

07

Church website mistake 7 of 7

No one is watching the domain

Your domain (yourchurch.org) is your church's address on the internet. If it lapses, someone else can buy it, and sometimes someone does.

What it looks like

- ✗ The domain is registered to a former member, and renewal notices go to an inbox nobody reads
- ✗ Auto-renew is off, or the card on file has expired
- ✗ Your Google Business Profile is unclaimed, or shows old hours or an old phone number
- ✗ Your name, address, and phone number are written differently on the website, Google, Facebook, and directories

Why it matters

We look at a lot of church websites, and some of the domains no longer belong to the church. One now advertises a holiday rental. Another serves pages about industrial machinery in Thai. The churches had effectively vanished from the internet, and didn't know it.

Google is the other half. When someone searches "church near me," Google relies on your Business Profile and on your name, address, and phone number matching everywhere they appear.

Five-minute check

If you can't tick every box, start with the fixes on the next page.

- ☐ Do you know the date your domain renews?
- ☐ Is auto-renew on?
- ☐ Does the renewal email go to an inbox someone reads?
- ☐ Have you claimed your Google Business Profile?
- ☐ Are your name, address, and phone number identical on your website and Google?

How to fix it

- 01 Log in to your domain registrar. Confirm the domain is in the church's name, under a church email address, with auto-renew on and a current card.
- 02 If you can, renew for several years at once, and set a reminder a month before the renewal date.
- 03 Claim your Google Business Profile at business.google.com. Check the hours, phone, website, photos, and service times.
- 04 Write your name, address, and phone number one way, and use exactly that everywhere (see the list below).
- 05 Ask your web developer to add church schema markup, so search engines can read your name, address, and service times directly.

Where your church's details should match

Write your church's name, street address, and phone number exactly the same way in each of these places.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Your website footer | ☐ Apple Maps (Apple Business Connect) |
| ☐ Google Business Profile | ☐ Bing Places |
| ☐ Your Facebook page | ☐ Your denomination or association directory |

Want a second set of eyes on your church website?

Tell us about your church. We'll look at your current site and send back a free website plan, with no cost or commitment.

dfd.llc/church-website-development

All seven: 1. The homepage is a bulletin board · 2. Service times are hard to find · 3. Nothing for first-time guests · 4. It breaks on a phone · 5. Old events are still up · 6. Only one person can update it · **7. No one is watching the domain**