

Developing a GTEH Strategic Roadmap

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When traveling to a destination there are important steps in preparation and implementation that are necessary to arrive. Sometimes plans go exactly as designed but often there is a need for flexibility to adjust along the way. The most frustrating journey is one that is driven solely by the calendar/clock and not by the excitement of the journey and the joy of the final destination.

As your association considers and plans for participation in the Gospel to Every Home initiative, I want you to consider this a journey not just a project. Where would you hope that the churches of your association arrive by engaging with the GTEH? What do you prayerfully desire to see happen in your communities because of the GTEH effort?

Over the next few minutes we want to help you think through some important steps in developing a Strategic Roadmap for how your association will be a part of the GTEH effort. First, let's think a little about the importance of planning and the Biblical basis for doing so.

The Bible Speaks on Planning

The wisdom of the ages teaches us to plan. Take a look at the book of Proverbs and you quickly see the priority of planning in God's economy.

11:14 With good counselors, there is safety.

13:16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge, but a fool flaunts his folly.

13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick; but when dreams come true at last, there is life and joy.

15:22 Plans go wrong with too few counselors; many counselors bring success.

16:1 We can make our plans, but the final outcome is in God's hands.

16:9 The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.

22:3 A prudent man foresees the difficulties ahead and prepares for them; the simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences.

24:3-4 Any enterprise is built by wise planning, becomes strong through common sense, and profits wonderfully by keeping abreast of the facts.

24:6 There is safety in many counselors.

27:23 Watch your business interests closely. Know the state of your flocks and your herds.

Most of you have done a study in the book of Nehemiah and recognize the principles of leadership and planning found there. We are wholly dependent on God's provision in any effort, but He also expects us to be wise, discerning and to plan intelligently.

Nehemiah planned before going to Jerusalem and while he was there.

Neh. 1:4; 2:4 – fasted and prayed.

Neh. 2:5-8 – he had a plan ready for when the king asked him.

Neh. 4:16-18 – with the vision in front, he adjusted the plan when necessary.

Finally, in Luke 14:27-32, Jesus tells us that being a disciple means counting the cost and as an example testifies that planning is wise and that we should count the cost as a wise builder and wise king, so that we can proceed clearly.

So, let us consider some questions on how to begin our GTEH journey with a well thought out Strategic Roadmap.

Why Do We Need a Roadmap?

A. A Roadmap guides us into the preferred future.

When we don't plan for the preferred future, we can end up having everything in place, but being neither functional nor effective.

B. A Roadmap is necessary for the journey to be clear and productive.

A solid Roadmap will support clarity and vitality among your churches and your communities. GTEH should support and enhance our association's overall vision for evangelistic engagement in your community. Jumping in a "vehicle" and driving recklessly to and fro with no consideration for where you are heading or where you are, will not bring about a God honoring end.

C. A Roadmap is necessary for accomplishing the tasks God has called you to do.

God did not design the universe in a piecemeal fashion; He designed it with the completed purpose in mind. Each day He added a new part, but the complete design was in His mind before the beginning.

Your Association's GTEH Roadmap should lay out the complete concept of how what exactly you hope to accomplish in this effort (it has to be more than just put door hangers on doors), what information will be shared with churches, what resources will be necessary, how the elements of the strategy will be utilized in your given context,

What is a Strategic Roadmap and what does it accomplish?

A. It is an overview of the association's plan for enlisting and equipping churches to engage their communities with the Gospel message, so that, saturation might occur to the greatest extent possible. It must answer the question of how the effort will be coordinated for maximum reach and impact across the community?

B. It defines the relationships between your context, the goal, the resources, and the process.

Within your context, what are the relationships between the component strategies, the people resources, physical resources, and the ability to accomplish steps necessary to put all of those aspects to the best use. None of these should function as separate or as ends in themselves. They exist as dynamically related parts of the associational GTEH roadmap.

C. It guides the connectivity of the churches and the flow of resources towards the common goal of the associational GTEH effort.

To get a handle on this issue of flow, try to answer the following questions:

Why should a church in the association participate?

How will you explain the vision and goal of the GTEH initiative to your churches?

What is the first step for participation by a church?

What training will be provided?

How will churches request and receive needed resources from the association?

Why and how should churches report their results to the association?

What will be celebrated and how will the effort be transitioned to ongoing city-wide efforts?

D. It informs the measurable results of involvement for the association as a whole and your churches in particular.

Determining what a successful effort looks like ahead of time will help you to distinguish between just being busy and instead accomplishing the goal of engaging your community with the gospel. This will require a realistic assessment of your context, a determination of how many churches will actively participate, and what each of the strategic components of the initiative are meant to accomplish.

What are Characteristics of Effective Roadmap Markers?

A milepost is a marker of where you are on your journey. If I am driving to Ashland from Louisville along I-64, I will expect to see mile markers indicating my progress and direction.

- A. Consistent with vision (destination), strategic components (tasks), and resources available
- B. Realistic in terms of time projections and sequence
- C. A steady flow of relationship between roadmap markers (no gaps)
- D. Critical roadmap markers are limited in number
- E. Each critical marker has a due date (with flexibility) and person responsible assigned to it

How do we build our Association's GTEH Strategic Roadmap?

Step 1. Gather a GTEH Strategic Planning Team. This should be a team that represents the diversity of your association and churches and have representatives with different skills and giftings.

Step 2. Consider with your team the context of your association and churches. What unique aspects of your community will affect your journey to get the Gospel to Every Home? Different areas within your association may require different techniques for engagement.

Step 3. Brainstorm roadmap markers that need to be accomplished during your selected time frame. Record those regardless of how many you discover. Stay on the road, but mark steps that will help you know you are on track. Arrange your mileposts in a logical sequence. Continue adding mileposts until all gaps and/or missing tasks are included.

Step 4. Identify your *critical* roadmap markers—those that if not completed will most likely mean the ultimate goal for your association will not be met. Highlight these.

Step 5. Arrange your critical roadmap markers in a process-oriented sequence.

Step 6. Under each of your Critical Roadmap Markers, identify the tasks that must be completed (supporting mileposts).

Step 7. Project a realistic timeline to accomplish your Critical Roadmap Markers. Remember, these are time projections and are subject to change. Flexibility, and maybe more realistically fluidity, should be discussed and planned.

Step 8. Identify needed personnel, budget, and other resources to accomplish each task for your association's GTEH journey.