



Indianapolis Center for Congregations

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Resources for: Finding Your Niche

Our mission is to assist Greater Indianapolis Area congregations in finding and using the very best resources available to address the practical challenges they face. This resource list was developed to supplement the *Finding Your Niche* workshop sponsored by the Center and led by Robert Perry, a Southern Baptist pastor and denominational leader. Perry recommends the following resources:

Gallup, George Jr. and D. Michael Lindsay. *The Gallup Guide: Reality Check for 21st Century Churches*. Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2002.

This book, written by one of the acknowledged experts in the field of research along with a young associate, provides excellent guidance for doing religious research. The book covers practical skills such as the design of questionnaires, the proper use of data gathering methodologies and ways of analyzing research findings.

Perry, Robert L. *Find a Niche and Scratch It: Marketing Your Congregation*. Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 2003.

Perry lays out the thesis that churches should make better use of the principles of marketing, especially the desirability of "niche" marketing. The book explains a variety of research approaches to help churches identify potential niche groups in their communities and design ministries to reach them. The author provides a step-by-step process which church leaders might adapt and utilize to help congregations develop strategies for growth.

Shawchuck, Norman, et. al. *Marketing for Congregations: Choosing to Serve People More Effectively*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992.

This book contains a wealth of information about the field of marketing. The learnings and principles of the secular discipline are applied carefully and thoroughly to congregational life. Market "segmentation" is discussed at length, and this concept is consistent with the identification and targeting of niche groups for outreach and ministry.

Visit the Congregational Resource Guide website, www.congregationalresources.org, to find more resources on this and many other topics of interest to congregations.