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WEB EVANGELISM BULLETIN: July 2018 - final issue

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Web Evangelism Bulletin (guide@web-evangelism.com) To: you Details

W.E.B Issue 243 July 2018

::: WEB EVANGELISM BULLETIN :::

::: news, resources, help on all things digital ministry ... from Internet Evangelism Day :::

Contents:

Jesus.net takes on Internet Evangelism Day | Thank you | Summarizing digital evangelism in 27 lines of code | Free resources you can grab now | How Internet Evangelism Day started | Top evangelistic, video, training and discipleship resource links

First, I want to thank you for being a reader of *Web Evangelism Bulletin*. And secondly, I must apologise that you have not received one for three years. Here's a bit of my story, and also exciting news of what is happening in August.

In 2013, my father had a stroke, and my brother and I alternated in providing care for him in his own house. We were both able to continue, to a considerable extent, working there during the day, as we both had digital computer-mediated jobs. So I was able to continue producing the *Bulletin*, updating the Internet Evangelism Day website, blogging, writing, and trying to advocate options and strategies for digital evangelism. But as you will know, caring responsibilities, which most of us need to do at least once in our lives, are draining. By the beginning of 2015, I couldn't easily continue with the *Bulletin*, though did manage a couple, and carried on blogging for a bit longer. Later in the year came both my father's peaceful death and homecall, and after another six months my own retirement from *SOON Ministries*, where digital evangelism advocacy had been a major part of my role.

I had always thought that digital advocacy would be something I could get back into on retirement, and at least continue at some level. However, realistically I now realise that is not possible. To effectively write, network, update the website, keep up to date with developments and research, maintain links with friends, collaborators, and everything else involved, means essentially, continuing to have a fulltime job. In other words, not actually retiring at all. So I have been really unable to return to it, apart from occasional posting of interesting resources to [my Twitter account](#) and Facebook, plus the automated [Paper.li page Digital Evangelism Resources](#) which scoops up related news based on hashtags. So, sadly, the Internet Evangelism Day pages remained online but slowly going out of date, and there were no more annual focus days promoted after 2014.

And so things rested there uncomfortably until a few weeks ago, when the Jesus.net team made contact. You are probably aware of the umbrella Jesus.net ministry, which in collaboration with a [range of ministry partners around the world](#), maintains outreach websites in an amazing 33 languages. They had been looking at ways to increase the profile of their ministry to the Christian public. One part of their plan was to hold an annual focus day to increase awareness. Then one of their team pointed out that such a thing had indeed existed in the past! So they made contact.

I am very happy to tell you that the Jesus.net team will be using the annual Internet Evangelism Day concept, and from the beginning of August will take over the website, and relaunch it, using:

- [InternetEvangelismDay.com](#)
- [Facebook.com/internetevangelismday](#)

They will of course be developing entirely new webpages. What a wonderful outcome in God's timing and providence. Jesus.net is a world-changing global international network of more than 70 Christian organizations and ministries who are engaged in evangelism and discipleship on the internet.

Here's what the team says:

"We want to make the Gospel freely accessible on the internet for every single person in the world. And we see the impact on our websites. Every few seconds someone in the world decides that he or she wants to know Jesus. It is our dream that people keep on growing in their faith. Keep on reading the new website and newsletter for more information about our network and how to become part of it.

The possibilities of the Internet are limitless, and you are part of it. Internet Evangelism Day is creating global awareness about the impact of God's love through the Internet. Whether we talk about social media, websites or apps: you and I are present online. Through this annual event, we want to equip Christians and churches to optimize their online presence. We provide tools and training for this."

How does this affect you?

1. This is the final email newsletter I will send to you, after editing it for 21 years. (Anyone remember the first few, in 1997?)
2. Jesus.net will write to you shortly asking if you wish to continue receiving this newsletter, relaunched by them. You will **not** be automatically subscribed, and if you do nothing, that will be their last contact with you. This issue of the Bulletin, and their follow-on email, will follow GDPR guidelines, and after these two communications, your email address will be completely deleted and not used in any other way, unless you opt back in. I warmly encourage you to be part of their network, and also to follow them on the [Facebook page](#). They will doubtless be using the website and newsletter to recruit volunteer followup team members, to work at home advising inquirers to the websites, a very fulfilling and vital ministry.
3. My email addresses: guide@web-evangelism.com and office@internetevangelismday.com will **cease to operate**. Please amend any contact list that includes either of them. If you wish to write to me, please use tony@soon.org which is also the reply address which will appear by default if you just hit 'reply' to this message.

Thank you for the music!

Now is the time to say a very big thank you for all your encouragement, fellowship, ideas and news over the years. The last 24-plus years have seen the rise of digital media from its beginnings as a hobby for Western techies, to a worldwide communication medium of unprecedented reach. The advent of relatively cheap smartphones has placed instant worldwide connectivity in the hands of a remarkable proportion of Majority World residents. This revolution has been as impactful as the invention of the printing press (by both the Chinese and Gutenberg), with worldwide adoption far faster, and end-user costs far lower.

Despite years of advocacy by many people such as myself, we all agree it is still true that the worldwide church very often does not grasp the potential of digital tools, and is not fully aware of strategies to use them. So there do remain huge opportunities to inform and explain. More than half the world's population are now online. Do check the [amazing latest figures](#) from Internet World Stats.

Can it be summarized?

I did recently try to put the elements I believe we still need in digital evangelism into a very short form - as whimsical faux computer coding, so please don't be put off by it. You don't need to understand code to understand the strategies embedded in it! I was not much of a coder, could just handle some 'PHP' (a language that operates a great many websites). All any coding does, is to say, "if this applies, then do that (or don't do that)", with each block of instruction terminated in colon. So here it is:

```
<need digital-evangelists (  
'writing' = jargon-free;  
'language-structure' = simple;  
'paragraphs' = short;  
'enticing headlines and subheads' = use;  
'tone' = outsider-friendly;  
'target' = prioritize non-seekers;  
'condemnation' = off;  
'love' = on;  
'preachiness' = off;  
'churchiness' = off;  
'two-way conversation' = enable;
```

'cultural-sensitivity' = high;
'contextualization' = high;
'storytelling-mode' = on;
'empathy' = high;
'popular-culture-parallels' = use;
'felt-needs' = understand and start with;
'sense-of-entitlement' = off;
'politics' = off;
'humor' = use;
'social-media interaction' = use;
'languages' = multiple;
'location' = worldwide;
'video-shorts' = use frequently';
'platform-optimization' = mobile,tablet,pc;
) /need>

That pretty much distills all I've tried to say over the years, so I leave it with you. Feel free to reproduce it in any way you wish. And please re-use any of our existing pages - see next item.

Free pages for you, including church website self-assessment scorer

Jesus.net will not directly be using any of the pages currently in the [Internet Evangelism Day site](#). You are completely free to use, republish, or adapt any of the old pages which will remain visible there until the end of July. After that, you should be able to track them down at the Internet Archive. Some of the archived dates seem to hold more pages than others. [This one](#) appears quite comprehensive. Please pass this offer on to anyone else who might be interested.

One concept I'd particularly mention - the church website scoring page at www.ieday.net/design

or after July at [this archive URL](#) which still demonstrates the concept although not fully functional. Although there is much I would change in it now, you can see how it enables a church to self-assess their website, and make improvements in it. It's been coded with PHP and javascript, but is not incredibly complex.

If any ministry, involved in encouraging churches to build more effective websites, wishes to use the concept, please take it. And if you want to see the coding, please contact me.

There are other pages I'd humbly feel are not time-sensitive and therefore still relevant. Here are the Internet Archive direct links (note, the Archive does run **very** slowly - be patient):

[Does your church have a digital advocate](#)

[A tale of two golf clubs - short parable story](#)

[Desperately seeking lodgers](#) - another short parable relating to church websites

[A range of strategy pages](#) I called 'the communication channel', including vital concepts such as The Gray Matrix, meeting needs, research studies, humor, drama, the Bridge Strategy, parables, redemptive embedded meanings, using popular culture, writing advice (revision tips, headlines, a free style guide) and much more, all accessible from that archived link.

Please do tell me, just for my encouragement, if you do re-use any of the pages. Even a whole block of the communication pages would be great to see back online as an integrated set.

The back story of Internet Evangelism Day

If you've read this far, you might like a bit of the back story on Internet Evangelism Day and its context.

By 1996, the Internet was becoming mainstream in the West, and Christians were starting to wake up to this new medium. Wheaton, the Billy Graham organisation, the new digital Gospelcom team, CCCI and many others, were beginning to think about the way forward. (Dr Graham himself was an early advocate.) This was inevitably, of course, mainly in USA, which had both the advantage of large teams with the resources and critical mass to utilize the new medium, and benefited from the massive bump-start to internet growth that free local phonecalls provided.

Those who were not online in the 90s might be amazed to know that internet users had to make a specific dialup connection to their internet provider, through their phoneline, any time they wanted to go online. The internet providers offered local phone numbers in every location. Users needed a box of electronic tricks called a modem, which cost as much as a budget laptop now, to do the dialling. While you were connected to the web, you could not use your phone! Because USA for many years already had free local phonecalls, internet usage soared.

So these teams got together for an Internet Evangelism Consultation (as they named it), to discuss the way forward. Out of this grew the Internet Evangelism Coalition (IEC) with an annual conference and newsletter. The

IEC facilitated and encouraged specific projects under its umbrella, both in direct outreach websites, a strategy email discussion forum, and online training.

I'd already been involved in writing and advocating for digital evangelism opportunities, including this newsletter from 1997. In that email discussion group, we were considering the need to help the wider worldwide church understand these options, and my friend Anders Bjorvand Torvill suggested having an annual focus day, a concept that many Christian and secular groups have long used to increase awareness. It somehow fell to me to work up the proposal in detail, and take it to the IEC. And yes, then I was asked to implement it too. So out of that grew the Internet Evangelism Day website, as both a year-round resource guide and an annual focus day at the end of April or beginning of May. The first IE Day was 2005, and there were nine more to come. I was also privileged to speak at conferences in Australia, Europe and USA, and meet many wonderful key people involved in a big range of ministries. Heartfelt thanks are due to all those I met, the encouragement they gave, the things I learned from them, and the hospitality.

Resources you may need

Here's my final roundup of links that may help you. And a number of them happen to be partner ministries of Jesus.net! I am sure there are other good related resources I have missed - sorry. Please tell me of any that should be on this list.

More free articles

Rusty Wright produces outsider-friendly articles on current topics and issues, films, and much more. These are free for you to syndicate into church websites, blogs, online newsletters, or print media. Some are also available in a range of European languages, plus Chinese. Access them at RustyWright.com

Church use of digital media

- [Steve Fogg](#) - advice on using social communications
- [MinistryTech](#) - free newsletter on a range of topics
- [Centre for Church Communications](#) - many resources, ideas, free newsletter
- [Trinity Digital Media](#) - free newsletter, advice on church projection strategies and more
- [Outreach Magazine](#) - print magazine and free email newsletter
- [Effective Church Communications](#) - free newsletter, covers all aspects of how a church communicates, free print templates, additional useful material on pay subscription
- [Church Tech Today](#) - free newsletter, many downloadable resources
- [Christianity Today](#) offers a wide range of free newsletters for church leaders, obviously primarily in a US context.

Mobile

Mobile phones, especially for the Majority World, are a key opportunity. And there are now hundreds of different language Bibles available free as the [YouVersion phone app](#) (or read on pc). Videos are easy to watch. The [Mobile Ministry Forum](#) provides resources, ideas, and training in many aspects of digital ministry for mobile phones, including video shorts and storytelling.

Training days around the world

[Indigitous](#) aims to train Christians in digital outreach and ministry, often in Africa, Asia or South America with training days and other resources. Sign up for their free email newsletter, and also get additional information and news from their [Facebook page](#).

Storytelling - the forgotten key

It is still widely unappreciated that stories can communicate far better than abstract information push, and be remembered. I can still remember stories from 40 years ago. Can you remember the sermon from two weeks ago? Whatever, whenever, you want to communicate, embed it in stories. [Visual Story Network](#) is a vital resource to learn more - sign up to their newsletter. Learn from secular master storytellers too, such as [Sean Buvala](#). A Google search will give you a [great range of further resources](#). If you only have time for one take-away from this newsletter, making it storytelling. Yes, really.

Short videos and full-length films

- Short videos in several languages to watch and share online on Facebook, Twitter, etc: yesheis.com | globalshortfilmnetwork.com

- God: New Evidence. Short apologetics videos in several languages explain reasons to believe, including explanations of science, and explain Christian faith: focus.org.uk
- More films online:
 - JESUS Film in 100s of languages: jesusfilm.org (also available as smartphone app)
 - Films and animations in Asian languages: indigitube.tv
 - Kairos Media have 'channels' on Vimeo with films dubbed into different Asian languages. Go to vimeo.com/channels/ and then add after 'channels/' the language to watch. These are the languages available - write only one, in lower-case letters: tajik shugni uzbek russianvideos kazakh urduvideos turkmen turkishvideos kyrgyz So, for example, to watch in Urdu, you would write vimeo.com/channels/urduvideos in your web browser.
 - Sabeel Media have a growing range of [short and longer videos on their YouTube channel](#), in English, Arabic, Urdu and other languages.
- Welcome Africans: offers audios, films, and other links in English, French and 13 West African languages: bienvenueafricains.com/en
- Audio MP3 recordings - in 6000 languages, about the good news of Jesus: globalrecordings.net/en/download

Help for your community - particularly for Majority World

- Footsteps Magazine and other resources. Ideas to help your community, from the UK Christian NGO Tearfund, in English, French, Spanish & Portuguese: tilz.tearfund.org
- Stop human trafficking: stopthetraffik.org | stoptraffickingofpeople.org
- End sexual violence: tinyurl.com/najemly | Stop sexual violence: [We will speak out](#) | Ending violence against women: restoredrelationships.org
- Recovery and healing from sexual abuse and rape: Josephine's story (from Cote d'Ivoire): newchristian.org.uk/josephine.html | Carrie's story: tinyurl.com/carries-story | God's healing after rape: tinyurl.com/rape-recovery
- Free ebooks in English, French, Swahili including on the need to end FGM and sexual violence: tinyurl.com/tilz-books
- [Other resources](#) particularly appropriate for the Majority World.

So thanks again. It has been a great ride! Do stay in touch on [Twitter](#).

Be blessed

Tony

This is the last Bulletin you will receive from me, so unsubscription is not really necessary. You will soon receive a single invitation from Jesus.net by email, but then unless you opt in, you will receive nothing more, and all records about you will be deleted. However, if you really wish to unsubscribe now for any reason (please do it by the end of Saturday 21 July), note that this means you will not receive the Jesus.net invitation. To unsubscribe now, just send an empty email from your subscribed address to: bulletin-unsubscribe@lists.web-evangelism.com

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Keep as New

Flag Message

Create a Filter

Print Message

View Message Source

Move to:

Old E-mail

Spam

Recently Deleted

Saved E-mail

Saved Chats

New Folder