

MICROSITE MINISTRY

Episode 005: Locations - What You Must Ask and Count

Featuring: Mingo Palacios & Esli Medrano

<https://micrositeministry.com>

Transcript:

Mingo Palacios: [00:02](#) I'm never going to disagree with you. Everybody knows you don't disagree with Esli. So let's get into the episode. Launching a site can be one of the most intimidating things in the process of doing a microsite. So, when you were actively leading microsite, did you ever launch a site pure from the ground up when you were on the ground Esli?

Esli Medrano: [00:02](#) Yeah.

Mingo Palacios: [00:36](#) So let's, let's go through the history of how you launched the site.

Esli Medrano: [00:45](#) Working with microsites you have the tendency of looking at spaces and being like, "Oh, here would be a nice place to have microsites. So it always happens

that way when you work at microsite for so long. We started with a group of friends, "Hey, we're gonna do this together as friends, as a ministry." Back in the day was a hiking ministry, we would just-

Mingo Palacios: [00:45](#)

Yes, I remember.

Eslí Medrano: [01:04](#)

We were just a bunch of friends that wanted to do something for the Lord that was more than just hiking. So we rallied some people and then we went and looked for a location after that. But the decision to have a church on Sundays with us, and it was like you said, intimidating, because you're thinking, "Are people gonna come? Is anybody going to show up? How are we gonna do this? Who's going to get the equipment?"

Mingo Palacios: [01:31](#)

Right. I see what you're saying there where you first have to leap over the mental hurdle that you're going to start a church.

Eslí Medrano: [01:31](#)

Yes.

Mingo Palacios: [01:44](#)

Beyond just a location. You are going through the emotional checklist of the fact that you are now going to begin a regular service for people to attend and it's not just a one time event.

Eslí Medrano: [01:58](#)

And there's responsibility too because you aren't going to start a microsite every Sunday. So you want to have some sort of a responsibility in this sense say, "OK, I'm going to be there on Sundays. I can't really miss Sundays. Am I ready to commit my Sundays?"

Mingo Palacios: [02:11](#) Yeah, that's a big deal. While you're talking, I'm going to move your microphone, but while you're talking I'm going to do that. So I love that you started with the group of people. This was a mutual collective decision. It wasn't like you mandated a location as a group, you decided, let's start to find a place where we feel like the Lord would allow us to run a microsite. Walk us through that process, walk our audience through that process so that they can get an idea of how to approach the plate when they're thinking about launching their first site.

Esli Medrano: [02:56](#) I'm so distracted by you right now. It was a process of, like you said, everybody agreed on this new adventure, you call it. Everybody agreed that we all had different strengths and we're all going to use it together. So some of us were nicer than others. Some of them were smarter than others. So we try to use everybody's strengths to get this team going. And so, and even the location, we all agreed on that location. So we all had the agreement of we're going to do this together so we're gonna put our two cents. Everybody's going to put our two cents and really get this going. So it was more like an agreement, like let's do this together as a family to see what happens. Am I answering your question?

Mingo Palacios: [02:56](#) Yeah. I think you're answering the question right. I'm going to pull the principal out of the particulars.

Esli Medrano: [02:56](#) Yeah. Awesome.

Mingo Palacios: [02:56](#) It sounds to me like you assess the strengths of the people on your team. I'm guessing you probably asked the question, "Who do we know and what do we have access to?"

Eslí Medrano: [04:05](#) Right. So when we got the team and it was like eight of us. We decided to figure out, OK where do we want to go? One of the team had already in mind, "Hey, I go to a coffee shop every Thursday and I see a bunch of people and there's one park that's near it and it was in Chicago Park in San Diego" and he's like, "Hey, I wonder if we can have microsite in that coffee shop?" So we were like, "Huh, is it big enough?" "Yes, it's big enough." And we're like, "Great, let's go. Let's all meet on a Wednesday night. And it was just see if we can get that going."

Mingo Palacios: [04:39](#) Yes. Now we're getting into the details so somebody has an idea of where a site could potentially be. They don't go through the like, "Hey, we'd like to know if we can host a church service here?" You're just doing research. You're going and investigating. Miles talks about a process- count, walk, ask love, right? I'm going to assume that this is a part of that process. I love that model so much. You counted the cost. That was that mental checklist that you said. Miles uses it as like count the details around the space that you might be launching a ministry. I think that's a hundred percent valid, right? Miles says, "How many coffee shops in the area? How many parks are in the area? How many churches are in the area? How many schools are in the area?" So that you get an idea of

the data that exists around the area you might be doing ministry in. I like to add to that you count the mental, physical and spiritual cost, right? The commitment to going in every week. The commitment to owning a role on a team. The commitment to showing up no matter how I feel or what the weather's like. That's the mental costs, the count there. What you guys talked about going and scouting it out, that's the actual walk part, right? That's like we're going to walk the area. You walk it, you don't run it because it's slow. You take a slow and detailed look at the space that you're thinking about doing the ministry so you can get a full breath of what that place may look like once you start doing ministry there. That's what you guys did.

Eslí Medrano: [06:17](#)

Yeah. Yeah. But and in that walking you also had to think of the people that you're going to impact because yeah, the coffee shop was great, but when we got to the coffee shop, we realize, well really there's no people around this coffee shop only the people that come. And it doesn't mean that they're going to come on a Sunday. So is there any people that you see that are active outside or are there any houses out there that you may want to go in and knock on doors?

Mingo Palacios: [06:45](#)

I remember you and I leading when we had regional leaders and they had the idea, "Oh we have access to a parking lot." Remember they were like, "Oh, we have access to a space." And then because they had

access to it didn't necessarily mean that it was a great space to launch a site.

Eslí Medrano: [06:45](#) Right. It happens often.

Mingo Palacios: [07:07](#) Because we fail to do the walk part, the assessment, the slow assessment. We decided to make a fast decision because you have the possibility of launching a site doesn't always mean that it's going to have the potential of the greatest impact.

Eslí Medrano: [07:23](#) So that's why I said I don't know if I disagree with you with location part because I actually like to say first you make the commitment you're going to lead this beast.

Mingo Palacios: [07:23](#) So good.

Eslí Medrano: [07:33](#) Second, you rally your people. You rally your friends or the ones that owe you a favor.

Mingo Palacios: [07:33](#) You stack hands right?

Eslí Medrano: [07:33](#) Yeah.

Mingo Palacios: [07:38](#) You stack hands in the middle. You say it no matter what.

Eslí Medrano: [07:40](#) And then the third is you go and look for those souls that you want to target and then the location. That's why I said, I don't know about the location.

Mingo Palacios: [07:49](#) That's good. I just try to simplify it so that when people are taking notes, they're like, cool get a team. Choose the lead.

Eslí Medrano: [07:58](#) Yeah because in the so many years we've been doing this, I think I've found that it's so difficult to go with a location.

Mingo Palacios: [07:58](#) Right.

Eslí Medrano: [08:07](#) Because it's like, OK, where's the people? You do have an amazing location but the people around-

Mingo Palacios: [08:10](#) You could have an amazing location in death valley.

Eslí Medrano: [08:10](#) Yes. Yes.

Mingo Palacios: [08:13](#) And not have a single person to reach.

Eslí Medrano: [08:16](#) And you're going to drive them nuts, you know? So I would rather have a location next to a dumpster, knowing there's going to be people coming.

Mingo Palacios: [08:16](#) Which exists.

Eslí Medrano: [08:25](#) This does exist. I'd rather have it next to a dumpster knowing that there's going to be saved and impacted by the Lord.

Mingo Palacios: [08:25](#) Yeah that's so good.

Eslí Medrano: [08:36](#) So that's why I said, "I don't know if I could agree with you" but it is the people. You want to go for the people. And I have tons of emails that I get during the week that say, "Hey, I have a great place where you

could have a microsite." And I'm like, OK, I go and see the place and there's nobody around.

Mingo Palacios: [08:47](#)

That's good. Now how often as the site pastor do you roll the dice, that you gamble on a location and what does it look like to decide to try and then what do you use as measurements as you assess whether or not it's worth staying or going? Because I know that there's a spiritual development side on a team, so I love what you said about the team commits to the location, assessing the potential people that it can impact. But if you go and nobody comes, I think of some of the parks that we've run microsities in and for weeks and weeks and weeks, people are measuring you. They're looking at you from the outside saying, I see what these people are doing. I'm not sure it's for me. I'm skeptical of whether or not they're going to even be here next week or not. Right.

Esli Medrano: [08:47](#)

Yes. It happens often with the homeless.

Mingo Palacios: [09:41](#)

The homeless community certainly is a tough one to break into, but I believe there is a growth opportunity for the team and committing to being somewhere despite whether or not people are coming or not. I always tell people, you celebrate the fact that you started not the number of people that are sitting in the chairs.

Esli Medrano: [10:01](#)

Often, often we have moments where they're like, "Ah, same people again, same 20 people again, no new people"

Mingo Palacios: [10:08](#) No new members,

Esli Medrano: [10:08](#) No new members.

Mingo Palacios: [10:08](#) No new visitors.

Esli Medrano: [10:12](#) So some people are like, "Ah, Esli again, we have the same amount of people." But you don't know what the Lord is doing. So I really rely, um, it's going to sound really Christianese peeps but I really rely on the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit tells you is it a good move is not a good move or you should stay or not. I just got a text message from one of my teams are like, "We really wanted to quit until we saw that we had five people." Five people, of course. I mean the team is four.

Mingo Palacios: [10:41](#) It seems skinny, right? The team of four and five people attending.

Esli Medrano: [10:47](#) And it's like "ah", you know, and I actually considered messaging me like, "Hey, Esli like we should just leave here." There's no, there's no-

Mingo Palacios: [10:47](#) Shut it down.

Esli Medrano: [10:55](#) Yeah, let's kill it. And then there's one guy that came, one guy that accepted the Lord, so they're like, "Forget it Esli. We're just going to continue here."

Mingo Palacios: [11:02](#) You know what's so funny is I always felt like it was a reasonable ask when you had a team of four or a team of six and let's say maybe you had four or five people attending that you commit to loving those four

or five, like it's 40 or 50, right? I've heard it said from some great leaders that you do for one, what you wish you could do for everyone. Right? So if you have four or five people, you make that service the best you can deliver. The hospitality meter can be way up when you're only serving four or five people. You can be very specific about how you take care of the people coming to your microsite when it's four or five. When it becomes 40 or 50, it becomes much more difficult to love that community specifically. So I say because a microsite is always an expression of the local church. It's like the Costco samples of the product that's on the shelf behind it.

Esli Medrano: [11:02](#)

I love that.

Mingo Palacios: [12:04](#)

So what you want to do is you want to be really, really responsible. You want to be totally committed to those four or five because the taste that they get is going to be the evidence of the people that they're going to bring, right? They're going to decide whether or not they want to bring a friend or their wife or their brother or their kids or their neighbor, and so if you treat four or five, like a disappointment, what makes you think that they're going to believe that it's a great thing?

Esli Medrano: [12:36](#)

And what kind of Jesus? I mean what kind of example? I mean, if you can't handle five people, how do you want a 50-

Mingo Palacios: [12:42](#) How do you believe that 15 or 25 are going to come? That's when people start to chase numbers in the microsite world.

Esli Medrano: [12:42](#) It's dangerous.

Mingo Palacios: [12:49](#) And it's upside down. I really do believe scripture is so clear, right? Faithful with a few trusted, with more, right? Faithful with a few. Faithful with a few. People were like, "Ah, there's not enough people here. We don't want to go all out. We don't want to go. We don't want to unpack all that we can because we don't have enough here yet." I think it's the opposite. You unload as much as you can with who god brings to the table and you let him, you let him bring who he wants to bring. Rick says it really well. He says, "You're responsible for the depth of your ministry and God is responsible for the breadth of your ministry."

Esli Medrano: [12:49](#) Oh I love that. Oh Rick.

Mingo Palacios: [12:49](#) So good, right?

Esli Medrano: [12:49](#) Yes. I might use that.

Mingo Palacios: [13:32](#) So we have to be responsible. We have to be responsible for the depth and he's responsible for the breadth. So launching a site, you understand that it's not the place, but the people that matter when you're deciding.

Esli Medrano: [13:45](#) Oh, that's what happened with us in the coffee shop. We ended up going to the coffee shop, but we figured "Eh this is not really close to the people."

Mingo Palacios: [13:45](#) Yes

Esli Medrano: [13:45](#) Let's go across the street.

Mingo Palacios: [13:45](#) Into the park

Esli Medrano: [13:45](#) Into the park.

Mingo Palacios: [13:55](#) And then you're like, "Oh, there's no power here."

Esli Medrano: [13:55](#) There's no power.

Mingo Palacios: [13:58](#) And there's gangs here. There's drive by shootings.

Esli Medrano: [14:04](#) There's three gangs there. There's drive-by shootings. Then we looked and we saw a barbershop.

Mingo Palacios: [14:04](#) Yes. I remember this.

Esli Medrano: [14:09](#) And then we just ended up being at that barbershop.

Mingo Palacios: [14:09](#) That barbershop was more of a connection to the people than the coffee shop was.

Esli Medrano: [14:09](#) It was.

Mingo Palacios: [14:15](#) And it didn't seem like a barbershop would be a great place to hold a service, but your relationships with the people in that space-

Esli Medrano: [14:15](#) And that's what the Lord really wanted to do.

Mingo Palacios: [14:15](#) Yes.

Esli Medrano: [14:15](#) The Lord wasn't after the people in that park that we thought we were going for. The Lord was after the guys that were cutting hair in the barbershop.

Mingo Palacios: [14:33](#) That's what I love. So what we think is going to be the greatest impact sometimes is not what the Lord is doing and we have to be very keen to lean on the Lord when we're assessing those things. So we talked about whether or not you pay for a site.

Esli Medrano: [14:33](#) No.

Mingo Palacios: [14:46](#) Esli would believe because I think that we have the same heartbeat here. There's plenty of free places to launch a site before you start paying for one, but if you're working backwards off of a multi-site model, the inclination is, "OK, well how much is it going to cost for us to secure a building?" So let's talk about this.

Esli Medrano: [15:03](#) So I always go with a no, and I always get the whole "Oh Esli but we have... this amazing. This is perfect." Yes, but it's not. I'd rather use that money for something else, like I'd rather use that money for someone that needs it for rent.

Mingo Palacios: [15:03](#) This is a principal.

Esli Medrano: [15:03](#) Mmm hmm. This is a principal.

Mingo Palacios: [15:27](#) This is a ministry principal. Money is not unlimited. I mean, yes, God owns the cattle on a thousand hills.

Esli Medrano: [15:27](#) Yes.

Mingo Palacios: [15:35](#) But if you're watching the video, yes you'll see cattle on a 1000 hills, but you have a finite budget. When you're working on micro sites, chances are if you're listening to this, they're barely squeezing a little bit of money for you to try microsities.

Esli Medrano: [15:46](#) It's really inexpensive to do microsities, but you still need to make sure that you are very-

Mingo Palacios: [15:46](#) You've got to manage a budget.

Esli Medrano: [15:46](#) Oh yeah.

Mingo Palacios: [15:52](#) I definitely know that there are some people that come to the tables so excited, so eager to go, "It's only going to be \$100 a month. It's such a great deal."

Esli Medrano: [15:52](#) "It's nothing Esli."

Mingo Palacios: [16:04](#) "They usually charge a thousand." I think that you start backwards with what we just said. You measure the people potential, so if the people potential is high, then I would sacrifice the budget and then give it a time table to figure out if it's actually going to reach and do what I believe it could reach and do. I remember we did this with the Alano club. So the Alano club was in AA facility. People came there to go through the Alcoholics Anonymous Narcotics Anonymous, 12 step program. There was already a built in community there and they were friendly with the church. Some of the people were members and

attending the church, the East county campus. So when I went to go talk to the manager, he said, "Well you know, we usually charge x, y, z amount of money. I'd be willing to let you guys come in and try it for \$50 a month.

Esli Medrano: [16:04](#)

And then he forgot to charge it.

Mingo Palacios: [16:54](#)

And then he decided not to charge us. Yeah. Whether he forgot or decided consciously, he forgot. I'd like to think that he blessed us. We went into an agreement there and it's funny I committed to \$200, so that would have been for four weeks, one month because it was \$50 a week, it was \$200 a month.

Esli Medrano: [17:18](#)

This is where the holy spirit comes in again because you can have the best amazing plays where the Internet and the project is going to look clear and it's going to be a really great way-

Mingo Palacios: [17:18](#)

It has chairs.

Esli Medrano: [17:30](#)

They have chairs you don't have to set up.

Mingo Palacios: [17:30](#)

There's a roof over your head.

Esli Medrano: [17:33](#)

There's a roof so it if rains which it never rains in San Diego, but when it rains and then you have outside, you have a parking lot. There's just enough it's ok.

Mingo Palacios: [17:33](#)

It's got concrete.

Esli Medrano: [17:43](#)

So it got concrete. There's no cars that you need dodge. It's ok. you kind of have to really put your heart

into it. Like really? Do you want the comfort of another church?

Mingo Palacios: [17:54](#) That's good. Do you want a feel like at church or do you want to be where the people could see?

Esli Medrano: [18:00](#) Where the people could see that something's happening. That's where maybe I sound like I'm very stingy and probably I am, but I rather not pay for that amazing location.

Mingo Palacios: [18:11](#) Yeah because you can move those resources elsewhere. You can do something with the resources. I do think that somehow we just stumbled on something that's a great principle, right? Do you want to be where people can see? That's a missional and an outreach focus.

Esli Medrano: [18:11](#) Exactly.

Mingo Palacios: [18:26](#) Or are you just trying to create a space where you can move people into. That would be like a building.

Esli Medrano: [18:26](#) That would be another campus.

Mingo Palacios: [18:35](#) Eventually yeah it could convert to a campus, so that's a strategy that people can deploy. If you want to start building campuses, you allocate some money. You secure a building that you can, you know, move somewhat into and then that becomes a part of the way that you expand the model and mission of your church. If you're going to treat a microsite like a mission's field, which I love, you're going to try to

make it viewable by as many people as possible. You want their curiosity factor to go up. The same reason people won't walk into your churches is the same reason why people won't walk into your microsite if it's behind closed doors. I know this.

Esli Medrano: [19:12](#) Exactly. We've seen several homeless people were like, "Oh, I don't know if I want to be in that building" but I'll sit in this chair.

Mingo Palacios: [19:17](#) I'm happy to sit in this park because I sit in this park every day. If that's a homeless focus, so be it, but we've got a lot of communities or neighborhoods that people are trained to reach by way of proximity. I was just on the phone with the church yesterday. They have 12 counties that they want to reach and they've got multisites in four of those 12 and they said financially it's upside down for us to imagine being an all 12 of those counties. I said, "Put microsities at each of them and try them out. Figure out where the biggest population or the biggest potential reach is for people who are yet to experience the taste of your church's brand." Right? Remember like Costco samples that you get a taste of what your church brings to the table and then roll them out accordingly and maybe you don't have a huge hit in one county. The nice thing about a microsite is that the equipment is mobile, so you can move it the same equipment to another county, test it out and go, "You know what? I like it here. I like it here better, better results, better return, better impact, better movement, all things better." OK. So we went through how to launch your

site, the process that you should go through to recap, count, walk, ask love, right? And we didn't get to the ask and love part. Maybe we can set that for the second episode.

- Eslí Medrano: [19:17](#) Let's do that.
- Mingo Palacios: [20:38](#) Count and walk is what you should be deploying. When you think about launching your first sentence
- Eslí Medrano: [20:44](#) And the count also has a lot to do when you count on what, why, why is your purpose.
- Mingo Palacios: [20:44](#) That's good.
- Eslí Medrano: [20:49](#) Because there's a lot of people that come to me, they want to start their own church and so they think, "Oh, I'm going to do a microsite."
- Mingo Palacios: [20:49](#) "I'm going to short track it through a microsite and I'm going to mean
- Eslí Medrano: [20:57](#) I've had tons of people telling me, "I want to preach, so I'm going to go to a microsite."
- Mingo Palacios: [20:57](#) Yeah, that's not the vision.
- Eslí Medrano: [21:08](#) Not the vision. Wrong place. So, what is the count? What is it that you expect the Lord to do? What do you expect the Lord to do in you? What is your goal? What is your agenda?
- Mingo Palacios: [21:08](#) That's really good?

Esli Medrano: [21:16](#) Where are you going with this? Are you just there to be the one that's getting the attention.

Mingo Palacios: [21:16](#) The face.

Esli Medrano: [21:22](#) Or do you want people to really know what the Lord is doing in your church? If you're going to make this to be in your church, are you in love with your church enough? Are you in love with their pastor enough-

Mingo Palacios: [21:22](#) To multiply it.

Esli Medrano: [21:33](#) To multiply it so that everybody can hear what the pastor is saying?

Mingo Palacios: [21:35](#) That's such a great question Esli. This is not a me display. This is a my church display. That's really good. Esli, thank you so much for giving us that perspective. I always value you to death. I love that we get to now talk about the years of ministry that we did together for all of our listeners who want to follow along with what you've got going on in the ministry, you can be found at-

Esli Medrano: [21:35](#) @micrositegirl on Instagram,

Mingo Palacios: [22:03](#) @microsite girl on instagram. You can find me @microsite guy on Instagram. If you want to get even more nitty gritty you can find me at @mingo2 and

Esli Medrano: [22:14](#) @micrositegirl, you can see everything there. But really you can go to sdrock.com. I think we're going to get a new website so just search us at sdrock.com

Mingo Palacios:

[22:32](#)

Microsites, chances are The Rock has influenced it if you find it, any other church. They've been around for a long time. To our viewers, love you. Hope your ministry is going well. I pray confidence over you and courage. I pray a spirit of unity with the team members that you're gathering together as you determined to step out of the four walls of your church and I pray for your leadership that has to be with you in this project. Until next episode when we talk about asking and loving, let's talk about that in the next episode. We'll talk to you guys soon.

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