to exclude those who identify with a non-Protestant group, such as Mormon, Roman Catholic, or Orthodox. This is a study of evangelical Protestants, a group representing 23% of American adults, or about 59 million people.

The study was conducted online, through a blend of research access panels. Stringent quality control was used to eliminate any responses from bots, click farms, and disengaged or fraudulent respondents. A demographically representative sample was screened for evangelical beliefs and lack of non-Protestant affiliation. Data was gathered in early 2024. A total of 1,039 evangelical Protestants participated in this study.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

from Infinity Concepts and Grey Matter Research

If you found this report beneficial, Infinity Concepts and Grey Matter Research offer additional reports on evangelical Protestants:

CHURCH INSIGHTS:

- [Denominational Loyalty: What Churches Can Learn from Consumer Brands](#)
- [Church After COVID: Changes in Evangelical Engagement](#)
- [The Congregational Scorecard: What Evangelicals Want in a Church](#)
- [The Ripple Effect: Congregations, COVID, and the Future of Church Life](#)

GIVING INSIGHTS:

- [The Giving Gap: Changes in Evangelical Generosity](#)
- [Strategic Creative Design: Fundraising Advertising Among Evangelicals](#)
- [Who Controls the Wallet: Giving Decisions Among Evangelicals](#)
- [Race & Gender in Fundraising: Exploring Potential Bias Among Evangelicals](#)
- [The Sustainers: Exploring Monthly Donor Partnerships](#)
- [The Favorite Charity: Evangelical Giving Priorities](#)
- [The Generation Gap: Evangelical Giving Preferences](#)
- [The Generosity Factor: Evangelicals and Giving](#)

SPIRITUAL INSIGHTS:

- [The Spiritual Journey: How Evangelicals Come to Faith](#)
- [The Renewalists: Pentecostal and Charismatic Evangelicals](#)

ISRAEL INSIGHTS:

- [The Holy Land Journey: Evangelicals and Israel Travel](#)
- [The Jewish Connection: Evangelicals and Israel](#)

CULTURAL INSIGHTS:

- [Artificial Intelligence: An Evangelical Perspective](#)
- [Beyond the Label: Unmasking Evangelical Identity](#)
- [Evangelicals in the Public Arena: Understanding Their Political, Moral, and Social Views](#)
- [Faith & Wellness: Evangelical Insights on Healing and Physicians](#)
- [Media Matters: Evangelicals and the Media](#)

ABOUT GREY MATTER RESEARCH



What do you wish you knew about the people you are trying to reach: donors, potential donors, customers, or the general public? And what could you accomplish if you knew the answers to those questions? **That is where we help you make a difference.**

Grey Matter Research helps our clients make wiser decisions with **valuable, relevant consumer insights**. We specialize in serving **Christian organizations**, although we have partnered with many secular charities and for-profit companies, from professional sports teams to vehicle manufacturers to branding, marketing, and fundraising agencies.

Our motivation is to **partner with our clients**, which is why we have been working with some of the same organizations **for over two decades**. Whether we are helping a client discover how consumers perceive their brand, learn what the donor experience is like, develop new messaging, or any other topic, we have **A Passion for Research That Makes a Difference**.

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General Motors • The Christian and Missionary Alliance • Focus on the Family
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Our work has been covered by the international media, (MSNBC, *Christianity Today*, NPR, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Fast Company*, *Harvard Business Review*, *NonProfit Times*, and many others), translated into multiple languages, used in US Senate panel hearings, and included as part of the curriculum at universities in the US and Italy.

You can learn more about how we help clients, as well as check out a variety of available research reports, on our website: www.greymatterresearch.com.

Company president Ron Sellers would be delighted to chat with you. Call him at **1-602-684-6294**, or meet him digitally at ron@greymatterresearch.com.

ABOUT INFINITY CONCEPTS

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Infinity Concepts is an integrated marketing-communications agency inspiring people of faith to action that specializes in the following:

- **Consulting:** We help you think more strategically and lead more effectively.
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Faithful Central Bible Church • Faith Life Now • Foursquare Missions International
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You can learn more about Infinity Concepts and how our team of experts can help you make a bigger impact. If you are looking for an agency to be your thoughtful strategic partner and impassioned advocate, Infinity Concepts may be for you: www.infinityconcepts.com

Infinity Concepts President, Mark Dreistadt, and Chief Growth Officer, Darrell Law, can be reached at 724-733-1200 or by email at Mark@infinityconcepts.com and Darrell@infinityconcepts.com.

Additional FREE RESOURCES from Grey Matter Research

In addition to our custom research work for clients, we offer a variety of exclusive reports.

A small selection is below; [click here](#) for information on all of them.

■ Lapsed Ministry Donor Research Report

What happens when a donor stops giving? This in-depth exploration of lapsed ministry donors looks at how and why giving ceases. In many cases, donors don't even realize they've lapsed. [Click here.](#)

■ Uneven: Success, Stagnation, and Delusion in Spiritual Growth

Spiritual growth and maturity among American evangelicals is a mixed bag. Some are highly engaged and growing, while others have almost completely checked out. [Click here.](#)

■ What America's Favorite Charities Have in Common

Donors often claim they like to support small, local organizations. The reality is they generally favor massive global brands. And most people of faith do not favor supporting faith-based organizations. Learn what sets America's favorite charities apart in the minds of donors. [Click here.](#)

■ Lost Opportunities: Faith, Giving, and Social Media

Learn how donors and people of faith use social media to interact with nonprofit organizations and congregations. [Click here.](#)

■ Charitable Overhead Ratios and Donor Decisions

Donors often believe ministries and charities spend more on fundraising and administration than they should. Because of this, many organizations think donors will not support organizations with expense ratios exceeding a certain threshold. We find that is often not true—and in fact, donors frequently do not have a clue what their favorite organization's overhead ratio really is. [Click here.](#)

■ Understanding Evangelical Mid-Level Donors

This small but critical group is not well understood because not much research has been done on them—we help put that right with this report. [Click here.](#)

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■ *CAPTIVATE* Magazine

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■ Donor Trend Analysis

Every nonprofit should have a clear understanding of what is happening with its donors by measuring key performance metrics to monitor the health of its donor file. The **Donor Trend Analysis** gives insights into your donor retention rate, average lifetime donor value, donation frequency, number of multi-gift donors, average gift amount, new donor acquisition trends, lapsed donor trends, and much more.

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Your digital presence matters, now more than ever! What does a donor experience when they give to your organization online? Are you posting too little or too much on social media? Does your website effectively communicate your story and impact? How well do you engage with your followers through social media?

Infinity Concepts provides a FREE **Digital Assessment** to qualified churches, ministries, and nonprofits. This analysis will help you improve the way you communicate and engage with people and donors online. [Reach out](#) to see if your organization qualifies for a FREE **Digital Assessment** by the experts at Infinity Concepts.

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