SEGMENT O52: URBAN AMBITION
Mission Impact...Focusing your heartburst for the people around you

Mainly Generation Y African-American singles and single families established in mid-market cities

Resource: Mosaic by Experian

General Spiritual Insight:

*Urban Ambition* is part of the Lifestyle Group O (*Singles and Starters*). Please refer to the description of Group O for the larger context of this segment’s potential relationship with the church.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Perspective:</th>
<th>&quot;Looking For Heroes of Faith&quot;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Behaviors:</td>
<td>High Energy, Contagious Enthusiasm, Online, Music Soundtrack in the Background</td>
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<td>Strong Impressions:</td>
<td><strong>Inclination &amp; Attitudes:</strong> Progressive, Sociable, Fulfillment</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Mood &amp; Values:</strong> High Drive for Affluence, High Pursuit of Personal Growth</td>
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Download resources for your mission field through [www.missioninsite.com](http://www.missioninsite.com).
Comments:

These young (under 35) African-American singles (and some single parents) are striking out on their own. Most have entry level, low paying jobs in retail and service; but over 20% are unemployed (the highest percentage of any lifestyle segment). They rent apartments in high-density neighborhoods on the urban fringe. They may be liberal or conservative, but have certain things in common.

They all have a lot of pride and want to get ahead. They’ll put duty and work ahead of good times, and are usually taking courses in colleges and technical schools to get ahead. They also like to be the life of the party, stand out in a crowd, and attract the opposite sex. If they aren’t working or studying, they are likely to hang out on the front steps, play team sports, or browse the clearance racks at the store.

Although they may be enjoying freedom from home, and may be rebelling against cultural expectation, people in this segment may connect with the church. Urban churches that connect with these people will not wait for them to show up, but go out to meet them. They may offer free dinners, and make indoor or outdoor sports areas available to them. These churches will need to pick up the tempo of worship. Use contemporary Christian Rock, Blues, or R&B. Preaching needs to be more topical and practical, and the refreshments need to be abundant enough to take home.

These churches often step up to be advocates for these younger adults. They are strong on crime prevention, and offer advice in personal finances, resume writing, dating, and parenting. They may offer inexpensive day care, organize food cooperatives, and or broker part time job opportunities.
Relevant Ministry Choices:

**Leadership**

**Compelling Issues:**
Carry a Smartphone with a wireless earpiece to respond to calls quickly. Check for texts and follow social media so that you can offer advice and encouragement, or follow the lives of younger adults. Keep a stack of business cards with a thought for the day or Bible verse, and mobile number and email.

**Hospitality**

**Compelling Issues:**
Gather contact information for instant messaging, and encourage them to connect with the social media network of the church.

**CEO, Mentor**

The pastor of this church is a rare blend of program manager and people person. He or she is ordained, and young enough to keep pace with these active younger adults. The denomination doesn’t matter too much, so long as the programs are relevant. The pastor spends a lot of time outside the office, visible wherever younger adults gather, or networking with social services, business leaders, and police and emergency agencies.

This pastor is an excellent administrator, and the church functions like a community center, with relevant programs going all week. The pastor needs to be able to raise money (obtain grants, motivate giving, and collaborate with other organizations). At the same time, this pastor spends a lot of time talking with individual younger adults ... befriending, advising, affirming, and supporting them in their struggle to get a head. This pastor is part authority figure and part role model, with an overall attitude of acceptance and optimism.

**Multiple Choices, Take Out**

People in this segment will always think about coming to church on Sunday morning, even though they may be inconsistent in attendance. If they can afford it, they may have had a late night with friends or a date; or they may have work that interferes with church; or they may just rebel against it. Receive them warmly with complete acceptance, and acknowledge their name and appearance.

These younger adults like to stand out in a crowd, so they are apt to linger outside the worship center until it fills up. Refreshments should be available before worship, and the pastor and other leaders should mingle among them and initiate conversation. Build relationship first; then later engage in more serious conversations.

Provide as many food and drink options as possible. Refreshments do not have to be fresh or fancy ... just abundant. Encourage them to linger 30-45 minutes after worship. Consider showing a video related to career development, job hunting, health care and prescription medicines, or any topic relevant to basic life skills for people starting out on their own. The pastor and lay leaders can again mingle and initiate conversations.
Relevant Ministry Choices:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Worship</th>
<th>Education</th>
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<td><strong>Inspirational, Coaching</strong></td>
<td><strong>Experiential or Curricular, Topical, Peer Group</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship should be upbeat, with more contemporary Christian Rock or</td>
<td>One of the first habits people in this segment lose when they go off on</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gospel music, and plenty of opportunity for interaction between</td>
<td>their own is the practice of Sunday morning Christian education. When they</td>
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<tr>
<td>leaders and participants. A blend of live performance and music video</td>
<td>were teenagers, some may only have connected with a church youth group ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>will ease the burden on volunteers, and provide a contemporary edge to</td>
<td>and now they do not even have that support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>worship. Worship is an opportunity to establish the spiritual</td>
<td>The best hope to involve them in a Sunday morning class is to offer classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>credibility of lay leaders, and help them build influential</td>
<td>based on specific topics of urgent interest that only demand short term</td>
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<td>relationships during the week with adult singles in this group.</td>
<td>commitments. People are more likely to commit to three or four sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage lay leaders to witness, read scripture, and lead prayers.</td>
<td>on a practical topic of Christian living than an ongoing Bible study class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>At this stage of life, many people in this segment will prefer</td>
<td>The teacher’s credibility needs to be supported by visibility in worship</td>
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<td>worship that is more topical and practical (in contrast to the more</td>
<td>leadership, and initiative in mingling with participants individually and</td>
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<td>didactic or motivational tradition with which they may have grown up).</td>
<td>through social media.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choose topics about Christian living at work, on the streets, at play;</td>
<td>Large gatherings and single events can also be effective. The event may</td>
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<td>in relationships with friends or the opposite sex. Topics might also</td>
<td>be on Sunday evening and have a strong recreational (e.g. sports) or</td>
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<tr>
<td>pertain to surviving personal crises, getting along with neighbors,</td>
<td>entertainment (e.g. concert) component ... in addition to some prayer.</td>
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<td>dealing with victimization, and any detail of the actual challenges</td>
<td>This increases opportunities to develop personal relationships or deepen</td>
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<tr>
<td>they may face this week. Topics should have more to do with tomorrow</td>
<td>friendships in a safe environment, doesn’t cost much if anything, and</td>
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<tr>
<td>than with the eternal ... but they should be grounded just as solidly</td>
<td>allows church leaders to again mingle and build trust with participants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>in scripture and the example of Jesus.</td>
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**Worship Compelling Issues:**
Follow up the message of the worship service with a “thought for the day” distributed hard copy as people leave (small card to carry in a pocket) or as a text message sent later than day to their cell phone.

**Education Compelling Issues:**
Christian education for people in this phase of life has more to do with credible Christian role models, than with information.
## Relevant Ministry Choices:

### Small Group

**Compelling Issues:**
Small groups for these people often have clear definitions for the duration of the group ... usually 3-6 weeks. There is also a method on-line or in-person to recap group discussion for those who inevitably miss a session.

### Outreach

**For Themselves:** Human Potential, Interpersonal Relationships

**For Others:** Survival, Quality of Life, Health, Recovery

People in this segment are experiencing one of the most significant transitions of their lives. They may feel lost, overwhelmed, lonely, and inadequate ... and cover up their insecurities by loud, boastful, or extreme behavior. They will often respond to any outreach ministry that helps them understand themselves and their situation better. They seek to explore their hidden potential, develop skills for living and working, and explore relationships with friends and potential marriage partners. They tend to be very materialistic, and need guidance to evaluate success in more than monetary ways.

People in this segment work hard, but they also have extra time on their hands to a degree that varies according to their work schedules and job security. They will volunteer for a good cause ... especially if volunteering involves special training that will serve them well in future careers and relationships. Training and accountability are the personal benefits and motivations for volunteering. They will often become involved in outreach ministries that help people get the basics for survival (food, housing, clothing, etc.); or which raise the standard of living in the neighborhood (crime prevention, fire safety, environmental cleanup, etc.); or which provide basic medical care (especially guidance to use over-the-counter medications).
Relevant Institutional Strategies:

Outreach

Compelling Issues:
Given the urban issues in the high density neighborhoods in which they live, there can be a need for addiction recovery ministries including small groups, healing worship services, and counseling.

Ecclesiastical or Utilitarian, Christendom, Modern

Urban Ambition is not picky about church architecture. They tend to gravitate to ecclesiastical-looking churches with arched doors and windows, colored glass, musty narthexes, traditional sanctuaries, and Christendom symbols because that is familiar and usually feels safe. But any building will do. They are concerned about personal safety and cleanliness, and expect good outdoor illumination, illuminated hallways and clean washrooms, reliable security, and working fire exits. As long as the masonry isn’t crumbling, the roof is leak proof, foundation is sound, and the stairs are safe they are “good to go”.

Many of these people can’t afford the latest technology (although many splurge for cell phones); they do appreciate internet access and special cable TV stations. If possible, the church will create computer room for monitored use by members and visitors that provides high speed access. People will use it to download music, research job and medical information, and check in with faraway friends.

Unified Budgets, Lifestyle Coaching

Urban Ambition includes people who are focused on material success, but who are currently in entry level, low paying, and often part time jobs. They have little savings and few investments, no equity, no insurance, and probably can’t afford a car. They frequently have no credit or bad credit, and primarily rely on debit transactions and cash. They are hard working and put duty before pleasure, but they are not particularly experienced or skilled in managing money. They tend to splurge on clothes, cell phones, and occasional entertainment magazines.

They are not disciplined about giving to the church, and probably don’t know what it really costs to run a church. Therefore, they tend not to participate in stewardship or fund raising campaigns, and only put a dollar or so in the offering plate. They will give generously to a particular mission project or urgent need that captures their attention. Churches need to understand that people in this segment will never “pay their own way” when it comes to supporting the church. The church blesses them with no or low expectations for financial return.
Relevant Institutional Strategies:

**Property and Technology**

**Compelling Issues:**
Consider building a lending library dedicated to recent resources related to career planning, personal relationships, parenting and infant care, nutrition, crime prevention, and basic home medicine.

**Stewardship/Financial Management**

**Compelling Issues:**
Churches often provide legal aid to help people in this segment protect themselves from landlords that gouge rent or employers that manipulate salaries.

Continued...

People in this segment will appreciate any programs that help them learn how to set priorities, manage money, build investments, and save for the future. This can also help them avoid debt (especially future high interest debt related to credit cards and loans) and learn to tithe. They are eager to learn how money works and how they can develop both a self-sufficient and generous lifestyle.

**Communication**

**Print, Gatherings, Phone**

People in this segment will use the internet, but often cannot afford hardware or high speed access. They will splurge for cell phones, particularly if they can get a deal on text messaging, but won’t be able to afford much digital time email and web surfing. The church can text and call them, but church websites are probably of little help.

These people will respond to print advertising, read print literature, and take home printed information about upcoming events and opportunities. Churches often have a lot of free literature (from Christian sources, educational institutions, and social agencies) available at the church. Develop lending libraries dedicated to recent resources for career development, job hunting, home medicine, interpersonal relationships, and other topics.

Information and news is most often communicated by word of mouth. Announcements in worship and large or small gatherings are often supplemented with printed information.
Relevant Institutional Strategies:

**Communication**

**Compelling Issues:**
Outdoor signs may be vulnerable to breakage, but are still necessary to advertise coming events and opportunities. Update them several times a week so that people get in the habit of checking.

**Resources:**

- **Really Relevant (and) Always Faithful: How Churches and Ministries Target Mission in An Explosion of Diversity** by Thomas G. Bandy (Available through Amazon)
- Download the **MOSAIC Guide** from Experian
- Explore the **Interactive MOSAIC Guide** from Experian