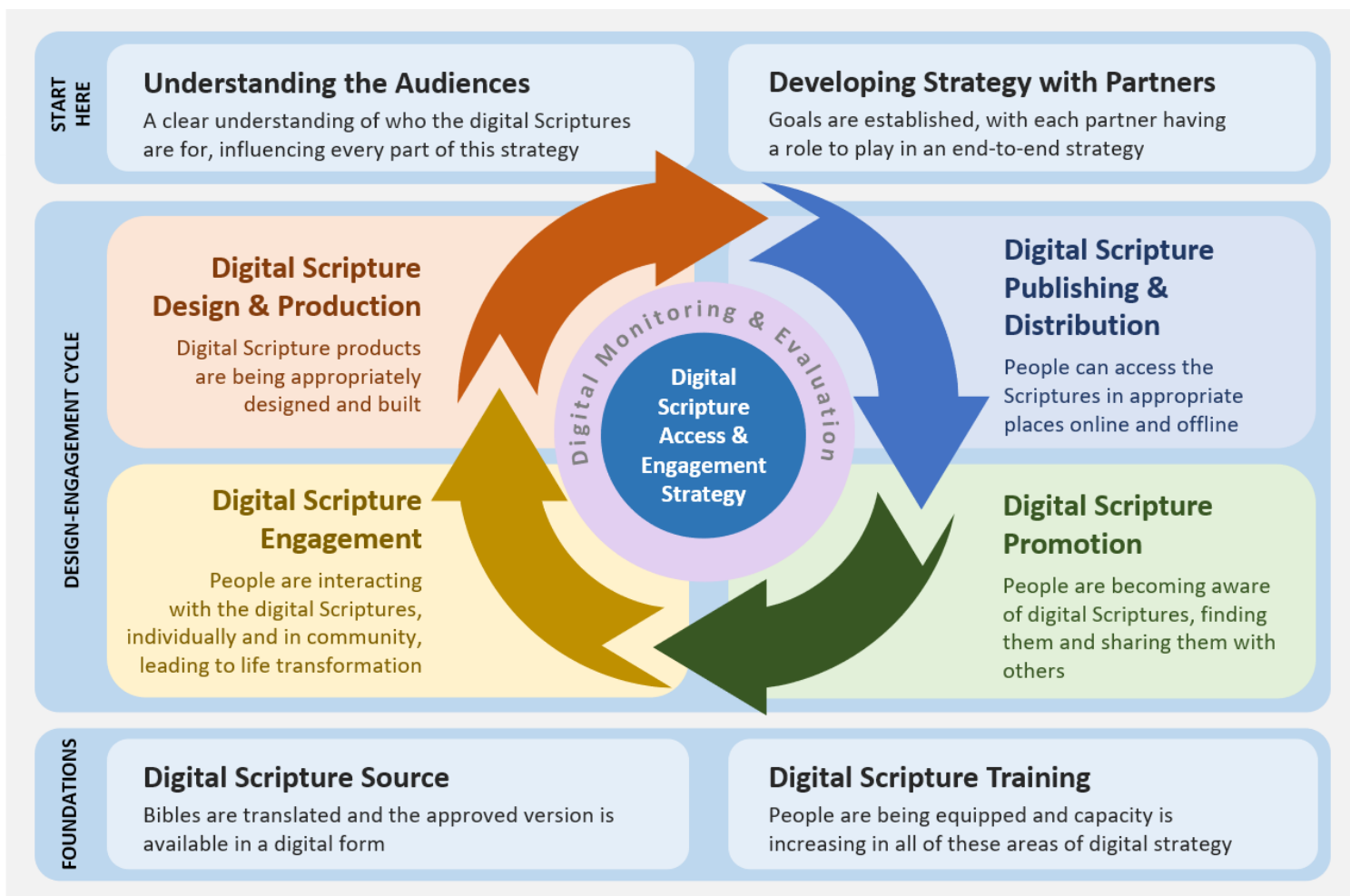# Digital Strategy Guides

This document contains eight guides to help with planning for digital strategy. They cover the sections in the digital strategy diagram below.

You don't need to look at every question in every guide, or provide specific answers to them. You can focus on the areas that are most relevant. The questions are intended to guide your conversations, and to help you decide on the goals that should be included in the project plan. When you have decided on the main goals, you can work with a specialist on the details.

START HERE

Understanding the Audiences
A clear understanding of who the digital Scriptures are for, influencing every part of this strategy

Developing Strategy with Partners
Goals are established, with each partner having a role to play in an end-to-end strategy

DESIGN-ENGAGEMENT CYCLE

Digital Scripture Design & Production
Digital Scripture products are being appropriately designed and built

Digital Scripture Publishing & Distribution
People can access the Scriptures in appropriate places online and offline

Digital Monitoring & Evaluation

Digital Scripture Access & Engagement Strategy

Digital Scripture Engagement
People are interacting with the digital Scriptures, individually and in community, leading to life transformation

Digital Scripture Promotion
People are becoming aware of digital Scriptures, finding them and sharing them with others

FOUNDATIONS

Digital Scripture Source
Bibles are translated and the approved version is available in a digital form

Digital Scripture Training
People are being equipped and capacity is increasing in all of these areas of digital strategy

Digital Strategy Guides

To summarise the diagram:

- We need to **start** by:
    - **Understanding the audiences**, identifying clearly who the digital Scriptures are for, and
    - **Developing goals and strategy together with partners** : the local community, churches and other organisations.

- Then we have a **design-engagement cycle:**
    - Digital Scripture **design and production** (ensuring that digital Scripture products are being appropriately designed and built),
    - Digital Scripture **publishing and distribution** (so that people can access the Scriptures in appropriate places online and offline),
    - Digital Scripture **promotion** (with people becoming aware of digital Scriptures, finding them and sharing them with others), and
    - Digital Scripture **engagement** (with people interacting with the digital Scriptures, individually and in community, leading to life transformation).

As people engage with the Scriptures, we **monitor and evaluate** the strategy, design, distribution and promotion - and we continue to design, distribute and promote in ways that will facilitate Scripture engagement by the intended audiences.

- There are two **foundational activities** at the bottom of the diagram:
    - In order to build Scripture products, we need a digital Scripture **source**, with the approved version of the text available in the Digital Bible Library.
    - And everything requires digital Scripture **training**, with colleagues, partners and local communities being equipped in each of these areas of digital strategy.

We hope you find this guide helpful as you plan Digital strategy for your project.

Audience Questions

This guide asks questions about the ways in which people interact in the digital world. The answers will provide a foundation for making decisions as you look at the other guides.

Smartphones and the internet

- What sorts of devices do people use: smartphone (Android/iPhone), feature phone, computer…?
- Where do people go to use these devices (own phone, friend/family, office…)?
- What types of people have what types of phones?
- How easy and affordable is internet access?

Social and cultural

- Do people engage with digital content individually or in groups?
  - When, where, how and why do they engage with digital content?
  - Which media are more appropriate for certain types of communication (casual, serious, motivational, controversial, etc.)?
- What kinds of content do people engage with (text, audio, photos and images, video)?

Scripture Engagement

- Are people already engaging with Scripture using digital media? If so, how?
- Which apps do they use to read or listen to the Bible?
- In which languages are they engaging with Scripture?
- What is the attitude of church leaders to digital Scripture, inside and outside the church?
- To what extent are people outside the church interested in interacting with Scripture digitally?

Social media, apps and websites

- Which social media and messaging apps, if any, do people use?
- Which people use which ones?
- Are there any websites or apps that are blocked?
- To what extent are people creating content for sharing online?

Digital Strategy in Partnership

Having spent time understanding the intended audiences, it is important not to rush immediately into creating digital products. The stakeholders in a language project need to think through some strategic questions before moving into the technicalities of app design, video production, etc. How can you do this? It may involve adding new partners to the project, those that are engaged in social media and digital ministries.

What digital media content do you want to create?

Where will you distribute the digital content?

Local Recording Studio?

Who will help?

Local video maker?

App builder?

Local Artist?

Translation team?
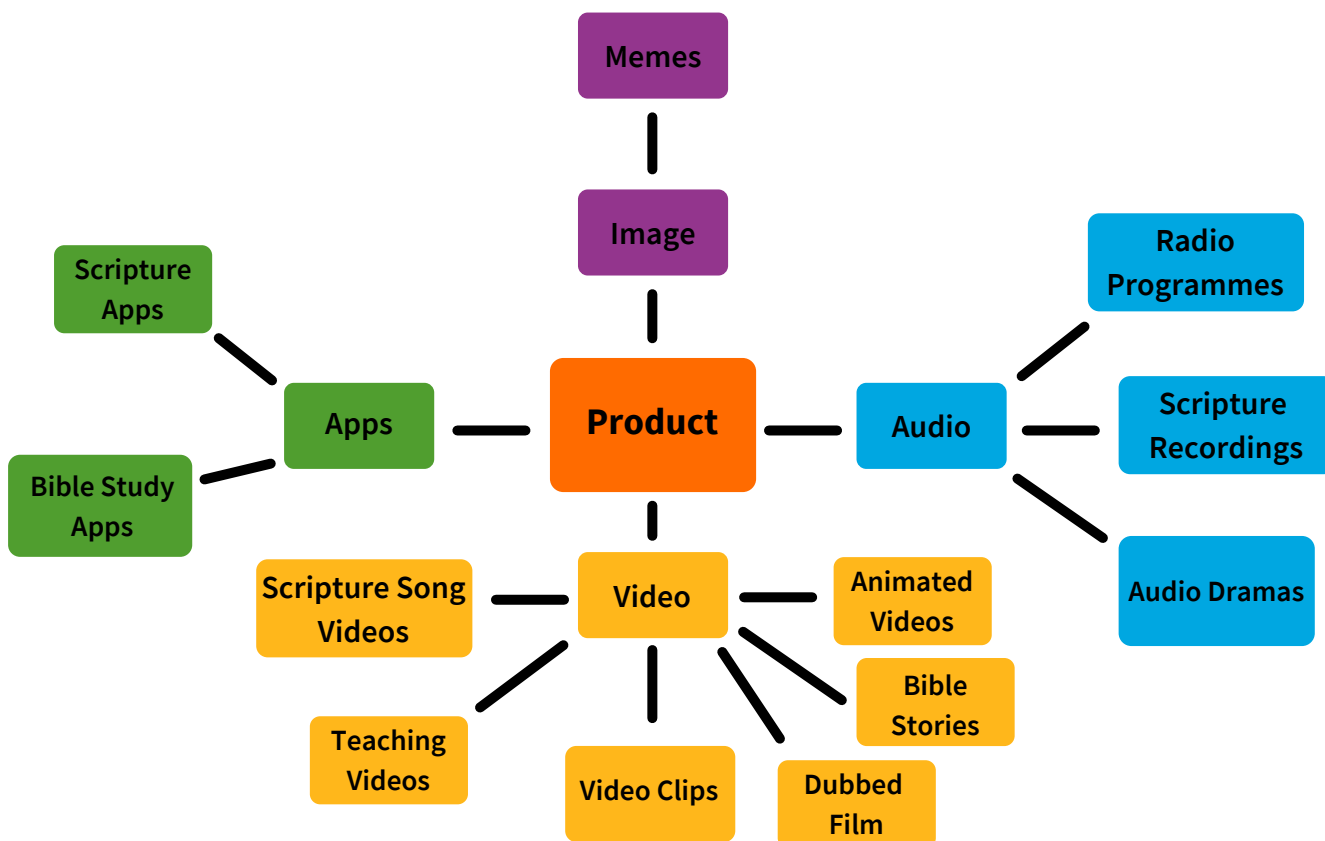
Young person who knows social media?

Local radio station?

Media ministry?

Design Questions

Here are some questions that will help you think through the design of digital content and products that fit into your digital strategy.
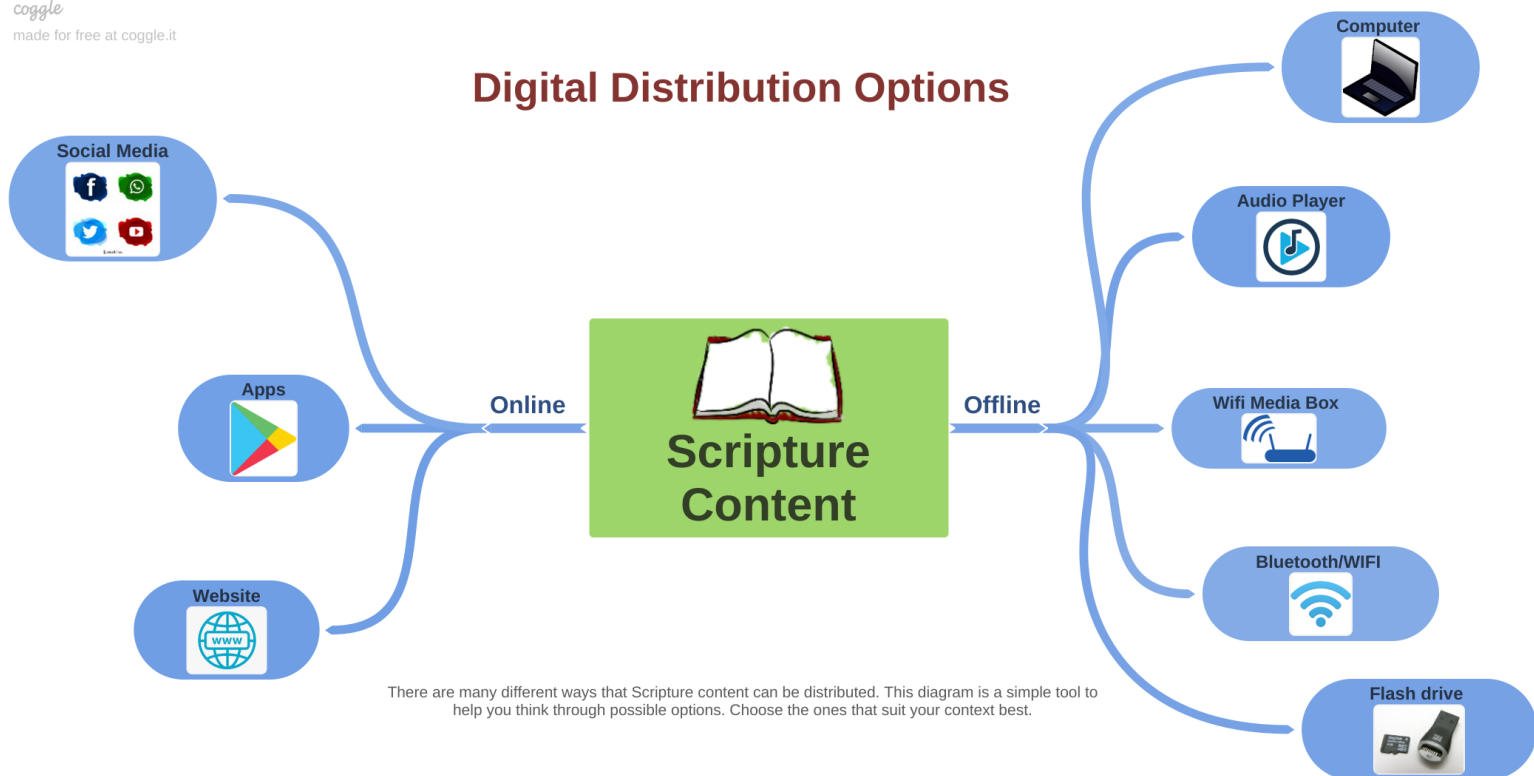
General

- What languages will be used in the content/products?
- How will the products be branded? Who will 'own' the brand?
- Will what you are creating be sustainable? If it needs maintaining, who will maintain it?
- Will the products be for a general audience, or a particular audience?

Product

- Are you creating a one off product or a set of products, e.g. a series of videos?
- Will you be publishing early and often, or when the set is complete?
- Can the content produced have multiple uses? (radio, Facebook, webpage, WhatsApp)
- Is there any appropriate existing material that could be used? (shell videos, photos, images)

Copyright and Licensing

- Which partner(s) will own the intellectual property rights, which will hold the copyright, and which will be the publisher?
- How will the product be licensed?

Arts

- Will you incorporate local art or music in your products?
- Are there local artists that you can involve in the creation of the digital content?

Memes — Image — Product

Product:
- Apps — Scripture Apps, Bible Study Apps
- Audio — Radio Programmes, Scripture Recordings, Audio Dramas
- Video — Scripture Song Videos, Teaching Videos, Video Clips, Dubbed Film, Bible Stories, Animated Videos

Distribution Options

There are many options for digital Scripture distribution and it may be overwhelming and difficult to know where to even start for distribution.

Digital Distribution Options

Social Media

Apps

Website

Online

Scripture Content

Offline

Computer

Audio Player

Wifi Media Box

Bluetooth/WIFI

Flash drive

There are many different ways that Scripture content can be distributed. This diagram is a simple tool to help you think through possible options. Choose the ones that suit your context best.

One option is to start by focusing on just a few distribution options that will likely be the most helpful in your situation. How do you know which options may be most helpful? Here is a document to help you find what's best for your situation.

Digital Promotion

Do you have Scripture looking for an audience, or an audience looking for Scripture?

Scripture looking for an audience

Audience looking for Scripture

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Scenario: People may not be thinking about finding Scripture.

Scenario: There are people searching for Scripture

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Aim: Find the audience, and take the Scripture to them in a way that encourages them to try it out.

Aim: Bring the people to the places where they can find Scripture.

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General Rule: Find the audience, and take the Scripture to them in a way that encourages them to try it out.

- Use your understanding of the audience to identify the best places to promote Scripture
- There may be places that members of the audience go to online, such as WhatsApp groups, or Facebook pages. If you can connect with these places, there may be opportunities to promote Scriptures there.

General rule: Find where the audience is looking, and promote there. Ways of looking include:

- Google search
- Google Play Store, Apple App Store
- YouVersion Bible app
- Scripture Earth, or other Bible sites

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Here are some things you can do:

- Set up a Facebook page (or another social media platform) and pay to promote posts about Scripture, apps, websites, or real world events
- Identify influencers - well-connected influential people in the community, who can post to their online followers
- Use word of mouth - real world, or WhatsApp groups etc.
- Post announcements on community Facebook pages
- Print flyers with QR codes
- Advertise on radio, in newspapers or magazines
- Develop a communication strategy with church leaders and other stakeholders

Here are some things you can do:

- Google Ads - help people on Google to find you
- App Store Optimisation - make sure your app can be found easily
- Get on YouVersion and bible.com through the Digital Bible Library, and have the information set up so the translation can be found
- Make sure the Scriptures are listed on Scripture Earth, Find-a-Bible and other Bible sites
- Use radio and other forms of advertising

Make connections

You may have Scriptures in several places, such as a website, a Facebook page, an app and a YouTube channel. Make sure that each place connects with the others, and with Scripture bookshops and other real world places where people can find the Scriptures.

Digital Scripture Engagement Pathways

"We want to see people interacting with the digital Scriptures, individually and in community, leading to life transformation."

What kinds of digital interaction with the Bible would work well in your context?
How can you encourage people to engage with God's Word using digital tools and media?

Face-to-face Listening groups
A group of people gathers together to listen to a passage of the Bible on a digital audio player or a telephone. After listening for a few minutes they take time to discuss what they have heard.

WhatsApp Listening groups or Bible Studies
Face-to-Face Listening groups or Bible studies can take plance online using WhatsApp, or a similar messaging app.

Facebook with Scripture Content Interaction
Create a page on Facebook or other social media platform on which you post Scripture content regularly, as a place to encourage engagement with the Bible.

Digital SE Options

Watching groups: films clips and discussion
This is a variation on the theme of getting together in a group to listen to audio Scriptures. Instead, the group watches a Bible content video clip together and then talk about what they have seen.

Bible apps: Individual Scripture Engagement
Bible apps for smartphones can be tools for encouraging personal Scripture reading and Bible meditation.

Sharing God's Word with others using your phone
People can be encouraged to make use of their phones to share God's Word with others.

Media to Movements (M2M)
An end-to-end strategy, making use of social media marketing to identify those who are interested in finding out more, accompanying them on their journey, and helping them to join groups where they can interact with God's Word together with others.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Analytics

Planning Questions:

What **goals** do you have? What do you hope to learn from the process?

What **specific numbers** do you want to aim for (e.g. how many downloads or users)? What kinds of **trends** are you hoping to see in the data?

What are the **most important indicators** you want to look at?

Websites
- Website visitor numbers and page views
- Website file downloads

General
- Video views (number of views and how long people watch for)
- Comments, stories and feedback (on app stores, websites)
- Geographical location (where are people from, in country and diaspora)

Social media
- Social media views (number of people who see your posts)
- Social media interactions (likes, comments, messages)

Apps
- Number of app installs
- App usage (regular users, time spent in the app, specific actions in the app)
- Use of the Bible translation in the YouVersion Bible app

Planning for Monitoring:

- **Who will be responsible** for retrieving and sharing the analytics data?

- **What comparisons** would be helpful to look at in your reports, e.g. with other digital products and initiatives in your context?

- **How often** should they prepare an analytics report? (monthly, quarterly, etc.)

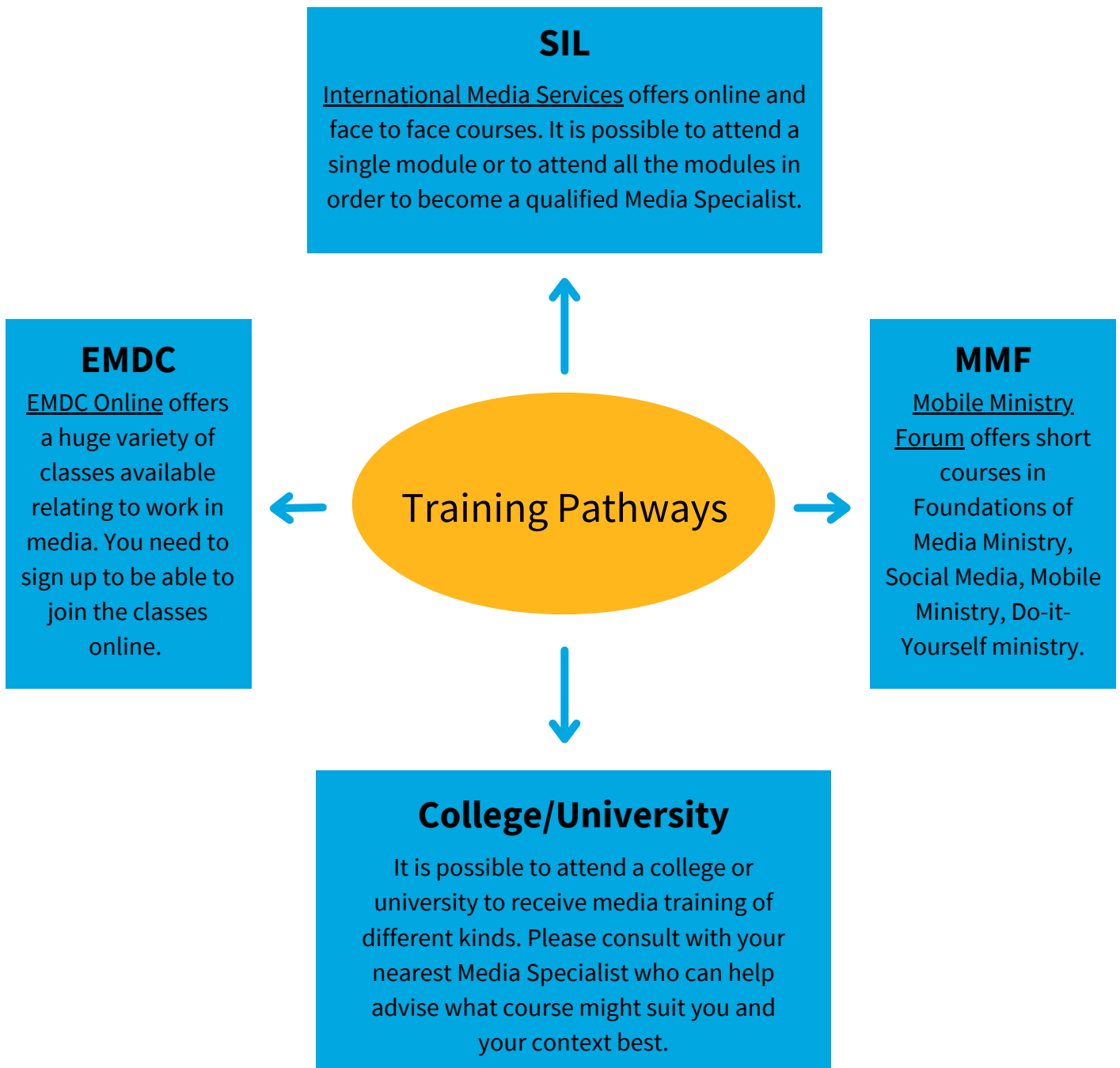- **What training** do they need on how to access relevant analytics data and interpret it?

Evaluation:

Once you have some months of analytics data, here are some questions you can ask as you evaluate your digital strategy:

- To what extent are you **reaching your goals?** What has helped and what has hindered?

- What **feedback** have you received from people who are using your digital products or have engaged in your digital programmes? How will you continue to improve them to meet people's needs and interests?

- How successful have your **promotion and distribution** strategies been? What changes could make them more effective?

We want to know how well our digital strategies are working and to act accordingly.

Training Pathways

SIL
International Media Services offers online and face to face courses. It is possible to attend a single module or to attend all the modules in order to become a qualified Media Specialist.

EMDC
EMDC Online offers a huge variety of classes available relating to work in media. You need to sign up to be able to join the classes online.

Training Pathways

MMF
Mobile Ministry Forum offers short courses in Foundations of Media Ministry, Social Media, Mobile Ministry, Do-it-Yourself ministry.

College/University
It is possible to attend a college or university to receive media training of different kinds. Please consult with your nearest Media Specialist who can help advise what course might suit you and your context best.

Further opportunities for training can be found on the Scripture Engagement website

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in contact with the IMS Training Director.