

Church members are also using Twitter, a social networking Web site used to send brief messages (“tweets”) via the Internet, to share the gospel. Most notably, general conference was Twitter’s top trend in April 2009,² meaning general conference was mentioned in more tweets than any other subject.

The Church has also established a presence on YouTube, a popular video posting Web site, which has generated a positive reaction from members and nonmembers alike. Every Mormon Messages video, like all others

posted to YouTube, can be easily posted on a blog or shared via e-mail, Facebook, or Twitter.

The Internet provides a way for Church members to reach people in ways unimaginable a generation ago, and as technologies improve, so will Church members’ ability to share the gospel. ■

NOTES

1. M. Russell Ballard, “Sharing the Gospel Using the Internet,” *Liahona*, June 2008, N1.
2. “Top Twitter trend: LDS General Conference,” Mary Richards, *ksl.com*, April 6, 2009. <http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&sid=6074101>.

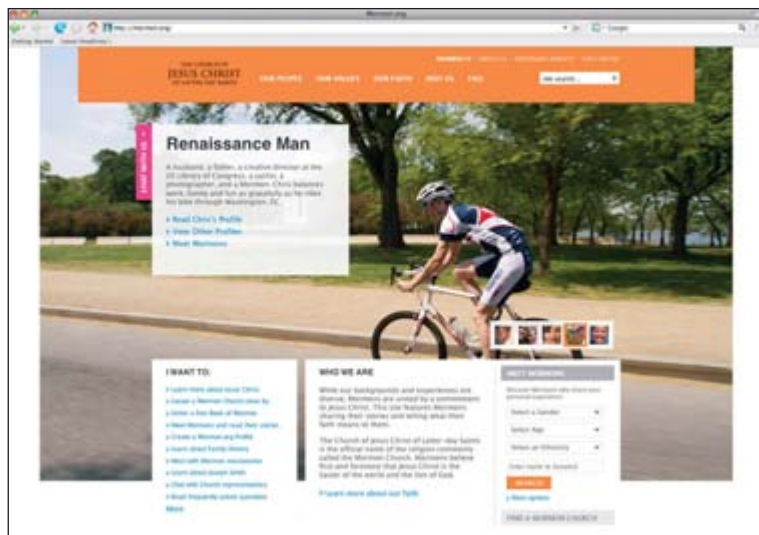
Mormon.org Redesign Connects Members and Investigators

Since its launch in 2001, Mormon.org has helped people get straightforward, honest answers to their questions about the Church. Those answers came primarily from Church headquarters.

Mormon.org’s most recent update—including a complete redesign—still offers plenty of answers and a way to contact missionaries. But now, thanks to a new online profile feature, many answers come directly from Church members around the world.

Visitors to the site will be able to sort thousands of member profiles by gender, age, ethnicity, religious background, and other qualifiers to find Church members who are similar to themselves. Once on a profile page, users can read testimonies, ask further questions, and in some cases, connect with

The redesigned Mormon.org makes an effort to connect investigators with members of the Church.



Church members on social networking Web sites. This peer-to-peer contact allows investigators to get a non-authoritative viewpoint of the Church.

“When people search the Internet for information, they give more credence to the opinions of their peers than to what an organization says about itself, especially when it

comes to organized religion,” said Elder Richard G. Hinckley, Executive Director of the Missionary Department. “That is why member profiles are such a valuable part of the new Mormon.org.”

The new Mormon.org is divided into four major areas, each focused on teaching about a certain aspect of the Church:

Our People, Our Values, Our Faith, and Frequently Asked Questions.

Our People

This section contains the member profiles, allowing investigators to learn more about the gospel by “meeting” those who have gained testimonies of the restored gospel.

“The one thing that helps people get past misconceptions about the Church is if they’ve had the opportunity to know a Mormon,” said Ron Wilson, manager of Internet and marketing for the Missionary Department. “They realize the negative things they might be hearing about the Church don’t line up with the lives their Mormon friends are living.”

Our Values

The Our Values section teaches what members do as a result of their beliefs. It explains some of the Church’s priorities, including humanitarian aid, families, education, service, and family history. This section will help investigators connect Church doctrine with the way members live their lives.

Our Faith

The Our Faith section explains fundamental doctrines of the Church. Everything in this section of the site can answer the question, “What do Mormons believe?” This section also provides context for other areas of the site. Visitors to the site can learn about our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, the Restoration of the gospel, Joseph Smith, the plan of salvation, the Book of Mormon, and other topics.

Frequently Asked Questions

Church members create the content for this section by answering questions on their personal profiles. They answer FAQs in their own words, helping visitors to learn about the Church from its members. ■

New Building Design Saves Energy, Resources

Think of the new meetinghouse in Farmington, Utah, USA—complete with solar panels and wider hallways—as a test drive.

The building, along with four others in Utah and Nevada, is part of a new pilot program that will influence future building designs. They were built to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification requirements, designed to reduce water use, waste, and pollution. The solar panels will prevent two million pounds of carbon dioxide pollution over the next 25 years, and the other buildings have special light-colored roofs that will reduce cooling costs.

In addition, the Church is saving money.

“These projects are both environmentally friendly and cost-efficient,” said Jared Doxey, director of the Church’s Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Division. “It makes sense to build them this way.”

But wise construction practices are nothing new for the Church. Designs for existing meetinghouses already met 75 percent of LEED certification requirements.

Dozens of other improvements are also making their debut—from larger classrooms to a fan-shaped chapel that holds more people but sits them closer to the pulpit.

The new buildings also have Webcasting capabilities so meetings can be broadcast via the Internet without a satellite dish. In fact, Webcasting technology could replace satellite dishes altogether.

“Webcasting expands the Brethren’s reach,” Brother Doxey said. “They can deliver messages in one place and be heard in any meetinghouse with a broadband Internet connection.” ■