

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

Are We Healthy Enough to Go Multisite? (Replay) - Episode 326

Our Best Episodes of 2023

The number of churches going multisite continues to grow even on this side of the pandemic—in fact, the data from our Q1 2023 [Unstuck Church Report](#) showed that nearly 60% of the churches that average 1,000 or more people in attendance are now multisite. **But how does a church know when it's ready to go multisite?**

In this popular episode, we discuss **the key indicators that you are ready to expand through multisite.**

Multisite Readiness Checkpoints

As a part of our [Multisite Unstuck Process](#), we use a tool called the “**Multisite Readiness Checkpoints**” to confirm whether or not a church is ready to move forward with a multisite expansion. The ten checkpoints (scored by a red, yellow, or green in each area) are:

1. Clarity of DNA
2. Organizational Buy-in
3. Current Growth
4. Staff Leadership Capacity
5. Staff Health
6. Volunteer Strength
7. Ministry Model
8. Defined Systems & Strategies
9. Financial Strength
10. Replicable Weekend Services

Notice what's NOT on that list:

- Do we have a campus pastor?
- Do we have a location and a building?
- Are we going to use video teaching or live teaching in each location?

Those factors are **secondary** to the overall health of the church when it comes to the success of multisite strategy.

Multisite Is Not a Growth Strategy

In preparation for this series, we did some analysis looking at how every church scored their readiness on these checkpoints, from least ready to most ready for multisite expansion. One of *least* ready checkpoints among churches was current growth (in other words, lack of growth).

Let's be clear: **Multisite is not a growth strategy.** It's a strategy to multiply healthy ministry.

Whatever trends you are experiencing as a ministry now will accelerate with multisite expansion: Healthy churches will reach more people faster. Unhealthy churches will get "more stuck" faster.

Think of multisite like a marriage:

- In a healthy marriage, having a child adds stress to the marriage dynamic, but makes the marriage stronger in the end.
- In an unhealthy marriage, adding a child to the already-strained dynamic creates more stress and can ultimately lead to its demise.

After helping more than 100 multisite churches through the years, it's clear that the churches who are healthy and growing as multisite churches are growing because they are healthy churches—not because they are multisite.

Developing a Reach Strategy

So, if multisite *isn't* a growth strategy, what should a church work on *now* to prepare for multisite expansion in the future? Churches need to have a growth strategy—we call it a "**reach strategy.**"

Many churches have a *discipleship* strategy for people who are already connected to their ministry, but very few churches have a *reach* strategy to reach new people who are not already connected to their ministry.

[We do a lot of work with churches](#) to customize a reach strategy for their unique context and community—but the reach strategies that are working for many churches right now include these two key components:

1. Clarity about **WHO** you are trying to reach in your mission field.

2. Clarity about **HOW** you are going to reach them.

The HOW commonly includes:

- Redesigning your weekend services with the person you're trying to reach in mind.
- Equipping your congregation to engage the Gospel mission where they live, work and play. *(This is sometimes called relational evangelism).*
- Community engagement and serving the needs of people in your mission field.
- Larger churches might also add a digital strategy, like creating shareable content that addresses the life questions and priorities of the people they are trying to reach.
- **Prayer!**

We call this a “reach strategy,” but it’s really a strategy to grow the number of new people connecting to your church and, hopefully, to faith.

If you are considering multisite expansion in the future, you need to find a reach strategy that will help you experience growth BEFORE you consider launching your next location.

Listen to the full episode on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or at theunstuckgroup.com/episode326.

Special Thanks to Our Sponsor for This Episode:



You may think you know Ministry Brands, the parent company of industry-leading brands such as ShelbyNext, FellowshipOne, and easyTithe. But wait until you hear about their brand new flagship solution, Ministry Brands Amplify: a cutting-edge all-in-one Church Ops solution helping empower healthy churches, connect, engage, and grow their Ministry while boosting member engagement, allowing church staff and volunteers to focus on their calling.

Empower your Ministry today with this all-in-one Giving, People, Streaming, App Builder, and Website solution. Learn more at ministrybrands.com/unstuckgroup.