

Segment **054: Striving Single Scene**

Young singles living in Midwest and Southern city centers

Resource: Mosaic by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective: *Looking for Heroes of Faith*

Common Spiritual Issues: *Feelings of guilt, anxieties about abuse and shame*

Potential Influence

Lifestyle Compatibility	Family Group 0 Singles and Starters	Frequent Neighbors
F22 Fast Track Couples	O50 Full Steam Ahead	L42 Rooted Flower Power
G24 Status Seeking Singles	O51 Digital Dependents	D18 Suburban Attainment
G25 Urban Edge	O52 Urban Ambition	S69 Urban Survivors
P57 Modest Metro Means	O53 Colleges and Cafes	R67 Aspirational Fusion
	O54 Striving Single Scene	
	O55 Family Troopers	

General Comments

Striving Single Scene respect all religions, and expect religions to tolerate one another, but they are not particularly committed to faith. They are mainly concerned about status and recognition, self-improvement, and the latest fashions and technologies. They are more likely to spend Christmas and Easter in a new Caribbean destination than in church.

Experian suggests that *Striving Single Scene* has the highest percentage of singles in any lifestyle segment. Their lifestyle represents a transitional stage for young city singles before they marry and settle down. These singles move to older apartments in the city close to where the “urban action” is. On the one hand they are ambitious, motivated, over-achievers who want to get ahead and even start their own business; but on the other hand they lead entertainment-intensive lives, out and about, sampling the smorgasbord of culture.

If they do connect with a church, it will often be very liberal. It will be strong on social action, and avoid evangelization. It will try to be cutting edge in technology, whether in architecture, interior design, education, or worship. It will be clear about a big, bold vision to make the world a better place, but radically experimental in how to get there. People in this segment love novelty and change, and conformity makes them uncomfortable. They may gravitate to an independent church, new church plant, or new religious movement before they ever consider joining a denomination. They drive traditionalists crazy because they truly do like change for the sake of change.

General Comments

On the other hand, many in this segment are self-conscious of their transitional phase of life. They may try out a church with a view to settling down and raising a stable family with normative values, worldviews, and beliefs. They figure that the best way to understand a faith and evaluate a church is not through worship or institutional membership, but by volunteering in one of the mission projects. Therefore, action/reflection methodologies work well. Start with an activity, but intentionally guide significant conversations during the break, or after-work gatherings over food and drink.

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				Pilgrim

Striving Single Scene looks for pastors who cast a large, inclusive, bold vision that encompasses an entire city, region, or the world. The vision may include key outreach ministries that make daily life better, but it really implies fundamental changes in assumptions, attitudes, and worldviews. Pastors need not be great expository preachers, but should be motivational speakers. They alert people to new possibilities and hidden resources, and energize people to attempt impossible dreams. *Striving Single Scene* feel ennobled because they can participate in the big vision. They respect a pastor who is unafraid of challenges, regularly thinks outside the box, and is often a maverick in their own denomination.

These leaders may not be very accessible to individuals, but select and train staff leaders who are good coaches and equippers. Pastors are often good strategists, but are impatient tacticians. They often partner with an executive minister who is a good tactician and manages the “nuts and bolts” of resourcing the vision. These pastors develop networks with people who are “movers and shakers” in different sectors of the community. One the other hand, these pastors often make mentoring covenants with individuals who are eager for personal and spiritual growth. Covenants usually define clear boundaries for frequency, location, and time allotted, and mentoring will be both in-person and on-line.

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		

When *Striving Single Scene* visits a church, they are often accompanied by other participants in their midweek small group or outreach ministry. They come by personal invitation, and are attracted by the vision or the personality of the pastor. They stay because of the high accountability and sincerity of the organization, and the opportunities for personal growth. Greeters are trained to demonstrate total acceptance, quickly and simply articulate big vision, and highlight at least one opportunity for personal growth or community service ... within 30 seconds of meeting a new person.

It may be helpful to create a Welcome Center at a major crossroads inside the church, or in the refreshment area. Use LCD screens in the vestibule and worship center that are constantly revealing the vision, repeating an optimistic and motivating mantra, showing images of mission, and articulating key values and beliefs.

Refreshments are varied and often reflect multi-cultural tastes. In addition to treats and snacks, include flavored coffees and teas, and provide healthy food alternatives (no sugar, no caffeine, low calories, etc.) The environment should provide plenty of room for conversations. Decorations should be edgy, abstract images. Combine images of regional or global mission. Train servers to intentionally model core values and readily articulate bedrock faith convictions in spontaneous conversation. The primary purpose of volunteer servers is to build and network relationships, not just serve food.

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				

If *Striving Single Scene* come to worship, they expect it to be experiential, participative, inspirational, and communal. Worship is usually quite informal and upbeat. It incorporates static and video images, but also drama, dance, panel discussions, and dialogue between speaker and audience. The musical genres are intentionally diverse (R & B, rock, jazz, salsa, etc.), and the instrumentations are non-traditional and occasionally multi-cultural (amplified guitar, percussion, electronic keyboard, and even sitar). If worship includes Holy Communion, the sacrament is often celebrated with greater drama and visual effect, and less wordy and didactic. These people prefer to come forward to the altar or communion rail. The celebration of Holy Communion is uplifting and inspirational, and moves along at a fast pace.

Worship follows a practical “how to” theme. The message provides coaching for daily Christian behavior at work and leisure and Christian interpersonal relationships, but it may also be about problem-solving, coping with depression, and fear factors. The theme is often connected with short term small groups, and is advertised well in advance through websites and daily through electronic signs outside. The worship service as a whole, or the coaching message by itself, should be recorded for podcast and link participants to a blog maintained by the pastor.

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
x	Experiential	x	Topical	x	Peer Group

If *Striving Single Scene* participate in Christian education on Sunday morning, it will likely be another small group that happens to meet on Sunday morning. In other words, the learning methodology is informal, relational, dialogical, and intimate, rather than formal, programmatic, presentational, and impersonal (which is how people in this lifestyle segment perceive most Sunday schools).

These people do value continuing education. Some anticipate advanced degree work, but many will take additional courses to develop their creative talents. Christian education can attract their interest if it connects with community college content, or encourages them to use and experiment with creative arts. Education is supported by sophisticated, interactive websites that provide downloadable resources, links, blogs, and forums ... and which are usually linked to other social media.

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

Striving Single Scene is more likely to participate in midweek small groups to continue education and spiritual formation. Groups need to be *very* flexible about time, place, and longevity of the group. Participation may vary. Groups usually meet at the church, but they might also meet at a cafe or diner over breakfast or late night snacks. There may be a method to keep track of participation, and reminders may be sent out by text or tweet. 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.

Leaders of such groups should be selected and trained by the pastor (or church staff). People in this segment are often quite outspoken, and their points of view can be extremely varied, so personality conflicts and arguments are common. A designated leader can bring calm, objectivity, and spiritual discipline to the group. Groups can form around any shared interest or need. They tend to be somewhat structured with prayer, scripture, and a strategy to help participants share their life struggles and spiritual victories. The shared interest might be an activity, or a video relevant to their current concern in life.

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	X
Salvation and Human Destiny		

Striving Single Scene may have very diverse goals when it comes to outreach. Personally, they are interested in any form of outreach that helps them discover or develop their hidden potential. This may include discernment of spiritual gifts and personality types, or alternative career possibilities and new life skills. They are often interested in entrepreneurship and want to start their own business. Despite the appearance of self-confidence and their generally optimistic attitudes, these people are often feeling insecure and worried about the future. They are still getting to know themselves and want to build self-esteem. People in this segment are interested in any outreach ministry that will help them build or deepen interpersonal relationships.

Striving Single Scene is willing to volunteer for a good cause. They may well join a protest movement or participate in a march on city hall, and they will participate in petitions and advocacy campaigns. When they look beyond themselves, people in this segment can be very passionate about any number of issues. They are particularly concerned about human rights, restoring the environment, corporate ethics, respect for diverse cultures and lifestyles, economic justice, and other causes. They respond quickly and urgently to natural or human disasters. They do not donate money readily, but they will volunteer for risky missions in short bursts of energy. Churches need to work hard to sustain long-term commitment to outreach ministries. This usually requires lots of personal attention, positive reinforcement, and increasing opportunities to meet new people and explore new contexts.

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		Classic Christendom
x	Utilitarian	x	Postmodern	x	Contemporary Post–Christendom

Striving Single Scene does not find any property or technology as particularly sacred. They are mainly concerned by its usefulness or effectiveness, and not in its architectural significance. They are most likely to connect with a church that rents space ... perhaps in a community center, store front, or (more creatively) a coffee shop, cafe, or even Christian micro-brewery. If, in order to be mission effective, a church does own property, they prefer it to be utilitarian. Space is primarily dedicated to support some outreach ministry (food bank, free clinic, low cost housing, etc.) Office space is frugal, but high tech. They prefer a virtual office, with any paid staff working through a website at home offices or through mobile devices.

Symbolism in a church property often includes spiritual images from different religions, in addition to Christianity. There may also be contemporary images of nature, color and light, or abstract art. It might also include photographs of the people and contexts that represent the “primary mission field” of the church. Symbolism should not require words to convey clear meanings. They not only serve as reminders for particular values and convictions, but also portals through which God touches their hearts.

Digital technology is by far the most important. Hardware and software must be absolutely up-to-date and state-of-the-art. Moreover, the staff leaders that use technology must be well trained and proficient. There must be a seamless interface between the digital and real world. These people want to access church resources and interact with church leaders instantly and continuously.

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
	Designated Programs & Mission Projects	x	Lifestyle Coaching & Family Financial Planning

Experian suggests that *Striving Single Scene* often carry large burdens of debt from education. They may have little savings, and often no insurance. In their urban settings, they do not need (and probably can't afford) a car or home ownership. Discretionary income is often spent on the latest fashions, cell phones, and electronics.

They usually accept the rationale for paying salaries and benefits for needed professional church leaders. However, they don't want to waste money preserving heritage buildings or maintaining redundant programs. They may be motivated to give money to a good cause, support a religious movement, and develop an adaptive digital resource. This is one group that may actually pay for *change for the sake of change*.

Striving Single Scene tend to be more generous with their volunteer time, expertise, and energy than with their money. Charity needs to be motivated by a big, bold vision and sustained by visible, measurable results. They are not likely to participate in stewardship campaigns that invite them to pledge, and more likely to give cash on impulse. If they are excited by the big vision, they are not very interested in budgets and financial reports. They may support a capital campaign with one-time gifts, but only if most of the money goes to the mission target with minimal professional fees or bureaucratic costs for management.

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	x	Mobile Telephone	x	Online Computer	Newspaper	Corded Telephone	Verbal Announcements
x	Email Receptive		Broadcast Cable TV	x	Internet Radio	Print	AM/FM Radio	Personal Visits

Experian suggests that *Striving Single Scene* uses the internet as the chief source of entertainment, communication, banking, socializing, shopping, and almost anything else. They are connected to it 24/7 through social media and web surfing; using computers, laptops, tablets, and Smartphones; texting, tweeting, downloading, surfing, viewing, and multi-tasking. They carry on several conversations, research, shopping or bidding all at the same time.

The church must provide a sophisticated, custom designed, interactive website and update it daily and weekly. Church leaders must regularly contribute to blogs, forums, and chat rooms and constantly text, tweet, and maintain a running dialogue with members, adherents, friends of friends, and complete strangers. Upcoming events, news flashes, prayer concerns, and any item big or small pertaining to their particular Christian movement passes quickly from person to person. The communication goal is to share quickly, but not perfectly. You can then update, clarify, correct, and if necessary apologize as you go.

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.