



16 Proven Ways Technology Creates Church Growth



UrbanMinistries.com

Introduction

In this article, you will learn an easy-to-use, inexpensive roadmap to raise the support needed to adopt technology that sustains your ministry and helps grow your church.

The use of technology in the church is one of the most easily accessible ways to grow and sustain your ministry. But unfortunately, churches that plan to adopt technology in their services often get pushback because of resistance to change.

However, the churches that apply the level of technology that is correctly sized for them report improved membership communication and stabilized or even increased church financial health!



This free resource shares answers that church leaders frequently ask about technology adoption ...

- Why should our church adopt newer, easy-to-use technology?
- What current technology has been proven effective in churches like ours?
- How can I safely adopt the right technology for my church's situation?

Our goal at UMI, Urban Ministries, Inc., is to help you achieve the Great Commission given to us by our Lord & Savior, Christ Jesus. Please share your questions and concerns about technology for your church or ministry.

We also invite you to request a free sample of UMI's media and publications. When we get your request, we will be pleased to send you samples of our uniquely contextualized Christian education and Sunday School curriculum or a copy of UMI's *Precepts For Living*® Annual Commentary. **Email us with "Free Sample" in the subject line** at contactus@urbanministries.com, and let us know if the sample is for personal Bible study or your church's Sunday School.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you.

Why Your Church Should Adopt Technology

1. Expand Your Church's Audience

Advancements in applying technology have allowed churches to reach audiences across the country and the world. And it is more affordable than ever before! Churches have many ways to fulfill the great commandment to preach and teach God's word. Here are the basic tools you need.

Social media

Posts, comments, shares, and ads are easy! If you can read this or send an email, you already have all the important skills to get started. Social media connects people previously unreachable, and it helps members stay in contact with the church after they move or can't attend church activities in person anymore.

Online Access

The virtual church isn't a new concept! It's been used by churches with access to local and national TV networks. But thanks to newer technology, and the pandemic, your church can "broadcast" services via the internet without fancy or expensive equipment. It's the "new normal" to minister to homebound students away at school, and people in any location or situation who can view, join, participate, and tithe or give an offering online!

Church App

You may not think an app is right for your church. But Apps increase the involvement of youth and young adult church members. Apps are the most productive way to spread the word about services, Sunday school, community services, Bible study, prayer, and church events. Apps also help meet the need for daily inspiration from the Word of God.

2. Increase Collaboration

Online access and social media allow churches to find genuine supporters who will help raise funds for the church with crowdfunding and peer-based campaigns. This ability could become a blessing at a critical time for churches that aren't raising funds effectively yet.

Additionally, technology helps church infrastructure, security, and overall plant efficiency. For example, password protection and access cards are important extensions of security technology that most churches need to ensure member safety.

With technology, you can promote your church to new followers and connect with existing members more effectively. The right technology helps identify and build relationships with people and communities in danger of being lost or left behind.

3. More Ways to Raise Funds



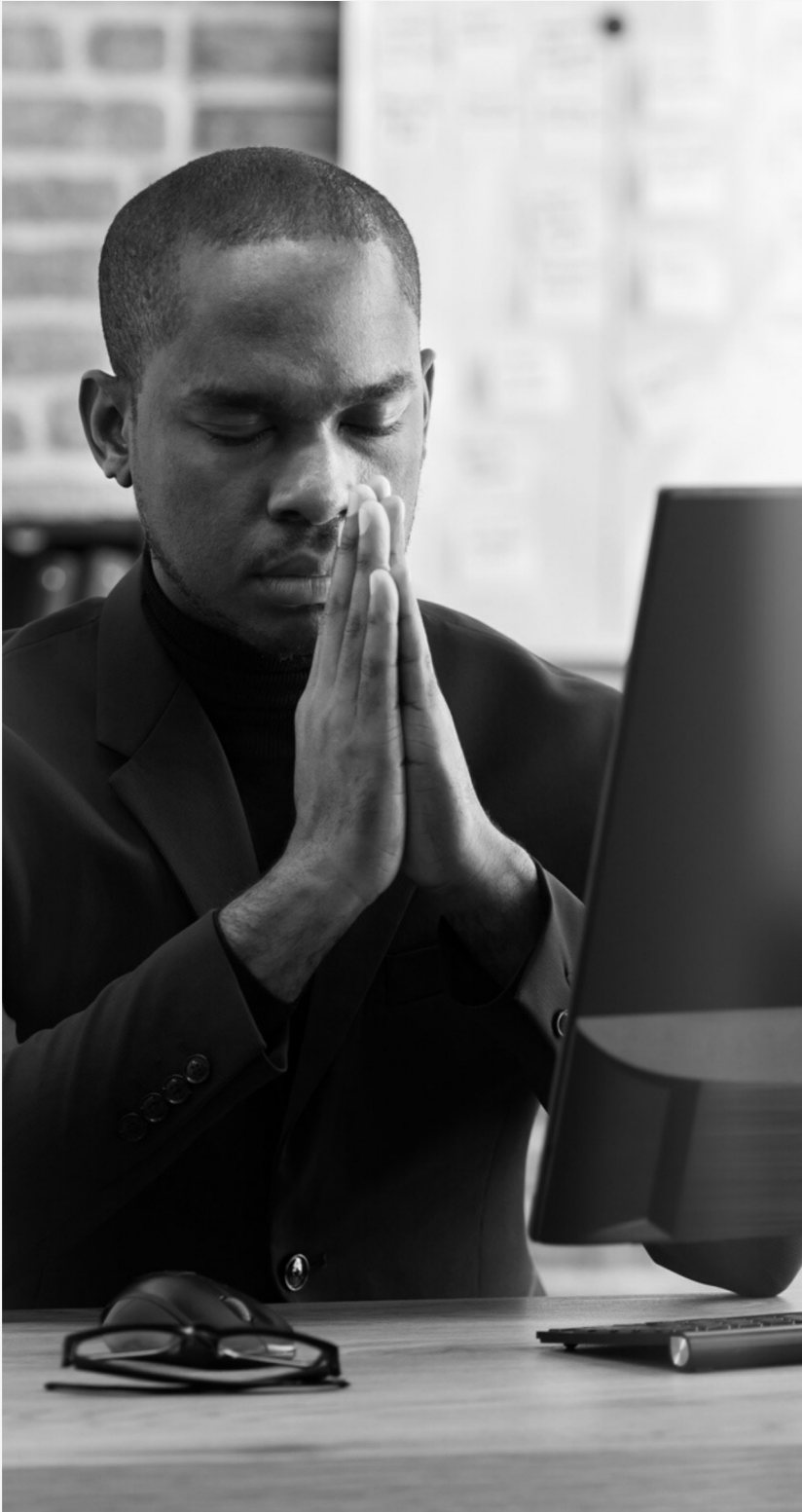
5% of the church leaders reading this will agree that you can't rely exclusively on the collection plate for enough money to run your church facility anymore. As a famous Deacon once said, "... money is not the most important thing, but in the area where money works, nothing else does ... but God!"

Nowadays, most people aren't carrying cash or checks anymore. That's why fundraising online is a necessity for most of us. Thanks to technology, churches can collect offerings and tithes with:

- online donation pages
- forms on a website
- an app
- text-to-donate.
- crowdfunding
- peer-to-peer appeals
- SaaS (software as a service) providers



4. Get Access to the Best Available Help



When something is scarce, the expense or investment required to own it increases in direct response to its limited access. Before technology changed the game, expert help with fundraising and other requirements of church management was NOT generally affordable.

But thanks to exposure created by technology, access to leaders in the fields required to run the church most effectively is available. Everything from fundraising to missionaries or biblical scholars is more available than ever.

Professionals – Freelance professionals are available for church marketing, fundraising, and other services. Pastors and leaders can access professionals in the community and worldwide.

Missionaries – Missionaries are based globally to spread God's Word. Technology makes it easier to find mission opportunities and helps us share the work their members do on the ground with live streaming, too.

Bible Scholars – Biblical scholars connect through email, social media, and virtual or in-person meetings & seminars. Technology allows them to join us in Sunday school, Bible study, small groups, and prayer meetings.

These are only a few examples of help for churches accessible through online searches.

The Proven Church Technology

in 2023 and Beyond!

Simplicity, accessibility, and affordability allow churches to get on board with 2023 church technology trends. There are 6 technologies churches of every variety will participate in eventually to connect with their members, promote their mission, and fundraising.

- Mobile-friendly website or church apps
- Live stream on secure streaming platforms
- Use micro-marketing of church events.
- Use social media to communicate strategically.
- Let your donors give with a text service.
- Give your donors a secure way to schedule repeat donations online.

5. Go Mobile with a Website and Church Apps

Churches can improve communication with their members and community with technological tools like websites and church apps. Churches can inform their congregations about upcoming events and activities. Members will submit prayer requests and tithe or give offerings through online giving platforms. To get the best results from online tools, churches must ensure that websites and apps are mobile-friendly. Websites and apps increase involvement when finding your Sunday school class, Bible study, or prayer meeting is not hard.

6. Live Stream with Secure Streaming Platforms

Live streaming has become “expected” as a part of the new normal. Post-pandemic sharing services through live streaming are easier than ever with various platforms. YouTube and Facebook are unsafe and not recommended. We recommend secure platforms created especially for churches. Live streaming can be used for weekly services, classes, prayer meetings, events, and other creative applications.

7. Focus on Micro-Marketing

Today's consumer demands targeted relevant adverts and personalized promotions. Here is where micro-marketing can be effective. With it, you can target people through geo-targeting, social media advertising, etc. which is especially useful when making an ask that will only make sense to a particular group.



8. Use Social Media to Connect and Communicate

Social media is a chance to communicate and connect with your congregation and their communities. Churches use social media accounts to share stories and updates that entice and excite their congregations. Facebook and Instagram let you write long captions that make connecting with followers easier. Encourage followers to share their experiences with the church & God.

***Note:** Post several times during the week to get the best reaction from your followers. Frequent contact with your followers and give them the spiritual support they may lack.*

9. Give Your Donors a Secure Way to Schedule Repeat Donations Online

Using tools like 'Text-to-Give,' churches can create a campaign and enable text-to-give to get started. They can share the campaign ID and texting number with donors. Donors interested in giving by text will send the ID to the number and receive a link to the online campaign page where they can give any amount. Repeating the donation becomes even easier with 'Text-to-Give' without filling out any forms.

10. Help Senior Donors Give with an Automated Phone Call

Telethons were once considered the only way for a larger organization to raise funds after disasters or other premium events. With new technology, smaller nonprofits and churches can still use tele-broadcast technology to encourage donations to encourage members.

11. Give All Your Donors & Audience the Ability to "Text and Give"

Bulk text campaigns were once considered the only way for mega-churches and big ministries to raise funds for disaster relief or other events. But, with new technology, smaller churches, para-church organizations, and nonprofits can access the best in the text and give technology!

Text is one of the most effective new ways to encourage tithe and offering behavior! It's easier for a member to be a "cheerful giver" with the convenience of text and give apps!

How to Adopt Technology for your Church

Updating or adding newer technology to your church environment should follow a plan based on research and planning. Technology can be a costly mistake if not done correctly.



12. Start with a Focus on the Outcome



Before expanding, replacing, or adding technology to your church, conduct a technology inventory. The way to do this is to consider your current needs compared to the tech and service platforms already in place. Then consider all the options based on the investment required versus the expected effectiveness. Start with no cost, low cost, and higher cost.

You can get started with many free options if your budget is limited. Be cautious when researching “free” options when considering church security, communication apps, and streaming services. But you can always upgrade as you gain experience and finances.

13. Remember Your Mission When Prioritizing Ways to Use Technology



When researching technology, balance what you have versus what you want to achieve. You may want to buy tools focused on the mission to bring more community youth back to the church. But a more affordable option may be best to prioritize first securing an older community that sustains your church home base now. Think of how your decisions will fill the current and longer-term mission of the church.



14. Include Technology Maintenance or Replacement in the Annual Church Budget

Create a technology replacement and maintenance fund. All tools and even software wear out or require maintenance. Think in terms of setting aside funds to repair or replace some tools. Make it a visible line item that gets attention during budget reviews.



15. Raise Funds From Your Members and Followers

You may need to explore ways to raise funds for technology purchases. Start by preparing all the ways to explain how the tech will help your church fulfill its mission. That's the best way to get started raising funds. Let people know why it's so important. The church's chances of receiving donations increases exponentially when members truly understand the purpose behind the technology. Understanding the benefit of technology to your church's mission gets support and donations from loyal members even when there isn't a unanimous agreement.

Note: *Adding a donation designation for the technology fund (or building fund, etc.) to your online donation form reinforces awareness of the need and makes it easy for people to give.*



16. Review the Inventory and Your Plan Annually

As your church grows, you might need new equipment occasionally. Frequently when live streaming is growing exponentially, you may want to buy a camera or upgrade the lighting! At least once annually, take time to review the status and update the budget accordingly.

Closing Thoughts



Technology options changed drastically over the last few years, and the pace of change will continue. Many free and affordable options exist for your church to get started or to upgrade. However, most importantly, before purchasing any new technology, be sure the tool or service helps your church fulfill its mission.



UMI (Urban Ministries Inc.) has relationships with many providers of affordable tools and services for churches for fundraising, donor management, accounting, tax compliance, security, and marketing. If your church wants more fundraising ideas and marketing help or to learn more about UMI's technology partnerships, contact us at contactus@urbanministries.com.

Samples & Examples

You can get great sound and video every time, with minimal technical experience.



Equipment Summary

- Camcorder (with an external mic input, auto level control, and HDMI or USB video output)
- HDMI to USB video capture device (with audio support) and cables
- Microphone (wireless preferred)
- Laptop (or desktop) computer running ZOOM.
- Projector or large screen TV (to show Zoom participants)
- Speaker (to hear the Zoom, participants can use the TV)

Camcorder

Panasonic HC-V180K
Full HD Camcorder



@ Under \$300

Other camcorders are equally good – ensure there is an external mic input, auto level control, and HDMI or USB video output.

Video Capture Interface

These are available at many price points (\$25-\$400), for broadcast & gaming. Check if it converts the camera to a USB input. And that it has HDMI output, too, so your camera operator can have an external viewfinder. **You don't need this adaptor if your camera has a USB video output.**

Sources vary, and we suggest online research on sites like Amazon for equipment comparisons. Also, use Google to find and attend tutorials before purchasing.

HDMI to USB video capture device (with audio support) and cables

@ Under \$100

The HDMI video capture device takes the signal from your camera and converts it to USB so the video can be recorded on your computer, manipulated, and edited/streamed online at a later date.



Microphones

We prefer wireless mics for automated “low tech” configurations because there’s no wire to pull out, run over, or pick up hum and interference. Wired mics can work well, too.



Comica Boom XD Wireless Compact Mic System

This microphone is super-simple, with a range of 150+ feet, rechargeable batteries, an internal & external microphone, and many more useful features.

@ Under \$225



Audio-Technica ATW-1101/L Wireless Lavalier Mic System

This high-end digital microphone system will work well now in the “low-tech” configuration and can be used as a body mic with a more high-tech audio configuration. @ Under \$400

Quality Extras

Upgrades Add Much Better Results

Tripod

A tripod for the camera makes a world of difference. Get one with a fluid pan/tilt head to allow smoother camera movements.

Video lights

Video lights can bring you out of the shadows for a dramatic boost to the look of your presentation. Put them on stands, so they're 30-45 degrees up, and 30-45 degrees off center.

Make sure the color balance (a.k.a. color temperature) of the lights matches the lighting in your space (daylight is bright white, or 6500 degrees, while indoors is yellower, or 3500 degrees). Some lights have an adjustable color temperature and can be used in multiple scenarios.

Lighting is an art form. You can learn more with online tutorials like this one on Vimeo:
<https://vimeo.com/blog/post/your-quick-and-dirty-guide-to-3-point-lighting/>

Headphones

When the band is playing, it's hard to hear how the program sounds to people at home. A good set of sound-isolating headphones lets your technician connect to Zoom on his or her smartphone and listen to the online version of the program. The words to look for in the product description are "noise isolation" or "sound isolating." This differs from "noise canceling" headphones, which have circuitry to reduce ambient background sound.



Koss QZ99 Headphones
@ Under \$50



Shure SE215
Sound Isolating Earphones
@ Under \$100