

## LEADING ONLINE OUTREACH

### Why Online Outreach

In 1 Corinthians 9:22, the apostle Paul wrote, “I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.” Applying this principle to today’s generation of students means meeting these digital natives where they are: online.

Whether you’re a social media virtuoso or just dipping your toe into the “virtual world” for the first time, we encourage you to be open to this new approach. Many of the things you’ll learn in this course are based upon our tried-and-true, in-person ministry strategies simply converted over into a digital setting. And we’ve had great success with these new techniques in recent semesters.

### General Guidelines to Online Outreach

#### 1. Be Above Reproach

As you engage with students, faculty, university staff and administrators, and fellow volunteers, remember to stay professional and appropriate. That means using your chapter profile when communicating on social media, double-checking to make sure your posts align with Scripture and InterVarsity’s mission, and safeguarding people’s contact information.

#### 2. It’s Not All Up to You

Be willing to reach out to other volunteers and students to help you. InterVarsity also has a ton of resources all set for you to use, which can save you lots of time.

#### 3. Match Interest Level

Just as all relationships take time to form, we’ve generally found that faculty and students go through four different levels of interest: gaining awareness of your ministry, building interest, having a desire to participate, and finally a willingness to take action. Concentrate on helping people move from one stage to the next and don’t try to skip stages.

#### 4. Scrappy Outreach

Online outreach can be demanding and tiring, but we encourage you to stay scrappy, trusting in the Lord’s faithfulness and pressing on in the good work he’s called you to. We never know when God will take a single message to a student and use it to spark a lifetime of discipleship and following Christ!

### Instagram Outreach

Of all the social media platforms out there (and they’re increasing all the time), Gen Z primarily gravitates to Instagram. It’s simple, has a clean design, and is highly visual.

**Step 1: Discover Where Students Are Gathering**

Start searching for your campus's official account in Instagram by typing in the school's name or its acronym. You might even find a specific account for a particular class of students, which is great for connecting with new freshmen.

**Step 2: Find Specific Students**

Now start scrolling through the bios of the followers for this particular account. If a student mentions their faith, church, or Bible study, start following them. Try not to get too bogged down in sifting through every post. Stick mainly to the bio.

**Step 3: Follow Up**

If students follow you back, send a direct message (DM), introducing the chapter and giving them a specific call to action, like checking out a Bible study or online event.

## Insta Proxes

Insta Proxes are a specific strategy on Instagram that can generate a lot of curiosity among students and faculty. They are based on an in-person outreach technique we've done for years called Proxe stations, where we combine interactive art and icebreaker questions, usually posted in a booth or outdoor display, to help spark faith conversations.

You can find more specific Insta Proxes online ([intervarsity.org/online/library/onso-resource-type/proxes](https://www.intervarsity.org/online/library/onso-resource-type/proxes)), but they generally follow these steps:

1. Create your hook
2. Ask a relevant question (e.g., Do you ever feel fake?)
3. Share a quick personal response to how Jesus helps you with that (e.g., how Jesus helps you be real with others)
4. Pick a final community-centered image

## Learn More

**General Online Outreach**

- [Website Builder](#)
- [Flourishing Communities Large Group Series](#)

**Recommended Courses**

- [Inviting Well](#)
- [Growing My Networks](#)
- [Sharing the Gospel](#)

**Social Media**

- [How to Create Your Chapter's Instagram Account](#)
- [How to Leverage an Instagram Profile](#)
- [Instagram Starter Pack](#)
- [Social Media Best Practices](#)

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