Access ACS Launch Tips

If your organization is new to Access ACS, here are some ways to get your members and attendees on board.

Update activities, classes, and groups

Before launching, make sure your activities, classes, and small groups are up to date. For example, if you're no longer using a roster, be sure to drop everyone from it. If a small group hasn't met in several years, you can delete it. Otherwise, people may log into Access ACS for the first time and find they are in groups they've forgotten about.

Check permissions

Also, make sure all user profile permissions are set correctly. Don't lock down too many features from your members. Otherwise, it may appear that first-time users can't do much with Access ACS, which makes them less likely to use it.

Get e-mail addresses

If your church owns the ACS Attendance module, you can modify the attendance marking sheet to include columns for home and business email addresses.

Ask Sunday School teachers or class secretaries to help obtain email addresses from those who do not have one on file or whose email address may have changed. Each week, as the marking sheets are turned in, the person responsible for entering attendance can include email addresses that have been added or modified. Use these columns on the marking sheet for the entire period.

It's a good practice to modify the marking sheets once a quarter for members to make sure that the church has valid email addresses.

Different Access ACS features interest different groups within your congregation. Be sure each group knows how Access ACS features can help them stay connected.

Staff and Small Group Leadership – First, make sure your staff and leadership team are on board. They may not have had access to their members' information before, so Access ACS and Church Life could be incredible to them. Access ACS lets them mark attendance, manage rosters, email or text group members, complete outreach follow ups, update information on group members, and schedule and recruit volunteers.

Be sure the group leaders understand the need for Access ACS and aren't just going along for the ride. Your group leaders will be the cheerleaders for Access ACS, both for their small group members as well as the rest of the congregation.

It's a good idea to have a training session for your staff and leadership, since they will pass their Access ACS knowledge on to their small group members. You could also create a checklist of tasks for them to do when they first log into Access ACS. Staff and leadership team members should understand how to update personal information, send an email to the group, complete a connection, and mark attendance.

Active Members – You'll need to actively market Access ACS to your members so they understand why they should be on board and use it.

The tasks active members complete in Access ACS are a bit different than leaders. Active members will register for events, obtain tax statements, find available small groups, and give electronically.

Event Registration and Online Giving should be set up well before your launch. When members log in for the first time and see they can register for events or give, they will be more likely to engage with Access ACS.

To get people in your church to start using Access ACS, create an Access ACS launch team.

Each launch point in Access ACS can benefit from a launch team to make that launch a success. Launch team members can demonstrate how to sign in and use Access ACS at committee meetings, small group meetings, or other types of activities.

The launch team can get involved with the church, and church's members and attendees can learn how to go online and use Access ACS.

To give your members easy access to Access ACS, create a member sign in page on your church's website. The Web Links in the Admin area contain a link your members can use to sign in.

To access your member sign in link

1. Point to **Admin**, then click **Options**.
2. Click the **Web Links** tab.
3. On the **General** tab, under **Member Sign In Link**, copy the URL. You can place this URL on your website or email it to members.

At the end of the year, upload your contribution tax statements online.

Create an instructional document (with screenshots) that explains exactly how they sign up and log in to get to the tax statement. You can email this document to your members or place a few around the church so members and attendees can pick up the instructions.

Bulletin inserts are an effective way to gather e-mail addresses and help update address and phone information.

Use a bulletin insert during your Access ACS launch period. Recommend that members complete a form and place it in the offering plate during the service. Ushers can quickly gather the forms and submit them to the church office.

Using inserts for the entire promotion period should reach about 75-80% of your membership.

If you also use ACS Connections, you can track and send prayer requests.

Open the ACS Connections module and click **Define Lists**. Add an outward contact type called Prayer Request. You can also set up prayer teams and assign the appropriate people to each team. Make sure you remember to upload to Access ACS so that information displays on the Access ACS pages.

As you receive prayer requests, you can enter them into Access ACS so that the prayer teams can see who they should pray for.

To enter prayer requests in Access ACS

1. Sign in to Access ACS and find the record of the person requesting the prayer.
2. At the top of the record, click **Connections**.
3. At the top of the Connections page, click **Assign New Connection**.
4. Select **Outreach Connection** and click **Next**.
5. On the Assign Outreach Connection page, choose the person or prayer team responsible for completing this prayer request and click **Next**.
6. Select and enter appropriate information. Make sure you select **Prayer Request** in the **Description** drop-down list. Click **Next**.
7. Review your selections and click **Submit**.
8. On the **Admin** tab, click **Change Requests**.
9. To upload your prayer request, select the outreach connection you created and click **Apply Change Request**.

Launching Access ACS is not a one-time event. You'll need to continuously maintain Access ACS to give leaders and members reasons to keep using the tool.

Add new events to sign up for, new groups, use connections, and make sure your group leaders mark attendance in Access ACS.

Related Topics

Getting Started
Sign into Access ACS
Administrator Guide