

TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERING MINISTRY

# MinistryTech

SUMMER 2020

by CHURCHLEADERS



## VITAL TECH FOR YOUR CHURCH'S RETURN

- >> MICROSOFT TEAMS: SAFE, SECURE, AND STRONG
- >> 10 KEYS TO CHMS SUCCESS
- >> 5 TECH REASONS PEOPLE ABANDON GIVING

# CONTENTS

## SUMMER 2020



12



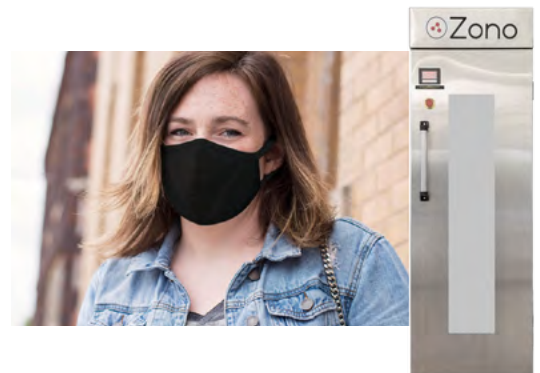
17

### FEATURES

- 10** | CYBERPRAYER IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA
- 12** | MICROSOFT TEAMS IS WORTH THE LOOK
- 15** | 10 KEYS TO CHURCH MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SUCCESS
- 17** | JUST-IN-TIME UPGRADE: INTERISE PROVED FLEXIBLE
- 20** | WHY A “GIVE” BUTTON ON YOUR CHURCH WEBSITE IS NO LONGER ENOUGH

### COLUMNS

- 04** | ■ **TECH CHECK:** CLEAN TECH IS HIGH TECH
- 05** | ■ **PASTORAL TECH:** AGREE TO DISAGREE—WITH CIVILITY
- 06** | ■ **WORSHIP TECH:** 3 IN-STOCK VIDEO TOOLS EVERY WORSHIP LEADER NEEDS YESTERDAY
- 07** | ■ **COMMUNICATION:** INSTAGRAM FROM YOUR DESKTOP
- 08** | ■ **SAFETY & SECURITY:** WE ARE RETURNING—AND SO ARE OUR DEVICES



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## A WORD FROM THE EDITOR Ray Hollenbach



### GOD'S UNCHANGING MISSION IN AN ERA FILLED WITH CHANGE

Finally we can venture outside and feel the summer sun. We can feel the breeze warm upon our faces. We can begin to gather again as a congregation... hold on...check that...maybe we can—or—maybe we can't.

At this writing, more than half the states in America are seeing the Coronavirus infection curve turn back up again. This is not the "second wave" we have heard so much about, it is still the first wave. Eager to get back to "normal," many people have abandoned the practices of mask-wearing and social distancing. But our impatience with quarantine means nothing to the virus, and the science of pandemic response is an imprecise guide. Covid-19 related deaths have topped 125,000 people. On June 26th (just last week!) the Centers for Disease Control guesstimated that there are perhaps 10 unreported cases of Covid-19 for every one confirmed case.

This issue of *MinistryTech* was intended to be part of the great restart of American culture—including the return to the Sunday morning worship gatherings we have so dearly missed. But in the short time required to assemble the articles and produce our quarterly PDF version, circumstances have changed (again).

The tech world is certainly used to change. Improvements and

advancements in devices and software are routine now. Everything is supposed to change for the better: faster, cheaper and more reliable. But what happens when technology meets a health crisis of worldwide proportions? Everyone is praying for the breakthrough of a Covid vaccine, and indeed, we've come to expect lightning-fast tech responses.

The people who attend our churches are no exception. Believers want to assemble and sing. As grateful as we are for streaming and YouTube preaching and worship sets, there is still no substitute for the comfort and encouragement of Christian fellowship face-to-face. And yet, God is not surprised by current events, and the mission of the church continues, perhaps with greater urgency than ever. But we can easily find ourselves impatient and eager to return to normal. What has changed is how God's people go about our response—not to the pandemic—but to the unchanging mission of the church. This is the challenge of Christianity in a technological age: How do we balance our faith in God with our growing faith in tech?

Grace to you all, and peace.

**Ray Hollenbach is the Editor of MinistryTech magazine. He has previously served as the editor of Outreach's Better Preaching Update, and as the editor of the Pastor channel at Churchleaders.com. You can reach him at [rhollenbach@outreach.com](mailto:rhollenbach@outreach.com).**

# TECH CHECK

## CLEAN TECH IS HIGH TECH

Who would've thought that cleaning supplies would be considered part of church tech? But 2020 is a strange year, and here we are, re-opening buildings and rethinking how to protect the people in them. Take time to [read the latest on what to do](#), and [bookmark the websites](#) that will help you with specific, church-related supplies.

There was once a time when no one used computers, projectors or even fog machines, but hey—requirements for “doing church” are always subject to change. Here are a few must-have cleaning tech supplies:

**PPE for Everyone:** Right, we get it: Masks are ugly, uncomfortable and downright controversial. But [Personal Protective Equipment](#) is a huge way to show God's love in practical terms.



**Hand Sanitizing Stations—AND Signs!** Don't make it hard for people to clean their hands: Every church should have plenty of [touchless hand sanitizing stations](#).



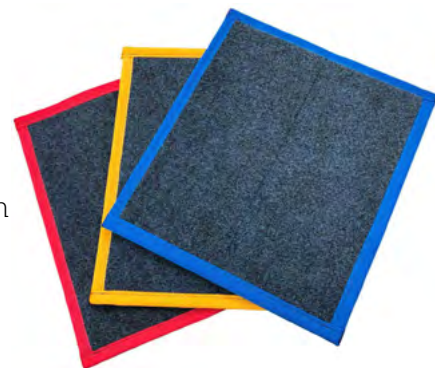
**Disinfecting Cabinets:** Don't have time to wipe down every single plaything in the nursery? Consider something like this [Zono disinfecting cabinet](#). Place the toys into the cabinet, set the timer, and in 30 minutes you're ready for the next shift of little darlings!

**Don't Cross That Line!** In a Covid world, “signage” now includes marking the floor with tape, and you guessed it: You'll need [the right tape for the job](#). And since people are looking down, how about [floor decals](#)?

**Microfiber Cloth:** What we used to call “rags” have gone high tech, and in a virus-sized world you'll need [the right kind of cleaning cloths](#).

**Wash Your Hands, but What About Your Shoes?**

Floor mats are always a good idea, but re-opening your building may call for upping your game. The folks at [Sanistride](#) have been doing this for years.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Who can possibly keep up with all the tech options available these days? TECH CHECK highlights tech news and new gadgets that save you time, energy, money—and keep you from re-inventing the wheel. Have a hot tech tip or news item? Email [rhollenbach@outreach.com](mailto:rhollenbach@outreach.com).

# AGREE TO DISAGREE—WITH CIVILITY

It seems as though we've always got something to disagree about, after all the Internet has made us all experts on everything. It stands to reason as we have more and more access to data, we will inevitably find more and more things on which to disagree. There is nothing inherently wrong with disagreeing, after all, God made us each unique, but we must disagree and still get along. We can't elevate every disagreement to the level of heresy.

Technology folks have been arguing about some things since the beginning of technology.

Mac or Windows?

iPhone or Android?

Most of these debates can never be settled and we should stop trying. Instead of trying to convince folks that our view is right and getting emotionally involved in opinions that don't matter, we should be using that energy to find opportunities to serve those around us.

Yamaha or Allen & Heath?

Shure or Audio-Technica?

My favorite color is blue, and not just any blue but the blue the sky is at 8,000 feet on a crisp day up the side of a mountain. While I have a specific opinion on my favorite color, that does not and should not mean that I can't respect someone who likes the blue color the sky is at 7,000 feet on a crisp day up the side of a mountain. Or even, perish the thought, someone who prefers a drastically different color, like orange.

McDonald's or Burger King?

Chick Fil-A or Kentucky Fried Chicken?

Religion and politics have always been volatile discussion topics, but not every disagreement rises to the level of religion and politics. Vote your conscience,

but love those with whom you disagree. Our nation was founded on those who disagreed and yet were able to compromise on some extremely divisive issues.

Democrat or Republican?

Those who wear masks or those who don't wear masks?

The Bible is clear that we are to hate sin but love the sinner. Unfortunately, today it seems we hate both. The Bible says in Matthew 7:1 that we are not to assume motive or intent, and yet we do it all the time with those who disagree with us. After all, if they disagree then everything else they do and think must be wrong. One assumption leads to another and before you know it you are back to not only hating sin but also hating sinners, even when no sin is involved, like one's favorite color.

My favorite sports team or your favorite sports team, Purdue University or Indiana University? (*Ahem . . .*

One of these schools put the first and last footprints on the moon and was attended by me. #BoilerUp)

Or you can insert your own college rivalry here.

Without civility and respect for others when disagreeing, we won't be able to accomplish the church's mission. Social media is full of folks arguing, spreading arguments, and sharing misinformation to promote their viewpoints on issues that just don't matter. Perhaps we should all be more like the Bereans in Acts 17 and spend more time studying and examining before arguing and sharing. Disagree with love, and look at others with whom you disagree as individuals to be loved not as disagreements to be battled.

Keep the main thing the main thing, but remember: Not everything is the main thing.

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# 3 IN-STOCK VIDEO TOOLS

## EVERY WORSHIP LEADER NEEDS YESTERDAY

Welcome to the new reality of the online church, online small group and Zoom videoconferences galore. Just because we are re-opening churches, these technologies are here to stay. I don't know about you, but when I became a worship leader, I don't remember also signing up to be a videographer!

These three items from Amazon will up your video game immediately. You might not care what you look like, but if what you are communicating is important, then you might as well make it (and you!) look as good as possible. Put all three of these together and you can frame your face in a variety of ways. Things will look and sound better.

**1. A nice [HEAVY BOOM STAND](#) to hold your phone.**

Because a microphone stand is 100 times more adjustable and easy to use than a typical camera stand, I recommend the DR Pro Tripod Mic Stand with Telescoping Boom.

**2. A nice [METAL ADAPTER](#) thingy to affix the adapter.**

I know, "thingy" doesn't sound very technical—but it works! I recommend the On Stage CM01 Video Camera/Digital Recorder Adapter.

**3. A nice [PLASTIC ADAPTER](#) to cradle your phone.**

That's right, you really do need two adapters to safely mount your phone to a mic stand—but they're cheap! I recommend the Ailun Tripod Phone Mount Holder.

All three of these fit together seamlessly. You can check out [my two-minute YouTube](#) to see how your life will be easier—and you can thank me later.

Here are two Bonus Tips, one for lighting, one for sound:

1. [THIS SELFIE LIGHT](#) from QIAYA really helps. It will up your lighting game and make you look like a Kardashian.
2. You can up your audio for FREE by talking louder, getting closer, and closing the door. But if you want



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•  
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*Mike's ability to break down complex ideas into memorable phrases and move-forward practices is second-to-none. I wholeheartedly recommend that you have Mike in to work with you, your musicians, and your techs. You won't regret it; he carries the heart of worship deep within him — and it spills out everywhere.*

— Dan Will

[www.themikeo.com](http://www.themikeo.com)

to spend money, try [this highly rated microphone for iPhone](#) from Shure: the MV88. Shure even provides two free apps that allow you to customize the performance and set-up of the microphone for professional audio and video capture.

(Alternate #2: If you prefer [here is an option for Android](#). It's from the folks at Rode.)

**Mike O'Brien** holds a B.A. in Music from Kennesaw State University and a Master of Worship Studies from the Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies. He has worked as a producer, engineer and mixer at Lucko Sound Studio, and with a collective of 25+ musicians called Poured Out Like Wine. Together, they produced seven albums with over 15 published songs with Vineyard Worship USA. He lives in Atlanta, GA, with his wife, Susan, and son, Ezekiel. You can reach Mike at [vineband@hotmail.com](mailto:vineband@hotmail.com)



# INSTAGRAM FROM YOUR DESKTOP

*(An alternate way to make the most of this powerful social media channel.)*

Though much of the focus of technology is on the big and splashy and all the ways to get services filmed and streamed, etc., do not forget the power of less splashy but potentially equally powerful tools such as Instagram.

Instagram is a visually compelling social media tool—[over 1 billion people a day access the app](#). True, there are a lot of selfies and celebrity pictures on Instagram, but it can also be a way to push out inspirational messages, scripture, quotes and challenges. **And here's the best part: You can do these things without touching your phone; you can do Instagram creation and posting on your desktop computer.**

I always wanted a way to communicate short messages, lessons from my devotional time, and quotes I liked to some younger people I love, who aren't particularly interested in sitting still for hour-long podcasts on books of the Bible or reading my inspiring blog posts. (You can check out [my personal Instagram account](#).)

I liked their Instagram sharing and wanted to respond with my own, but creating on the phone was hard for me. I am a Boomer and Boomers were born to type. My little fingers fly when I touch type. And when I try to type with my thumbs, I am well, all thumbs. In frustration, I poke around at the tiny keyboard with one finger. It takes forever and I make mistakes. I sit at a computer all day. I like creating on the computer and writing on the computer. I wanted to create and post on Instagram using my desktop computer.

**Here's a procedure for creating and posting images and comments (or micro-blogging) for Instagram using your desktop computer:**

1. Create your image with either an inspiring quote or a verse. You have several options on how to do this (all of these are illustrated on a video on [my website](#)—see the “Instagram from the Desktop” video.)

- a. #1—You can create your Instagram image directly in Canva or Snappa. Both programs have large image libraries and templates for Instagram.
  - b. #2—You can create your Instagram image in MS Publisher. Create a file that is 1080 x 1080 pixels (or 11.25 x 11.25 inches). Bring in a photo you want to use. If you don't have one, [Unsplash](#), [Pexels](#) or [Pixabay](#) are three great sites for totally legal, copyright-free, and free images you can use. Save as a JPG file with Web 96 dpi.
2. Save the completed image to a file on your computer.
  3. Download the app “Desktop for Instagram.” It is super-easy and fun. It runs as a Chrome extension and after you download it, you just click on it and up pops an image of your smart phone with your Instagram account.
  4. Click on the “+” sign on the phone image, load up your image, click “next” to write a caption and then save all.
  5. On writing a caption: Instagram allows 2,200 characters for caption or about 365 words. These longer captions get into the realm of “micro-blogging.” There are many ministry possibilities with this format.
  6. I recommend creating your caption content in MS Word, where you can edit, spell and grammar check, and keep track of word count. After you have perfected your words, then copy and paste into Instagram in the caption section.

I imagine the Apostle Paul had no idea what we'd be doing to obey his example of “becoming all things to all people that we might win some (1 Cor. 9:22)” and that one day we'd follow his example with an Instagram app, but these are challenging times.

**Yvon Prehn** is the primary content creator for [www.effectivechurch.com](http://www.effectivechurch.com), a website that serves and equips church communicators to help them be successful in the incredible work they do in introducing people to Jesus and helping their churches grow in numbers and their people as disciples. The site does this by providing strategy to give them a biblical foundation and motivation and practical skills training to make them more effective church communicators.



# WE ARE RETURNING—AND SO ARE OUR DEVICES

Since his knees were extending beyond the handlebars on his current bike, I made the decision last weekend to purchase a new bicycle for my son. As we drove together through town I was astonished by all the auto traffic that I had not experienced in a long time. Also, parking lots were full again. Things seemed to be returning to “normal.” As a business owner myself I know firsthand there have been many challenges for companies to get to this point, and while we are not exactly at a “normal” stage, we are getting closer. Seeing people out and working and shopping brought a smile to my face.

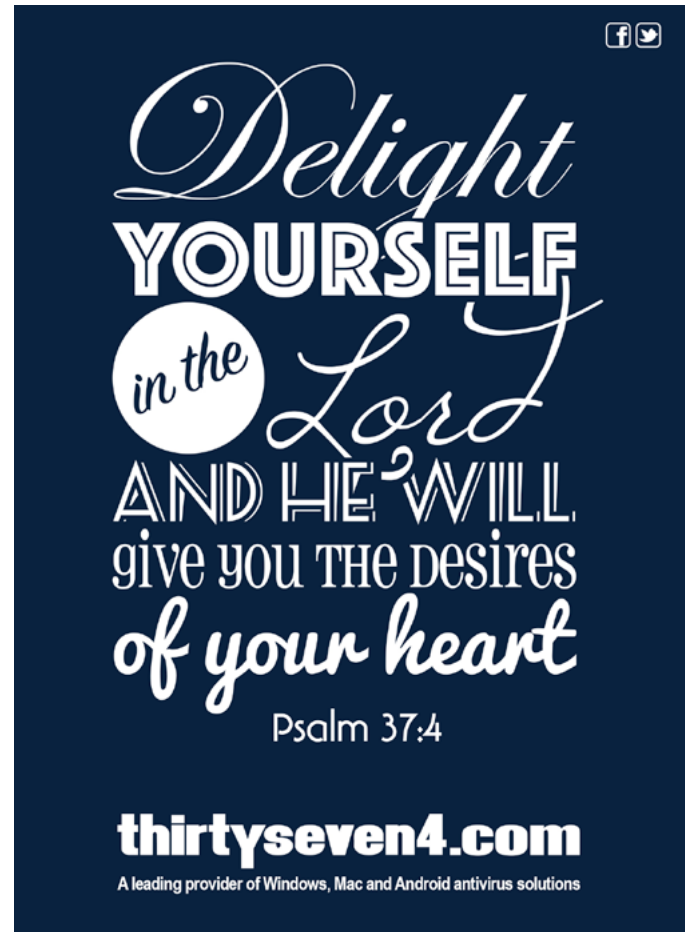
As states across the country slowly begin to ease lockdowns and regulations, businesses, schools and churches are tasked with new challenges as they begin to balance all the new and changing-by-the-day mandates. For many, conforming to new opening regulations may include requiring face masks, social distancing between workers and staff, temperature checks, and the regular disinfecting of shared surfaces. But here’s a vital question: Are organizations also putting the same level of thought and precaution into the safety and security of their digital equipment as it returns?

It’s been a while: employee, staff and student laptops, chrome books and mobile devices have been out of the hands of their respective tech departments. While we would like to believe that these systems were strictly used for business-only purposes in secure environments, we know better. Or to the opposite point, as the device-users we may assume that these systems will be immediately wiped by the IT team, and per personnel and time constraints, we also know this may not be the case either.

Here are a couple of recommendations for staff and students returning borrowed mobile devices:

- Properly log off your device wherever necessary, because leaving your credentials stored would allow the next user full access to your accounts if the system is not professionally restored.
- Delete your personal files—including deleting them from the Recycle Bin.
- Reset the browser to the default settings to clear stored passwords, history, etc.
- Remember to remove plugged devices: USB flash drives, SD cards, etc.

Or perhaps your tech team is receiving borrowed equipment or having staff bring back devices into the



network for the first time:

- Advise all applicable employees and staff to back up and save all data to the network or cloud storage prior to returning so files are accessible from the office as well.
- Whenever possible, re-format the system back to the core system image.
- If that’s not possible, scan the device for malware, adware and other problematic applications. (Typically, I usually advise a quick scan of the system, but upon initial return in our current Corona-situation, I would suggest the thorough scan.)
- Verify that all operating system and third- party software patches have been applied.
- Reset the browser to the default settings to clear stored passwords, history, etc.
- Provide a new, highly secure device password.



- Remember to check for plugged devices that may remain, such as USB flash drives or SD cards.

Whether you are returning to work, church or school, or if you're bringing your device back in, or if you are the one receiving devices back after an unprecedented and extended time out, there are prudent steps to take to ensure the safety of both sides and all devices.

The mandates for personal protection and distancing are being made clear by most institutions, but the protection of our devices is another area where we should also have steps in place to ensure safety for our information, devices and our networks. We do not want to be a vulnerable vector for any virus on any level—human or machine. Both physical and digital safety preparations are critical. Let's do our part to lay the groundwork for a safer tomorrow.



**Steven Sundermeier** is the owner of [Thirtyseven4, LLC](http://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.



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# CYBERPRAYER IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

*Is Anyone Listening?*

by Ray Hollenbach

***“Our Facebook, who art on the Internet, followed be thy pages...”***

**D**on't worry: This isn't a screed on the devilish dangers of social media. It's too easy to locate trouble and place blame in structures and technologies beyond ourselves. Our modern problems do not lurk in apps or software. In truth, our modern problems are not modern at all. Our “modern” problems reside deep within us, where they have always hidden. Social media merely puts us—and our problems—on display with astonishing speed and reach. In one respect Facebook and its many children have provided a new outlet, called cyberprayer.

Social media is like any other technology, a device capable of good or ill. It's a tool to be wielded well or to hinder the real work of living life wisely. Social media is a comfort to the shut-in, and a means to share everyday joys; it is also the latest platform for fears and fools to find expression.

What was formerly the province of what was called a “prayer closet” is now an opportunity to broadcast our prayers around the world in search of someone who will hear. Prayer has always been difficult because we have so often felt alone—in the very place we are told to pour out our hearts before God. In prayer, when we meet the silence of God, we usually fill the silence with our own words. With

social media, others will fill the silence for us.

We go to social media to know we are not alone. We post our prayers because we will certainly get some kind of answer.

**A TYPICAL POST:** *You guys! I'm going in for a job interview today. Please pray that I get this job because I really need it.*

**TYPICAL REPLIES:**

- You've got this!
- Hugs to you, I'm praying.
- Don't worry: God's in control.

These answers, well-meaning but completely powerless, feel better than no answer at all, which is what we often think we get from God. Traditional prayer is the place we bump into the silence of God. Cyberprayer is how we fill the void apart from the still small voice of the Spirit.

It's true: There are plenty of examples of God's people praying together, rallied by social media, and miracles have followed. In a world of a billion-plus Facebook users, this should not surprise us. But daily, and in ways uncounted, we have turned to social media because we are sure of [getting] some answer—any answer—that we can see and hear.

Even more frightening than not getting an answer from God is the possibility that the Father would



respond, and focus us on the real problems of our lives. Imagine what would happen if God responded to your cyberprayer:

**PRAYER:** *Father, I'm going in for a job interview today. Please help me get this job because I really need it.*

#### **POSSIBLE RESPONSES FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT:**

- What happened to the last job you had?
- Are you afraid I will not provide?
- Are you so desperate for money you would debase yourself by working for a company that exploits the poor and abuses its own employees?

The gospels are filled with stories of people who brought their requests to Jesus only to receive challenging “answers” to their prayers:

*Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”*

*Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”*

We post our cyberprayer online because the social media space is filled with people like us, and when people like us respond we can be sure to get the answer we are looking for. If we complain about other drivers, people like us will respond with more of the same. If we post angry words about a political party, we can be sure others will join our anger. If we post the latest warning about the dangers of modern life, we will soon read fearful words from others who feel powerless against



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Here are the challenges of living in a world filled with social media:

Can we wait on God?

Can we sit in the silence without trying to fill the void?

Can we bear the possibility that the Spirit will change the subject, and ask about the condition of our souls?

**Ray Hollenbach**, a Chicagoan, writes about faith, tech and culture. He's the managing editor of MinistryTech magazine, and the author of *Deeper Hope* (and other books) available at Amazon.com. He currently lives in central Kentucky, which is filled with faith and culture, but not so much tech.



# MICROSOFT TEAMS IS WORTH A LOOK

*Video Meetings Aren't Going Away*

by Jonathan Smith

The pandemic has many working at home for the first time and organizations are struggling to keep this new crop of remote workers connected and productive. Congregations and their small groups are also struggling to find meaningful ways to connect while in-person gatherings are heavily restricted. If your organization uses Office 365 (now named Microsoft 365) you have access to an incredibly powerful tool called Microsoft Teams. Odds are you've had access for a while and just didn't know it.

Before you rush into Teams, consider if you already have tools you can use. For instance, if 75 percent of your group is on Facebook, then use Facebook, because the learning curve is only for the 25 percent who aren't using it. The learning curve is always 100 percent if you decide to use another platform entirely. Try to find a common denominator first. Then, if there isn't something secure

or readily available, start looking at other options.

Microsoft Teams is a relatively new product, introduced in 2017. It was built by integrating several existing Microsoft collaboration products, like Skype, Skype for Business and Microsoft Classroom. It was designed to be a way for organizations to not only

collaborate, but also communicate and gather virtually. (Who knew that in 2020 the only way for collaboration, communication and gathering would be virtually?)

Today Teams is expanding rapidly and adding features and functionality at a breakneck pace. Teams is being used by schools for remote learning, corporations for board meetings, conference

organizers for virtual events, and churches for livestreaming services or small groups. With Teams built into Microsoft 365 and Windows 10, the integration makes it easy to use—but there is a catch. As the name implies, Teams is built for a team, which is why it is heavily integrated with the Microsoft

TEAMS IS EXPANDING  
RAPIDLY AND ADDING  
FEATURES AND  
FUNCTIONALITY AT A  
BREAKNECK PACE.

ecosystem. Zoom, Facebook, WebEx and other providers make it easier to add users and guests who are not part of your team or organization.

As a platform focused on communication, Teams was originally limited to only showing a four-up display, meaning you could only see four other participants on your screen at once. Other tools emphasized their ability to show 25-50 users on the screen at one time. Microsoft initially resisted the pressure to display more users, stating productivity would be hindered. Are participants focusing on the communication and its content, or scanning 25 little boxes on their screen to get a glimpse into others' homes or catch misbehaving pets in the background? Today Teams now shows up to nine users, but that number will probably grow.

Teams also requires a bit of configuration when integrated with a Microsoft 365 setup. You can get a free account and start using it now even without a Microsoft 365 organization setup, but many have found using Teams with guests (or even between another Microsoft 365 organization) to be a bit cumbersome. I'm sure these challenges will be addressed as Microsoft continues to evolve the Teams platform.

One of the bright spots to using Teams is the security. Teams is backed up by the security resources of Microsoft and provides a secure communication and collaboration portal. While many organizations have run to Zoom and other less secure platforms, bad actors are having a field day as folks rush to virtual communication without proper security. Teams uses encryption and your existing Microsoft work or school account (one less login to remember) and provides two-factor authentication.

As with most technology there is no one-size-fits-all. Evaluate what you are trying to accomplish and match the

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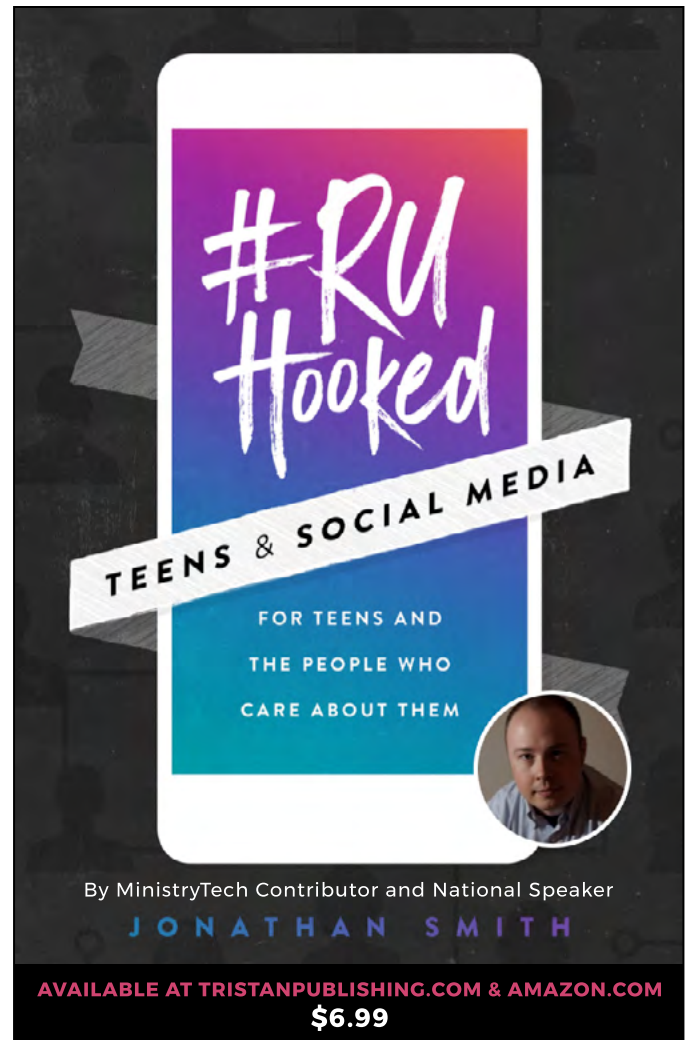
## SCREEN TIME ON STEROIDS

Working (and learning) from home has us looking at screens now more than ever. Gone are the days of notebooks, pads, pencils, textbooks and workbooks. Most if not all of these items have been replaced with glowing pieces of glass.

There is no doubt technology provides tremendous learning and productivity potential but there are also some drawbacks. When entertainment, communication, work and learning all collide on a screen, it seems except to look up and make sure the spoon does not miss our mouth, we rarely look at anything, or anyone else.

Here are some resources that may help you, your family and those you influence to use screen time responsibly and not to become a screen addict.

- [Do Not Disturb Setting: The Surprising Secret to Sanity](#)
- [Beware the Technological Imperative: Just Because You Can Doesn't Mean You Should](#)
- [Thanks Apple: Family Cyber Protection Just Got Harder](#)
- [Parental Controls Still Require Parents](#)
- [Keeping Your Family SAFE Online This Summer](#)



functionality need with the proper tools. Function over fashion—not fashion over function. I'm all-in with Teams but it may not be right for everyone. It is just one of the tools available and definitely worth serious consideration—especially since you may already have free access to it if you are a Microsoft customer. Why pay extra for something else?

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# 10 KEYS TO CHURCH MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SUCCESS

*Maximize Your Software's Usefulness*

by Scott Smith

Church management software (ChMS) is designed to help solve operational ministry challenges, but many churches are less than satisfied with their ChMS. No matter which ChMS you use, the following 10 tips can help you maximize your software's usefulness.

## 1. Start with your church's unique strategy.

To make good software decisions, you must be clear on [your church's unique strategy](#), including your identity, passion, vision and ministry calling. *Your ChMS choice and implementation decisions are dictated by your church's specific expression of the broader Great Commission calling.*

## 2. Define your desired processes.

ChMS can help you serve people intentionally. Thoroughly define the processes involved in caring for and equipping guests and members throughout the stages of their lives. With processes defined, you will be ready to choose and configure the proper ChMS tool.

## 3. Automate what you can.

Determine what you can automate in your ChMS. When you automate important tasks that align with your ideal ministry processes, you conserve staff time and ensure that important follow-ups and ministry tasks don't "fall through the cracks."

## 4. Assign a ChMS "Champion."

The ChMS Champion's job is to communicate with staff, leaders, members and volunteers, and to help them use the software to its fullest. As

the resident "expert," they ensure that everyone knows and can successfully utilize the ministry-enabling features. They also encourage ChMS adoption by providing the ongoing training and support required for its effective use.

## 5. Provide ongoing ChMS training.

New people come into the church and onto your staff. People change roles. Ministry processes change. ChMS vendors make updates and changes. Thus, you must develop and maintain ongoing training for all users. Training can include in-person mentoring, group training, video training, and "tips and tricks." Ongoing training, designed specifically for your church, will provide an enhanced return on your ChMS investment.

## 6. Make your ChMS the authoritative data source.

For any ChMS to be useful, its information must be up-to-date, accurate, easy to use and trustworthy. Maintaining multiple departmental applications or spreadsheets containing volunteer assignments, addresses and mailing lists is counterproductive. Your ChMS must act as the [Single Source of Truth](#). With data in multiple "silos," people will rely on their own specific, departmental data source, and will not have complete, correct data to support ministry.

## 7. Evaluate your current ChMS functionality.

If you require lots of additional software programs, apps, information services and databases, your ChMS software may not be a good



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fit. ChMS systems are often purchased because they do one important thing exceptionally well (even while not doing many other church processes very well at all). The overall usefulness of such ChMS systems may not be acceptable in your church environment.

## 8. Establish concrete ChMS requirements based on your unique strategy.

You must be clear about your specific requirements before falling in love with any software features, “look and feel,” etc. Create a prioritized list of functional requirements that you can use to evaluate three to four applications. *Make sure to involve key stakeholders from all departments and levels to ensure that this list is thorough enough to give a comprehensive view.* Too often, one “cool feature” or one specific staff member can have an outsized impact on a decision that affects the whole church.

## 9. Introduce change in concentric circles.

The best way to achieve adoption is to start with a core group of invested, “friendly” stakeholders who will be excited about a new opportunity. Once they have used the software and fixed any “bugs” in the system, you can enlist successive groups of staff, leaders and members. This reduces friction and develops momentum.

## 10. Recognize ChMS limitations.

Your ChMS is a tool; it is not divine. It will not do the work of connecting with people, making good decisions, or changing hearts for Jesus. [No software is equipped to love people.](#)

To read the full article from Enable Ministry Partners, [click here](#). Enable specializes in helping churches solve ChMS questions to enable ministry. Email us at [info@enable.email](mailto:info@enable.email) for more information.



## JUST-IN-TIME UPGRADE: INTERISE PROVED FLEXIBLE

*How Grace Polaris Church Upgraded During the Downtime*

Since 1964, Grace Polaris Church in Columbus, Ohio, has seen a rapid increase in their congregation from a group of 30 to now serving over 2,000 members. As Grace Polaris' congregation continued to grow, their need for a new worship center increased, and in 2018 they started construction on a new space. They turned to InteRise of Nashville, Tenn., for an extensive AVL and acoustic installation that would transform the space and engage their audience.

At the beginning of the partnership between Grace Polaris and InteRise, no one could have imagined a full-time switch to only live-streamed services. Through a dedication to providing the best possible service and equipment while anticipating needs before they arise, InteRise helped upgrade the systems to ideal quality just in time.

Grace Polaris' new upgrades have helped them adapt to our current new normal of social distancing.

A NEXO STM speaker system, along with an Avid S6L-32D console, allow the church to boost their live production. These additions meet the needs of being able to record to ProTools and do virtual sound checks, which allows the volunteers to record all of the channels before a service and practice mixing, along with providing high channel count. The MADI card option for the E6L engine accommodates track playback on stage from the computer running Ableton Live software, making it simple for the band to play along with pre-recorded tracks.

Additionally, due to the new Dante-enabled audio network from InteRise, Grace Polaris now has the flexibility to create a custom mix that's catered to an at-home audience with a separate broadcast audio console, while still mixing in-house for the benefit of the worship team.

"With the entirety of our church services currently existing in a digital space, the excellence of our video production has become a high priority," explains



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Jonnie Barlow, Creative & Live Video Producer at Grace Polaris. “Any small mistake becomes much more apparent when it’s the only channel that the congregation has for experiencing the service.”

“Consequently, the newly installed video production system has become a vital asset,” Barlow continues. “With reliable hardware that won’t flake out, a switcher and graphics package that allow for much more visual creativity, and a high-bandwidth multi-channel recorder that allows for maximum post-production flexibility—and for ironing out any mistakes—we’ve been able to greatly improve our online offerings in order to keep our congregation as connected as possible in this disjointed time.”

Barlow notes that his favorite part of Grace Polaris’ new system is the Carbonite Black switcher and the accompanying 2ME panel. In the past they had been strictly limited to a standard definition 1ME switcher with minimal keying and DVE capabilities. They are now equipped to produce more dynamic, creative experiences that highlight the wide array of creative talent at the church.

While the added complexity could have been overwhelming, the seamless integration of the video system with Ross Dashboard and the ability to program robust custom macros that fire at the push of a button means that even the most complicated, creative executions can be accomplished by a relatively inexperienced volunteer crew. Yet, a switcher is of little use without inputs, and the Sony HXC-FB80 cameras were the perfect fit.

The new lighting system at Grace allows for various dynamic looks in the worship center to be created. The Sony HXC-FB80 camera wide dynamic range and the fully equipped remote control panel allow for quick adaptation to many different lighting looks.





Additionally, Ross pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) PivotCams provide secondary angles to complement the Sony HXC-FB80s. The PivotCams seamlessly integrate with the Ross Carbonite, and their color can be matched with the internal ProcAmps and Color Correctors. Having high-quality cameras staged at different angles allows the at-home viewer to feel immersed in the experience.

“The best feature is undoubtedly how easy it is to call up shots on the PTZs, with near-infinite recall available through Dashboard and precise tweaks possible with the switcher panel's onboard joystick,” explains Barlow. “With all this integrated together, our five man crew can produce a service that looks like it required 10, and I've never had more fun working on a Sunday morning service.”

When Grace Polaris needed to select an AVL integrator for their long-awaited worship center renovation, they sought out a company with proven experience and expertise. But beyond technical knowledge, they wanted a long-term relationship with genuine people. They needed a partner that would work with them to accomplish all of their goals, even with a limited budget.

“From the beginning, the InteRise team has gone overboard to make sure not only that we have a functional system, but that we have so much

more capability to learn and grow down the line,” says Barlow. “Along the way, InteRise constantly demonstrated their professionalism, diligence and care for our team in a way that I've never experienced from an audio/video company before. Rather than viewing us as a sales figure, they've treated us as partners, helping us to accomplish our ministry goals in a technologically excellent way, and I couldn't be more thankful for that.”



At its core, InteRise is here to partner in impacting people by creating customized designs and builds with world-class audio, video, lighting and acoustic systems for churches and corporate spaces. InteRise believes it is their responsibility to steward the client's process with excellent service, straightforward communications, and passionate team members, and no matter what, they do the right thing. For more information, visit [InteRiseSolutions.com](https://InteRiseSolutions.com).



# WHY A “GIVE” BUTTON ON YOUR CHURCH WEBSITE IS NO LONGER ENOUGH

5 Key Reasons Givers Abandon Their Giving

by Vision2Systems

**W**e've all heard the definition of insanity: *Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.* You see a form of insanity every time a church trusts a vendor to slap a GIVE button on their website and then assumes it will automatically grow generosity.

Sure, some traditional givers move online, but often the promise of overall giving growth fails to materialize. Until now, no one has really questioned the effectiveness of that old “GIVE” button.

## THE INSANITY OF ABANDONED GIFTS

We studied the world's most successful nonprofit organizations and found that **83 percent of the people who began a charitable gift left without making a donation.** Collectively, churches are missing out on millions of dollars in potential gifts because of simple barriers in the giving experience.

We dug deeper and found **five key reasons givers abandon their gifts.**

## THE INSANITY OF PUSHING GIVERS AWAY

The most common reason for gift abandonment? **The practice of sending givers away from the church's website to a third-party site to complete their gift,** which accounts for 29 percent of abandoned gifts.

This trust-eroding practice may be common with church giving software but it's certainly not for Amazon or any other successful online shopping experience your givers are accustomed to.

Sanity is looking for an online giving solution whose giving experience is fully, and securely,

83% OF THE PEOPLE WHO BEGAN A CHARITABLE GIFT LEFT WITHOUT MAKING A DONATION.

embedded within your church's website. This builds trust with your givers, especially your newest members.

## THE INSANITY OF REQUIRING ACCOUNTS

Requiring a potential giver to create an account before they make their first donation can be frustrating. As new givers, they may not be ready to share their personal information until they fully trust your church website.

Sanity is offering guest checkout so that givers can donate to your church at their own comfort level. As givers gain trust with your online giving solution, they will naturally create an account and recurring gift schedules.

## THE INSANITY OF GENERIC GIVING OPTIONS

Images and detailed descriptions are essential to every online decision, whether you're buying a product from Amazon or making a hotel reservation on Expedia. It's no longer enough to offer a simple drop-down list with a few generic ministry funds and expect givers to be inspired to donate.

Sanity is bringing your ministry opportunities to life right in your giving form with emotional imagery and a detailed blurb about the impact of each one. This helps to motivate givers into deeper participation with your work in the community.



## THE INSANITY OF USING VENDOR COMMUNICATIONS

Giving is a very personal act, and online giving inherently runs the risk of feeling impersonal. Does the gift confirmation email your givers receive from your vendor's DO-NOT-REPLY address convey trustworthiness and help them feel 'known' by the church?

Sanity is being able to personalize, customize and automate gift confirmation emails from the church, so you can connect in the same engaging way you do in person: by expressing your sincere gratitude, offering more ways to get involved, or perhaps including a video from the Pastor.

## THE INSANITY OF GIVING LIMITS

Many online giving tools place limits on your givers' generosity by setting an upper limit on the size of their online gift. It doesn't make sense to bring givers to a screeching halt by telling them they're being too generous and could they please give less.

Sanity is being able to accept gifts of any size, at any volume or velocity, without scaring off your givers or paying higher fees.

## AN EXCITING NEW APPROACH TO ONLINE GIVING

[Vision2 Systems](#)' deep experience with the church and leading nonprofits fueled its desire to stop the insanity of doing things the same way and expecting different results. We explored all the obstacles behind the high rate of gift abandonment and developed a whole new approach to online giving.

To learn more about these common barriers and the innovative ways Vision2 has solved them, download our white paper, [The 5 Deadly Sins of Online Giving](#). You'll learn how to stop the insanity and begin to reach your true giving potential.

A graphic with a teal background. At the top, the word "INSANITY:" is written in large, bold, red capital letters. Below it, the text "Slapping a 'give' button on your website & expecting giving to increase" is written in white, with "give" in quotes. In the center, a 3D-rendered hand is shown with the index finger pointing at a red button that says "GIVE" in white capital letters, followed by a right-pointing arrow. A black mouse cursor arrow is also pointing at the button. At the bottom, a black banner contains the text "Vision2: An Exciting New Approach to Online Giving" in white.

# INSANITY:

Slapping a  
“give” button  
on your website  
& expecting  
giving to increase

GIVE>

Vision2: An Exciting New  
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by CHURCHLEADERS

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