

Segment

K38: Gotham Blend

Mix of middle-aged and middle-class singles and couples living urban area lifestyles

Resource: Mosaic by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious perspective: *An eccentric habit with only occasional advantages*

Common Spiritual Issues: *Feeling trapped by circumstances, anxieties about self-esteem and guilt*

Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group K Significant Singles	Frequent Neighbors
G24 Status Seeking Singles	K37 Wired for Success	G25 Urban Edge
O50 Digital Dependents	K38 Gotham Blend	P57 Modest Metro Means
O52 Urban Ambition	K39 Metro Fusion	P58 Heritage Heights
O53 Colleges and Cafes	K40 Bohemian Groove	O54 Striving Single Scene

General Comments

Gotham Blend may connect with a church related to their upbringing or ethnicity. Some will connect with Roman Catholic churches. Protestant churches that connect best will share their broadly progressive and liberal attitudes. Churches should model tolerance, and multi-cultural and multi-racial sensitivities. They encourage mutual respect and are active to protect the rights of immigrants.

Gotham Blend tends to be irregular in attendance, and attend mostly on special occasions. These churches celebrate personal uniqueness and encourage participants to express themselves and stand out in a crowd. These churches readily support non-violent protests, but are equally strong on law and order. These are churches that offer big, audacious visions for the city, so that participants feel they are part of a great adventure.

Experian suggests that *Gotham Blend* is found only in the largest metro areas (like New York City), and these mainly single or divorced adults in their 40s and 50s are very ethnically diverse. They live in low and high rise apartments in densely packed neighborhoods. These are not cultural ghettos, but diverse and energetic neighborhoods with many Hispanic, Asian, and African American people sharing active urban lifestyles. The local shops often speak Spanish, but most of the media is in English. These diverse people work very hard and play hard, but they also live intensely and learn constantly.

General Comments

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How do I, as a leader, perceive the spiritual expectations of people in our community?

How can we, as a board, research and understand our community better?

How can we, as a church, build closer relationships with this lifestyle segment?

Color Key

High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
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Leadership Preferences

Resource: *Spiritual Leadership* by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

THE CONSTANT LEADERS		THE ORGANIC LEADERS		THE EXTREME LEADERS	
	Caregiver		Discipler	x	Visionary
	Enabler		Guru	x	Mentor
x	CEO			x	Pilgrim

Gotham Blend gravitates toward pastors or priests who not only visibly demonstrate a credible spiritual lifestyle, but who also have experience in the non-profit sector. These leaders are often bilingual and may have strong connections with their country of origin. They articulate a big vision for spiritual life and social action, and work tirelessly for cross-cultural tolerance, peaceful race relations, fair business and employment practices, and opportunities for personal advancement. The image of this leader may be somewhat “larger than life”. The leader often stands out in a crowd, and the church itself may be more associated with the name of the leader than any particular church tradition or denomination.

Leaders need to have strong administrative skills. They must rely on unpaid staff, and know how to motivate and equip volunteers. They are strong on systems of accountability. They establish broad cross-sector networks in the city, and work well with police and emergency agencies. They need to be good communicators everywhere and all the time, and not just in preaching. Their spontaneous deeds and unrehearsed words must unconsciously match the values they teach. The leader needs to be able to teach in small groups, and contribute to civic committees.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe your pastor now?

How might your pastor adapt to be more empathic in the future?

How can you equip, train, and/or support your pastor in any transition?

Hospitality Preferences

Resource: *Worship Ways* by Thomas Bandy and Lucinda Holmes (Abingdon Press)

TRADITIONAL		MODERN		POSTMODERN	
	The Basics	x	Multiple Choices	x	Take-Out
			Healthy Choices		

The ethnic diversity of *Gotham Blend* forces churches to plan carefully for hospitality and train hospitality leaders. Most people will take public transportation, but they may enter through any door in the facility. Greeters should be stationed before *and after* worship to provide a warm welcome and encouraging goodbye. A team of volunteers should also be present in the hallways during worship and not just for security. They should be ready to greet late comers, or assist anyone with special needs who steps out of the worship center. Whenever possible, add contacts of visitors to your database to include in chat forums and the church digital social page.

Greeters or ushers should be acquainted with the unique ways different cultures show respect to men and women. If possible, they should be able to say welcome in a second language. Printed information should be in multiple languages (e.g. English, Spanish, and Vietnamese), and readily at hand for hospitality teams to distribute. A Welcome Center or Resource Room is very helpful, and offers devotional guides and devotional objects, mission magazines, and apparel free or at low cost.

Refreshments should reflect the ethnic diversity of the neighborhood. Provide multiple serving stations. Be sure to use utensils that are environmentally friendly and recycle paper cups, plates, cans, and plastic. Try never to throw out or refreeze leftovers, but provide free bags of food that participants can take home (and include literature related to the mission of the church and opportunities to volunteer). Again, servers should be trained to be sensitive to diverse cultures; be very welcoming and respectful.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe your hospitality ministries now?

How should hospitality ministries change to be more relevant to this lifestyle segment?

What additional training do greeters, ushers, and servers need to be more empathic?

Worship Preferences

Resource: *Worship Ways* by Thomas Bandy and Lucinda Holmes (Abingdon Press)

TRADITIONAL		MODERN		POSTMODERN	
	Care-giving Worship	x	Inspirational Worship	x	Mission-Connectional Worship
	Educational Worship		Transformational Worship	x	Coaching Worship
	Healing Worship				

Gotham Blend expect worship to be an "experience", not really a "liturgy". It is often quite simple: culturally relevant music, motivational or practical message, and outreach focus. Music may be both performance and participation, and should use contemporary or multi-cultural instruments and use upbeat lyrics and lots of rhythm. The message connects people to a large vision, but is mainly practical and focuses on daily challenges and Christian behaviors. Special holy days and holidays are opportunities for stronger, motivational preaching that inspires people to participate in the great adventure of personal spiritual life and the congregation's mission.

Worship will include basic elements that are essential to any given Christian tradition, but do so in as informal and inclusive a manner as possible. Catholic churches will celebrate Eucharist, but likely use common language and shorter liturgies. Evangelical Protestants will read from scripture, but most likely in common English translations and shorter passages. English is the preferred language of communication, but words may be repeated or displayed electronically in other languages. Be especially sensitive to people with vision or hearing impairments.

Worship is topical. There may be themes that are pursued for 2-3 weeks, but each worship service stands alone in significance because people may not attend regularly. People want to take away from worship some practical tip to lead a better, healthier, or more purposeful life this week.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe your worship service(s) now?

How should you customize one or more worship services to be relevant to this segment?

What additional training do preachers, musicians, readers need to meet expectations?

Education Preferences

Resource: See, Know, and Serve by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

FORM		CONTENT		GROUPING	
	Curricular		Biblical		Generational
	Experiential	x	Topical	x	Peer Group

Gotham Blend may not regularly participate in a Sunday school, but they might participate in short term education or training related to baptism responsibilities, affirmations of faith, healthy intimacy, grief, and more. These educational experiences are usually linked to social media or internet forums.

Spiritual guidance is offered through blogs, chat forums, and social media. Outreach advocacy and education may be supported by workshops, in-person or on-line. Websites are the real "classrooms" for continuing education. Websites may invite people to respond with their own ideas and images, but they must be carefully monitored for content.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe children, youth, and adult education in your church now?

How would education strategies need to change to be relevant to this lifestyle segment?

What changes in leadership selection and training would make education more effective?

Small Group Preferences

Resource: See, Know, and Serve by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

LEADERSHIP		CONTENT	
x	Trained Leaders		Curriculum Study
	Rotated Leaders	x	Shared Affinity

Affinity groups based on special topics of interest are the most likely way churches involve *Gotham Blend*. The topics will often be practical: career development and job satisfaction, relationships and intimacy, safety and crime prevention, cross cultural understanding, personal financial planning, etc. *Gotham Blend* have a strong moral conscience and may be interested in short term seminars related to business ethics, the environment, and social and economic equality. These small groups can have intentional spiritual components (intercessory prayer or Bible reading), but they are less likely to engage in traditional Bible study or theological reflections.

It will be a challenge to find the right time and place for small groups to meet, and churches will need to be very creative in order to fit them into the busy lifestyles of these people. They generally prefer a designated leader who has expertise in the topic and experience in facilitating small groups. People in this segment can have strong opinions and dialogue is apt to be vigorous. Small groups will often encourage extended conversations through the internet (blogs, social media, and forums). Groups are usually short term, with very clear starting and stopping times. All small groups will have an underlying purpose to build or deepen interpersonal relationships.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How would you describe the Small Group strategy in your church now?

How would Small Group strategies need to change to be relevant to this lifestyle segment?

What changes in leadership and content would make Small Groups more effective?

Outreach Preferences

Resource: Strategic Thinking by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

	PERSONAL NEED	READINESS TO VOLUNTEER
Basic Survival		X
Health and Wellness		X
Quality of Life		X
Addiction Intervention		X
Interpersonal Relationships	X	X
Human Potential		X
Salvation and Human Destiny		

Gotham Blend is interested in learning new things, provided there is some practical application to community life or opportunities for personal advancement. They are generally open to new ideas and will adapt to change. Dialogue opportunities related to public policy changes, re-zoning of neighborhoods, and other environmental changes will often be welcomed ... especially if they can dialogue with a credible expert. People in this segment tend to be risk takers. They can be galvanized into action by any number of emerging and urgent issues. Churches should be clear about accountability guidelines, so that they can respond quickly and with integrity to organize advocacy or deploy emergency response teams.

Outreach programs that are most effective probably involve personal growth, networking, and practical help to develop “people” skills for career development. For example, relevant programs might include coaching to write job resumes and succeed in job interviews, skills for team participation and conflict resolution, or opportunities for artistic or creative self-expression. People are likely to volunteer for ministries that improve quality of life: cleaning up parks and vacant lots, water purification, amateur sports, household and community safety, and health clinics. The most powerful attraction of any outreach ministry is the opportunity to multiply or deepen relationships.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

What outreach categories does your church emphasize now?

What outreach categories would be more relevant to this lifestyle segment?

What outreach priorities and tactics should change for the church to bless this segment?

Facility Preferences

Resource: See, Know, and Serve by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

PROPERTY		TECHNOLOGY		SYMBOLISM	
	Ecclesiastical		Modern	x	Classic Christendom
	Utilitarian		Postmodern		Contemporary Post–Christendom

Gotham Blend is pragmatic in its attitude toward property and expectations for technology. Their personal histories in a country of origin and Christian tradition generally dispose them to associate a Christian church with ecclesiastical architectures (simple or elaborate). However, aside from the altar or the Bible, they may not have a strong sense of sacred space. They are quite prepared to renovate facilities in any way that will make them more accessible, usable, or relevant, whether or not the result is aesthetically pleasing or theologically correct. Environments need to facilitate informal gatherings and quality conversations.

They tend to connect with traditional Christian symbols and images, and prefer images that have obvious meanings but which have been “translated” into contemporary art forms reflecting contemporary cultural perceptions. They often like interior and exterior murals and signs to be striking, colorful and contemporary, and an amateur touch is valued for its authenticity.

Insofar as it is affordable, people will prefer to upgrade to post-modern technology. This includes great sound amplification and video technology, and internet connectivity throughout the building. Fixed furniture may be replaced by movable furniture, and pews replaced by chairs. In practice, furnishings are often deliberately eclectic, with an array of colors, textures, styles, and images. Conformity and consistency are not required.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

What renovations and/or upgrades need to be made in our church facility?

What symbols of faith would be most relevant to this lifestyle segment?

If we started another site of ministry for this segment, how should we design it?

Financial Preferences

Resource: See, Know, and Serve by Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press)

GIVING TARGET		GIVING METHOD	
	Unified Budgets and General Funds		Informed Philanthropy & Pledging
x	Designated Programs & Mission Projects		Lifestyle Coaching & Family Financial Planning

For *Gotham Blend*, the mission comes first, and operational overhead comes second. They give serious thought to donate to specific charities or mission projects, and then give additional money to the institution that has made those projects possible. They often need assurance that the entire amount donated to mission will go to the mission, and not be diverted for other institutional purposes. This can mean that property maintenance and salary support are chronically challenged.

Gotham Blend tend to be financial management rookies. They often do not have much savings, nor do they have an investment plan. Other than renters insurance, they may have no backup plan in the event of temporary unemployment or personal misfortune. They tend to grow significant credit card debts. While they may not pledge to a church budget, they will welcome coaching from Christian financial investment counselors on how to avoid debt, save for the future, and put together a personal plan for charitable giving.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

What options in giving methods and giving targets do we offer now?

How do we design our annual stewardship campaign(s) now?

How should we revise our financial strategy to be more relevant to this segment?

Communication

Resource: Mosaic E–Handbook by Experian

CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC COMMUNICATION					TRADITIONAL CHURCH COMMUNICATION						
	Direct Mail Receptive		Mobile Telephone	x	Online Computer		Newspaper		Corded Telephone		Verbal Announcements
x	Email Receptive		Broadcast Cable TV	x	Internet Radio	x	Print		AM/FM Radio		Personal Visits

Gotham Blend use the internet for news, research, entertainment, and social interaction. They are less likely to use the internet for shopping, and are not necessarily responsive to online advertising. Churches should provide a high quality, interactive website that uploads messages from the pastor, updates their perspective on citywide or world events, and offers blogs and forums for ongoing dialogue. Keep it simple to navigate. They may access websites in cafes or other public places with only modest internet strength.

Gotham Blend use social media, and upload both trivial and significant comments. They also may upload images. Pastor and staff should be equally active on line, and regularly post a “thought for the day” and images of mission, networking with civic organizations, and volunteers at work.

Churches can also use printed newsletters, brochures, and mass mailings to reach people. Avoid verbal announcements, but use handouts during worship. Communicate information in small data bytes, preferably with images and icons that facilitate comprehension. Consider offering print in different language versions. Outdoor signs are helpful. Electronic signs outside the church building can announce the topic of the day, or urgent opportunities for mission. Signs in the public transportation system will get noticed.

Note: See the list of definitions at the end of this report to explain key terminology.

Discussion Questions:

How do we communicate among church participants now?

How do we communicate beyond our church to the community now?

How should we adapt communication strategies to be more effective for this segment?

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

POTENTIAL INFLUENCE

Lifestyle Compatibility	Daily behavioral habits overlap with common activities and similar priorities
Family Group	Grouping by key demographic factors like age, income, culture, family status, etc.
Frequent Neighbors	Often live near each other with shared recreational, health, or emergency services

LEADERSHIP

Constant Leaders	Traditional clergy focused on sustaining ministries & increasing members
Organic Leaders	Innovative leaders focused on church growth, new starts & multiplying followers
Extreme Leaders	Non-Institutional leaders focused on spiritual disciplines, high accountability, and pursuing perfection
Caregiver	Focus on visitation, counseling, pastoral prayer
Enabler	Focus on facilitating meetings, lay empowerment, mediation, liturgy
CEO	Focus on staff development, administration, fund raising, expository preaching
Discipler	Focus on seeker sensitivity, adult faith formation, guidance for Christian living
Guru	Focus on religious insight, holistic personal growth, spirituality, enlightenment
Visionary	Focus on big picture, major social change, motivational speaking
Mentor	Focus on self-awareness, individual meaning and purpose, vocational clarity
Pilgrim	Focus on cross-cultural sensitivity, inter-religious dialogue, strict spiritual discipline

HOSPITALITY

The Basics	Friendly untrained greeters, basic coffee and creamer, packaged food or sugary snacks
Multiple Choices	Trained greeters, multiple serving stations, great coffee, varieties of food
Healthy Choices	Trained greeters mirroring lifestyle diversity, healthy food options, allergen alerts
Take-Out	Coffee-to-go, bagged food, exit door hospitality, text message and social media

EDUCATION

Curricular	Printed books or study guides. Passive, intellectual, classroom. Maturity measured by acquired knowledge
Experiential	Activities. More music, images, movement, interaction. Maturity measured by behavior patterns, attitudes.
Biblical	Focuses on the Old and New Testaments. Maturity means Biblical literacy
Topical	Focuses on contemporary issues. Maturity means ethical integrity and enlightened behavior
Generational	Gathers people by age or grade in separate classrooms with age-appropriate resources.
Peer Group	Gathers people sharing affinities or common interests regardless of age.

SMALL GROUPS

Rotated Leaders	Participants take turns hosting and leading the group. Requires limited expertise and training.
Designated Leaders	Single leader guides the group from start to finish. Requires significant maturity and training.
Curriculum	Focus on a book, workbook, or structured program to guide structured discussion
Affinity	Focus on shared interest, enthusiasm, or activity to inspire informal discussion.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS (cont.)

WORSHIP

Educational	Consistent liturgy, expository preaching, focus on doctrine, ethics, and history
Inspirational	Uplifting music, motivational speaking, focus on joy, optimism, and encouragement
Transformational	Spontaneous, expectant, personal transformations, Higher Power interventions
Coaching	Informal, dialogical, topical, practical coaching on how to live better & faithfully
Caregiving	Slow, meditative, family–feel with pastoral prayer, children’s time, senior celebrations
Healing	Quiet, prayerful, expectant of physical, mental, relational healing and hope
Mission–Connectional	Unity of action/reflection, all about outreach, volunteer empowerment

OUTREACH

Survival	Basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, jobs, basic health care
Recovery	Addiction intervention, 12 step support, and counseling services
Health	Mental and physical fitness, disease prevention, rehabilitation, therapy
Quality of Life	Social wellbeing, neighborhood safety, environment, immigration, peacemaking
Human Potential	Personal/vocational fulfillment, education, career help, human rights advocacy
Interpersonal	Intimacy, sexuality, family & marriage counseling, healthy friendships
Human Destiny	Repentance, conversion, witnessing, alignment with God’s purposes

FACILITIES

Ecclesiastical	Facility must “look like a church” with traditional architecture and furnishings
Utilitarian	Facility must be “user–friendly” and multi–purpose for public use
Christendom	Indoor/outdoor symbols associated with church history or denominational identity
Contemporary	Indoor/outdoor symbols from nature, indigenous cultures, alternative spiritualities
Modern	Technology primarily enhances print and oral communication
Postmodern	Technology primarily enhances multi–sensory interaction, internet, social media

FINANCES

Unified Budgets	Stability first. Give to a single general fund to pay staff and manage overhead costs
Designated Giving	Effectiveness first. Give to specific funds or causes by personal preference
Informed Philanthropy	Informed, independent, confidential financial commitments for a tax benefit
Lifestyle Coaching	Individual & household coaching for Christian family financial management

COMMUNICATION

Direct Mail Receptive	Pay attention to mass mailings to postal addresses.
Email Receptive	Pay attention to information delivered digitally to personal email addresses.
Mobile Telephone	Regularly rely on cell phones and smart phones for calling, texting, surfing, banking etc.
Broadcast Cable TV	Regularly rely on cable television for news, advertising, and entertainment.
Online Computer	Regularly go online by personal computer to surf websites, shop, bank, and use other services.
Internet Radio	Regularly subscribe to internet services for music, sports, and topical discussions.
Newspaper	Pay attention to printed newspapers for updates about church news or local, national, global events.
Print	Pay attention to printed church newsletters, bulletin inserts, brochures, and other handouts.
Corded Telephone	Regularly use ordinary telephones to communicate from home.
AM/FM Radio	Regularly use traditional radio to listen to music, commercials, and talk.
Verbal Announcements	Always rely on verbal announcements from the pulpit about church events or items of interest.
Personal Visits	Always expect personal visits at home by a representative of the church to share information.