



Marketing Resource Kit

A Communications Guide for Jewish Congregations



Jewish Reconstructionist Communities
In Association with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College



Contents

What Is Marketing?	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Telling Your Story	5
What Is Reconstructionism?	5
What Does Marketing Success Look Like?.....	6
Engaging Your Current Members	6
Learn About the People You Want to Come Through Your Doors	6
How Do You Attract New Congregants?	9
How Do You Engage Current Members?.....	10
Public Relations and Media	11
Photography.....	15
Flyers	17
Advertisements	18
Brochures.....	19
Managing Your Online Presence.....	22
Search Engine Optimization (SEO).....	22
Online Advertising	22
Managing Your Online Reputation	24
Websites	25
Social Media	26
Logos / Identities	30
Acknowledgments	31

What is Marketing?

In order to attract new members, engage current members, publicize an event or be recognized in your geographical area, you have to get your name out.

How can you use marketing to strengthen your congregation? Do you need to send out press releases about events and hope someone will come? How do you get people to read your flyers? How do you encourage current members to participate more? It sounds like an insurmountable *balagan* (mess)! Where would anyone know how to begin?

The term “marketing” can be vague and can feel overwhelming. Take a step back for a moment and realize that marketing is not what makes your synagogue. Remember that people connect to the community you’ve built with your members and spiritual leadership, not to a press release or newspaper ad. **Marketing does not exist without your community. It’s a plan to help you tell a story—your story.** Marketing is about discovering the needs and wants of those you want to reach and telling your story in a way that appeals to those needs and wants.

As a Reconstructionist congregation or *havurah*, you have a rich history. You are also part of a wonderful, egalitarian Jewish movement dedicated to making the community and the world a better place. Marketing helps connect your congregation to your community and the world. When you can apply marketing tools to help convince others to care about the Jewish community you built, then your community can grow.

This guide has two purposes. The first goal is to get you to think about your communications strategically, meaning that you will be able to sit down with key members of your synagogue (whether this is your board, communications team or long-range planning committee) and figure out your story. Who are you? What do you want others to know about you? How do you want people to interact with your community? This process will help you *engage* your audience. You may have to repeat this planning process as your story changes, but this guide will give you the grounding to help you begin.

The second goal of this guide is to educate you on fundamental marketing tools with best practices. These are basic instructions to help you use these tools. Not all of the tools presented here are essential to your marketing plan. You will need to decide which will work best for your community based on your resources and time.

Like most important things in life, marketing requires careful planning and dedicated time. The techniques alone cannot guarantee success, especially if you do not allocate the time and effort needed to implement them well. This is a guide to help you begin the marketing process.

If you have any questions as you read this guide, please feel free to contact us.

For questions regarding communications and marketing resources for your congregation:

Rachael Burgess, Communications Associate, rburgess@rrc.edu or 215.576.0800, ext. 141

For questions regarding resources for your community:

Tresa Grauer, Director of Affiliate Support, tgrauer@rrc.edu or 215.576.0800, ext. 144

For information regarding Distance Learning and the plenum:

Michael Kolodner, Assistant Director of Affiliate Support, mkolodner@rrc.edu or 215.576.0800, ext. 118

How to Use This Guide

No matter where your community is in terms of publicity and marketing, we're confident everyone can find something useful in this packet. We've tried to make it easy for you to choose what might be most helpful for your community.

Anything printed in red can be customized for your community—that is, information like the date and time of a program, or a photo that you may use or take out, substituting one that pictures members of your own community.

We've used the name and address of a fictional congregation:

Agudas Itgets
1234 Main Street
Yourtown, ST
555-123-4567
info@agudasitgets.org
www.website.com

This appears in places where you should substitute the name and address of your congregation/community and your contact information.

Telling Your Story

What Is Reconstructionism?

The Reconstructionist movement is rooted in tradition but committed to innovation. Egalitarianism, inclusion and dedication to helping Jewish communities flourish are important values. Our affiliated congregations are spiritually and intellectually vibrant.

Our seminary for training rabbis is the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Wyncote, PA. This is also the home of Jewish Reconstructionist Communities, the organization providing support to our affiliated congregations and *havurot*. No'ar Hadash is our youth movement, and Camp JRF, located in the Pocono Mountains, provides Jewish summer experiences for children and teens.

Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan, the founder of Reconstructionist Judaism, taught that Judaism is a constantly evolving civilization—that Judaism is more than a religion, more than prayers. The Jewish people share historical memory and have in common literature, art, music, food and other touchstones of cultural life. We share concerns about Jewish morality and Jewish philosophy, and our cultural legacy is growing and changing all the time.

Perhaps because Reconstructionist Judaism is the smallest mainstream branch of modern Judaism, or perhaps because of its progressive values, some people assume that Reconstructionism is less engaged with traditional practices, like *kashrut* or observing Shabbat. This is not true.

Reconstructionist Judaism teaches that each individual and each community must explore and decide for itself how to live a meaningful and spiritually fulfilling Jewish life. For some, that might mean living a life that is very observant. For example, many Reconstructionist Jews, both men and women, wear *kippot* and *tallitot* during prayer services. Some traditions and rituals are of their own invention or created by their community. We reconstruct traditional rituals to conform to a current idiom and develop new life-cycle events and liturgy to mark passages with a uniquely Jewish stamp. For example, Reconstructionist communities have created rituals for retirement, leaving home for college and welcoming grandchildren, so that modern life-cycle moments may be infused with Jewish spiritual elements.

Important Reconstructionist Links

Reconstructionist movement mission statement: <http://www.jewishrecon.org/mission-statement>

For a complete listing of all Reconstructionist congregations and *havurot*: www.jewishrecon.org/directory

Resources about Jewish holidays: <http://www.jewishrecon.org/holidays>

For more information about rituals: <http://www.ritualwell.org>

What Does Marketing Success Look Like?

Are you trying to grow your membership? Publicize an event or major fundraising opportunity? Bring awareness to an important issue?

Communications aimed at growing your membership require different timelines, budgets and tactics than publicity for an event. You'll need to figure out exactly what measurable goals you want to accomplish.

You need to look at four key elements:

- **Feel**—How do you want people to feel at your congregation or at your event? Welcomed? Inspired?
- **Know**—What should the outside world know about you? What should they gain from your activities?
- **Believe**—What perception would you like people to take away?
- **Do**—When people come through your doors, what do you want them to do? Come back? Talk to the rabbi? Make friends? Donate? Join as new members?

The answers may seem obvious, but they will direct you as you decide on your congregation's upcoming programs and help you create your marketing materials.

Engaging Your Current Members

Marketing is about finding out what your audiences want and what they need, and then meeting these needs.

Though the focus of this guide is on growth, one of your key audiences is your existing members. In fact, they are the key to outreach.

Your current members represent your community to the rest of the world when they talk about your congregation. Whether talking to their family members and friends, or starting conversations with prospective members at services and events, they are your cheerleaders. What would you like your current members to feel, know and believe about you and do for you?

When you develop your marketing strategy, it is important to recognize your congregants' wants and needs. Their desires will most likely align with those of prospective new members as well.

Learn About the People You Want to Come Through Your Doors

A great way to figure out what kinds of people you want to come through your doors is to learn about the people who are already inside them. How old are they? What do they do for a living? Do they have children? What kinds of activities interest them? Where do they get their news? How do they like to stay in touch? What made them fall in love with your synagogue or *havurah*?

You can collect this type of information from your membership forms, surveys (www.surveymonkey.com is great for this), focus groups, parlor meetings or one-on-one interviews. (See more on focus groups on page 7.)

After you collect information from your congregants, you will understand what your congregation does well and where to make improvements. You can then tailor your programming and narrow your marketing efforts to your key audiences by taking into account how they will most likely connect with you.

Focus Groups

Focus groups are facilitated discussions with small groups of people (some communities may have small enough memberships to make a focus group unnecessary). These discussions are a very effective way to collect data about the everyday lives of your congregants as well as how they feel about Judaism, your congregation and your current activities. By learning everything you can about your current members, you can learn how to better serve the needs of your current members and anticipate the needs of prospective members.

To do this, you will need to create a plan. Understand that you have multiple audiences. You may have families, singles, empty nesters, retirees, and so on. You will need to identify the types of people already in your congregation and then determine who you want to walk through your doors.

Look at your membership list and your congregants' demographics. Are they young families, retirees, empty nesters? Plan for a focus group with members in each category. Invite 10 members to each group (it's always better to have more in case someone is unable to come at the last minute). Six to eight participants is ideal.

When scheduling focus groups, plan for each discussion to last between 90 minutes and two hours. This may sound like a long time, but a two-hour discussion with eight people gives each person about 15 minutes to speak to you. This is very valuable time and a small window in which to receive important information.

Before you pick your date and invite your participants:

- **Plan your questions.** Draft a set of open-ended questions for each group. Questions should start broadly, and then narrow as the conversation progresses. Ask questions that begin with “what” or “how” as opposed to “why.” Often a group can cover no more than three to five questions.
- **Pick a facilitator and a note taker.** Your facilitator's goal is to keep the conversation moving while also drawing out honest responses. A designated note taker will allow the facilitator to lead the discussion and ensure that important points are not missed.
- **Set up a tape recorder.** During the discussion, participants may say something relevant to your research that the note taker may have missed. Having a tape recorder will allow the note taker and facilitator to review the discussion and ensure that important information has been written in the notes. Alert participants that the discussion will be recorded, but that their comments will not be attributed to them and will not be used for any other purpose. The goal is to foster an environment where the participants feel safe, so confidentiality is very important.
- It is usually good practice to **provide food or a snack.**
- **Start with easy icebreaker questions.** Examples include “How long have you been a member?” or “What made you want to join this congregation?”
- **Be prepared to go off script.** As the focus group progresses, you may find that the conversation concentrates on a particular topic. Sometimes, it is important to be flexible and adapt your plan to delve deeper into an important subject. Be prepared and start with the questions you feel are most important. This way, you'll be sure to cover the most important information with the group, even if the conversation runs too long and you don't make it through the whole list.

After the focus group, the facilitator and the note taker should get together and compare notes. Within two to three days of the focus group, the note taker should review the tape recording to make sure no points were missed in the notes. Before presenting the focus group findings to the congregation board or strategic planning committee, the note taker should highlight important ideas or themes brought up in the discussion. The findings from the focus groups must honor the confidentiality of the participants.

Competition

It's always a good idea to learn what nearby synagogues and Jewish organizations are doing. What are they doing well? What are they not doing? Why did your members join your community and not theirs?

Watch your competitors closely and learn from them. Focus your marketing efforts around what makes you *different* from them. Does your competition count women in a *minyán*? Do you welcome interfaith families or LGBTQ members? What makes you stand out from the synagogues around you? Think about what your congregation offers potential members that your competition cannot.

Pick Your Message, Then Your Tools

After conducting research to get to know your audience, you will need to decide what to say to your audience. This is your "message." What messages will grab your audience's attention and give you the response you're looking for?

Brainstorm a few different messages, and then reach out to a handful of congregants who are most similar to your target audience. Which messages appealed to them? Which messages drew a positive emotional response? Let their feedback guide you. Messages that appeal to the emotions tend to be more successful than messages that appeal to logic.

Once you have your message, you can pick your marketing tools. During your research process, you should have determined where your audiences like to go, how they collect their information and how they prefer to be contacted. You don't need to use every marketing tool out there, just the ones that your audience will most likely see.

Make a Calendar and a Timeline

Now you know who you want to attract. You have an idea of what types of programming they like. You know what they will like about your congregation. You know how they like to be contacted. Now it's time to make a plan with goals, action items and evaluation. Your plan in action is commonly referred to as a "campaign."

Pick a date for your program or decide when you want to launch your marketing campaign. Put this date on the calendar and start working backwards. When will flyers need to go out? When will emails go out? When will you send out press releases and ads? How long will it take your board to approve your marketing materials? Make a calendar of when things will be done and who will do them. Keep everyone on the same page, ensure tasks are completed, and alleviate the stress of last minute rushing. Then pick a date after the program or campaign to evaluate your efforts.

Designate a Marketing Person or a Team

You'll have to decide who will implement this plan. Remember that while a great marketing plan takes time, the results can be very rewarding. If you have someone with a marketing or sales background, that's great! If not, figure out who can take on this project. Divide the workload if you can. People can learn about marketing tools (this guide and our support can help them do that), but a strong work ethic and a desire for your congregation's success are crucial.

Budget

Many marketing tools are free, but don't disregard the tools that require some financial support. If printing flyers or purchasing ads in newspapers makes sense, see what you have in your budget.

Evaluate, Evaluate, Evaluate

When you have created your plan and have picked your marketing tools (there will be more information about the most common marketing tools later in this guide), you will need to come up with a system to measure your plan's effectiveness. Decide what you can measure. Whether it's keeping track of the number of incoming phone calls, your membership trends, service attendance, website traffic or survey responses, you need to figure out a way to measure the effectiveness of your plan before you execute it. Make an ideal goal like increasing membership by two families next year or attracting more event attendees from outside the congregation. Pick a date after the campaign to evaluate successes and areas to improve.

Pay attention to your campaign as it runs. Are you hearing complaints? Are you coming across logistical problems? Address these problems early. Don't wait until the end of the plan to talk about problems that could have been addressed earlier.

Ask for feedback. Send surveys. Always look for both your successes and areas where you can improve.

How Do You Attract New Congregants?

How Should You Think About Marketing Your Congregation?

- Determine the needs of your present and potential congregants through research.
- Determine what you offer your present and potential congregants that nobody else does (or what you offer in a better or more meaningful way than others).
- Select specific audiences and specific geographical locations to serve, and target your efforts there.
- Consider the best time to attract potential congregants. High Holy Days and school open houses are a great time to attract those looking for a new congregation.
- Determine how you can best satisfy the needs of your present and potential congregants with the time, money, and tools that you have.

What Should You Do?

- **Conduct research:** An inexpensive way to do research is through polling and focus groups. The simplest form is a questionnaire for both current and prospective congregants. Ask questions to find out what they want and need that they are not getting right now, or could be getting in a better way.
- **Identify prospective congregants:** You will need to identify potential congregants (or *prospects*) as various types or groups—for example, all Jewish people within 10 miles of the synagogue, Jewish faculty and staff at your local liberal arts college, people who patronize a local Jewish book store.
- **Act on Your Prospects' Needs:** Consider tailoring program offerings, dues and promotional efforts to those groups. A good strategy helps a congregation focus on the target groups it can serve best.

Marketing Plan

- **Programs, Services, Offerings:** What specific content are you offering to meet the needs of congregants and potential congregants? Is it enough? Do those polled tell you that these offerings “deliver”?
- **Promotion:** Do you have an advertising budget (even a modest one)? Are you taking advantage of newsworthy events to inform your local Jewish and consumer news outlets? Are you getting into larger conversations in order to make people aware of your congregation and to attract like hearts and minds?

How Do You Engage Current Members?

When prospective members decide to join your congregation, it is very important to keep them engaged. If your current members are not regularly connecting with your congregation, they will not participate in your activities or fundraisers. After some time, they will likely not remain members. Remember, your current members are incredibly important to your growth efforts.

As you communicate with current congregants, imagine how you would like to be approached. The language you use should not make your current members feel like a mere revenue source. Your congregation should be something your members feel excited about whether your synagogue or *havurah* is a great place of learning, a spiritual center or more of a social hub. Members will invest in places and activities they care about.

There are many ways to keep your current members engaged with your congregation:

- **Email** is a great communications tool to let your current and potential congregants know what is happening within your congregation. You can inform them about upcoming events, fundraisers, service schedules, birthdays and other news.

There are several ways to manage email. If you have a small congregation, you can simply copy and paste email addresses directly into a normal email program. If you have a large list, you will want to look into a listserv or bulk email software like Campaigner or MailChimp.

If someone requests to be removed from your bulk email list, you must honor this request by law. If you ever have a question about the laws regarding email, visit www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/can-spam-act-compliance-guide-business

Just make sure you do not bombard your congregants with email. Sending an email once a week is usually acceptable.

- **Newsletters** can give an in-depth view of your congregation. You can make announcements, promote events and inform congregants about synagogue news. It's also a good idea to have articles from key people in your congregation, such as your rabbi/lay leader, president or educational director.
- **Bimah Announcements** can allow you to reach congregants in the pews. Many congregations will make these announcements at a dedicated time toward the end of the service. Keep these announcements brief and highlight the most important information. Create a bulleted list with the who, what, where, and when for your seven to 10 upcoming events.
- **Backpack Flyers** can be very helpful if you are trying to engage Hebrew school students and parents. Just ask your Hebrew school teachers to send students home with flyers for upcoming events.

Public Relations and Media

What Is News?

When you're watching television, browsing the internet or reading the newspaper, what type of stories catch your eye? When you want a reporter to write about you, you have to think about how the story is newsworthy. In order to get your story picked up by a reporter, you need to think like a reporter.

- **Is your story relevant to a decent-sized segment of your community?**
- **Does your story have an impact?**
- **Is your story interesting?**
- **Is your story timely?**

When you are sending a newsworthy story to the media, you are "pitching" a story. What kinds of stories should you consider pitching?

- **Events**
- **Community volunteer activities or social action projects**
- **Your congregation's response to breaking news or news outside your synagogue (for example, a legislative decision)**
- **Stories that you find out are already being written and that you could comment on**
- **Op-ed pieces or commentary from your rabbi or lay leader**
- **Timely calendar events (such as High Holy Days and Hanukkah)**

Where Should You Pitch?

What media outlets are in your area? Which ones might cover your stories? Pay attention to local, regional Jewish media outlets, hyper-local newspapers (like *The Montgomery County Press* or *Ocean Township Reporter*), town newspapers and the larger newspaper in your nearest city. Also, make note of blogs, event listings, etc.

Once you've done the research, start putting together a media list for your congregation. Call each media outlet, introduce yourself, and ask who would cover your community's events. Newspapers usually will assign a reporter to cover a particular subject area, called a "beat." If you call into the newspaper directly, they might tell you to send all your news to the "local" beat. Be sure to get the name, phone number and email address of an actual reporter or editor. That way, you will know whom to contact when you want coverage.

For television news coverage, press releases and information can be sent to the "assignment desk." However, you still need the correct email address and phone number of the newsroom for follow-up. A little online investigation can give you this information. Go to the website of your local television news and search "staff" or "contact us."

Tips for Getting Newspapers, Radio and Television to Cover Your Events

Pre-event Publicity

Pre-publicity is generally for events that are open to the public. You wouldn't want to put a notice in the newspaper for an adult learning class and then have people show up only to find out that it's for members only or pre-school families only.

For newspapers, pre-publicity should be sent weeks in advance of your event, with the newspaper's deadline in mind. Several weeks in advance is not too early; you can always resend it closer to the date as a reminder. Many Jewish newspapers print at the end of the week, on Thursday or Friday. They need to have that week's information in hand or in their email by Monday or Tuesday. Today, many publications have online editions that they update frequently, perhaps several times a week. They often use additional content online that might not appear in print.

Pre-publicity should be your press release. You can also send a photo if it's relevant: a head-shot or formal photo of the guest speaker, a photo of the person being honored, photos of donated canned goods to go with your release about the upcoming food drive.

Community events often are listed briefly in newspaper sections called "Community Calendar" or "Coming Events." Find similar events in the newspaper where you want your notice to appear. The paper will often provide deadlines and contact information for these sections. You can also send it directly to an editor, or to a reporter who you hope will come and cover the event if it's something really newsworthy.

For television coverage, you can usually send your press release to the "assignment editor" or "assignment desk." This is the place in the newsroom that collects information about what is happening that day, and then decides whether to send a TV news crew to cover it. Email your press release about a week in advance, and then make a follow-up phone call on the morning of your event to make sure that they have the release, know the details, and know that you would like them to cover the event.

Post-event Publicity

Unless it's a really big event with great news value, many publications would prefer a photo or two to sum up an event after it happens. Once the event has occurred, you really have to be quick (the next day or two at most) to write up a press release of what happened and send it out, so that it is still timely and relevant by press time. Much of this release can be prepared in advance.

Instead of writing up a press release, you can send photos with captions. The captions should provide a sentence or two about what the event was, what was accomplished and what made it newsworthy. Then identify the people in the photos.

Remember to think like a reporter!

Typos can be very jarring for professional writers. Before you send your release, make sure you check for spelling and grammar. Have a second pair of eyes look over the release or even read the release aloud to make sure it sounds right. The cleaner you can make the release, the easier it will be for the reporter to read your story.

If you really want to give reporters less work to do (which may help them cover your stories), get familiar with *The Associated Press Stylebook*. The Associated Press (AP) is very specific when it comes to spelling and word use, and publishes a guide every few years. If this is something you want to learn, the stylebook could be a very useful investment.

Anatomy of a Press Release

Instructions are in black

Sample release copy is in red

If it's for use now, say:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

If you don't want word to get out until a certain date, for example, announcing a new slate of officers, say so.

For release: **September 10, 2015**

Contact: **Name of person coordinating**

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Headline that says who and what is happening

JEWISH COOKBOOK MAVEN JOAN NATHAN TO VISIT AGUDAS ITGETS

The start of a press release is called a "dateline." It always follows this format: **CITY, St.—Month day, year**

Then follow it with something fun to interest the reader, but quickly get down to the facts. This is called a "lede." The first paragraph should explain who, what, when and where.

YOURTOWN, St.—September 10, 2014—Have you always wanted to be able to cook the perfect bowl of *matzah* ball soup? Renowned Jewish chef and cookbook maven, Joan Nathan, will be at Agudas Itgets on Sunday evening, November 17, at 7:30 p.m. to share some of her favorite recipes and Jewish cooking traditions. Agudas Itgets is located at 1234 Main Street, Yourtown, ST.

The second paragraph can give some background information and a quote from someone connected with the event. You can find information online or ask the speaker for a bio and any press information. If it's an in-house event, ask the person planning the program for some information: How did she choose the speaker? Is the planner excited about the event? Is this the first time such an event has happened in your community? After the first mention of a person's full name and any title, just use their last name for subsequent mentions.

Nathan is the author of 10 cookbooks including her most recent, *Quiches, Kugels and Couscous: My Search for Jewish Cooking in France* (Knopf), which was named one of the 10 best cookbooks of 2015. In 1994, Nathan's *Jewish Cooking in America* won the James Beard Award for the best American cookbook. Her other books include *Foods of Israel Today*, *Joan Nathan's Jewish Holiday Cookbook*, *The Jewish Holiday Baker*, and *The Children's Jewish Holiday Kitchen*.

In the third paragraph, you can include more interesting, filler information. Joan Nathan's official bio is three pages long; that's too much. You have to edit and keep it short. If you take an interesting quote or piece of information from another source, you should say where you got it. Direct quotes from a person should be set off with quotation marks.

In an interview with *Tablet* magazine, Nathan described the ideal *matzah* ball. In the days before boxes of soup mix, Nathan said, "cooks made humble dumplings by pounding their *matzos* with a large wooden mortar and pestle, adding a little sautéed onion, some eggs, and a lot of *schmaltz*." If you want to learn the secret to a perfect *matzah* ball and hear more great reminiscences from the world-famous chef, plan to join us.

Wrap up with any other pertinent information in the fourth paragraph. This is the place to mention the cost, parking details and any other special arrangements. Make sure to include contact information if the reader has questions.

The program will take place in the synagogue social hall and is open to the public. Admission is \$10. Nathan's newest cookbook will be for sale at the event. Teens over the age of 12 are welcome. Tickets can be purchased in advance at the synagogue office or at the door. Questions? Please contact Sara Silver, program coordinator, at 555.876.9876 or ssilver@email.com.

Your last paragraph is called "boilerplate." This is a brief paragraph about your congregation or *havurah*. You can use this same boilerplate for every press release.

Agudas Itgets is a Reconstructionist synagogue serving the needs of the Jewish community in Yourtown, ST. With 150 families, we provide a wide range of religious, educational, and social programs for all ages. Visitors are always welcome! For more information, call us at 555.123.4567 or email us at info@agudasitgets.org.

If your release is more than one page, make sure to put (**MORE...**) at the bottom right of the first page. Then put a short descriptive title and page number at the top left of each page: **Joan Nathan at Agudas Itgets/page 2**

End the release with three number signs (also referred to as pound signs or hashtags) **###** or end with **-30-**
This should be aligned in the center.

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sarah Silver
555.876.9876
ssilver@email.com

JEWISH COOKBOOK MAVEN JOAN NATHAN TO VISIT AGUDAS ITGETS

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Photography

Photographs are powerful because they can show your congregation's activities and culture. These photos can also tell the story and history of your congregation or *havurah*. In fact, pictures on social media tend to be shown to more people than just text.

On all of your marketing materials—news releases, your website, advertising or social media—photography is very important, especially photos of your congregants participating in your activities.

If your congregation is holding an event when photography is acceptable, ask a few people to bring their cameras and take pictures.

Cameras

There are many advantages to using a digital camera:

- You can take pictures, review them, save them and quickly send them without having to wait for film to be developed.
- By having digital pictures, you can send pictures quickly to anyone via email, post them on social media, and use them for any other marketing material.
- You can also print as many as you'd like in any size.
- You can easily store the photos without losing the photo quality.
- You can also edit these photos as needed.

Many cell phones are equipped with digital cameras. Having the camera phone is convenient because you do not have to carry an extra camera (especially if you are the type of person who never leaves home without your cell phone). You can also text, email and post photographs to social media right from your phone. If you are very active with social media, you can post pictures on your congregation's synagogue page *while* the event is happening. Though a camera phone may not have the best photo quality compared to a separate digital camera, this is still an adequate photography tool.

Storing Photos

Your photos should be labeled and organized in such a way that you will be able to find them at any time. Make folders with descriptive names and dates. Many programs like Microsoft Picture Manager will also allow you to create "tags" or keywords to help you search for digital photos.

It is always a good idea to store photos in multiple places in case a computer crashes or a photo album gets damaged. Every few months, you will want to make copies and backups of your photos.

- **Hard Copies** are physical copies you can hold in your hand, like a printed picture. You can take digital photos to any photo center or just print these on your personal computer on photo paper. If you ever need to, you can always scan these pictures into a computer.
- **Soft Copies** are digital copies. Keep digital copies of your photos so you can easily label, print and send them. Keep copies of all of your photos on two different storage devices, such as a computer, a CD, a flash drive, a database or portable hard drive.
- **The Cloud** is a private online database where you can access your photos from any computer with a username and password. Google Drive and Dropbox are two free places to store computer files, including pictures. You can label these and access these photos from anywhere, whenever you need them.

While these storage spaces are encrypted and secure, many congregations will err on the side of caution and will not save pictures of children to the cloud.

Respecting Privacy

Photography is a great marketing tool and you may find that members of your community would be happy to participate. However, you will also need to be respectful of your members' privacy. You cannot post pictures in public places if the people in the picture do not consent.

Obtaining Consent

To be safe, have your members sign a release. On your membership form, include a line that allows the member to opt-out of having pictures taken and distributed. Honor these requests. This will help you protect yourself and your congregation.

Children and people who cannot consent

While pictures of children will generate the most interest from media or potential members with young children, minors cannot legally consent to having their pictures taken for public view. You will need to make sure you have written permission from their parents first. This can be accomplished by including a line in a membership form or a Hebrew school application allowing the parents to opt-out of having their child's picture taken.

Elderly people with dementia are also unable to consent. Legally and ethically, if you cannot obtain consent, do not use these pictures in any of your marketing or public relations material.

Flyers

Flyers are a classic way to publicize an event. One sheet of paper has the ability to reach a large audience by quickly drawing attention and communicating your message. Whether you post flyers in a local restaurant or grocery store, or mail them to your members, flyers can be a very effective marketing tool.

What Will You Need?

- **A headline**
- **A graphic (or picture) relevant to your event**
- **Basic information in a few words (consider bullet points, which are very easy to read)**
- **A call-to-action (what you want people to do), contact information or both**

The 10-Foot Rule

Can you see your flyer from 10 feet away? If not, your graphic or headline should be bigger.

Sample Flyer



Advertisements

Once you have identified your target audience, you need to figure out what you want that audience to do. Your call-to-action could be as simple as “Join us” or as specific as “Attend our synagogue’s upcoming concert.”

Here are the components you’ll need to emphasize in your ad:

- **Call-to-action** (what)
- **Location** (where)
- **Date/time** (when)

What Kind of Ad Is It?

There are print ads and online ads. Print ads are usually found in newspapers or event programs, and the outlet will let you know what size the ad should be. If your ad will be placed online, there are specific sizes for various social media sites.

Creating Your Ad

Simple ads can be created using Microsoft Publisher. This program allows you to set your dimensions before you even start designing. You can use it to create text and simple shapes, and save it as a Publisher file or as a PDF.

You can also get help creating online ads with Canva (www.canva.com). Depending on the design you choose, ads are either free or very low cost. If you choose to design a Facebook ad or post on the Canva site, Canva will size the ad for you. The site offers both free and paid (\$1 each) ad components. Canva is easy to use, with a variety of templates. You can even use it to design eye-catching Facebook and Twitter posts, automatically created to the correct size specifications.

Need Photos?

If you don’t have photos in-house, you can always use stock photography—that is, photos you can purchase from websites such as www.istockphoto.com or www.123rf.com. You can also find free stock photography websites like www.morguefile.com. On all of these websites, you can search for photos by keyword (for example, “Hanukkah menorah” or “preschool children”).

Congregation Agudas Itgets

A warm, inclusive spiritual community

Join Us for Services!

Kabbalat Shabbat (Friday Evenings): Bi-weekly at 7:30 p.m.

Shabbat Mornings: 10 a.m.

Tot Shabbat Services (First Shabbat of each month): 10 a.m.

Community Potluck Dinner (Last Shabbat of each month): 6 p.m.

We hold participatory, egalitarian services year-round for Shabbat and holidays.



1234 Main Street Yourtown, ST 55555 (555) 123-4567

Brochures

When someone comes to visit your congregation or *havurah*, you want the person to know what kind of community you are. Having a brochure will help you do that.

Your brochure can be as elaborate as an illustrated booklet, but a simple tri-fold brochure can also be very effective.

What Will You Need?

- **An attractive cover**
- **A short history of your congregation or *havurah***
- **A statement of your mission and vision**
- **A description of your services** (religious services, adult education, Hebrew school, etc.)
- **Images** (pictures of your congregation being active—participating in an activity, kids learning in the Hebrew school, etc.)
- **Information about your rabbi(s) or lay leader(s)**
- **A call-to-action** (visit us again, join us, contact us, etc.)
- **Contact information**
- **Testimonials** (How has your synagogue affected one of your members? What made a member want to join?)


Remember not to crowd the brochure with text and pictures. Leave some blank areas or “white space” so the reader does not feel overwhelmed with information.

Making the Brochure

You can take your pick from many different programs, and you can find many templates on the web. For a tri-fold brochure, this is the format:

Welcome to Congregation Agudas Itgets! Even before you enter we want you to feel at home.

Our caring community embraces people from all walks of life: single and partnered, straight and LGBTQ, intermarried, multiracial, Jewish by birth or by choice.



No matter what you already know or how you practice, you can find your place at Agudas Itgets. Participate according to your own needs: whether you're seeking worship, education, social connection or social activism.

New members have opportunities to read Torah, join committees, suggest classes, or launch a *hikun alom* (social action) initiative.

Here you can insert a quote from your rabbi, a testimonial from a congregant, or another photo. For text, use Callibri Bold Italic, 10.5 pt in black. For photo, add Outer Drop Shadow at 315 degree angle, values: 100, 12, 5, 50. Remove the dotted box.

Congregation Agudas Itgets allows you the freedom to explore Judaism in creative and empowering ways.

100 word paragraph highlights special strengths of your congregation (e.g., mention choir, school, *hikun alom* projects, trips to Israel, films or speaker programs etc.)

Joyful spirituality, intellectual curiosity, inclusivity and deep commitment to social justice.

40-100 words for each category you chose or create, totaling 150 words on this panel

Our Rabbi
Text goes here


Our Worship Space
Text goes here

Our Hebrew School
Text goes here

Our Teen Group
Text goes here

Adult Education
Text goes here

Services (or Spiritual Life)
Text goes here



Inside left

Inside middle

Inside right

What is Reconstructionist Judaism?

What do Reconstructionists believe?
Judaism is more than a religion—it is the evolving civilization of the Jewish people, encompassing history, literature, art and music, land and language. Each generation is responsible for re-constructing Judaism to give it meaning for our time. The Jewish people share historical memory, a commitment to the Hebrew language and the land of Israel, and a rich legacy of ideas, texts, melodies, values and rituals.

What is the role of congregations and *havurat*?
Our communities provide unique, warm environments for an increasingly diverse Jewish population with changing needs and expectations. We avoid rigid structures, promote relationships, and facilitate each person's engagement with a tradition that has the power to transform, redeem and guide individuals and families on their sacred journeys.

Learn more:
www.jewishrecon.org
www.rtc.edu
www.RituaWell.org
www.campj.org



Find Your Jewish Voice at Congregation Agudas Itgets



We value your ideas and welcome your individuality. Join us in creating a Judaism that respects the past and opens to the future—that explores tradition and encourages questions. We strive to challenge your mind, nurture your spirit and enrich your life.

Logo goes here

Folds over inside

Back

Front

Example Brochure

Welcome to Congregation Agudas Itgets
Agudas Itgets! Even before you enter we want you to feel at home.

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Learn more:

www.jewishrecon.org
www.rrc.edu
www.Ritualwell.org
www.campjrf.org



Find Your Jewish Voice at Congregation Agudas Itgets



We value your ideas and welcome your individuality.
Join us in creating a Judaism that respects the past and opens to the future—that explores tradition and encourages questions.
We strive to challenge your mind, nurture your spirit and enrich your life.

Congregation Agudas Itgets
123 Street
City, State, Zip
123.456.7890
www.website.org



Jewish Reconstructionist Communities
In Association with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Managing Your Online Presence

The internet is not a tool used exclusively by “young people.” Millions of people of all ages use the internet. Though word of mouth is the best way to spread your message, the internet comes in a very close second. Whether a newcomer in town is looking for a local Jewish community or someone local wants to learn about your congregational activities, your audience is looking at your online presence, and that’s an area you cannot ignore.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

What does your online presence look like?

Your first step should be to do a web search of your congregation’s or *havurah*’s name and see what comes up in the results. Google.com is by far the most popular search engine website, but you can also try Bing.com and Ask.com. Type your congregation’s name in the search bar. The results that come up are how you are perceived by anyone looking for your congregation on the web.

When someone uses Google to search the web, the person uses a word or phrase (called “keywords”), and Google will present a list of websites, articles, pictures and social media sites that match these keywords. Generally, the searcher will look down the list of results and choose the website with the most relevant information. However, many people will not scroll through more than three pages. If your website appears on page four of Google’s search results, then your website might not be seen by a potential visitor or new member.

One way to help move your website further to the top of search engine results is by improving your Search Engine Optimization (SEO). You can do this by using social media, keeping your website updated and using relevant keywords frequently (more about keywords on page 23), and focusing on media coverage. This will take time and effort before seeing results, but this is relatively inexpensive.

What if a Google search turns up an out-of-date website that lists a rabbi who retired three years ago? An old newspaper article that doesn’t accurately portray the facts about your congregation? Or an old blog post that mentions your previous location when your community was much smaller than it is now?

If there are no results at all or several results come up that don’t accurately portray your congregation, then it’s time to put the democratic power of the web to work for you. Correcting outdated information, attracting news coverage of your events, participating in social media and posting your events online will help raise your SEO.

This is a very important area of your congregation’s image. *Everyone* is online. Luckily, you have plenty of tools at your disposal. You just need to apply your marketing plan to your website, social media sites and any online advertising you choose to use.

Online Advertising

Online advertising requires the exact same elements as a print ad, but the formats may change depending on the site where you choose to advertise.

For those who wish to purchase print advertising, the outlet will provide a “rate card.” You will pay a certain amount for an ad of a certain size that runs for a certain length of time.

Advertising online is different. While some websites will provide a similar rate card, much of online advertising today works with Pay Per Click (PPC). You will only pay when someone clicks on your ad. How much you pay will depend on where you are advertising and the budget you specify. But just as with print advertising, pick places where your key audience will likely see and click on your ad.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

Another tool is called Search Engine Marketing (SEM). SEM is an advertising tool that will make your website rise to the top few search results and prevent your website from being overlooked or lost. You can pick your words, your budget and even the geographical location where you'd like your ads to appear.

Though the process can get complicated, there is value to SEM:

- An SEM budget will be much lower than a typical print advertising budget.
- When a person is using a search engine, the person is actively *looking* for information, meaning they will be more likely to notice your ads. There is no guarantee that a newspaper ad will be noticed by readers.
- You can easily measure your Return on Investment (ROI). Print advertising sets its rates by guessing how many people may see your ad, but you will have a hard time showing whether the ads were successful. By using SEM, you will only pay when someone clicks on your ad. SEM programs will also generate reports to let you know how many people saw the ad and even which keywords brought in the best results. SEM is very measurable.

While SEM shouldn't be your only outreach strategy, it is a great way to get your name out where people will likely see it when they need it.

Google Adwords is one of the most popular SEM tools on the market. Google will allow you to pick words someone may type into a search engine to try to find you (for example, "synagogues in New York, NY" or "Reconstructionist"). Then you "bid" on those words. This is similar to a silent auction.

Say you want to bid on "synagogues in New York, NY." You will tell Google you will pay, say, \$.50 per click and up to \$5 a week. If your bid is the highest bid, your ad and your website will be the top result in Google when someone searches for "synagogues in New York, NY." If you are the second highest bid, you will be the second on the list, and so on. You will pay \$.50 every time someone clicks on your ad. When you have spent \$5, the ad will come down and not be displayed again until the next week. It will run until you end the campaign.

Social media marketing works in a similar way. You set a budget and target audience, then your ad will circulate all over that social media to the audience you specified.

Should you spend your entire marketing budget on SEM to be the very first search result? No. Ironically, the first result may give you the highest visibility, but it's pretty typical for people to quickly browse or even skip the first couple of results. If you're looking for someone to find your website and spend time there, the "sweet spot" tends to be results three to six.

Keywords

There are a few kinds of keywords to look at when you're thinking about SEM.

- **Broad match:** If you pick a keyword, this option allows your ad to appear whenever someone uses this keyword in a search string. As the name implies, this is a *broad* term. If "Reconstructionist Judaism" is one of your keywords, a broad match means that your ad will appear every time someone uses the term "Reconstructionist" or "Judaism" in a search. The person may see your ad for "Reconstructionist Judaism," but may also see results for "Orthodox Judaism" or "Crime Scene Reconstructionist."
- **Phrase or Exact match:** This type of keyword is more specific than a broad match. If your keyword is "Reconstructionist Judaism," your ad will only appear if the term "Reconstructionist Judaism" is somewhere in the search string.
- **Negative:** When you choose keywords, the search engine will place your website on any page the keyword is used. However, say "Reconstructionist" is one of your keywords. A person searching for "Celtic Reconstructionist" or "Crime scene Reconstructionist" and may come across your ad. This person may not be interested in your synagogue at all. If the person looking for a crime scene reconstructionist accidentally clicks on your ad, you will have to pay for that click. You want your ads seen by people who are actively looking to engage your congregation. Making negative keywords like "Celtic" and "crime scene" will ensure your ads don't end up as results of a search irrelevant to your congregation.

A great place to find keyword ideas is www.ubersuggest.org.

Get to know your competition. You may want to bid on the names of competing synagogues. If someone is searching for another synagogue in your area, your congregation will appear too. This is another great way to be seen by prospective members.

Challenges

You won't always know what your bidding competition looks like, so it's hard to know how much you should spend. Keep a close eye on your analytics (see more on page 25). Every online advertising site will provide you with data and reports to let you know how your ads are doing. Always know what is working and what is not, and adjust your plan accordingly.

Managing Your Reputation

While it is not very likely that someone will go online and write terrible things about your congregation (thankfully, this is actually pretty rare), you should always keep tabs on what people are saying about you online. Besides monitoring your social media sites, a few free sources are very helpful when you're trying to find out what people say about you:

- **Google Alerts**
- **Addictomatic.com**
- **SocialMention.com**
- **Topsy.com**
- **Ubersuggest.org**

Managing Comments

Before you start using any online tools, be very clear about who can and cannot post on your social media sites. If you see a negative comment, don't be in a rush to delete it. Carefully read the comment and evaluate whether or not the comment has valuable feedback or if the person is just unfriendly.

Here are a few guidelines:

- **If someone simply says he or she is not a fan of your congregation**, the stand-alone comment with very few (if any) people agreeing is probably harmless. However, it would be worth reaching out to the commenter for some feedback about what your congregation can do better.
- **If the comment complains about a specific event or a particular issue that could be worked out**, reply to the comment online for the public to see. Tell the person that you value the feedback and would like to talk directly to resolve the issue.
- **If the comment is obscene or anti-Semitic**, delete it.

Websites

Making a Website

If you have a website already, that's fantastic! Hopefully, you have someone responsible for maintaining your website on a regular basis. If you do not or if you are working with a website that is difficult to manage or update, you are not stuck. You do not have to be an information technology expert to create a website.

If you don't have a website designer in-house, you can easily find an outside company to put one together for you. However, you can also find places online that will allow you to make your website yourself without special technical knowledge. You can type in your content yourself, upload your own photos and update the site regularly. There is usually a small monthly or yearly fee for these sites, but it's well worth the investment.

If you do not have a website and would like to build one yourself, some great places to go to are:

- **Godaddy.com**
- **Wordpress.com**
- **Weebly.com**
- **Squarespace.com**

What Will You Need?

Your website should include these pages:

- **Home page**—This is the first page a person will see when visiting your website. Include your current news, pictures, and a menu to help the visitor find out more about you.
- **About Us page**—This should have your mission and vision statement as well as your history.
- **Calendar**—When are your services? When are your events? Let visitors know what activities are coming up.
- **Staff**—Your staff (rabbi, president, executive director, education director, or office administrator) are representatives of your congregation. They generally know what is going on in your synagogue and will be the most likely people your visitors will want to contact. Make their office hours and contact information available.
- **Visitor Information**—If this visitor is interested in attending your services or events, what should this person know before coming? Have driving directions and parking information available. Let visitors know what to do or bring beforehand.
- **Contact Details**—Remember to provide a phone number, address and email address.
- **News**—What is new and exciting at your synagogue? What are your new events? What is your school up to? Can you provide thought pieces and resources on the upcoming holidays?
- **Links to Social Media Sites**—How can visitors stay in touch with you all of the time? Are you blogging? Are you on Facebook or Twitter? Let your visitors know! If you have an email list, tell them how to sign up.
- **Hebrew School/Educational Programs**—Educational programming is a big factor when prospective members shop for a synagogue. Prospective members want to know if there is a Hebrew school for the children or if you provide programs for adult learning. If your congregation has educational programs, it is important to have this information available on your website.

Analytics

Depending on where your website is hosted, your provider can usually give you data about how many people visit your site, how they found your website, and what pages they visited. Another popular and useful tool is Google Analytics. Using Google's data, this site can provide you with detailed information about your visitors and how they're finding you.

Social Media

There are myriad ways for people to connect online these days. But just because there are many social media sites doesn't mean you need to be on all of them. Don't feel overwhelmed; just let your ideal audience lead you. Decide whom you want to reach (current congregants, potential congregants, organizations you collaborate with, teens) and then look at where they are active. When you know where your audience is, you know you should establish your community there. So there's no need to be on Tumblr or Reddit if your audience doesn't use those sites.

No matter what you end up doing on social media, you should use an authentic voice that reflects the personality of your community. The beauty of social media is that it's "social": it's **two-way**, not one-way. Engage people in an online "conversation."

Ask them to post the photo that best represents your congregation on your Facebook page. People might post photos of a field of wildflowers or clasped hands, a hug, or a beautiful seascape. Share a story and then ask your followers to share related stories...or recipes or *niggunim* or original prayers. Most of all, try to create conversations that will move people from online connection to real action, such as coming to a service; participating in a fundraiser or *tikkun olam* event; or bringing a friend to New Member Night.

Be authentic. Tell stories. Share photos. Ask questions.

The 80/20 Rule

It's said that 80 percent of sales come from 20 percent of your customers. Similarly, 80 percent of your messages are broadcast by the 20 percent of your constituents who are the most active and social-media-connected. So rely on those individuals to spread the word. Use their networks and the trust they've earned on social media by putting their social media names into your posts, tagging them in photos on Facebook, and involving them in the social media life of the community.

Sources of Help

It's easy to find good, free sources of help with organizational social media. Here are a few we recommend:

- Darim Online: <http://darimonline.org/resources/socialmedia>
- How to set up your Facebook page: <http://info.firstgiving.com/blog/bid/91757/Back-to-Basics-How-to-set-up-your-Nonprofit-Facebook-page>
- John Haydon (social media blogger): <http://www.socialbrite.org/author/john-haydon/>
- Beth Kanter, "The Networked Nonprofit": <http://www.bethkanter.org/welcome/>
- How to "clean up" your online image: <http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/spotlight/college-students-clean-up-your-online-profiles-now/>
- For designing social media cover images: <http://www.canva.com>

Getting Started

If your congregation has decided to invest time in developing a social media presence, you'll find that it's very easy to get started. Creating an account on any social media site, whether it's Facebook, Twitter, Google+ or Instagram, is fairly simple and costs nothing. You will be walked through the entire set-up, step by step.

When you begin, make sure to have a few things ready:

- **A short history of your synagogue or *havurah***
- **A mission statement**
- **A logo or a picture you can use as a profile picture**
- **An email address (preferably one that begins with "info@")**
- **Your congregation or *havurah*'s website address and phone number**

Facebook

For congregations, the most often used social media platform is Facebook. That's where boomers communicate most frequently, and it offers a lot of flexibility. "Community" Facebook pages do not operate exactly like "personal" Facebook pages. Your goals will drive what kind of page you should select.

There are three ways to use community Facebook pages:

- A **fan page** is like an organization or celebrity page. Anyone who is already on Facebook can "like" the page; then they will see posts from that page in their Facebook timeline. The more active your page, the more priority Facebook will give your posts on your fans' timelines. And the more often one individual interacts with your page (by liking, sharing or commenting on the posts), the more frequently your posts will appear in that person's timeline.
- An **open Facebook group** allows anyone to join. Everyone on Facebook and in the group sees posts and knows who else is in the group. The benefit of a group over a fan page is that every post in the group goes to every member. You do not have to overcome Facebook's decision-making about what posts go onto your timeline.
- A **closed Facebook group** has only members who have been invited by the administrator. Only group members see items posted on the page. Conversation and materials posted in a closed Facebook group are not available to the wider public. This allows for the greatest privacy in communication. For example, your synagogue may use this as a "town square" where only members of the synagogue can post information or ask for recommendations. A hiring committee of the board might want to have a closed Facebook group for processing matters that require confidentiality.
- Find more help on open and closed groups at <https://www.facebook.com/help/220336891328465>.
- **Images (either photos or graphics) are critical to your success.** Posting text-only messages on Facebook will not get you very far. Facebook prioritizes images over words in deciding which messages go into people's newsfeeds. Since most people now carry phones that are also cameras, it's easier than ever to get photos at congregational gatherings (of course, respecting community traditions about when and where photography is appropriate). If you can identify community members who are skilled at taking photos, connect with them. Ask them to take photos at events that you can use on social media (see more information about photography, see page 15).

Your Facebook administrators can, and should, monitor the page to ensure respectful speech and to delete spam messages from outsiders trying to either sell products or post ideas that do not match your community's values.

Linking to Content

You can use RRC.edu, JewishRecon.org or RitualWell.org as a source of interesting content for your website or Facebook page. At the bottom of our homepage, our “What’s New” section lists articles and essays by and about RRC students, faculty and graduates. You can post a link to these articles—or any article on another site that might be of interest to your congregation.

Popular sites for Jewish news include:

- **myJewishLearning.com**
- **Forward.com**
- **InterFaithFamily.com**
- **Haaretz.com**
- **jpost.com**

You can also post news from your local Jewish newspaper. Once your Facebook page gets going, ask congregants to “share” the site on their personal Facebook pages.

Twitter

People focus on the 140-character limit on Twitter, but Twitter is really about “pointing to” or “curating” content. You use **links** in very short messages to show your followers what is important for your community, whether it is the rabbi’s sermon on your web page, a PDF of a flyer for a community gathering, or a news article on a multifaith, *tikkun olam* project launched by your *b’nai mitzvah* class. You write a short Twitter message and link the reader to longer content elsewhere on the web. The question is: Who is out there to follow your Twitter account, and will they make it worth the energy it takes to maintain an active Twitter presence? For most communities, the answer is no. However, if you are trying to be very visible to other like-minded organizations or to keep your families’ college-age children in touch with the congregation, it might be worth considering Twitter.

Google+

Google+ is overlooked in many social media plans, but this is a useful tool. Anyone with a Gmail account has a Google+ account.

Google+ makes it easier for people to find you through a web search on google.com. Earlier in this guide, we talked about SEO, or how easily can someone find your website online. Google+ is a social media site that connects directly to Google, the search engine. When you post links, pictures or articles to your Google+ page, Google figures out what sort of content you like (Judaism, Reconstructionism, environmental activism, etc.) and then connects these keywords to your congregation. When someone then searches on Google for Judaism, Reconstructionism, etc., your Google+ page and website will reach the top of the list. This is an easy and free way to boost your SEO (see page 22 for more information on SEO).

Earlier in this guide, we also talked about targeting your audience. From young families to retirees, each audience has separate interests. Rather than being all things to all people, your Google+ page allows you to group your audiences in what are called “circles.” If you have a group of people assigned to a circle, you can make content available only to those people and not to the general public. This means you can focus your content on a particular group. For example, you can have a circle of young families and post activities for their children. You can have a circle of young adults without kids or empty nesters interested in Jewish adult education. You can post messages for your board members only. Your targeted message can reach your targeted audience. If you assign someone to a circle, that person will not be notified and will not know what circle you have assigned them to.

Another great tool in Google+ is called a Google Hangout. Have you ever had a video chat with your friends or family online? A Google Hangout allows you to video chat with many people at the same time. This is great if you would like to host adult education classes, hold board meetings or network with other congregations. This is another tool to help broaden your reach inside and outside your congregation.

Blogs

Media coverage of your stories and activities is fantastic. It's a great way to get your story out to the public, and it gives your congregation third-party validation. However, you no longer have to rely on the media to tell stories about your congregation or offer your congregation's reaction to current events.

A blog is essentially your congregation's online journal. You can post in-depth stories about your members, your rabbi's *d'var Torah*, the events you've held, and your congregation's reaction to current events. Blogging is your congregation's online thought journal and news room. It's a great way to encourage your current members to get involved in telling your story for people outside of your congregation.

YouTube

Video is an invaluable tool. People from Minnesota can watch video streams of a Rosh Hashanah service taking place in New York. In fact, some communities have used this as a way of gaining members hundreds of miles away!

Whether or not your congregation feels comfortable using video in ceremonies, a recording of your adult education classes, school activities or community events allows you to share the events with people who were unable to attend and allows attendees to relive the memories.

It is very easy to post videos to YouTube. When you post a video to YouTube, you will have the search engine support of Google, so more people can find your videos through Google searches (since Google owns YouTube). You can also share your video on your website and on your social media sites.

For some examples of the power of sharing video, we recommend:

- **Inauguration of Rabbi Deborah Waxman:** <https://www.rrc.edu/node/1810>
- **Dreams of Peace: Arabic Class for Rabbinical Students:** <https://www.rrc.edu/video/dreams-peace>
- **Rabbi Shulamit Izen: Chaplaincy & True Compassion:** <https://www.rrc.edu/video/rabbi-shulamit-izen-chaplaincy-true-compassion>
- **Julie Benioff: I Could Only Be a Rabbi!** <https://www.rrc.edu/video/julie-benioff-i-could-only-be-rabbi>
- **Young Jews Passionate About Social Justice:** <https://www.rrc.edu/video/young-jews-passionate-about-social-justice>
- **Shema Prayer: American Sign Language and Hebrew:** <http://www.ritualwell.org/video/1468>

Logos / Identities

Because you are an affiliate member of the Reconstructionist movement, we encourage you to use the following logos on your website and promotional material. For information about accessing these logos, contact Tresa Grauer at tgrauer@rrc.edu or 215.576.0800, ext. 144.

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In Association with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

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We'd Like to Hear From You!

Was this guide helpful to you? What else would you like to see?

Let us know!

On www.jewishrecon.org, we'll provide templates and other useful guides to help you run an effective marketing campaign.

Tell us what you'd like to see!

Feel free to contact Rachael Burgess at 215.576.0800, ext. 141, or via email at rburgess@rrc.edu.