

ANSR POLL

Technology and the Ministry of the Church Winter 2006 – Members

PART I

First would you please think about your personal preferences for use of technology in the ministry of your church. Some of the technology options listed may be in use by your church. Others are just possibilities. Few, if any, churches are using all of these technology options. At the right of each option please indicate how helpful that use of technology would be to people like you. Use either a pen or a pencil to fill in the most appropriate oval.

| | Level of Helpfulness for Ministry* | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| | Not helpful at all | Not very helpful | Somewhat helpful | Very helpful | Extremely helpful |
| An informative church web site for potential visitors | 2% | 5% | 31% | 38% | 25% |
| Pastor's sermons available on the church's website | 5% | 18% | 32% | 32% | 13% |
| E-mail communication with members of the congregation | 2% | 8% | 26% | 38% | 26% |
| Presentation software for worship services | 6% | 12% | 26% | 34% | 22% |
| Showing DVDs or videos | 3% | 7% | 31% | 42% | 17% |
| Using technology to connect with missionaries | 1% | 4% | 29% | 41% | 26% |
| Streaming video on the church's website | 6% | 21% | 40% | 25% | 9% |
| E-mail based threaded discussions between committee meetings | 10% | 24% | 35% | 23% | 9% |
| Internet discussion forums for members hosted by the church | 12% | 27% | 35% | 18% | 8% |
| Church newsletter delivered by e-mail | 7% | 10% | 29% | 36% | 19% |
| Making it easy electronically for people to make prayer requests, etc. known | 3% | 7% | 25% | 38% | 28% |
| Tracking attendance electronically | 6% | 19% | 36% | 27% | 13% |
| Using surveillance cameras for building & property security | 4% | 12% | 30% | 34% | 20% |
| Using surveillance cameras in nursery & children's areas for protection | 4% | 8% | 30% | 35% | 23% |
| Providing an option of electronic payment of tithes and offerings | 14% | 24% | 34% | 18% | 10% |
| Making information about church activities available on the web | 2% | 8% | 19% | 41% | 31% |
| Self-paced instruction for adults via computer or the internet | 5% | 19% | 34% | 28% | 14% |
| Using technology to enhance worship services | 4% | 7% | 27% | 38% | 25% |
| Podcasting | 15% | 25% | 40% | 12% | 8% |

Are there other uses of technology that you would like to see your church use?

Other technology uses volunteered:

Simulcast of major conferences, etc.

Perhaps headsets for hearing impaired.

Digital sound control/system

Wireless networks so that sermon notes can be downloaded to PDAs during the service.

God blogs are something we should consider as well.

Digital recording of services, digital sound reinforcement systems, WI-FI/wireless internet throughout church buildings.

Podcasting would be the best every!!

*Throughout this report percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

The winter 2006 ANSR Poll was mailed January 3rd to a representative sample of active, adult members (341). A follow up postcard was mailed about ten days later. By March 7, 2006, responses had been received from 204 (60%). The response from members was generally representative of the distribution of Nazarene members in churches of various sizes and regions. While this level of response is good, some caution should be exercised in generalizing results. With sample responses of this size, the margin of error is within plus or minus 8%.

PART II

In this part would you please tell us a little about your personal opinions about and use of technology. First, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|-------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------------------|
| 1. Videos of nature during praise and worship help me feel closer to God. | 8% | 34% | 36% | 16% | 6% |
| 2. Video clips make the pastor's sermon better for me. | 8% | 40% | 31% | 14% | 7% |
| 3. I am worried that technology will replace personal relationships in my church. | 10% | 27% | 22% | 31% | 10% |
| 4. Technology helps me in my relationships with other people in the church. | 2% | 24% | 36% | 30% | 8% |
| 5. Technology is a distraction from the ministry of our church. | 5% | 10% | 26% | 44% | 15% |
| 6. I believe our use of technology makes the ministry of our church more effective. | 18% | 43% | 27% | 11% | 3% |

Which word at the right best describes your feeling about the following uses of technology?

| | Helpful | Necessary | Apathetic | Unnecessary | Wasteful |
|---|---------|-----------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| 7. Using technology to enhance worship | 62% | 15% | 7% | 15% | 2% |
| 8. Having a church web site | 49% | 33% | 11% | 5% | 2% |
| 9. Using e-mail to communicate | 57% | 28% | 5% | 8% | 3% |
| 10. Using technology in the Sunday school | 62% | 14% | 14% | 9% | 2% |

How would you describe your own use of technology?

| | |
|--|-----|
| 11. I have a personal web site. | 17% |
| 12. I use the internet for research. | 77% |
| 13. I have taken, or am taking, an online course. | 21% |
| 14. I have used the internet to purchase something. | 69% |
| 15. I use the internet to make electronic payments. | 35% |
| 16. I use e-mail to keep in touch with family. | 71% |
| 17. I use e-mail to keep in touch with other people in the church. | 56% |
| 18. I use e-mail to stay connected to a support person or group. | 30% |

PART III

This final part asks for some personal characteristics. This information will be used to examine the general impact of various characteristics on technology use. Reports will only summarize responses from the group in order to protect your confidentiality. However, if you would be uncomfortable answering any of these question, please just leave it blank.

1. What is your age?
 - 3% 30 or younger
 - 10% 31 through 40
 - 25% 41 through 50
 - 23% 51 through 60
 - 40% Over 60

2. What is your gender?
 - 39% Male
 - 61% Female

3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - 2% Less than high school
 - 20% High school graduate
 - 24% Some college
 - 7% Vocational school certificate/degree
 - 7% College – Associates degree
 - 23% College – Bachelors degree
 - 17% Masters, Doctorate, or other graduate degree

Is there anything else you would want to say about technology and the ministry of the church?

Examples of the many comments volunteered:

Approval/Appreciation

“For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.” I Corinthians 10:33b

Our church has been utilizing progressive technology (web page, email, video presentations, etc.) for several years now. It has significantly improved the communication abilities of the pastoral staff. I feel that improved technology also helps attract younger people to the church.

It’s good – It’s here – Use it to advance where you can

Using technology is a crucial tool for us to use to get the message of the gospel out, especially with the younger generation. It is their medium. I use several websites to study the Bible. I use it to look up the Hebrew or Greek meanings of the scripture. I’ve also used it to find maps of Biblical stories to use in lessons I’ve taught. I’ve also used my laptop to present or to do interactive segments in my teaching.

Technology is a vital part of our world and an important means by which to reach the younger generation. My greatest concern with the use of technology in our churches is that we don’t leave out the people who do not have the new advances as part of their daily lives.

Concern/Caution

If we are going to use technology, we should take the time to do it right and well. Out of date websites and broken links do not make a good impression. Untrained technology workers in the booth are distracting to the worship service. If it is worth doing, it is worth doing well.

Nothing replaces good music and good personal sermons

Using high tech in the church we lose a lot of one on one interaction. No REAL personal eye to eye contact. A soft pat on the shoulder, hand shake and a smile goes a lot further in comforting a hurting soul than email contact.

The question about electronic payment of tithe – I believe this would not be good. I feel that bringing the tithe to the church is part of worship. I don’t want to treat it like another bill.

Training/Resources

Proper training of those using the technology is important. Improper training often causes disruptions in the service. Too much can also be taxing on church budgets. Especially if it is prioritized above other necessary ministries.

Hire a professional to work the sound system for the music. Lay people usually know nothing about balance and blend in music.

Cost

I currently work at a Lutheran church. Our website uses many of these features. It is nice to have, but is expensive. This is where we are at this day and age.

Technology can be used at an effective cost.

Church Setting/Culture

All things are relative – much of this would not be practical for a small church like ours. Also the more technology we use the less human contact we have. That would not be a good thing.

We’re a small rural church and a power point missionary presentation is “new” for our congregation.

Use of technology should be also used for smaller (rural) churches. Messages from larger church pastors could be used.

Implementation/Transition

I think we need to be cautious when implementing technology. Don’t forget not all can afford technology. Is this one way to continue to spread the gap between “wealthy” and “poor”? How will churches help to make sure all can have access?

Survey

Thanks for this opportunity

May God give you wisdom in your research. Thank you for your sensitivity in this area!

Pray I have helped some.

Thank you!