



# 2020 Statement of ROI

THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FROM **PROVIDING CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS,**  
A PROGRAM OF **THE MAILBOX CLUB,**  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2020

Prepared by:

CALVIN EDWARDS  
& COMPANY

*Maximizing the Good of Giving*



for:

**ROI Ministry**  
780 Old Roswell Place  
Suite 100  
Roswell, GA 30076

in collaboration with:

**The Mailbox Club**  
404 Eager Road  
Valdosta, GA 31602

August 2021

**NOTICE**

*Version 1.0, August 2021. Copyright © 2021 ROI Ministry (ROIM) and Calvin Edwards & Company (CEC), a philanthropic advisory firm. For additional information, contact CEC at 770.395.9425 or [info@calvinedwardscompany.com](mailto:info@calvinedwardscompany.com). To learn more about ROIM and its "Top 10" ministry list, contact ROIM at 470.493.0327 or [timothycbarker@gmail.com](mailto:timothycbarker@gmail.com). This 2020 Statement of ROI was prepared using information and materials provided by The Mailbox Club (TMC), discussions with TMC personnel, and other sources. It may be distributed to support the program it describes but may not be used for any commercial purpose.*



## Introduction

ROI Ministry (ROIM) seeks to identify, support, and promote ministries that have high levels of impact per dollar invested. These organizations proclaim the gospel, bring people to faith, or help the poor and needy in the name of Christ—and do so in very effective ways, thus ensuring a high return on investment (ROI) for kingdom giving.

Each year, since 2011, ROIM has identified and published its list of “Top 10” ministries that operated programs in the prior year that reaped significant outcomes with the finances entrusted to them. For 2020, the list includes The Mailbox Club and its program, Providing Children’s Bible Lessons.

Calvin Edwards & Company (CEC), a philanthropic advisory firm in Atlanta, GA, has extensive experience calculating ROI, and performing similar analyses, for many organizations worldwide. ROIM has engaged CEC to conduct a professional, third-party review and ROI calculation of each “Top 10” ministry program since 2014. CEC was not engaged to identify the ministry programs or verify that their ROI exceeds others’.

In addition to considering kingdom “return,” ROIM has adopted 18 standards that “Top 10” ministries should meet. These are presented in Appendix A. How The Mailbox Club and its program align with these standards is indicated on the following pages with color-coded symbols. The Confidence Rating presented on page 5 indicates CEC’s estimated confidence that the ROI calculation is reasonably accurate. It is based on (i) findings when the organization’s claims pertaining to compliance with standards were examined, and (ii) analysis of the quality of the data and explanations provided to perform the calculation.

The Mailbox Club completed the application process for its program, Providing Children’s Bible Lessons, and was selected by ROIM from a pool of applicants. This *2020 Statement of ROI*, created by CEC, constitutes an independent verification that the program efficiently and effectively used funds in 2020 to reach the lost with the Gospel.



# The Mailbox Club

**LEGAL NAME**

The Mailbox Club, Inc. (TMC)

**ADDRESS**

404 Eager Road  
Valdosta, GA 31602

**TELEPHONE**

229.244.6812

**WEBSITE**

www.mailboxclub.org

**MISSION**

“To win the children and young people of the world to Christ and help nurture them into spiritual maturity through Bible courses, and into local churches. This is accomplished through direct ministry and by multiplying our efforts through key partnerships and the body of Christ around the world.”

**GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS**

79+ countries

**STRATEGY**

To win the children and young people of the world to Christ and help nurture them into spiritual maturity, TMC produces materials and provides human resources to train indigenous church members to teach Christ-centered Bible lessons to children worldwide.

**STATEMENT OF FAITH**

1 Yes, consistent with historic Christian creeds

**LAUSANNE COVENANT**

2 Yes, subscribes to the Covenant

**LEADERSHIP FAITH COMMITMENT**

3 Leadership manifests a personal commitment to Jesus and is actively involved in a church.

**NUMBER OF PAID STAFF**

94

**BOARD**

4 Seven members

**INDEPENDENCE**

5 The president serves on the board; the remaining six members are independent.

**BOARD DONORS**

All contributed in 2020

**MEETING FREQUENCY**

6 Quarterly

**SENIOR EXECUTIVE**



John Mark Eager grew up around TMC and joined the staff in 1990 to help Child Evangelism Fellowship develop a follow-up program in Eastern Europe.

He became TMC’s CEO and president in 1995. Mr. Eager graduated from the University of Georgia with a BS in agricultural engineering; he also obtained a professional engineer license in civil engineering.

**EMAIL**

jmeager@mailboxclub.org

**AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

7 Yes, by Goldsmith Molis & Gray, PLLC

**TRANSPARENCY**

8 10 Yes, financial statements have always been available to the board, and it reviews the annual audit and Form 990; starting in 2022, financials will be provided to the board quarterly; they are provided to the public upon request.

**ACCOUNTING CONTROLS**

9 Yes, internal accounting controls have been implemented.

**RESPONSIVENESS**

11 Acceptable; responded to questions with some delay.

**501 (C) (3)**

12 September 1972

**DONATION DEDUCTIBILITY**

Yes, U.S.

**LATEST FORM 990 FILING**

2020

**FOUNDED**

13 1965, by George Eager

**LEGAL RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ENTITIES**

None

**PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

✓ **BIBLE COURSES**—21 age-specific Bible courses. The lessons are delivered by hand, the internet, and postal mail, also through churches and public schools.



A teacher in Tanzania teaching a TMC lesson at the Gihembe refugee camp

✓ **TEACHER TRAINING**—TMC trains thousands of indigenous church leaders and tens of thousands of volunteers to disciple children using its materials.

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION, 12/31/20**

Assets	\$2,867,008
Liabilities	\$153,772
Net assets	\$2,713,236
Portion restricted	\$2,383,873

Source: Audited financial statements. A Statement of Financial Position is the balance sheet of a nonprofit organization.

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES, 1/1/20 – 12/31/20**

Revenue	\$3,915,722
Expenses	\$3,455,576
Net income	\$460,146

Source: Audited financial statements. A Statement of Activities is the income statement or profit & loss statement of a nonprofit organization.

**MINISTRY UNIQUENESS**

TMC works almost exclusively with children and youth, delivers Bible lessons by hand—thus allowing for mentoring—and partner ministries with many organizations that provide local leaders and volunteers.

● ROI Standard met; numbers correspond to Standards in Appendix A. ◆ ROI Standard is not met.

## Providing Children's Bible Lessons

### PROGRAM PURPOSE

TMC is a single-program ministry; therefore, the program purpose is the same as the organization's purpose, to win the children and young people of the world to Christ and help nurture them into spiritual maturity.

### PROGRAM STRATEGY

The program strategy also replicates the organization's strategy. To win the children and young people of the world to Christ and help nurture them into spiritual maturity, TMC develops, produces, and distributes materials and provides human resources to train indigenous church members to teach Christ-centered, sequential Bible lessons to children worldwide.

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

TMC challenges indigenous churches and national leaders to wake up to the spiritual needs of children and youth. It then partners with indigenous volunteers who want to



Boys in Indonesia reading TMC Bible lessons

reach children but lack resources to do so. It trains them to evangelize children and provides them with children's Bible lessons. TMC Bible lessons are translated into many languages and written in a way that children can easily understand. Distributing the lessons by hand allows for an interactive

learning process that connects the students to godly mentors. Each child is encouraged to come to saving faith in Christ. Subsequent lessons help disciple children into deeper spiritual maturity and involvement in local churches. TMC leaders remain in contact with partner ministries for a year and offer ongoing training and encouragement. At the end of the year, one-page summary reports from partners and testimonies from children are collected to review the program's success.

### RATIONALE FOR THE STRATEGY

Focusing on the spiritual needs of children and youth fills an important gap, especially in the non-Western world. TMC has greater impact because it trains indigenous church members to disciple children, with the Bible lessons as a resource. A limited, inexpensive method of training allows for extensive ministry in many young lives.

### CURRENT STATUS

The program has been in operation for more than 50 years in a similar form, and so it is well established. TMC is developing a program in response to a request from the minister of education in South Sudan in 2019 to provide Bible courses for three million school children. Organizations have continued to reach out to TMC in

2020 requesting discipleship programs for children. In 2019, the first training of "instructors of teachers" began and grew throughout 2020. Seven new translation projects started in 2020. These will add to the 100+ languages into which TMC has been translated.

### PROGRAM IMPACT

TMC has received many testimonies of students coming to faith in Christ and gaining a clear understanding of the Bible. Often, once students accept Christ, their families and friends come to Christ as well.

In 2016, TMC independently engaged Calvin Edwards & Company to evaluate the effectiveness of TMC's Explorer 1 program in India and found:

- ✓ 79.2% of non-believers became believers during the program.
- ✓ 41% increase in those who chose to live a life pleasing to God.
- ✓ All four outcomes TMC sought to achieve among children improved by at least 36%.

TMC believes current programs generate similar results.

### OUTPUTS

14 The program generated the following outputs in FY 2020:

- ✓ Over 3.55 million students completed at least one TMC course of 10-12 Bible lessons.
- ✓ Over 549,784 volunteers and 66,218 churches participated in the discipleship process.

### PRIMARY OUTCOME

15 The return generated by this program is expressed in terms of **children being disciplined**, which is counted as those who complete a series of 10 - 12 TMC Bible lessons over a period of 4-12 months. The ROI calculation on the following page refers to this outcome.

### SECONDARY OUTCOME

15 Also, the program generated the following secondary outcome:

- ✓ **Children indicated decisions for Christ.** Students indicated this through a response on a Bible lesson. The metric associated with this outcome is reported below the ROI calculation on the following page.

### EXPENSE TRACKING

16 TMC tracks costs associated with program outputs and outcomes.

### DONOR REPORTING FREQUENCY

17 Annually; major donors may request additional reporting, which TMC provides as available.

### DONOR ACCESS

18 Yes

## Return on Investment Calculation

### OUTCOME ACHIEVED

In 2020, TMC’s program, Providing Children’s Bible Lessons, resulted in 3,559,830 children being disciplined. This is defined as a child completing a series of 10-12 TMC Bible lessons over a period of 4-12 months.

Outcome
<b>3,559,830</b> children disciplined

### DATA COLLECTION METHOD

TMC’s partner ministries and churches are asked to fill out an online survey annually to report data. TMC’s country coordinators direct this process, ensuring that the partner ministries fill out the survey. TMC’s regional directors work with the country coordinators to verify data submitted.

### COST OF ACHIEVING THE OUTCOME

The cost to achieve this outcome was \$3,455,576. Because TMC operates only one program, the program cost is the same as the overall ministry expenses for the year. It is broken down into 87% program expenses, 10% fundraising expenses, and 3% management and general expenses.

Program Cost
<b>\$3,455,576</b>

### COST PER OUTCOME

Therefore, the cost per outcome is:

$$\mathbf{\$3,455,576 \text{ program cost} \div 3,559,830 \text{ children disciplined} =}$$

Calvin Edwards & Company calculated TMC’s cost per outcome for prior years: 2019, \$0.82; 2018, \$0.89; 2017, \$1.23; 2016, \$1.79; 2015, \$1.54; 2014, \$1.86; 2013, \$2.12.

Cost Per Outcome
<b>\$0.97</b> per child disciplined

### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The return on investment of a \$1,000 investment by a donor would be:

$$\mathbf{\$1,000 \text{ investment} \div \$0.97^1 \text{ cost per child disciplined} =}$$

### SECONDARY OUTCOME

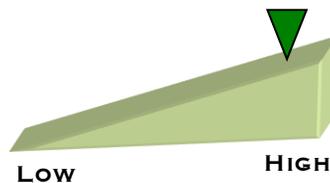
In addition, the program had the following secondary outcome:

**1,825,122 children indicated decisions for Christ**

Return on \$1,000 Investment
<b>1,030</b> children disciplined

### CONFIDENCE RATING

CEC’s estimated confidence that the ROI calculation is reasonably accurate is:



<sup>1</sup>The exact number used for this calculation was \$0.9707.



## APPENDIX A

# ROI Ministry Standards

ROI Ministry has established 18 standards—13 for the organization and 5 for the program on which “return on investment” is calculated—that it expects its “Top 10” ministries to meet. These standards are strongly recommended, though ROIM recognizes that circumstances may exist where variations are warranted. The organization’s compliance to these standards is shown on pages 2 and 3, by numbered, colored symbols.

### STANDARDS FOR THE ORGANIZATION

#### CHRISTIAN

1. The organization has a statement of faith consistent with historic Christian creeds.
2. The organization subscribes to The Lausanne Covenant of 1974.
3. The organization’s leadership manifests a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and is actively involved in a local church congregation.

#### GOVERNANCE

4. The organization has an active board of directors with at least five members.
5. The board has no more than two non-independent members, and it has at least four independent members for every one non-independent member. An independent member is one who is not an employee or contractor, has no familial relation to any employee, and has no familial relation to another board member.
6. The board meets at least two times per year and at least one of those meetings is in person.

#### FINANCIAL

7. The organization prepares financial statements according to GAAP and complies with FASB standards.
8. Financial statements are provided to the board on a regular schedule.
9. The organization has implemented internal accounting controls to prevent and detect fraud and financial misstatements, including:
  - a. Opening mail and receiving checks, preparation of bank deposits, and recording accounting entries are separated duties performed by different persons or by two persons who monitor each other’s work.
  - b. Reporting any variations from GAAP reporting requirements within financial statements.
  - c. Having financial statements prepared by an accountant without undue influence from management.

#### TRANSPARENCY

10. The organization makes its financial statements or Form 990 available to the public.
11. The organization responds appropriately to external requests for information.

#### LEGAL

12. The organization has 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status with the IRS.
13. The organization has existed in its current form for at least three years.

### STANDARDS FOR THE PROGRAM

#### PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

14. Outputs for the program are measured and reported to its donors.
15. At least one primary outcome for the program is identified, and possibly some secondary outcomes, and efforts are made to measure or estimate these.
16. Costs associated with program outputs and outcomes are tracked.

#### REPORTING & ACCESS

17. The organization reports to its donors on the program’s progress and performance at least semi-annually.
18. The organization provides donors access to the program’s operations.

*ROI Ministry used the professional services of Calvin Edwards & Company to develop these standards. Ver. 1.4, May 2020.*



## APPENDIX B

# Principles for Calculating Return on Investment

There is not a well-established, standard method to calculate ROI for nonprofit organizations. When doing so, many issues arise, largely related to calculating the cost of generating outcomes. Calvin Edwards & Company used the principles below in the calculation presented.

1. ROI is calculated on a discrete program of a ministry. In some cases, a program may involve the whole ministry—this is a “single-program ministry.”
2. The metric for the “return” is the primary outcome of the program.
3. A program may also have secondary outcomes or outputs.
4. The secondary outcomes or outputs are also reported numerically, if available. However, the program cost is not split among outcomes; that is, multiple ROI statistics are not calculated.
5. Program costs include all direct and indirect program costs, including non-cash costs such as depreciation of equipment used for the program, amortization of product development costs, etc.
6. Also, all appropriate overhead is included in the program cost:
  - a. Program overhead—sometimes a ministry tracks overhead attributable to a program; if so, it is included
  - b. Ministry overhead—a proportion of the ministry’s overhead that matches program costs as a proportion of total expenses (for a single-program ministry this is 100%)
7. In some rare cases, all overhead is pre-funded by the board or one or more specific donors. In this case, others’ investments do not fund overhead, and it is excluded from the program cost (see point 9 below).
8. All financial numbers are derived from the ministry’s financial statements; if estimates are used, those estimates are based on financial statements.
9. There may be times when the principles stated here cannot or should not be applied; in these cases, the *Statement of ROI* states the variation, reason, and alternate calculation employed.