

GETTING
DISCIPLE MAKING
RIGHT

7 ways
TECHNOLOGY
helps churches
WIN
at making disciples



STEVE CATON
with BEN STROUP

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

Acknowledgments

While [Church Community Builder](#) (CCB), [Ben Stroup](#) and I may get cover credit for this publication, there are many others that were a part of the story behind it.

God birthed the idea through a phone conversation between Ben and myself when we discussed the possibility of doing a podcast series about the connection between tight-knit church communities and sustainable ministry funding. We both realized God called us to do what we do because of a passion to see the Church make an impact on the world we live in. We both agreed that when churches are filled with connected, engaged and highly committed people, amazing things happen, financial health being only one of the outcomes.

We then released the first in a series of six discussions on this topic and were joined by Lauren Hunter, author of the [ChurchTechToday](#) blog and Tom Roepke, Pastor of Operations for [New Hope Community Church](#). God used all four of us in unique ways, drawing from each of our individual experiences and perspectives. When the project concluded and was released on the [ChurchGivingMatters](#) blog, we immediately began to dream about other venues for the conversation and how it could be improved. Thus this e-Book project was born!

Whether it be direct contributions to content or assistance with edits, promotion and strategy, Lauren Hunter and Tom Roepke have their imprint all over this publication and I am very grateful for that!

There are others who have contributed as well. Chris Overton was instrumental in managing the project and designing the look, feel and layout of the book. Andrew Reed is our "Grammar Guru" and makes us look really good on a regular basis.

Finally, I give credit to Chris Fowler and Free Grafton, in whom God placed the vision of CCB years ago. While both guys love technology and all it can do for us, they care most about the mission they were called to. Empowering the local church and helping them do ministry more effectively is all they truly care about. Providing tools that help people connect and serve each other more efficiently is their passion. When those same tools also inform church leaders about the health of their church and the impact they make on people's lives, their dream is realized. It is an honor to be a part of that dream and to experience the pleasure of partnering with churches to change lives every single day!

I pray that this resource will be a blessing to you and others who serve His Kingdom alongside you. May it prompt new ideas and affirm ones you already had.

In Christ!

Steve Caton
Vice President
Church Community Builder

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Foreword

I had been the Executive Pastor for just a few months and I wanted to return a call. I had met someone who told me they wanted to help me in my ministry. However, I couldn't remember their full name. We didn't have an updated directory, and our office administrator had gone home for the night. So I asked one of my fellow pastors how I might find the number. He smiled at me and said, "That's why you're here."

Our church used software to track our attendees and contributions, but only a few people had access to this information. I wasn't one of them. To give more people access, we would need to purchase more licenses, but our equipment was so old we needed to upgrade our computers first. We were stuck in neutral.

Since our church staff couldn't get the information they needed in a timely fashion, they eventually created their own spreadsheets to track their ministry's information. Our church was running on fifteen unconnected spreadsheets and was living according to the book of Judges - "Everyone did what was right in their own eyes."

I've realized that people who work or serve in ministry usually have strong relational gifts. They lead from an intuitive style and are sensitive to God's leading around them. I've also realized that they often desperately need help with organization, systems and structure. I think it's a shame that people who are gifted in ministry spin their wheels for hours to try to "get organized." Executive pastors are the ones who provide the tools to the ministry staff so they can be "efficient with things so they can be effective with people." Spending time and money on quality organizational tools actually translates into greater ministry impact.

Today, our church is thriving partly because we have implemented systems, processes and technology that unify staff, volunteers and critical church information. We have shaved cost from our budget, created higher levels of engagement and improved how we systematically care for people. This cannot be done with fragmented data or lack of instant access to relevant information about our people and our church. The intuitive gifts of our leaders are now supplemented by strong structure, systems and technology. That is a powerful combination!

I highly recommend that Pastors read this eBook and consider ways that they can become more involved in conversations and decisions involving technology. It isn't just an IT decision. It's not just about features and functionality. It's about finding tools that support the way you do church. Most importantly, it's about improving the way you steward and disciple the people God has entrusted to you. When you get that right, a healthy, growing church is just one of the many exciting outcomes. CCB has played a vital role in this journey for our church, and we value them not as a vendor but as a partner in our ministry!

Jim Gum
Executive Pastor
Heartland Community Church
Olathe, KS 66062
www.heartlandchurch.org

Introduction

Intuition is a bad disciple-making strategy

Let's face it. Those of us who raised our hand years ago and said we felt God calling us into ministry are probably not naturally drawn to numbers. Ministry is about people, relationships, ideas, and communication, not data analysis and complex algorithms. That's part of what makes us feel like ministry "fits" our personality and natural inclinations.

We spend a great deal of time preparing for such things as pastoral counseling, preaching, education strategy, and effective leadership. The last time I checked, there were very few seminary classes on technology, especially how to use technology to make better ministry decisions.

Following your gut is not always the best strategy for success

It's natural to gravitate to our most comfortable mode of operations. We place a great deal of confidence in phrases such as "I think," "I believe," and "I feel." Feelings and intuition are two things that make us great at providing ministry leadership to the communities in which we serve. The only drawback is that as organizational leaders, following your gut is not always the best strategy for success.

It's happened to all of us. We got all the right people on board. We set aside the right amount of money and launched what seemed like the right program at the right time to meet a very specific, felt need. Only the result was much less than what we anticipated. We scratched our heads and wondered what we did wrong. We struggled to identify what we missed along the way.

For most of us, we wrestle with those experiences for a few days. After finding no reasonable explanation, we simply chalk it up to a number of different things. We never guaranteed results in the first place, so it's not as if we made any promises to the people involved or the church at large. We just move along and resolve to do it differently and hope for better results moving forward.

Break the cycle

It's a tough cycle to break. And most will never "do church" differently than what is described above. Many who fill positions of ministry leadership in local churches will serve their entire careers resting solely upon intuition and simply hope for the best.

The reality is it doesn't have to be like that. Intuition is a bad disciple-making strategy. There is another way.

I'm not suggesting we throw out intuition altogether. We need to recognize the value in that innate gift. However, our work is of eternal significance, so we must always ensure that we use information to inform, validate, and evaluate the impact of our decisions.

Bring technology into the executive staff meeting room

One way we can do that is by mining the depths of your church management system. I'm sure you've assigned that responsibility to the IT staff or maybe even the education ministry. I want to challenge you to consider bringing it into the executive staff meeting room and see how this can be a tool to increase your Kingdom footprint in the lives of those God has entrusted to you.

That's what this e-book is all about. It's not another theological or

philosophical exercise in making disciples. Rather, it's the beginning for church leaders (maybe even you) to see the value in data and how that can ensure you are doing all you can with what God has given you through the people who sit in your pews (or whatever they normally sit on).

A church management systems isn't simply about membership, attendance, and contribution management. It is a lens through which we can observe and measure God's movement in and through our communities of faith.

Our work is too important to rest simply upon our perceived impact. Our calling, the people we serve, and the God who called us certainly demand our best. The good news is that achieving our absolute best is easier than we ever thought.

chapterONE

BUILD A SYSTEM TO INFORM AND VALIDATE YOUR DECISIONS

Engaging with any organization is a process.

Your credit card company knows this.

The organizations you contribute to (outside the church) know this.

Your bank knows this.

In some respects, everyone knows this except the church leader. We just assume people will proactively come, find their place, plug in, grow (and grow and grow with no setbacks or special attention needed), and then leave when “Jesus calls them home.”

Not true. (But, if you’re like many other churches, I bet it’s the way you’re managing the most precious assets you have...the people in your church.)

You don’t mean to. It’s just a by-product of the reality that you haven’t been exposed to an alternative plan that might suggest another way to capitalize on the assets (time, talent, treasure, testimony) God has already provided through the people who are participating in your church community.

Decision: Will you “fly blind” or figure out a way to validate and inform the decisions you’re making? Are they helping or hindering your ability to fulfill the vision God has placed on your heart?

I'm going to make the assumption that you don't want to "fly blind"... anymore at least.

(If you do, then go do something else. The rest of this e-book will simply waste your time.)

I'm guessing you didn't ask your spouse to marry you on your first date. Of course not! Over time, you interacted with one another, learned more about one another, and one day realized you wanted to "do" life together...forever! (It really is a beautiful thing.)

The process of building an intimate relationship with someone is the same way we should think about people interacting with your church. It takes time. And if we violate the natural timetable, it messes everything up and interrupts the process.

Stop asking your people to marry your church on the first date. There is a better way.

Think about the membership process in four stages:



Expansion

This usually occurs through strategies related to outreach and evangelism.



Assimilation

This usually occurs when someone says "I'm interested in 'dating' your organization."



Cultivation

This usually occurs when a commitment has been made and God is working through that individual to impact the Kingdom through your church.



Evaluation

This usually occurs when a “break up” has occurred.

Now that we have a framework to assign the different levels of engagement, we have to define what each one looks like in our own church context. (Hint: It will look slightly different in every church.)

The process gives us metrics (or ways to measure) “what is,” not what we “think,” “believe,” or “feel.” (Your intuition is good, but it’s not that good. Sorry.)

We should be able to trace our program decisions and financial investments back to this process of making disciples. When we do that, we can better understand if the programs we have in place and the money we are spending are producing the intended results.

(Just so we’re clear: The goal is to make more disciples.)

Honor the reality that engaging with your church is a process.

Trust your gut (most of the time).

Build a system to inform and validate your decisions (i.e. your gut).

Objective: Build a system to inform and validate your decisions

1. Are your ministry decisions backed up by data, or based exclusively on intuition?
2. Can you evaluate the relationship you have with each church member through the information available in your church management system?
3. Do you see the church management system as a resource for staff leadership to monitor the spiritual development and assimilation process of church attenders?

DEFINE AND MEASURE EVERY LEVEL OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

The Great Lie: If we can learn how to get more people in the door (and keep more people than we lose) then we will, by default, make more disciples.

Wrong! (That's why we call it a lie.)

This is where we miss it when it comes to technology. It's not just about tracking attendance, mailing information, and contribution records. It's about managing our relationship with the member.

When dating in high school, we used the phrase "define the relationship." It was that moment when you both knew intuitively it was time to determine whether or not the relationship was going to work.

Guess what? If church membership is like a relationship, then you can't avoid "the talk" when you...

Define
The
Relationship!

The difference is you are not looking for what people are saying necessarily as much as what they are doing. Behavior is a much better indicator of reality than words. Behavior is much closer to the "truth" of the situation.

Let's look at the membership process as we defined it in the last chapter. Only this time, we'll ask a key question to help us define the relationship.

Expansion

Key Question: What caused someone to show interest in your church for the first time?

Assimilation

Key Question: How we can learn as much as we can about each other to discover the gifts we each bring to the relationship?

Cultivation

Key Question: Does the behavior of a member - over time - reflect deeper levels of engagement? Why or why not?

Evaluation

Key Question: Upon ending the relationship, do we understand why? How can we learn from the (good or bad) experience?

Technology enables leaders to find ways to measure what's working and what isn't.

If 80 percent of the people who have attended a new membership class aren't giving, serving, and connected to a small group within six months of completing the new membership program, you should be concerned. It's time to evaluate the content and structure of the program because you didn't accomplish your goal.

But you wouldn't know that if you weren't....yep, say it...measuring.

You can't manage what you don't measure. Period.

The information contained within your church membership system is absolutely mission-critical data, which provides a window into the life of an individual member to ensure they are growing spiritually.

Do you know...

...what percentage of your people has been connected in small groups for at least six months?

...what percentage of your people has been missing from small groups for four consecutive weeks?

...who has attended every class on missions but never taken a mission trip?

...how a particular member or member segment prefers to contribute to your church?

These are all vital questions that ensure you are cultivating disciples and accurately “stewarding” the people God has brought to serve Him through your church.

Defining the key questions is going to take more than one staff meeting and should be reviewed often.

Measuring is a good discipline to adopt, and it can be learned.

When was the last time you “defined the relationship” with your membership? Are you capturing the data you need with your present system?

Objective: Define and measure every level of member engagement

1. What member activity are you tracking today?
2. Who is reviewing what information and how often?
3. How are you using the data to attract and retain new and current attenders?

chapter **THREE**

LEVERAGE DATA TO DISCOVER THE GIFT WITHIN THE MEMBER

Leverage data to discover the gift within the member

Assimilation is a funny word. It really is the best word we have to describe the dating process within the church.

When we date people we are interested in, we learn things like...

- ...what kind of music they like.
- ...what kind of food they eat.
- ...if they are fun or boring.
- ...how they deal with difficult situations.

The list goes on and on. The goal is to discover enough about the other person to know if you are compatible.

Why would we expect the church to function differently? (We don't check our humanity at the church doors!) Once someone says, "Yes. I'm interested. Let's figure this relationship out and see if there is something real here," it becomes the responsibility of the church leader...(that's you)...to take the lead in the process.

(There's that word "process" again.)

Let's get this straight: If you leave it up to the member to figure this out, chances are they will be worshipping at another church in your

community in a matter of months...maybe weeks.

Here is the "secret" to winning at assimilation...

...use technology to profile the person, capture their interests and unique gifts, and find ways to build a relationship around their unique interests, skills, and desires.

The biggest mistake you can make during the dating process is to make it all about you...your interests...your needs...your preferences. It's not about you. It's all about how our church can help others grow spiritually and become growing disciples (Christ-followers) who are taking the Gospel out of the pews and into the community.

One of the most effective tools is a personality profile. (Don't have the ability to do this in-house? Partner with a local pastoral counseling center in your area.) Uncover the gifts God has brought to you in the member. Then you can help the member generously release those gifts to the benefit of the Kingdom.

Profiling is not a bad practice. Actually, it can be healthy when capturing a picture of your church membership as a whole and individually. Capturing the right data helps us help the member follow Christ.

Example: A member scored high in their personality profile with regard to "mercy." You noticed (because you were looking at the data) 90 days after completing the new member's class, they haven't participated in one service activity.

What would you do?

You could let go and hope for the best. (Probably not the best option.)

The better option is to alert the missions pastor you have a new member with this personality profile who hasn't served yet, and encourage them to offer an invitation for the person to serve. Time for a little relationship building (and disciple making).

Another example: You do a database search and see you have a significant number of entrepreneurs in your church. Perhaps you could start a ministry helping unemployed people in the community start their own business.

Your ideas? No! In fact, it probably wasn't even on your radar screen.

But you followed the data, expanded your reach, and found ways to uncover the gifts God intended to be used for His glory through your church's ministry.

Is the connection between data and disciple making getting clearer?

Objective: Leverage data to discover the gift within the member

1. How much do you know about each member?
2. Is there a process in place to help members discover more about themselves and how God has designed them to serve within your church?
3. Are you tracking members who aren't serving and connecting them with staff leaders in areas that are native to their God-given gifts and interests?

chapter**FOUR**

TRACK HUMAN INTERACTION TO DELIVER A PERSONAL TOUCH

Ministry is about people, right?

Then why is the church the least intentional about dealing with people as...

...people.

...donors.

...learners.

...participants.

...activists.

...evangelists.

We think we are. But we aren't sure.

Why is it that the local university's alumni office can tell us more about our members than the church office can? Who should have the closer relationship?

What do we do when we realize someone has enrolled in three consecutive Bible studies related to women in ministry but has never volunteered to help lead or serve in some capacity?

What happens when a person gives money for the first time?

What happens in your church when someone is actively involved and then suddenly absent?

Church leaders expect people with problems to recognize the “signs” and seek the leader out for help. Most often, the people don’t even know when the “problem” began or that God might be calling them to something greater unless someone encourages them.

Technology empowers us to see what we didn’t even know was there.

Example: One member’s giving declined by 50 percent in one year. If giving is an outward sign of an inward commitment, then this is data that should set off alarms for staff leadership.

Want to know what happened? (Of course you do.) The giver retired. And when contacted by the front-line ministry staff, he revealed he was having a tough time making the transition.

No one would have ever known. But the data told a story that revealed an incredible ministry opportunity.

Guess what? There are multiple ministry opportunities you are missing because you aren’t looking at the data and allowing it to facilitate a personal touch to someone who has made a commitment to you and your church.

Do you know...

...how your members want to receive information about your church?

...how your members want to give?

...how your members want to learn and connect with your church?

Again, it’s not about you. It’s about them. And it’s nearly impossible to “fly blind” and make decisions that honor the practices and habits native to the people in your church.

What if a segment in your church can't be at church on Sunday because they travel regularly for work or have to work on Sundays? If it's all about you, then the response is..."tough!" Maybe even "get another job!" If it's all about them, you start delivering the Sunday morning worship experience via podcasts and live Web broadcasting, or consider offering an alternative worship time.

In a relationship, it's completely appropriate to be mindful of (not disregard) the personal preferences of the other person. If they are scared to fly, you wouldn't charter a personal jet for their birthday. (OK. Extreme example. I get that.)

Learn as much as you can about the other person and honor their likes, dislikes, interests, and abilities. It's easy to do this when it's one person. How do you manage this when it's a staff of four ministering to a population of 500? You have no choice but to let the data work for you!

Deliver a personal touch that builds trust and connection by leveraging the data you already have (or should have), and watch the number of disciples in your church multiply!

Objective: Track human interaction to deliver a personal touch

1. As your church has grown, how have you used technology to help maintain a personal touch?
2. Can you identify how people prefer to communicate or interact with your church?
3. In what ways are you using the data in your church management system to identify and implement member interaction even when the members aren't on campus?

CAPTURE THE EVIDENCE OF CULTIVATION

Part of making disciples is growing disciples.

Almost every great athlete has a demanding coach pushing him or her to the next level. When you think about professional athletes who are already operating at elevated levels of performance, how do you take them to the next level? The coach pushes them to a higher level he sees clearly but the athlete cannot.

Guess what? Very, very few people are going to push themselves to grow spiritually all by themselves. We need someone to challenge us to take the next step.

People are busy. They often find themselves overwhelmed, trying to balance church, work, parenting, marriage, and a million other things and countless other people tugging at their attention and eating away at each day.

Don't expect them to be panting for your every word. It may take you inviting them to take the next step of commitment for them to grow spiritually.

Rules of Engagement:

1. You have to have an existing relationship which embodies mutual trust and respect.
2. You must have to know more about them than they do about

themselves. (I'm not suggesting an FBI investigation.) Are you capturing enough information to know where they are excelling and where they could use a little push to take it to the next level?

3. You must have to be ready for them to say "yes," "not now," or "no" (and know what to do next).

The divine balance of power in every congregation is the leader has been given the vision and the membership has been given the time, talents, and treasure to accomplish the vision.

Here is the learning point. (Hint: Don't miss this. It's important.)

It's the job of the church leader to cultivate the resources God has already provided in the membership to accomplish the vision He has given the leader.

Yep. You're responsible!!

Technology gives the leader the information he or she needs to challenge others to take the next step of commitment.

Remember the membership process from Chapter One: Expansion, Assimilation, Cultivation, and Evaluation? Cultivation is an essential part of creating a sustained effort to bring about true, lasting spiritual transformation within any community.

You have to stay in the game long enough to make a difference. Sometimes that means challenging people to take the next step and achieve something they didn't know was possible.

It may mean challenging someone to...
...participate in their first mission trip.
...give for the first time.

- ...give the largest amount they've ever given.
- ...host a small group.
- ...start a new ministry.
- ...commit to a Bible study program.

If the leader doesn't cultivate the membership to take the next step, two things happen:

1. The member will never be completely satisfied operating within the church community.
2. The leader will reject the resources God has provided in the people who identify themselves as members of your church.

We can't intuitively manage hundreds or thousands of members. We have to depend on the data we are (or should be) capturing through our church management system to do two things:

1. Demonstrate that we recognize the resources available in and through the membership.
2. Mark measurable progress through continued engagement.

Or you can just "go with your gut."

But you've already tried it.

If it was working, you wouldn't be reading this.

Are you convinced technology can help you get disciple making right yet?

Objective: Capture the evidence of cultivation

1. Have you ever considered using the discipleship class attendance as a prospecting list to fill your next mission trip?
2. Are you matching the two, three, or four things you want every member to be doing with actual records to reveal members who may need to be challenged to move to deeper levels of engagement?
3. Is someone on staff alerted when there is a significant change in attendance or giving behavior?

UNCOVER HISTORICAL DATA TO PRESCRIBE FUTURE ENCOUNTERS

Uncover historical data to prescribe future encounters

Churches are complex organizations. (Bet they didn't tell you that in seminary.)

Operating a church is a lot like running a local nonprofit. You're responsible for program management, volunteer recruitment, leadership development, and that nasty "f" word: Fund-raising!

Communication is absolutely critical to building community and fostering a sense of connection.

People only touch your church once every seven days in 59 minute segments. (Assuming they come every week.) Whatever you say on Sunday, they will probably forget!

I know it pains you to hear such a thing, especially after 20-30 hours of sermon preparation. But it doesn't have to be that way!

Remember: It's not about you! And if you expect people to stay dialed in, you're going to have to learn how to carry the Sunday morning experience beyond the actual, live on-campus event.

It may be through blogs, Twitter, Facebook, buzz, e-mail, video blog, text messaging, etc.

The trick is not to focus on efficiency but impact. It's not about the leader's personal preferences but what motivates people to do something.

There is only one way to know this. You'll have to ask, record, implement, test, measure, and do it all over again.

Businesses make or break their bottom line based on their ability to deepen the level of engagement with their customers. American Express symbolizes this process with their Green (introductory), Gold (mid-level), and Platinum (premium) charge cards. Someone at American Express is responsible for moving customers to the next level.

If American Express is so intentional about communication, shouldn't the church be also? Our charge is not to improve the bottom line but to make disciples.

There is nothing more eternally important than that. And yet "our best" is often based on "our gut." We hope it all works out.

Trends aren't just for an economic conversation. Understanding what has happened in the past is an excellent indicator of what could happen in the future.

We learn this as children when we touch something extremely hot. The next time we are reluctant and less willing to touch the hot stove and see what happens. The same is true in communication.

Communication is tough these days. It used to be simple. Just make an announcement on Sunday morning and everybody heard you. Today, in the information age, communication clutters our minds, phones, televisions, radios, etc.

The beauty of technology is I can choose what to listen to, who to listen to, and how they will communicate with me.

The good news for churches is they will listen.

The bad news is some people have an attitude of, "if you don't say something valuable or use a medium I prefer, I'm not hearing you."

Either way, we will exhaust our resources and end up with little to show for it unless we pay attention to what our membership has proven effective by paying attention.

And how are you supposed to manage that? Easy. Your church management system should help you record this information.

Revealing question: It's Thursday night and you can't hold services at your normal location. How do you tell people you are meeting in a different location?

If you can't answer that question, you haven't been paying attention to the data. And frankly, if you haven't been paying attention to their preferences, you haven't earned the right to be heard.

The same is true for...

...Bible studies.

...Mission projects.

...Events.

Paying attention to what generates and accelerates disciple making shouldn't only be an intuitive process but should be informed based on what you know works. Success creates more success.

There is only one way to know your next move: check your data.

Objective: Uncover historical data to prescribe future encounters

1. What church membership activity are you measuring in your church management system?
2. If you had to choose three programs to eliminate from your church schedule, how would you make that decision?
3. When a program or event isn't as successful as (or is more successful than) initially expected, what data do you use to explain why it failed (or worked)?

EVALUATE THE RESULTS TO JUSTIFY PERSONNEL AND PROGRAM INVESTMENTS

The “new normal” for churches is the membership demands...
...more information about how money is used.
...more information about ministry results.
...more information about how decisions are made.

In order for us to preserve the trust needed to build and foster relationships with our membership, we must embrace this “new normal” and voluntarily hold ourselves accountable to measuring impact and reporting the good news...and the bad.

Of course, if we don’t voluntarily do this, we’ll be required to.

People don’t need your church as much as you need them to be the church God has called you to become.

Technology gives us a tool to demonstrate a ministry “return on investment” (mROI) to the member who decides to “invest” in your church.

When you can trace the dollar given through the disciple-making system which resulted in true life change, you achieve three things:

1. You build trust by doing what you said you were going to do.
2. You pave the way for future investments.
3. You discipline yourself through self-imposed systems of evaluation to ensure your “gut” is matched with data to validate your intuition.

Can you run reports over membership, giving, service, etc. and determine if your church is making more disciples and moving people to deeper levels of engagement?

If you can't, you risk losing the people God intended to be part of accomplishing the vision in your church.

It's simple.

Do what you said you would do.

Do it in ways that create life change and measurable impact.

Show your people how you're doing it.

Watch the energy level of participation (and life change) multiply itself.

What if your church bulletin printed a few bullets each week to the effect of:

Because of your generosity, this week we were able to help:

...14 people avoid foreclosure.

...10 people repair their cars so they could get to work.

...Five families have food to eat each night.

...Two teenagers achieve 12 months of sobriety that began with our church-sponsored recovery program.

or what about this:

Because of your generosity, this year we were able to:

...Baptize 300 people.

...Lead 375 to a first time commitment to follow Christ.

...Engage 34 families in marriage counseling.

...Free 75 people from suffocating debt through our debt ministry.

How would it change your position the next time you went into your

finance committee, Board of Session, Elder meeting (whatever) and asked for undesignated funds to meet a ministry need you just discovered (and supported with data)?

Numbers. Data. Research.

These things change the game of ministry funding and ministry leadership every time.

Just because measuring and numbers aren't native and comfortable doesn't mean we shouldn't push ourselves to learn and grow in ways that make us more effective. This is what we are supposed to be doing.

Are you changing the conversation of ministry expansion by showing your ability to track, interpret, and evaluate "what is" in clear, concise, and compelling ways?

You don't have a choice. This is the "new normal."

Don't underestimate the ministry potential of a church management system and how it can help you get disciple making right!

Objective: Evaluate the results to justify personnel and program investments

1. Do you base staffing decisions on perceived need or on actual data which reveals unmet ministry needs?
2. How do you prepare to ask your lay leaders for undesignated funds?
3. Is it easy for you to generate reports from your church management system to help you communicate the Kingdom impact of your church?

Conclusion

What now?

The job of the church leader is never complete. It's ongoing and growing more complex with each passing day. The purpose of this e-book is to help you and your church win at making disciples!

Disciple making is both art and science. There is a place for intuitive leadership in the life of a church, but we can't underestimate the power of making more informed decisions and looking for ways to validate our assumptions, hopes, thoughts, and dreams along the way.

Think about what might happen if 10 percent, 20 percent, 50 percent or more of your membership moved to the next level of engagement. How would it change impact the culture of your church?

Perhaps this e-book has helped you start a healthy conversation among your staff about ways to leverage your church management system to be more strategic about making disciples. Perhaps you've uncovered the system currently in place doesn't provide the tools you need to make your data work for you. Or perhaps you've discovered it isn't a software issue but a recognition that more ministry leaders need to be trained to use your church management system to gain the most from it.

The big question is this: Is it worth making an investment of time, money, and energy to leverage technology and multiply your efforts to fulfill the Great Commission, and to cultivate the resources God has provided in the people who make up the membership of your church?

It's your decision.

What's your next move?

Your decision to do disciple making differently comes with significant eternal implications. But you won't have to do it alone. We'll be here to help.

About Church Community Builder

Who is Church Community Builder?

Church Community Builder (CCB) is a web-based software solution designed to help your church build a better connected, more committed church community. Communicating and connecting with people is a challenging task today. Reducing “dropped balls” and making sure people don’t fall through the cracks is vital to the health and growth of your ministry. It is a challenging task these days to stay well connected with the members of your church and with those you are trying to reach outside your church. There are many tools available, but trying to work with outdated technology or multiple software products can easily create even more confusion and inefficiency.

CCB provides a solid church management system to keep accurate records and report on key church measurables, communication tools to keep people informed, calendaring tools to organize church events, social media tools to help build community and connectedness, and web integration tools that turn your church website into a community portal. CCB has incorporated all of these elements, plus many more, and put them into a single, fully integrated solution that makes everyone’s job much easier and increases your effectiveness in fulfilling The Great Commission.

Why Church Community Builder?

Software companies are either playing catch up or are already ahead of the game in providing new technology advancements to help them meet their communication goals.

Many pastors and administrators greatly desire to connect with their

congregation and stay more on top of their needs, while not allowing technology to overwhelm their day-to-day lives. If technology becomes a hindrance instead of a help, or if it gets in the way of ministry instead of aiding it, then the technology probably isn't working for you.

People today expect their church to have a viable website that is more than a mere Yellow Pages ad; they need a portal to connect with their church leaders and fellow members. People also communicate in ways that involve more technology, and this must be paralleled through the technology solutions a church embraces.

CCB continues to evaluate and build in enhancements to meet the ever-growing needs of their users: church plants to mega churches; single campus and multi-campus churches; churches with as few as 50 attenders to churches with over 10,000 attenders.

CCB has stayed ahead of the curve by focusing on three vital areas that are critical to the future of the church management software industry:

Mobile Computing: You can use your smartphone

In a world where mobile computing is used as much as or more than personal computers, it is critical that your church database be securely accessible from a variety of mobile devices. CCB provides unique interfaces for PDAs, web-enabled cell phones, and the immensely popular iPhone. Church staff and members with appropriate security privileges can quickly find phone numbers, email addresses, and physical locations of individuals in their database. They can instantly initiate calls, send emails, and even access maps and obtain driving directions. Pastors and staff can also edit member profiles, allowing them to quickly correct critical profile information on the fly. CCB's mobile capabilities equip pastors, leaders, and volunteers to better know and serve those in their care, even away from the church office.

Social Networking: You can enable small group communication all week long

The key to a healthy church is community, which is created as people develop relationships by connecting and communicating with each other. In CCB's socially-driven approach to church management, Group Management (not simply organizing names) is a major cornerstone.

Every church community, regardless of its size, can be broken down into smaller groups of people who need to interact with one another. Whether these groups are composed of church staff, elders (key lay leaders), small group participants, Sunday School teachers, volunteers, or Bible study members, the possibilities and the number of groups CCB allows you to create are endless. Each Group has its own Calendar, Discussion Board, Needs Management, Positions, and File Sharing benefits. Group Leaders can quickly communicate with their Group Participants, and Group Participants can easily interact with one another. By providing both data management and private community tools in a tightly integrated bundle, CCB offers churches a more robust view of overall church involvement.

Web-Based (Cloud) Computing: You don't have to be in the office

In the past, church management software was purchased, shipped, installed, and regularly updated through floppy discs and CDs sent to churches via snail mail. These days, web-based offerings are easily and instantly accessed through the Internet with little drain on the personal computer. No more waiting for updates to arrive in the mail—and no more headaches for your IT staff. Better yet, web-based church management software allows church staff and even members to access appropriate information from any location with an Internet connection.

Get “wired” for today’s culture

The Internet has created a fundamental shift in the way church staffs interact with their members, and the way members interact with their pastors and fellow congregants. This has forced church management software providers to develop solutions that meet these new demands. CCB was birthed in 1999 and was one of the first completely web-based church management software solutions. Today, we continue to support churches and look toward the future as cloud computing evolves.

Today’s “wired” culture demands more from its church management system. CCB recognizes that leaders need solutions that provide a church “fit” rather than expect the church to fit the solution.

What Others Say

Yes, we are proud of our work and commitment to ministry solutions.

BUT don't take our word for it. Check out what others are saying about CCB.



www.churchcommunitybuilder.com/buzz

You'll find what others are saying in the news, around the Web, and within our community.

Contact CCB

E-mail: solutions@churchcommunitybuilder.com

Web: www.churchcommunitybuilder.com

Twitter: www.twitter.com/CCBChurch

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CCBChurch

YouTube: www.youtube.com/ChurchCommBuilder

(And if you must...we don't mind)

Phone: 866.242.1199

Address: 12265 Oracle Blvd, Ste 105, Colorado Springs, CO 80921

CHURCH MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS aren't simply a function of membership, attendance & contribution management but a

"We have used Church Community Builder's functionality extensively in our adult assimilation flow. This tool is exactly what the doctor ordered. No other church management system we evaluated had everything we needed. [CCB] has propelled our discipleship strategy into the 21st century."

Brian Moss

Senior Pastor
Oak Ridge Baptist Church Salisbury, MD

"Think of management software in terms of a building house: with some solutions the plans are already in place with little ability to change. The walls are already in place and you have to make your furniture fit their rooms. What sold us on CCB is the flexibility. We can move the walls and create rooms to fit our furniture. It has the flexibility to do church the way we wanted to."

Steve Boyd

Connections Pastor
Christ Community Church, St. Charles, IL

LENS

through which we
observe
& MEASURE

GOD'S MOVEMENT

in and through
our COMMUNITIES of
FAITH.



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