

5 Metrics for Stewardship Ministry Success

As a giving analytics company, we often get asked the question, “What should I be measuring in my stewardship ministry?” Unfortunately, there’s no simple answer. While giving does represent a dimension of stewardship, measuring the ministry’s impact should extend beyond this dollar metric. For example, are your givers serving in your church, volunteering in your community, and using their talents to make a difference? Furthermore, as individuals mature in their Christian faith there should be an external transformation in how they approach their role as a steward.

MortarStone uses a powerful metric-based system to track giving. The scope of these metrics take into consideration a “win” as defined through givers (*people*) and giving (*dollars*). Giving is the fuel that funds the ministry. We’ve yet to engage with a church whose mission is not impacted by giving, or lack thereof. In other words, giving fuels the ministry so it’s essential for the church to understand the micro (*i.e. households*) and macro (*i.e. total giving to the church*) forces at work. ***In order for the church to better understand these trends, every church leader and stewardship pastor should know and track the following five (5) metrics:***

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR #1

What is the % of Giving Units to total givers in your church, and are your Giving Units growing proportionately with your annual giving?

GIVING UNITS

The foundation of all church giving is built upon its *Giving Units*. A *Giving Unit* is defined as those families that give \$200 or more per year to the general fund. *Giving Units* may also choose to give to designated ministries or programs, yet they at least give \$200 or more toward “keeping the lights on.”

Perhaps your asking yourself, “Why is MortarStone calling attention to these type of givers”? Simple, through our metric-based software we have determined that for every \$100 of giving to the hundreds of churches we support, \$98 comes from *Giving Units*. In other words, 98% of total ministry funding comes from these households.

While these households provide the fuel to expand His Kingdom through their generosity, our numbers suggest they represent a minority of your total givers. In analyzing the hundreds of churches who rely on MortarStone to track their giving data, we found that for every 100 givers in a church, only 43 of them are Giving Units, or 43%.



DID YOU KNOW?

For every \$1,000,000 dollars in giving most churches will average 719 givers and 317 ***Giving Units***.

GIVING UNIT DISTRIBUTION

You don't have to be a statistician to understand the Pareto Principal, more commonly referred to as the 80/20 rule (*i.e. 80% of your giving comes from 20% of your givers*). So why is this principal important? For starters, knowing how financially dependent your church is on a handful of families is the first step toward assessing the stability of your annual giving. Taken one step further, if a handful of givers become disenfranchised or suffers from a financial shock, what happens to the overall funding of your ministry?

Most likely, a sharp budget deficit followed by a special end of the year appeal to catch-up on your bills. Hence, knowing what portion of funding comes from the top 1%, 10%, 20% and 50% of your *Giving Units* will help you understand your funding dependency.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR #2

What is your financial dependency of your Giving Units by percentile?



Approximately 50% of your *Giving Units* give 90% of the ministry funding. Therein lies opportunity for a stewardship ministry!

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR #3

What is the retention and growth rates of your new givers, and what % of them are increasing their giving in the subsequent year?

NEW GIVERS

New Givers as a group are key to every ministry: they are the next generation of leaders in training. They are also the most at-risk group of your giving constituency base. Every church will eventually lose people (*i.e. a back door giver*), so connecting and shepherding *New Givers* is vital to healthy growth. The report card for a church's "first impressions" ministry can be summed up within three numbers – the growth, retention and increases in giving.

GIVING UNIT HEALTH

We talked about *Giving Units* and the importance they serve in fueling the ministry. Accordingly, what is the health of these *Giving Units*? How connected are they to the church, and what are you doing to surface pastoral opportunities to engage with them?

Those increasing their giving need to be celebrated for their faithfulness. Likewise, those that are decreasing should be reached via a pastoral connection.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR #4

What portion of Giving Units are upgrading and downgrading in their giving, and how do these percentages vary within giving segments, or gift bands (e.g., \$10,000 or more per year)?

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR #5

What is the annual growth rate of your financial leaders and what % of them are increasing their giving in the subsequent year?

FINANCIAL LEADERS

No stewardship ministry plan is complete without having intentional strategies for discipleship of both existing and emerging financial leaders. In MortarStone, the default for this segment is annual giving of \$10,000 or more.

In most churches, *Financial Leaders* are under-served. As a group they are very committed to the mission but rarely receive a personal visit that does not involve a financial ask. Developing relationships with these households requires intentionality on behalf of senior leadership. Casting vision and providing ministry progress reports to *Giving Units* is key to making sure there is long-term buy-in to the ministry.



Financial Leaders are defined as households that give \$10,000 or more per year to the church. In analyzing the hundreds of churches using MortarStone, we estimate that Financial Leaders will fund 41% of your annual general fund through their generosity. In addition, these households give on average \$21,000 per year to the ministry.

To sum it up, everything we have comes from God and belongs to God. Our life, family, money, time, talents...everything. We are stewards of what God has given us. He owns it; we use it. In general, Christians would agree that we are stewards, which begets the question: Do we live with gratitude for His grace or do we exhibit greed for our own gain?

Did you know facts were developed from a comprehensive review of ~\$4.5 billion dollars of giving over the last three years from ~1 million families. Every ministry is uniquely resourced and is encouraged to benchmark internally rather than to their peers.

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