

Jim's Tool Box

New Features on Link 2 Lead and Percept (Part 1)

“MemberView” Feature Added to Link2Lead site

Percept has recently offered two new features for congregations and judicatories to use in an effort to help congregations better to know both their own members and constituents and the wider community around them. Percept is a national organization that provides demographic data to local congregation leaders through contracts with judicatory organizations (in our case the West Ohio Conference).

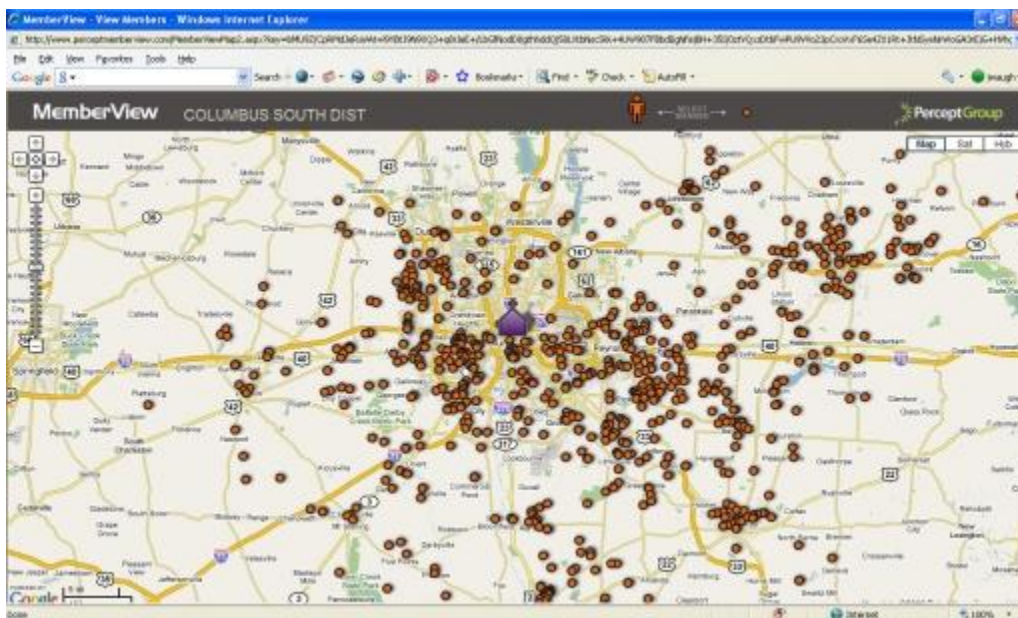
Congregations in our annual conference can then benefit from the services of Percept at no cost for many of the services and much of the information that Percept offers. If you want to know more about those basic services, you can click [HERE](#) to find a Tool Box article that I wrote two years ago about the features of Percept and Link2Lead.

In this month's Tool Box, I want to focus on one of the new tools. This one is directly available to congregations through link2lead.com This is the website that Percept offers to congregations in the West Ohio Conference. The new service is called “MemberView.” This service provides an easy (and free way) to accomplish something that I always wanted to do at while I was at Hilliard. I looked for ways to utilize the database of members and constituents of the congregation and enter those addresses easily into a program that would then show a map of the location of those households around the Hilliard/Columbus metro area.



That is exactly what MemberView does. If you have a database of the addresses of members and friends of your congregation that can be converted into an excel spreadsheet, you can automatically upload the names and addresses or just the addresses into this program. In addition, the program will also show you the distance or drive time that folks have to your congregation.

I uploaded the addresses of our newsletter mailing list into the program in a few minutes (almost 1,000 addresses). The program “geo-tags” the addresses and shows the locations on a Google Map. Here is a screen shot of the results for the mailing list of the Capitol Area South District:



The only difficulty with this image is that we have not updated the location of the district office to the current location. It still shows the location of the old Columbus South District Office on East Broad Street, Columbus (the church icon). But this screenshot does offer a view of the spread of each recipient of the district newsletter across the CAS District.

If I were to click on any of the dots above, it would show me the address of that location.

To get started, log on to the [link2lead](#) website. There you will find information about the MemberView resources. In the article is a link that will take you to the page on which you can start data entry. If you do not have an excel spreadsheet of the addresses of your members and constituents, the program allows you to enter the address information manually through the web page.

As the Link2Lead site points out that there are many possible uses of this too:

MemberView could be used to optimize the administration of events, small groups, shut-in transportation and car-pooling, outreach, neighborhood ministry, volunteer efforts, disaster preparation and recovery, and any other planning activity that benefits from seeing where people are located.

I think it is useful to have a visual that shows the concentration of members and constituents in areas around (or away from) the location of the church building.

So log on to [link2lead](#). Let me know about your experience in using this tool (email me at jwaugh@wocumc.org). On the administrative side of the Percept website, I can see which congregations have entered data in the MemberView, and I can view the maps that are created.

In next month's tool box, I'll tell you how we can now create a full Ministry Area Profile for your congregation at no cost to your congregation.