MinistryTech

LIVE STREAMING
CHURCH TECH THAT LEAVES NO ONE OUT

>> BEST NEW TECH FOR CHURCHES
>> DREAM GEAR LIST FOR WORSHIP TECH
>> HOW TO GET INTO LIVE STREAMING
>> CREATIVE CHURCH MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

FEBRUARY 2019
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Ministry Tech

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR
Ray Hollenbach

WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT?

The world is getting smaller with astonishing speed. In 1844, Samuel Morse sent the first digital message, *"What hath God wrought?"* via telegraph. His message is actually a quotation from Numbers 23:23. Morse understood that technologies—and human invention—are ultimately the work of God.

World-shrinking changes continued, faster and faster. Alexander Graham Bell invented analogue voice communication in 1876: the telephone. Voice-data went wireless in 1892 when Nikola Tesla invented the radio. 25 years later television technology was invented, and with the electrification of "adding machines," modern computing followed just 15 years later. Fast-forward to our present day, when, in a mash-up of epic proportions, voice, text, and visual data are now so portable that children carry around cell phones, *each one* containing more computing power than was used by NASA to put a man on the moon.

The world is more connected than ever before, but the human plagues of loneliness, bitterness, envy, and strife are still as real as ever—some might argue more so.

The church has always responded by leveraging human technologies for heavenly purposes. From radio waves that carried sermons to isolated individuals, to modern-day live streaming that attempts to bring the worship experience to anyone with a Wi-Fi connection (which is nearly everyone these days). The Good News is available around the world.

And yet, along with the spread of the Good News is the bad news that people are more in need of the gospel than ever: more in need of the church *and* more in need of the human touch within the church. As this issue of Ministry Tech explores the how-to and the why of church technology, one question remains that only the local church can answer: God's *message* is widely available, but where are God's *people*? The church is using tech tools like never before, but where are God's people? Church tech will always need the human touch, and the human touch is the work of local churches. Beyond God's tools, the world still needs God's people.

R. Hollenbach

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TECH CHECK
02.19

SO, YOU WANT TO LIVE STREAM?

Well, first of all, check out the Livestreaming 101 basics in this issue of Ministry Tech!

Then, check out the latest gear from providers like Matrox, which provides three different transcoders—one for every church budget. Or consider a turnkey solution from someone like Vimeo's Livestream.com, which combine highly responsive customer service along with fully integrated firmware, hardware, and software solutions for novices in the live stream game. ∎

ARE YOU AS FAST AS YOU THINK?

How fast is your Internet connection? Don't depend on your Internet Service Provider to tell you! Just because your church purchased the "premium package" from the local ISP, it doesn't mean you're getting what you've been promised. And these days, with live streaming becoming a standard part of church offerings, your Internet connection speed is the foundation for nearly all your communication. PCWorld publishes an annual review of "The Fastest ISPs," both nationally and with regional breakdowns.

Websites like Ookla's Speedtest.net and MegaPath's Speakeast.net offer independent speed checks, and you should visit them regularly. Also, read your user agreement carefully (yes—really): one prominent ISP contract states that 65 percent performance is "within parameters" (which makes us wonder if paying 65 percent of your bill is also considered "full payment!"). ∎

BE HONEST — HOW MUCH OF YOUR SCREEN TIME COMES FROM DISTRACTION?

Everyone says they are trying to reduce distracting screen time, but are they telling the truth? It's one thing to read a weekly report about screen time (nearly all cellular providers can provide that)—but what about apps and browser extensions that will actively help reduce distractions? You don't ever have to fall down the YouTube rabbit-hole again—unless you really want to.

It turns out help is on the way! Facebook and Instagram now provide built-in dashboard features that display your usage as you browse: users can now set reminders to get off the app after a certain amount of time, and can temporarily disable notifications for anywhere between 15 minutes and eight hours. Google and Apple provide features to help you manage screen time (such features are not just for kids, you know.) But the most encouraging develop these days comes from the folks at Stanford University, who've developed Habitlab, a Chrome extension with "over 20 interventions to help you regain control of your browsing." Check out Wired.com's article that gives you the details. ∎

WHY DO WE AVOID NUMBERS?

Numbers have often had an interesting place in ministry. The Bible uses numbers frequently to talk about things like feeding folks with loaves and fishes. The story is miraculous whether it was five or 5,000, but the impact is greater with a number like 5,000. The same is true with the day of Pentecost and the number of folks who came to faith that day. (I might point out: Pentecost happened without any audio systems, projectors, lighting, haze or other cool wizardry we use today. It's just food for thought.)

Churches, though, have often had an aversion to numbers. You've probably heard many times "we don't worship the numbers" when talking about attendance or giving. We should only worship God, but we have to pay attention to what those numbers represent. Giving numbers represent ministry ability and potential. Attendance numbers represent souls.

Technology today allows us to track numbers better than ever before. We can easily see trends and evaluate what parts of our ministries are effective and what parts need improvement, or should be done away with. Numbers allow you to make those evaluations. Without numbers, ministry effectiveness could be compromised and you won't even know it.

As a practical matter, numbers help make sure your organization stays in the black and you have enough seats and bathroom supplies for every soul that decides to show up at any of your events. Many churches are looking at multisite options and building facilities for the community first and their needs second. I wrote about this in the September issue of Ministry Tech. A detailed analysis of your attendance and giving numbers, and the number of folks in need in your community, are critical to making such decisions about investment of dollars and talents. Your strategic ministry plan and your business plan should be tied together, based on solid numbers.

> YOUR STRATEGIC MINISTRY PLAN AND YOUR BUSINESS PLAN SHOULD BE TIED TOGETHER, BASED ON **SOLID NUMBERS.**

Numbers also help balance our faith. God can do what He wants and He chooses to use us; He doesn't really need us. If you had 1,000 people at your church last Sunday, is it realistic to expect 10,000 this Sunday? Numbers help with realism but should not deter our faith. Growing from 1,000 to 2,000 over the course of a year may be a good goal you can accomplish by tracking the numbers. Remember, that's 2,000 souls, 2,000 points of impact and ministry potential.

While we shouldn't worship the numbers or use them as a source of pride, we should focus on the blessings of the Lord and how we can do more with what He has given. Perhaps the numbers aren't so good and we need to evaluate what changes need to be made.

Remember, the Bible even has a book named Numbers.

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MAKING A DREAM GEAR LIST
ARE YOU READY FOR OVERFLOW?

One day a guitarist at my church, someone that I had only met a few weeks prior, showed up to my office and said he had something for church. I went to his car and behold...a beautiful 88-key Mark 1 Rhodes Electric Piano! I asked him how he knew this was a dream of mine for the church stage. He told me he overheard me talking about it with someone else, he saw it in a store and bought it for us. Mind: blown!

A couple of years later an older gentleman who was new to the church asked me about the needs of the church in the area of sound and worship gear. I stuttered. I knew we needed things, but at the moment, I couldn't think of anything. We had been getting away with what we had for so long it was hard to think on the spot. This guy ended up buying some high-end items for the church in other areas like children's ministry and hospitality. From that moment on, I decided I was going to be ready for the next philanthropist conversation.

I suggest every ministry tech leader, at every size, have an ongoing list of technical gear that they need, want and dream of. Is there something that if the church had could better disciple people, increase the effectiveness of its mission, bring joy to the heart of everyone who sees it?

4 how-to's for building a dream list:

1. A dream list can be built in Excel or Google Sheets. This makes it share-able, plus expandable and scalable. Print a physical copy: Keep a three-ring binder in your office or green room with printed up pictures and prices of things the church could use to accomplish its goals.

2. Add both crazy expensive and moderately priced items on the list.
3. Know WHY you want what you want. Avoid personal preference and lean toward what serves the vision of the church.
4. Periodically share this updated list with church leaders and your team. Let them know what the future looks like.

Here's what my personal dream list looks like (starting with crazy to more reasonable):

- $15,000 Upgraded Danley Soundlab Subwoofers
- $4,500 Neve 1073 Preamp for the church studio for tracking high-end vocals
- $3,000 New iMac for front of house for video editing
- $500 Extra Fender Jazz House Bass Guitar for the stage
- $300 Extra Stage Tuners for all instrumentalists
- $100 New Headphones for soundboard

> MOST PEOPLE DON'T PLAN TO FAIL, THEY JUST FAIL TO PLAN.
> *JOHN L. BECKLEY*

We all know the idea of planning for a rainy day, but what about planning for a better one? Most local churches are non-profit organizations, which means people can and will make donations to help fund their mission. Local laws dictate whether or not these funds can be dedicated to specific uses, but in most situations, an earmarked donation can and will go to said request (check with your church leadership). Having practical lists like this will give some teeth and action to a church's vision. What are you waiting for? It's time to make your dream gear list.

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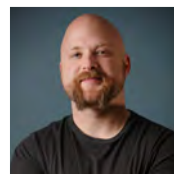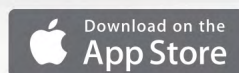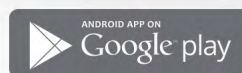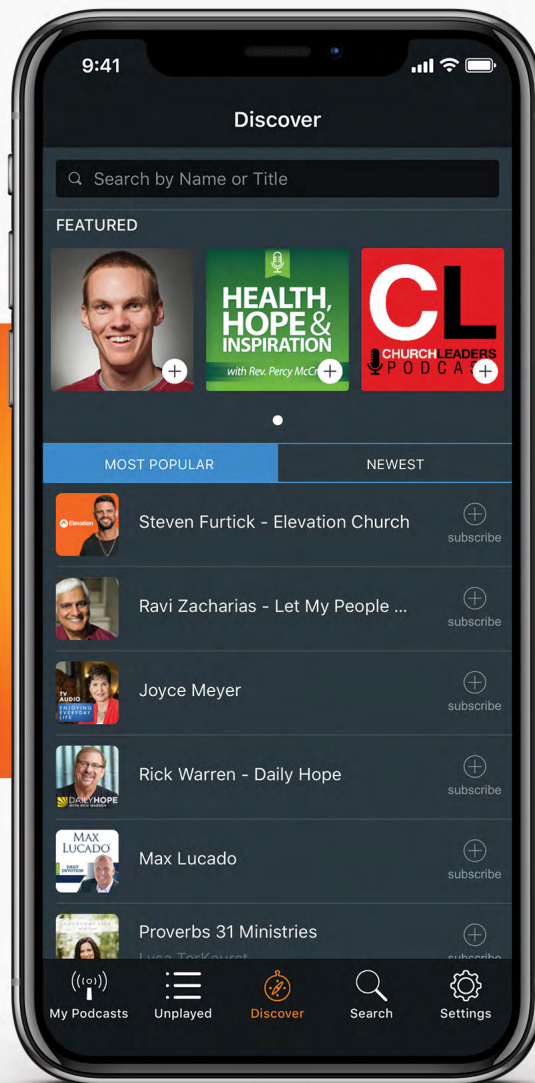
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THREE ESSENTIAL CHURCH MARKETING STRATEGIES

Technology is always changing, but in addition to cutting-edge tools that can help us communicate, following are three strategic characteristics that will help your marketing be successful no matter what tools you use.

Clarity

For audiences both inside and outside the church you must *clearly* explain what you are wanting to market. Event titles like "The Growing Edge," "Riptide," "HUGS" are a few examples that mean little to people outside a certain group. Why would someone come to something when they don't even understand its name? So use a clear name, for example, "Single's Group" (instead of HUGS) or "Adult Bible Class" (instead of The Growing Edge). If you absolutely can't bear to get rid of an unclear name, always add a subtitle: "Riptide, our weekly group for middle-school students."

"Riptide" is the name of an actual church group, and when I asked the pastor why any parent would want to send their child to something that will catch you unaware and drown you, he didn't have much of an answer—which is a reminder to think through carefully before you commit to a name for a church group. You don't want to be always explaining the meaning of something different than what the title means to most people.

Consistency

Come up with *one* message per ministry, season or campaign—and *one* set of colors, font, images—and use them consistently every time you market that event or ministry.

> COME UP WITH ONE MESSAGE PER MINISTRY, SEASON OR CAMPAIGN...AND USE THEM CONSISTENTLY.

"But won't my audience get bored?" is a frequent question. Professional marketers remember this: *Audiences seldom get bored, but they frequently get confused.* People won't know if you are talking about the same program or something new if the theme or colors or presentation change simply because you got bored sending out the same thing again and again. That means that rather than try to find out, people may just click on to the next thing.
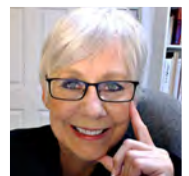
Repetition

This relates to Consistency. In order to cut through the daily noise and get people to respond to your marketing, you must repeat your message frequently. In marketing circles the number used to be seven repetitions, but today that number has increased to "however many times and ways we can get our message out there." Just think of how often the *same* ad is repeated during the *same* prime time program, or how many times you hear about a movie before it comes out.

Some churches get upset if something is in the bulletin more than twice—and then they wonder why no one shows up for anything! We need to remember that no one in our church audience actually sees the marketing for a ministry as many times as we do, and it is true servant's work to put out multi-channel marketing in print, social media, the bulletin, the church website, announcements, postcards, invitations, and using every tool of technology and creativity we can think of to involve people in ministries that will help them grow to mature disciples in Jesus.

Yvon Prehn's ministry to church communicators has two parts: effectivechurchcom.com, a site of FREE templates, strategy and resources, and churchcomtraining.com, a Church Communicators Online Training School.

SPREAD LOVE, NOT MALWARE

It's hard for me to believe that the infamous Internet worm "Love Letter" (or "Love Bug") will turn 19 years old later this Spring. I was fresh out of college, still learning the ins and outs of reverse engineering virus samples, and "Love Letter" provided me my first opportunity to earn my chops, be interviewed and appear on a national news network—thus my life's calling into the cyber battle of good versus evil began!

While considered simple by today's sophisticated malware writing standards, the Love Letter worm was monumental when it first surfaced in May of 2000. Love Letter spread worldwide as an email with the subject line "ILOVEYOU" and containing the attachment "LOVE-LETTER-FORYOU.txt. vbs". Differentiating from earlier computer worms, Love Letter was not limited in sending out copies of itself over email, as it sent itself to everyone in the user's Microsoft Outlook contact listing. Love Letter impacted as many as 15 percent of all computers.

There were many technical achievements that enabled the "success" of Love Letter. However, I've always felt that its dominance was attained through the well-crafted, socially engineered subject line and attachment naming. Who doesn't want to hear or read the words "I Love You" from a family member or friend. After all, possibly the greatest desire we all have is the desire to be loved.

Later this month on February 14th we will celebrate Valentine's Day. On Valentine's Day many of us will be exchanging cards, candy (especially chocolate), and roses. But whether we have a special Valentine to share the day with or not, it's safe to assume the desire to be loved is heightened during this time, and cybercriminals understand this as well.

A little technological correlation that you may not have made previously: Valentine's Day is the holiday of love, but it is also a top day for malware. Valentine's malware comes in all shapes and sizes, but here are a few things to be on the lookout for.

1. Be cautious of fake Valentine's Day eCards. eCards, like those offered by Hallmark (https://www.hallmarkecards.com/) are a quick, free, and easy way of sending a holiday greeting. Like Love Letter, cybercriminals have perfected methods to spoof such eCards to entice you to open them. Once opened, these scams usually load malware, including ransomware, directly on to the system or redirect you to replica sites of popular greeting card websites where they attempt to phish your personal data.

2. Be leery of Facebook, Twitter and other social networking ads promising too-good-to-be-true deals on Valentine's Day presents like high-end jewelry, etc. Similar scams originate weeks before Black Friday shopping, but close in second place, Valentine's Day marks the next biggest holiday for such online scams. In analyzing data from our Thirtyseven4 Virus Labs over the last few years, we have typically seen a 25 percent increase of malware during the Valentine holiday, with a focus on malicious social media targeted ads.

As we approach the famous "day of love," keep your technological wits about you. Try not to get swept off your feet by any eCards or Valentine links. The same principles that we apply to daily online safety are to be applied on February 14th for sure. Only click on legitimate links; know your sender before opening anything; use common sense before opening anything; and save yourself time and strife by just *thinking!*

Better yet, make the effort and spend the time writing your special Valentine a handwritten "love letter." Happy Valentine's Day!

Steven Sundermeier is the owner of *Thirtyseven4, LLC, a leading provider of antivirus/security software. With 17 years of experience in the cybersecurity field, he is one of the nation's leading experts in virus, malware and other threats. Before founding Thirtyseven4 in 2009, Steven worked in a number of roles in the antivirus industry dating back to 1999.*

REALITY CHECK:
ARE YOU COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHURCH?
Opportunities Beyond Sunday Announcements

by One Call Now

It's tough to build engagement and a relationship with people you only see a few hours a week, so how do you stay in contact during the days when people are not in your building?

Having an effective communication strategy for your faith community can be the key to getting more volunteers, encouraging involvement and ultimately growing your membership. The challenge comes with ensuring that you're consistently communicating what's going on and doing so in a way that spurs people to take action—whether that action is volunteering at a local children's home, coming to fellowship or increasing their weekly giving amount. Fortunately, there are some simple steps

> MEMBERS DON'T WANT TO HEAR FROM COMMUNITY LEADERS ONLY WHEN THERE'S MONEY INVOLVED. **CULTIVATE A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP BY SENDING UPLIFTING MESSAGES.**

that you can take that will help your organization become more effective at communicating to all of your members on a regular basis.

You're only reaching a small number of members.

Many churches have difficulty reaching the majority of members quickly in case of emergency or with important news. Consider a church with 150 members, an average size for most churches in the U.S. If you only have 35 email addresses on file, then you're reaching only one-quarter of your total membership with any particular email message! The same goes for phone numbers or mobile numbers. Are you able to effectively send a text message to your constituents if something changes and know that people are being reached?

Communicate a variety of messages.

Members don't want to hear from community leaders only when there's money involved. Cultivate a positive relationship by sending uplifting messages—this will make the times that you do need to ask for a special offering much easier, as members will be more open and willing to listen to needs. If you're asking for money even half of the time, it's a good possibility that your messages will be quickly deleted instead of being read with consideration.

Lack of consolidated communication.

Just like in an office setting, you don't want each team communicating different messages—via different channels—to the same group of people. This lack of strategy can cause constituents to be overwhelmed and tune out all messages. Speak with the different ministry leaders and encourage everyone to pool their contacts into a central database that can be used by the entire organization. When you all see the messages that are being sent, you're able to communicate efficiently and effectively.

Existing tools are inefficient.

Maybe all you do with messaging is post to your organization's Facebook site and hope that people see the message and spread the word. Or maybe you only send emails, or make phone calls. Truthfully, these options are all inefficient by themselves. To effectively reach the majority of members, you need to focus on gathering important contact details from everyone: active members, those who no longer attend services, wallflowers and visitors. That way, you are able to reach members through a variety of methods.

Give members an "Easy Button."

Signing up for notifications and updating contact information to stay in contact shouldn't be a chore. If your

communication tools are making it difficult for people to sign up to interact, then you're doing something wrong! Asking people to download yet another app or avidly follow and check your social media or website is a recipe for disengaged followers. Instead, work with a broadcast messaging solution that makes signup easy.
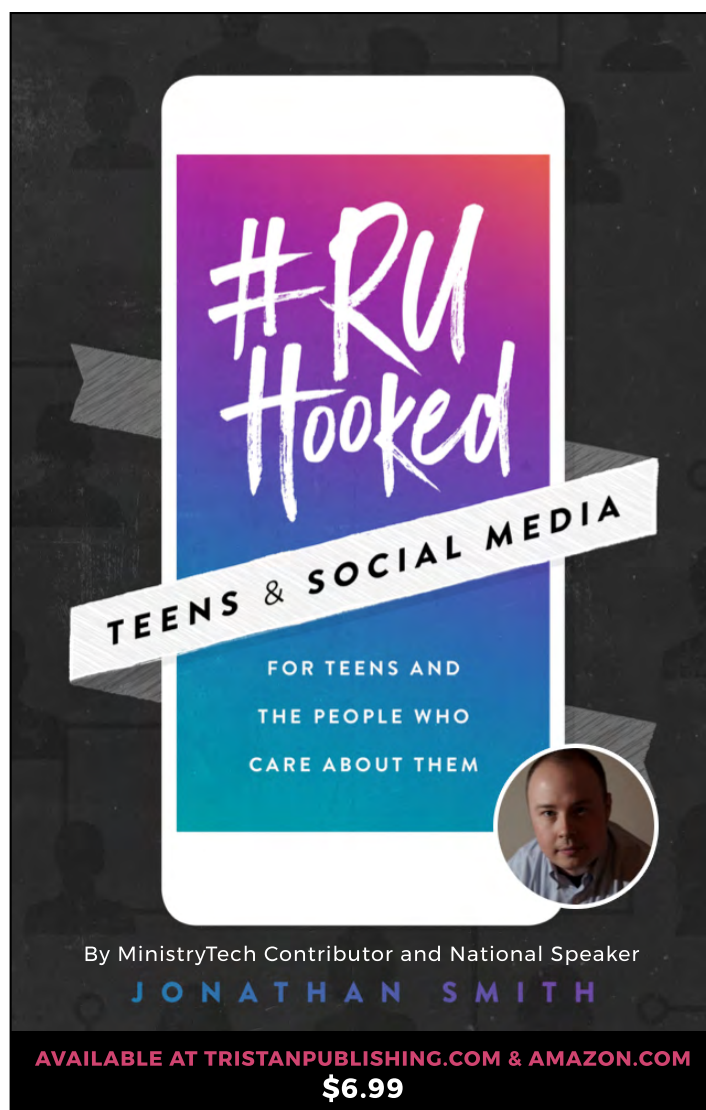
Clarify your messaging strategy.

If your mission and messaging strategy are unclear, you're muddying the water for your members. Everything that you do should go back to your mission and objectives—all of which should be clearly defined by leadership as part of your communication strategy. If random messages are off-topic and don't support the main strategy, they're distracting members from moving in the right direction. Ensure that your ministry leaders and anyone communicating on behalf of the organization clearly understand the mission and core values and can create a consistent theme for members and leaders alike.

Do you see your organization in any of these problems? If so, you may benefit from a unified communications strategy, supported by an easy-to-use platform. One Call Now allows leaders to quickly create a single contact database, choose contacts, craft a message and send it via email, voice message or text message—or all three! Messages can be scheduled for sending in the future, and you'll have one dashboard that includes reports on messages that were received, any invalid contact information, and answers to any questions that you asked. **MT**

One Call Now has grown to be America's largest group messaging provider, since its founding in 2005. The company's solutions equip organizations with fast, reliable tools for sending alerts to many contacts at once across multiple devices.

By MinistryTech Contributor and National Speaker

JONATHAN SMITH

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APPLY FOR A GRANT FROM ONE CALL NOW.

If this sounds like a service your community needs, then take advantage of this special opportunity: One Call Now is providing grants for 2 years of service to 6 deserving communities of faith. The selection process is not random; grants will be awarded based on merit and need. We understand the importance of keeping congregants protected, informed and engaged.

IMPORTANT: this grant is for communities of faith only (i.e. a community of people that share the same religious faith and meet on a regular basis to celebrate their beliefs).

Application deadline is February 15th!

APPLY NOW

CAN YOU TRUST
YOUR LEADERSHIP?

(And the Ramifications for an IT Worker)

by Nick Nicholaou

In 2008 I wrote an article about [how to tithe on behalf of a business](). There is surprisingly little published on the topic, which is why I addressed it. After 10 years, it's still the third highest ranked resource via Google, and I continue to get questions from people wanting to know specifics on how to apply it to *their* business.

I received an interesting question recently that really was about whether one can trust their church's leadership and, ultimately, the Lord. The ramifications go much further than the original question—even to church IT, so it seems worthy of an article.

The Question Posed

"If I feel that the leaders of the church are not doing what they are supposed to do in the church and when something is needed for the house of God they don't buy it—like furniture, carpets, and such—can I use my tithe money to buy those necessary things for the house of God. PLEASE ADVISE."

It felt to me like this is a larger question that relates to faith. Faith in the Lord, and faith in his ability to lead through the leadership he's put in place in his church.

The Answer I Gave

If your faith is in the God of the Bible through Jesus Christ, then you can't help seeing in scripture that the church is *his* church. In fact, it is referred to as the bride of Christ!

If it is his church, and he says that he puts those he wants in leadership positions, can you trust him to lead his church? My guess is that your answer is yes, you want to. If so, we're told to bring our tithes in, not to direct how they are managed. Interestingly, even the IRS says that when you give a donation you

> THERE HAVE BEEN PLENTY OF TIMES IN MY 40+ YEARS AS A CHRIST FOLLOWER THAT MY **CHURCH'S LEADERSHIP HAS MADE A DECISION I WASN'T CONVINCED WAS GREAT.**

relinquish control.

But what if you believe the church leadership is mismanaging? If that's the case, you may need to find another church. Or decide to trust that God is in charge.

Ultimately, tithing is a faith issue. Money always has an emotional tie to our heart. I encourage you to focus on trusting God to manage his church and decide to trust the leadership he's put in place (unless they're violating scripture). Focusing on him—even when you're not certain leadership is going in the right direction—is a terrific step of faith the Lord will bless.

Ramifications for Church IT Employees and Volunteers

I really believe that! There have been plenty of times in my 40+ years as a Christ follower that my church's leadership has made a

decision I wasn't convinced was great. God says he leads the church, and I have chosen to follow him.

A pastor friend once told someone who was leaving the church (who said he couldn't agree with a decision made) that until that moment they had only been walking in parallel paths. Each of the church's previous decisions were what the congregant believed was right. "But with this issue, this is your first opportunity to follow leadership."

Leadership sometimes makes decisions that IT staff and volunteers think may not have been the best IT decision. The common response is to protect the rest of the church by making decisions that leadership should make so leadership can't make the wrong decision. Doing so leads to dysfunction! The staff begins a culture of making *their* own IT decisions too. Before long, the leadership, staff and IT are all frustrated.

Worth Considering

IT's role is not making policy decisions— even about IT issues. IT's role is to inform and influence leadership's IT decisions, and then to implement and support them. That takes pressure off IT, and helps the entire team to focus on living within leadership's decisions.

The next time IT is tempted to make an IT policy decision, instead present the issues to leadership and let them make the decision. Trust the Lord! It's his church. **MT**

Nick Nicholaou *is author of* [Church IT: Strategies and Solutions](#) *and is president of MBS, an IT consulting firm specializing in church and ministry computer networks, VoIP, and private cloud hosted services. You can reach Nick at* [nickn@mbsinc.com](#), *and may want to* [check out his firm's website](#) *and* [his blog](#).

WHEN TO FIRE YOUR VOLUNTEERS (AND WHY)

A True Story About a Sound Tech

by Caleb Neff

Once upon a time I found out that our church had a member that had worked in a recording studio with a couple of my favorite artists (back in the '80s). The guy came across as a gentle and wise person. He had been a part of the church for a year already and was part of a small group. I invited him to join the sound team: Wouldn't you?

We desperately needed him! We had nobody in the building that was confident about what the mute button did. Now we had a guy who brought a soldering iron with him and suggested new ways of hooking everything up… Aaaand that's where the trouble began.

Remember the decade that I referenced with his studio work? It's not exactly the perfect fit with modern pop/rock worship sound, and it showed from day one. Most of you already know what his mixes sounded like: no low end impact at all, acoustic and electric guitar at the same volume (or

> SOMETHING ABOUT THE SOUND AND TECH AREAS ATTRACTS A CERTAIN TYPE OF PERSONALITY.
> **THESE OFTEN-FORGOTTEN FOLKS NEED TO BE LED AND PASTORED WISELY.**

the acoustic louder), the lead vocal way out front and sounding displaced. It was terrible, and we had conversation after conversation about it that went nowhere. Our first few conversations where we listened to the recordings we were trying to emulate went all right, but after that it became increasingly tense. He was trying his hardest to make me happy; I didn't hear any real changes in his mix; everyone got more frustrated; and I walked on eggshells for a year. I felt like every time I was going to ask for the kick drum to come up in the mix I needed to buy him dinner first. Looking back, there's a clear answer and I wish I had arrived at it sooner.

I fired him.

Church leaders look at me like I have three heads when I talk passionately about firing volunteers, like somehow this is the unpardonable sin. But when you step out of a situation to look at it, everyone is miserable, the level of dysfunction around the

situation is growing, and ministry is suffering. Leaders make hard calls, and this is just one of them. If there were a nursery team member that was annoyed by babies and was rude to parents, he or she wouldn't last long. Unfortunately, things are not always as objective with sound tech, and we have lots of mercy for people in support roles. To be honest I think we tell ourselves it's kindness ("let's just give them one more chance"), but it's usually just our fear of conflict, and/or our fear of that person (who has often been there longer than you) getting mad and leaving the church.

I have not encountered this situation just once or twice, but dozens of times (I'm _not_ exaggerating). Something about the sound and tech areas attracts a certain type of personality. These often-forgotten folks need to be led and pastored wisely. The worship stage does, too, but they are people with different types of issues, and that's another article for another day.

Here are some signs that you need to consider making a hard call of "firing" your volunteer sound tech:

1. Everything is a battle. Should it really be a 10-minute conversation when you'd like something turned up or down? Should you really be anxious leading up to that conversation and exhausted when it's over? Would you accept the same behavior and attitude from a band member? Is there constant pushback to every (or nearly every) suggestion?

2. Your volunteer sound tech is avoided by other members of the team. I've been in situations where every time the sound tech starts talking, the band members look at each other and roll their eyes. When you can sense a clear divide happening between the stage and the booth, the time for addressing the situation is overdue.

3. The sound person owns a lot of the stuff or buys a lot of the stuff. I know this one may be surprising, but almost anytime I have seen this it is a red flag that other problems exist. The type of personality that tends to cause problems in this area is territorial and controlling, and what seems like on the surface a generous gift is often leverage to further entrench themselves in ownership of their domain. I could tell you story after story after story. Let's just say that if your sound person buys batteries and doesn't turn in a receipt, that's fine; but don't let them purchase your sound system or instruments.

Not every one of these situations turns out the same way. When the situation is addressed head on as early as possible and clear expectations can be established, sometimes the situation can be saved. But you cannot be afraid to move people out of a role when all the signs in the universe point to this not being where God wants them. As I'm working on this article, just this last Sunday I was called in

at the last minute to cover for a large church that had lost their one and only sound guy after years of bad behavior—and now no one knows how to work anything because it was this guy's "territory." I could literally finish the worship leader's sentences as he was telling me about this person I'd never met.

It's not all bad. To end on a bit of hope:

You know what happened in my situation? Of course I'm not saying this is the norm—sometimes people get mad and leave your church, and you can't stop it. But I had a hard conversation with "Jeff" (not his real name) and after deciding that we bring the frustrating situation to an end, I had another suggestion. I said, "Jeff, why don't you take the next season of your life and spend it on encouragement for the team. Everyone knows that you're an expert in this area and compliments mean a lot coming from you. I've got a lot of younger players that could really use some affirmation." Not only did he take that suggestion to heart, but also within a few months of him being removed from that role and on a new mission, he became one of the most relationally sought out people in our church. A couple years later when my own life was turned on its head, he was one of the first people I called for advice.

Sometimes people are just on the wrong seat on the bus, and we're ignoring the signs. When we aren't afraid to have hard conversations, we can work in step with the Spirit to direct people to a place of fulfillment in their calling. **MT**

DOES YOUR CHURCH FOLLOW THE BASICS OF MARKETING?

Here's Where to Start

by Yvon Prehn

C hurch marketing has come a long way from being a somewhat questionable activity to a necessity in churches wanting to both reach their communities and involve their members in activities that will help them grow as followers of Jesus.

To help us do that better, following are two must-have categories of marketing I'll be sharing to help you do a better job in 2019:

- Useful Software Tools
- What You Definitely Need to Know

You need the first two areas because you can have the greatest tools money can buy, but if you don't use them wisely, you've wasted your money. Software tools are necessary also because the diversity and volume of what's needed today for effective church marketing requires above all else tools that will save time, and that's my focus for what I'm recommending.

> WE MAY MISS GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO **RAISE UP THE NAME OF JESUS AND WHAT HIS PEOPLE ARE DOING IN THE COMMUNITY.**

Tools for marketing creation in the church

Buffer.com, Hootsuite.com or similar services— These services will get your social media message out on a consistent basis. So many things that come from the church are reminders, boring to produce, but if people rely on them, they are essential. Sit down with your calendar, plan, create, load them up into these systems and let them do the work until next week or month.

Snappa.com—The *easiest* way to create social media and online graphics ever for use in any and all church marketing efforts. Better than Canva (which is wonderful), Snappa has become my go-to program for all the images, banners, ads, social media I do. On a recent church project, for some reason I didn't understand and don't even want to know, the person organizing it kept asking me for various versions of a ministry logo in a variety of strange sizes, and less than two minutes later a new Snappa version was on its way to her. Snappa kept me from getting really irritated to feeling like I quickly

conquered a challenge.

I did four short videos starting with a review of Snappa; then comparing Snappa to PicMonkey; and on creating social media verses with it; and how to do quick and easy digital sidebar ads. Check them out—they are of course free, but short and clear.

Snappa will make any marketing program easier and faster.

Animoto.com—Video is an important part of any church marketing program, and Animoto is the easiest way to create a great video collage (with text, motion, music) that I've ever used. It's the quickest, easiest way to put together pictures from mission trips or to motivate people to be involved in a church program. There are lots of imitators, but after testing many of them, I always go back to Animoto. *Don't steal videos for ministry—create your own with Animoto!*

Things you may not have thought of

Local networks—When many of the mammoth social networks are under fire for everything from violating privacy, to election manipulation, to mental stress, along comes www.Nextdoor.com. (*Read here* the latest message from the CEO—it's a good explanation.

If you aren't familiar with it, it is organized by local neighborhoods and neighbors asking for advice, recommendations, complaining, encouraging, and generally sharing the things neighbors share. I find I'm checking it more than any other social media channel these days.

They also have a "Groups" section, where people can start an interest area. I think there are lots of possibilities there. I'll write more in the future as I figure this out.

T-shirts—These are *huge*. People literally wear their heart on their sleeve with them, because t-shirts are made for every interest, affinity, team, belief or cause. Do an online search for "t-shirts for a cause" and check out the many examples that come up for inspiration. If you do one for a mission trip, service project, something your church believes in, and they are well-designed, your people will wear them and they are great conversation starters with friends outside the church.

Sponsor a community event or service project — Many sports, 5K Runs, parades and similar events are all sponsored by businesses, local or national.

They don't do this out of the kindness of their hearts, but because they generate huge publicity and goodwill for the sponsoring organization, in addition to having the sponsor's name on t-shirts and publicity. Find out what your church might sponsor or hold your own event for the community and be the sole sponsor.

In the midst of the fires here in California last year, a local group (Upper Ojai Relief) not only got local news coverage for the great work they did, but were even on the national news. Looking at their website to pass on the information brings up a very important closing issue...

Put someone *in charge* of marketing

All the above ideas may be useful, but especially when your church is involved in emergency or compassionate response, someone, in addition to

communicating on all church channels, needs to be feeding stories to the media and updating social media. I am especially aware of this as we have had fires again this year. I've been involved a little in helping survivors and I know the Upper Ojai group is once again doing extraordinary things and they need money to continue doing their work. However, there isn't anything about what they are currently doing on their website or social media. Because of that I fear they are losing out on much needed funding and volunteers.

I'm sure in their case, and as so often happens in the church, we are so busy doing ministry, we feel we don't have time to tell people about the ministry—but if we don't we may miss great opportunities to raise up the name of Jesus and what his people are doing in the community. To correct that, you may want to get a volunteer (or volunteers) who have media background to take pictures, write short stories or press releases, and update media.

We have the greatest story to tell—let's use every marketing tool and idea available to do it! **MT**

Yvon Prehn's ministry to church communicators has two parts: effectivechurchcom.com, a site of FREE templates, strategy and resources, and churchcomtraining.com, a Church Communicators Online Training School.

THE BEST NEW TECH
FOR SMALL- TO MID-SIZED CHURCHES
What to Get First, and Why

by Full Compass Systems

No matter a church's size, having professional sound and lighting equipment is a must for delivering passionate services and performances. For over 40 years, Full Compass has built a valued relationship with churches of all sizes, and it remains our goal to provide the A/V technology you need to convey all the emotion that goes into each and every service. To help achieve that goal, we've assembled this list of five outstanding pieces of gear guaranteed to add new life to your services in 2019.

Sabian FRX Series Cymbals

Drum shields are a necessary component for nearly every worship band, but let's be honest—as an aesthetic piece, they're not exactly ideal. In an environment that's all about connection, one less structure between musicians and congregation would be a welcome change. Consisting of 14" hi-hats; 16", 17" and 18" crashes; and 20" and 21" rides, Sabian's FRX Series of frequency-reduced cymbals give drummers all the performance and definition they're used to

from Sabian cymbals at a reduced volume for smaller rooms and stages. The secret is in their unique design, which eliminates mass in the cymbal to limit certain midrange and high frequencies. In addition to a 4dB drop over traditional cymbals, the small holes on FRX cymbals inhibit specific midrange and high frequencies, enhancing the listener's perception of lower volume. With FRX Series cymbals, worship drummers can truly take part in the performance without having to hold back. FRX cymbals also inhibit mic bleed, which means it may be time to open up that stage and send the drum shield to the storage closet.

Follow-Me Remote Follow Spot Control

When used properly, lighting effects can dramatically enhance the message behind any sermon, and create a mood among your congregation that makes them more receptive. And you always want their eyes focused on the messenger, which is where the Follow-Me Remote Follow Spot Control system can really enhance your lighting system. It's a Mac-based software solution for follow spots that's less expensive and easier to implement than truss-mounted follow spots. Used and trusted by national touring acts including Jason Aldean, Shania Twain and The Newsboys, the

Follow-Me system is ideal for churches too, allowing your message to shine through wherever you move. Your existing fixtures incorporate seamlessly with the Follow-Me system, allowing multiple fixtures to track multiple targets without jitter or jerky movements that distract from the speaker. Follow-Me offers several advantages over traditional follow spot usage like lower labor/installation costs,

freedom in fixture positioning, improved follow-spot angles, and eliminating loss of seating. Follow-Me also offers accurate timing for color bump cues, following performers with gobo effects, or color chases, and it solves weight issues on smaller roofs where typical truss seats with operators are too heavy or deep to implement.

Klang Technologies 3D In-Ear Mixing
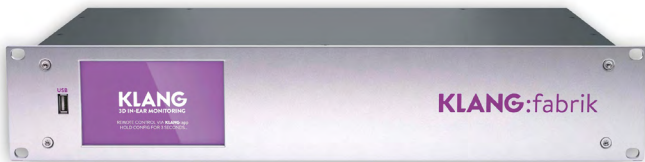
In-ear monitoring has become the standard on worship stages of every size, and even though there are still uses for floor wedges and other monitoring speakers, it's clear that in-ear monitoring is the wave of the future. With that in mind, Klang has brought to market an astounding new way to maximize the efficacy of in-ear monitors—3D In-Ear Mixing—and with it the ability to present musicians with their perfect mix, without the stereo limitations of traditional monitoring. And best of all, Klang's 3D-Sound products work with your existing in-ear monitors! This innovative new system uses binaural technology to deliver a three-dimensional mix through your in-ear monitors. By allowing full control over each element of a mix, each musician in your band can have a sonically and spatially perfect mix. With hardware options for both large ensembles and smaller groups of five, there's a Klang 3D mixing system that's right for your services.

QSC KS212C 12" Powered Cardioid Subwoofer

Nothing rounds out a mix and fills the hall with sound like a subwoofer-equipped system. And with its cardioid deployment, the QSC KS212C is a powerful 12", 3600W addition to fill any small- to mid-sized room with rich, warm low frequencies without washing the stage in unwanted bass. Despite its massive output power, it's incredibly portable thanks to Class D amplification, with comfortable aluminum handles and four rear-mounted casters to place it where you want. The KS212C incorporates

the latest DSP technology along with dual 12" long-excursion drivers, each arranged in a 6th order bandpass chamber. What's all that mean? Essentially, more output—15dB more at the front of the cabinet—to cover the congregation while sparing the folks on stage from the omnidirectional low-frequency rumble from a standard subwoofer. The KS212C is pole-mountable vertically or horizontally, and includes a 26" speaker pole, giving you flexible placement options and the ability to incorporate it seamlessly into your existing system. With the addition of a KS212C, you can easily enhance your room with powerful bass and not worry that you'll muddy the mix for the performers onstage. It's a win for everyone.

Roland TD-50K-S Full Compass Exclusive Bundle

The TD-50K Electronic Drum Kit already offers Roland's flagship sounds along with plenty of flexibility and connectivity. And thanks to our partners at Roland, we are proud to offer the TD-50K in an exclusive bundle that gives drummers that outstanding V-Drums performance and sound in a two-up, two-down configuration—at no extra cost! This six-piece kit delivers everything in the TD-50K standard kit, along with an extra PD-100 Pad and BT-1 Bar Trigger—a $439 value! Roland V-Drums have become a regular sight on worship stages, and with

their natural, acoustic-like feel and stellar Prismatic Sound Modeling, it's no surprise. The TD-50 sound module is loaded with high-quality sounds that capture every element of a drummer's performance and reproduce it with stunning sonic accuracy. Roland has enhanced the renowned V-Drums feel and response with a high-resolution multi-sensor digital snare drum, and an 18″ digital ride cymbal with improved expression and dynamics.

As much as we all love acoustic drums, even with attenuation accessories, they are still "loud," particularly as the room they're in gets smaller. V-Drums give drummers the feel they are used to without any acoustic sound, making it easier to dial in a great mix in a small space. Because of our partnership with Roland, we're able to offer this six-piece configuration at no extra cost—we recognized that there are plenty of drummers out there who wanted a two-up, two-down setup, and they worked with us to make it happen. This kit is a Full Compass exclusive, so if you're ready to move up to the professional-grade performance of Roland V-Drums, give us a call and enjoy huge savings you simply won't find anywhere else.

Five is just the beginning

So there you have five great reasons to get excited about tech for your worship services in 2019! And the best part is, we've barely scratched the surface. Head over to fullcompass.com to see all the great gear we have to offer for houses of worship of every size.

We're more than happy to talk too! Give our expert staff a call at (800) 356-5844 to discuss your particular needs and discover why we've been a part of countless audio-visual installations for the last 40 years, and earned the trust of the worship community as it continues to grow. **MT**

In the tempest You're the shelter
And I will hide beneath Your wings

LIFEHOUSE CHURCH
STREAMS WORSHIP WORLDWIDE
WITH MATROX MONARCH HDX

A Real Life How-To Story

by Matrox

Lifehouse Church, located in San Antonio, TX, with a congregation of over 300 has a mission of reaching out to people in the community as well as around the world, including partner churches in Columbia. To ensure that its remote and absentee members receive the sermon and experience the fellowship without missing out, the church streams their whole Sunday morning services live. The services are also recorded, edited and made available online as videos of the full services, as well as lessons (portions only), for absentee worshippers

> **THE MATROX MONARCH HDX PRODUCT WORKS HAND-IN-HAND WITH MEDIAFUSION SETTINGS AND MAKES OUR CHANNEL CLEAN**; ONE WE REALLY WANT TO BRAG ABOUT AND SHOW OFF.

or those who wish to reflect on the sermons at their own time and pace.

Lifehouse Church started having issues with their old encoder and CDN that resulted in poor stream quality in both the video and audio of their Sunday morning services, so they sought a better encoding solution and came across the Matrox Monarch™ HDX H.264 streaming and recording appliance. With the help of a local live streaming company, MediaFusion, Lifehouse Church set up the Monarch HDX for testing. Simplicity of set up that even the basic user could configure, as well as its affordability

and reliability, have made the Monarch HDX an integral part of Lifehouse Church's Sunday services. Alex Well, technical director of Lifehouse Church, says, "With the URL stream information provided by MediaFusion, a simple copy and paste to the Monarch HDX's web-based Command Center was all that was required; it was up and streaming in seconds! Monarch HDX resolved all our issues; it brought more clarity to our stream and gave us the capability for immediate local storage for backing up our services."

Easy setup and operation

Lifehouse Church used the presets from Monarch HDX's Command Center as a starting point for configuration and subsequently customized it to their exact requirements. Set to stream in RTMP at 2.1 Mbps, only the destination location is changed by the A/V operator as the Sunday service is followed by a youth service, each recorded to different destinations.

A Canon FX1 camera is connected to an iMac® running ProPresenter media presentation software, which mixes the video feed with its lower thirds (lyrics, verses) along with audio from the sound board (x32), then sends it out as an HDMI feed that goes into the Monarch HDX. MediaFusion provides Lifehouse Church with the necessary content delivery services.

Using Monarch HDX's H.264 encoding, Lifehouse Church simultaneously records the services in HD resolution at 10 Mbps, for archiving and backup purposes. By taking advantage of Monarch HDX's ability to create split files, that is particularly useful when recording for extended periods of time, Lifehouse Church is able to automatically divide its recorded files into convenient 4GB sections, without losing a single frame. This feature also ensures that

the majority of the content is preserved should a disaster such as power failure occur. The files are edited/trimmed using Final Cut Pro and posted online to the church website via the Vimeo video sharing platform, enabling the congregation to view the entire services or the lessons only, anytime, anywhere, with an experience of almost being physically present in the church.

High quality of streams and recordings

Moving over to Monarch HDX, Lifehouse Church is now blessed with a reliable, high quality encoder. Cleaner picture and crisper audio being webcast makes the Lifehouse online church experience enjoyable and allows the church to reach more people—those traveling, having moved temporarily or from partner churches in Columbia; or those unable to attend owing to inclement weather, limited mobility, sickness or other reasons.

Lifehouse Church is also able to save high-resolution, pristine quality hard copies directly from the Monarch HDX encoder, gaining easier and instant access to local backups. Previously, they were downloading files from the content delivery network (CDN) service provider. The quality of these files depended on the Internet and stream quality prevailing at the time, and often looked terrible. CDN service provider's Internet bandwidth restrictions meant they were unable to record in Full HD (1920x1080) with any reasonable quality.

Wells remarked, "The Matrox Monarch HDX product works hand-in-hand with MediaFusion settings and makes our channel clean; one we really want to brag about and show off. It makes live streaming a breeze! Monarch HDX has brought clarity to our live stream, post production and archives of the services." **MT**

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matrox®
Digital Video Solutions

Matrox Video is a technology and market leader in the field of 4K, HD and SD digital video hardware and software. Matrox's Emmy award-winning technology powers a full range of multi-screen content creation and delivery platforms used by broadcasters, telcos, cable operators, post-production factilities, live event producers, videographers and A/V professionals worldwide.

LEARN MORE ABOUT MATROX MONARCH HDX

LIVE STREAMING 101

How to Get Into the Game

by Ray Hollenbach

You want to share your Sunday morning service with the world. You've been told, "It's a Hillsong world, and the rest of us are just living in it." So, you take 20 minutes to browse for [information on live streaming](#) and decide you will need advanced degrees in information technology, engineering *and* video production.

Well, maybe you do need all that—if you're in charge of Hillsong's world-wide Internet empire, but basic live streaming—Live Streaming 101—is surprisingly within reach. After all, nearly anyone can upload videos to YouTube these days. The difference between YouTube and a live stream webcast is basically sending your audio and video out as it's actually happening, and for that there are a few absolute necessities.

> THE ESSENTIALS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION WILL NEVER CHANGE; BUT THE **CHURCH'S METHODS HAVE CONTINUALLY CHANGED OVER THE CENTURIES.**

1. Your Internet Connection

Not any ol' Internet connection: a *great* one. Before you do anything else, make sure your connect is as fast and reliable as it can possibly be. Step one is an ISP audit. Is your connection rock-solid reliable? Is it (reasonably) fast? Live streaming requires 5Mbpz per second at a very minimum, and really, 10 Mbpz should be your base rate. These two issues are the beginning: reliability and speed. Make friends with your Internet Service Provider—good friends. The most expensive gear in the world is worthless without a great Internet connection.

2. Get Your Gear

Like nearly all technical innovations, live streaming is gear-heavy. It's better to start with high-quality gear and keep things simple rather than trying to make a big splash by using tons of equipment, only to find out

you didn't need it, or it's not very good quality. Here's a start-up list:

Camera or (better yet) Multiple Cameras

So many choices! If your only concern is your Sunday service (always in the same room, always with the same lighting) you might go with fixed-position webcams, which has the advantage of saving money. Webcams sell cheap, but then, the image quality may be cheap, too. You could scroll through Amazon endlessly looking at models from Logitech or ProStream, spending from $50 to thousands of dollars—OR—you could reach out and shop the old fashioned way by connecting with a knowledgeable customer service rep from a company like Full Compass Systems (a Ministry Tech business partner). At the entry level to live streaming, it's best to pick up the phone and talk to a real live person.

External Microphone

Seriously: Don't use built-in mics that come with most cameras. In a live stream environment audio quality is just as important as video quality. External microphones are dedicated devices that are sure to make your audio quality rock-solid. A quick trip to Amazon reveals a dizzying array of hardware, but beginners can start with something like the Samson G-Track Pro series. Entry-level products from Audio-Technica, Neewer or Marantz are also solid choices. Be sure to browse around for all the necessary accessories: mic stands, connective wires and cables, and windscreens.

HD Box/Computer/Broadcaster/Video Encoder

There's no shortage of names for the function of putting together your audio and video and then formatting all the data for streaming. It's the work of transcoding devices (or "encoders"). Matrox (another Ministry Tech partner) has a range of devices to ensure smooth switching between input sources and options among data streaming protocols. After making sure your Internet connection is rock-solid, this may be the most important hardware choice you make. That's another way of saying it's a choice you shouldn't make alone, especially if you're a novice, and also a choice you shouldn't try to save money on.

The folks at Blackmagic offer a variety of hardware and software compatibility choices in this area as well. Whatever vendor you choose, make sure their hardware and output is compatible with nearly every live streaming platform including YouTube, Facebook and Twitch (there are more than a *dozen* livestream platforms!).

There are also laptop-based software solutions for this task: With an HDMI or SDI video source, you can immediately stream your video content by plugging it into a web presenter and your computer, enabling you to broadcast professional-quality live streams.

3. Don't Forget the Accessories.

Wouldn't it be embarrassing to lose battery power during a live stream, or have someone drop a camera at a critical moment? Create a gear bag with every imaginable back-up item: batteries, lenses, cables, tripods or anything else that may be a requirement unique to your location. The more varied the settings and locations, the more accessories you're going to need. (And never forget duct tape, because it fixes anything.)

Like so many hardware-based systems, some of the learning curve comes through practice and experience, which leads us to the final component necessary for every live stream launch:

4. Know-How

Once you decide on equipment and work-flow, make sure you have a dedicated full-time or volunteer staff to assist in production and streaming. Start with an experienced hand and you will avoid broadcasting your mistakes around the world! For some churches this may mean hiring a professional to get up and running; other churches may have tech-geniuses in the congregation and not even know it!

Next, make it part of this person's job description to cross-train other techs. A commitment to live streaming means consistently presenting your webcasts at predictable times. This means having more than one person with the know-how. Otherwise, you're just one sick-day or unexpected event from missing a webcast.

Finally, take time to research the experiences of other churches. Vimeo's subsidiary Livestream (another Ministry Tech partner) has an outstanding downloadable PDF resource that not only details the nuts-and-bolts decisions of gear and gadgets, but also provides case studies, which will allow you to

see how other congregations have expanded their reach beyond their physical locations. (Livestream also produces innovative hardware like Mevo, where cameras and streaming are combined in one unit.)

Live streaming multiplies the reach of your church. While there may be certain aspects of community worship that will always require face-to-face fellowship, you can serve the marginalized through technologies like live streaming. The essentials of the Great Commission will never change: We should go into all the world and make disciples; but the church's methods have continually changed over the centuries. Live Streaming is one more modern change to help the church fulfill its unchanging calling. **MT**

DON'T MISS THESE IMPORTANT ARTICLES ON MINISTRYTECH.COM:

5 REASONS YOUR CHURCH SOCIAL MEDIA NEEDS TO BE A PRIORITY

IF YOU DON'T HAVE PHOTOSHOP: THREE FREE GRAPHICS APPLICATIONS

5 POWER TIPS FOR TAKING BIBLE STUDY NOTES

CATCH UP ON BACK ISSUES