



Healthy Church Solutions

DISCOVERING YOUR MINISTRY COMMUNITY

Are you having trouble relating to your neighbors?

Does your church match the demographics of your community? One way to clearly see how your congregation matches up with the community surrounding your facility is to develop a demographic profile map of your area and plot your membership on the map. This will allow you to see several things. First, it will reveal characteristics of the people in your area and in which neighborhoods they live. This will help you understand their needs and ways in which you can better reach out and minister. Second, it will show where your members live in these profiled neighborhoods. With your own discernment and experience, and interpretive help from a Healthy Church Group consultant, you can discover how well you are penetrating your community and if there are specific areas where you need to target resources.

An example of this is a church the HCG worked with that was saturating a large geographic area with postcards twice a year. Plotting its membership on the demographic map showed specific areas where church outreach was bearing fruit. Because of this, the church decided to focus its mailings only in the areas that were most responsive. This gave the church two options. First, it could choose to reduce its mailing costs. Second, it could choose to send mailings more often to the targeted areas.

ScanUS detailed demographic information is available free from the HCG to any California Southern Baptist Convention church. Mosaic Major and Minor Cluster profiles are included in the ScanUS data. By providing your church membership and prospect file in a database form (Excel or dBASE) the HCG can plot your people right onto the cluster profile map. It is recommended to plot both membership and prospects to determine if there are demographic reasons why prospects are not becoming members. Any data you submit to the HCG will not be used for any other purpose.

Below are demographic questions you need to ask to determine how large your ministry/outreach footprint is and who lives in your area.

- How many people live in the church area?
- Is the population in the church area growing or declining? At what rate?
- What is the ethnic diversity in the church area? Is there an ethnic group that warrants a new ministry or new work?
- How much lifestyle diversity (refer to Mosaic Minor Clusters) is in the church area?
- What are the major generational groups in the area? Are the generational groups growing or declining?
- How traditional are the family structures (two-parent families, blended families, single parent, single)?
- How educated are the adults? Does this reveal ministry concerns or opportunities?
- What is the blend of homeowners, renters and vacant properties? What are the ratios for housing structures (single family home, apartments, group quarters, etc.)? What does this tell you about your community?
- How does average household income and individual income affect ministry in you area?
- What can be learned from information about occupations (professional, service industry, blue collar, academic)? What percentage of women are in the work force?

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