

Current and Future Use of Technology in Nazarene Congregations
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Introduction

In this paper, we will take a look at how Nazarenes responded to a survey about the current use of technology in their local church, we will look at the emerging technologies that are shaping what will be possible in the near future, and we will raise some thought provoking questions. The paper was written in three parts; one by each of the authors. Chuck wrote the introduction and background material, Ken wrote the report on the ANSR Poll and Mike wrote the article on the future impact of technology on the modern church.

It has been our desire to bring data and questions to the table for the sociologists and other researchers to explore and discuss. Hopefully this paper will initiate additional research related to the work of God in His Ecclesia during this time of change.

The nature of paradigms is that we see what we expect to see and is in many ways interrelated with the concepts of culture and plausibility structures. This has been quite useful through the centuries when change within a society or culture could take place over the life span of two or three generations. Today we face a new century with every reason to expect that the rate of change will continue to accelerate.

In his book, *The Business of Paradigms*, Joel Barker challenged readers to set aside their habituated thinking and engage the question of what is impossible for you to do today but if it could be done would fundamentally change the way your business or organization works. It's not uncomfortable for us to think about how businesses could dramatically and fundamentally change, but it's easy to avoid thinking that such a thing could happen to the Church itself.

As children, most of us looked forward to the arrival of the Sears catalog and some of us even remember the Wards catalog. They were designed to be a single source for everything a family might need, except food and transportation. If you wanted to raise chickens, you could not only order the chicks, you could order the brooder and the feed. If you needed a new suit to wear to church, you could order one and a tie to match. Sears and Wards bought the articles from manufacturers and suppliers, stocked them and sold them to the end user.

We don't have a Sears catalog any more and we don't even have a Wards company. What we can do is enter the name of the item in a search engine like Google, and literally within seconds have a list of dozens of sources where we can purchase the item, often directly from the manufacturer. In addition we will have dozens of sites with information about the items and how to use them.

Some of us would love to be able to find an old Wards catalog. We would love to sit and enjoy the feel of the pages, the sound they make when they are turned, the images they present and the memories they bring back. There will always be a market for nostalgia. There will always be a reluctance to change because we experience change as a “loss” of something valuable. We forget that the catalog was an innovation that allowed companies to bypass the local competition and take their message directly into the homes of the people.

Three of the areas that inform our thinking about how this dramatic period of technological change will affect local churches are: 1. logic; 2. motivation; and 3. primary questions.

Deductive Logic and Inductive Logic

How do people think? How do people process information and discover knowledge? Why do people use different thought processes in different parts of their lives? In the book *Practical Research*, Paul Leedy gives us a succinct description of the difference between deductive and inductive logic.

It begins with an understanding of the manner in which knowledge is discovered. In all of mankind’s long history, we have devised only two ways to seek the unknown. One of these is by means of *deductive logic*, (emphasis his) the other is by means of *inductive reasoning*, or what is familiarly called *the scientific method*.

Deductive Logic. Up to the time of the Renaissance, insight into most problems was sought by means of deductive logic, a methodology identified with Aristotle. It relied upon logical reasoning and began with a *major premise*. This was a statement, similar to an axiom, that seemed to be a self-evident and universally accepted truth: Man is mortal; God is good; the earth is flat.

The terror that gripped Columbus’s sailors was a fear supported by deductive logic. To them, the earth *was* flat. That was their major premise. Then they began reasoning. If the earth were flat, then the flat surfaces would have boundaries. The boundaries of flat surfaces would be edges of those surfaces. If a ship passed across a flat surface, it would come to the edge of it. There, they reasoned. It would fall off. At this point, they posited a second premise. The earth is afloat in Chaos. Those who travel to the edge of the earth will fall into Chaos and be forever lost! Q.E.D.

The logic was sound; the reasoning, accurate; the conclusion, valid. Where the whole proposition went wrong was that the major premise was incorrect. ... But such was Aristotelian logic. It provided answers to problems for which no other answer existed: What is the nature of God? Where are angels found? How many of them can dance upon the point of a needle? It satisfied those who started their quest for knowledge from a dogmatic premise and pursued it to a logical conclusion. (p. 79-80)

Deductive logic and the divisiveness created by it have been the bane of western religions since before the time of Christ. From the beginning of the Greek influence in Hebrew culture, deductive logic has repeatedly produced legalism and quarreling over the minutia it spawns. It’s

interesting to me to note that there are no Pharisees in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, legalism and dissatisfaction is such an issue that it occupies a substantial amount of Jesus' ministry and most of the content of the Sermon on the Mount.

Theology, philosophy and the legal profession are all focused on correct deductive logic. The difference between Arminianism and Calvinism is rooted in the difference between their major premises. If you accept their dogma, either first premise, and follow the rules of deductive logic you end up with that theology. In Aristotelian logic there is no provision for paradox. God is either sovereign or mankind has freewill, it can't be both ways.

But with the Renaissance came a new approach to the discovery of knowledge. ... It represented an entirely new way of thinking – an entirely new approach to an unsolved problem. It resulted in a different emphasis. The emphasis was upon this world and an intense interest in its phenomena. And it gave rise to a method of thinking known as *the scientific method*.

Its basis was a way of thinking known as inductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning begins not with a preconceived conclusion – a major premise – but with an observation. In the Renaissance, people began seeking truth by looking steadfastly at the world around them. They asked questions of Nature. And Nature responded in the form of observable fact. ...

During the Renaissance, people soon found that when facts are assembled and studied dispassionately, they frequently suggest hitherto undiscovered truth. Thus was the scientific method born. ...

The scientific method gained real impetus during the sixteenth century with such men as Paracelsus, Leonardo, Copernicus, Galileo, ...and others. They introduced scientific methodology to the western world. It is still the most valid method for problem solving and resolving unanswered questions. (p. 80)

This is an intensely important concept for several reasons. The first thousand years of Church history were marked by a series of heresies that began with a slightly false major premise. Deductive logic is still the most widely accepted form of thinking for church leaders. Most educational tracks for ministers actually do Theological Education.

When it is done well it produces clear messages and strong doctrine. When it is not done well it becomes the source of legalism and the many other maladaptive beliefs we deal with in the Church today.

Secondly, it is going to be at the heart of any great changes that may come within the Church. Not everything that the next generation is thinking could be described as “scientific” or particularly logical, but they are steeped in observation and web searching as the beginning of their reasoning and decision making. Many seem unaware that there was a time when people started their search for truth in the sacred wall and halls of the Church.

Additionally, it is important to remember that part of the nature of post modernism is an unrestrained willingness to be eclectic; merging the sacred space with the market place and searching for information from unknown sources on the internet as well as information from the Church. While the primary plausibility structure for most of us at this conference is the Church, we must become aware that such is not always the case for the post baby boom generations.

On a more troubling note, the stated goal of most terrorist groups is a goal to destroy those who do not believe what they believe. For us it is a war for safety and freedom, for them it's a war to enforce their beliefs on the world.

Motivation and Needs

In 1943, the *Psychological Review*, published a paper by A. H. Maslow titled "A Theory of Motivation." (50, 370-396) The paper is actually about motivation and not about needs, although it is best known as the source of the "Hierarchy of Needs."

It is an interesting difference because the paper suggests that people are already motivated. In recent years, too much has been written about how to motivate people instead of following Maslow's model of observing the people to discover what needs they are attempting to meet.

I'll not bore you with a long discourse, but I will ask you to take a look at the following model based on Maslow's hierarchy, the orientation of the individual, the historical/economic correlation and the type of church which has the "best fit" to mediate the grace of God to persons at the various levels of need.

Maslow's "Theory of Human Motivation"	Individual orientation	Historical / Economic Correlation	"Best Fit"
A Theory of Human Motivation A. H. Maslow (1943)	Orientation of the individual to the environment and others is not constant.	Emerging technologies have brought significant changes in society and organizations.	The form and structures of the Church have changed in each era.
Self Actualization	Personal fulfillment	?	?
Esteem	"Self directed"	Information / Technology Networked	?
Belonging	"Others directed"	Industrial Gathered	"Non-State" "Belonging" based Denominational
Safety <hr/> Physiological	"Selfish" preservation of life.	Agricultural Scattered	"Catholic" and/or "State Churches" Clergy led and directed.

The historical / economic correlation is in very broad terms and the reader should remember that individuals who are attempting to meet more basic needs will be motivated at that level and the type of church best suited to minister to that individual will be the one that fits their level of need. For example, inner city churches may not be able to count on the people they serve being able to participate in the church in the same way that a suburban church might. The Salvation Army has such a wonderful ministry in impoverished areas that few people realize that they are a denomination. Their work is primarily led and carried out by the "Corps." The people they serve in those areas are, of necessity, focused on survival and security leaving little time and few resources for them to take on the kind of roles that participants in other evangelical churches are expected to assume.

Thomas Friedman, in his book *The World is Flat*, suggests that there have been three great eras of Globalization. (p. 9-10) The first beginning when Columbus set sail in 1492. The second beginning about 1800 when multinational, joint-stock companies went global for markets and labor during the industrial revolution. The driving forces during this period were breakthroughs in hardware and he contends that it lasted all the way through the early development of the infrastructure of the internet and the World Wide Web. He describes the third era as just beginning and describes it as flattening the playing field.

...while the dynamic force in Globalization 1.0 was countries globalizing and the dynamic force of Globalization 2.0 was companies globalizing, the dynamic force in Globalization 3.0 – and the thing that gives it its unique character – is the newfound power for individuals to collaborate and compete globally. And the lever that is enabling individuals and groups to go global so easily and so seamlessly is not horsepower, and not hardware, but software – all sorts of new applications – in conjunction with the creation of a global fiber-optic network that has made us all next-door neighbors. Individuals must, and can, now ask, Where do *I* fit into the global competition and opportunities of the day, and how can *I*, on my own, collaborate with others globally? (p. 10)

The most dramatic periods of restructuring for the Church do not exactly coincide with Friedman's globalization eras. They do, however, share some of the same driving forces. For the Church the periods more closely match changes in the opportunities to have needs met and appear to follow Maslow's description.

The dynamic force that set the stage for the Reformation was probably the ability to communicate to a lot of people at the same time through the development of the printing press. Much of what Luther was saying had been said centuries before by Augustine. The difference was that lots of copies could be printed and distributed to lots of towns and villages where lots and lots of people could be studying them at the same time.

The oligarchy of Rome had lost its firm control of the dissemination of information. The democratization and freedom has long been tied to the search for freedom of religious belief and practice. But what came out of the reformation was really something similar to what Friedman suggests about Globalization 1.0. The new form of the Church could be seen as a Nationalization of the Church. New State Churches took over the role that the Roman Church had held and the power was still in the hands of a small group of highly trained leaders.

The next period of emerging new structures for the Church really didn't begin until the Industrial Revolution. Masses of people moved from their scattered communities to industrial areas and cities. For the first time they were working for someone else and had some structure to when they worked and how long. The conditions were often worse than poor, but the industrial barons had a vested interest in keeping them alive to run the machinery. They might get killed, but they weren't going to starve to death in a shack on the side of a hill in the middle of the winter. They had an account at the company store and could get food.

The wealth didn't flow to the workers very often, but they did have a little, and a little time to begin to form organizations. It was a movement up for many from physiological and safety needs to the opportunity to begin meeting their need for belonging.

Other than the old State Churches and the Catholic Church, nearly every denomination in existence today was formed during the industrial period. Most of those denominations are very focused on "belonging." When a local church is very good at helping people establish relationships and bringing them in to membership, we praise them and call them successful.

Belonging and attendance have been the standard tools of measurement throughout the history of the Church of the Nazarene.

Like Wards and Sears, denominations were often single source providers during this period. The local branch of the Church of the Nazarene had a shared access to the things a family needed: a community of support in times of illness and catastrophe; a family to celebrate life's great occasions; entertainment and education for all ages; a pool of acceptable kids for dating and mating; and even reading material for the home.

Other families looked to other denominations for those things and then there were those who joined the country club or a lodge instead. Belonging was a cultural obligation. When families moved, it was expected that they would find a place to belong and a group to join. Serving on boards and teaching classes were thought of very differently by a factory worker who spent all day in the same spot doing the same thing over and over. It was refreshing and they looked forward to the next meeting.

In 1981, when Yankelovich wrote about a shift that had taken place in the middle of the twentieth century from an Ethic of Self-Denial to an Ethic of Self-Fulfillment he identified a change from individuals being others directed to being self directed. Even in manufacturing industries management was shifting from centralized to decentralized. Factory workers were being formed into teams with responsibility for making decisions about how to accomplish the desired outcomes and production schedules. Serving on a committee on the weekend didn't look as refreshing as it had before.

In 1981 the internet was still in its infancy. Yankelovich might not have imagined the tremendous power that was about to be placed in the hands of individuals. Research organizations and the military had made great use of the ability to transfer documents quickly and securely over proprietary networks but few others had access. By the early '90s the World Wide Web opened up a resource for commercial and personal communication that was almost unimaginable.

Search engines made finding information manageable. Manufacturers and suppliers could take their message directly to the people without paying hefty sales commissions or selling through wholesalers at a significant discount. Anyone could start a business and have a national presence by simply building a website. Friedman is quite right to say: "Individuals must, and can, now ask, Where do *I* fit into the global competition and opportunities of the day, and how can *I*, on my own, collaborate with others globally?" (p. 10)

It is unrealistic to assume that individuals who are thinking in those ways economically will not also begin to think in those ways when it comes to how they are to live out their commitment to Christ and the work of His Church in the world. To paraphrase Friedman, individuals must, and can, now ask, Where do *I* fit into the global work of Christ, and how can *I*, on my own, collaborate with others globally as well as locally?

It is a very exciting time to be "researching" the Church.

Primary Questions

Research, as we have been taught, rests on asking the right questions. The changes in technology are affecting the Church in more far reaching ways than the worship wars we have all come to dread.

Many of the moral and ethical issues we are helping our people deal with are as a result of dramatic technological advances in all fields. Medical science has brought us dilemmas that are increasingly difficult to sort out. The internet has brought pornography out of the back rooms of sleazy shops into homes and offices. Rapid world travel for people has brought rapid spread of religious ideologies as well as physical diseases. Isolationist cultures are being inundated with technology that cannot be stopped. Western countries that have for two hundred years insisted that other countries accept our Christian missionaries are faced with having to accept missionaries representing other religions.

Even in the Nazarene churches which have refused to accept technology into their program, the changes brought by technology are part of the every day lives of their members. We can't go back and some don't want to go forward very far.

So what are some important questions for us to consider as an Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers? At the great risk of seeming impertinent and arrogant, let me suggest a couple.

1. What does a local church need from a denomination that they cannot get elsewhere?
Maybe the question should ask: what does a local church need from a denomination that they cannot find on the internet from some other source in less than a day?

We have two cues to how the churches and even ministers are looking at this question. First is the level of need the church feels to support the general church. The following tables and graph show a disturbing trend among our churches most recently started.

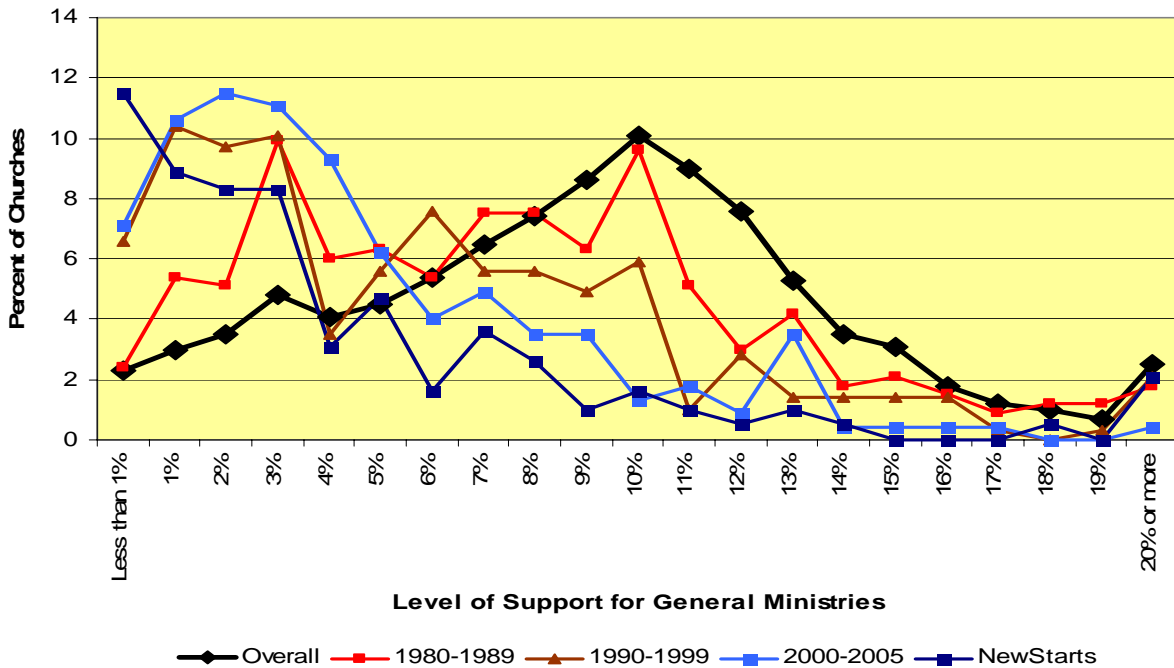
**Percent of Raised spent on General & Local - 2005
by Decade of Organization - in the USA & Canada**

Decade of Organization	Statistic	Percent for General Interests	Percent for Local Interests
Overall	Number	4869	4869
	Median	9.5%	82.9%
1900 - 1909	Number	121	121
	Median	10.6%	82.4%
1910 - 1919	Number	300	300
	Median	11.0%	80.4%
1920 - 1929	Number	599	599
	Median	10.9%	80.4%
1930 - 1939	Number	641	641
	Median	10.4%	81.6%
1940 - 1949	Number	715	715
	Median	10.2%	82.1%
1950 - 1959	Number	804	804
	Median	9.8%	82.9%
1960 - 1969	Number	382	382
	Median	9.7%	82.2%
1970 - 1979	Number	269	269
	Median	9.4%	84.0%
1980 - 1989	Number	332	332
	Median	7.5%	87.3%
1990 - 1999	Number	288	288
	Median	4.2%	88.2%
2000 - 2005	Number	226	226
	Median	3.1%	88.0%
NewStart	Number	192	192
	Median	1.0%	86.5%

The medians in the table above suggest a pattern that is also evident when the range of levels of support is examined. The following table looks at the distribution of levels of support of the general church in churches organized in recent decades.

Levels of General Church Support

Percent to General Interests	Overall	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2005	NewStarts
Zero	4.4%	5.4%	12.5%	18.6%	39.1%
Less than 1%	2.3%	2.4%	6.6%	7.1%	11.5%
1% - 1.9%	3.0%	5.4%	10.4%	10.6%	8.9%
2% - 2.9%	3.5%	5.1%	9.7%	11.5%	8.3%
3% - 3.9%	4.8%	9.9%	10.1%	11.1%	8.3%
4% - 4.9%	4.1%	6.0%	3.5%	9.3%	3.1%
5% - 5.9%	4.5%	6.3%	5.6%	6.2%	4.7%
6% - 6.9%	5.4%	5.4%	7.6%	4.0%	1.6%
7% - 7.9%	6.5%	7.5%	5.6%	4.9%	3.6%
8% - 8.9%	7.4%	7.5%	5.6%	3.5%	2.6%
9% - 9.9%	8.6%	6.3%	4.9%	3.5%	1.0%
10% - 10.9%	10.1%	9.6%	5.9%	1.3%	1.6%
11% - 11.9%	9.0%	5.1%	1.0%	1.8%	1.0%
12% - 12.9%	7.6%	3.0%	2.8%	0.9%	0.5%
13% - 13.9%	5.3%	4.2%	1.4%	3.5%	1.0%
14% - 14.9%	3.5%	1.8%	1.4%	0.4%	0.5%
15% - 15.9%	3.1%	2.1%	1.4%	0.4%	0.0%
16% - 16.9%	1.8%	1.5%	1.4%	0.4%	0.0%
17% - 17.9%	1.2%	0.9%	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%
18% - 18.9%	1.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
19% - 19.9%	0.7%	1.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
20% or more	2.5%	1.8%	2.1%	0.4%	2.1%



The second clue is related to the denomination providing educational preparation in the process of credentialed ministers to serve as pastors. The recently developed modular program may bring a change in direction, but there appears to have been a trend for quite some time in which more ministers are being ordained with none of their educational training from Nazarene sources.

2. What does a person need from a local church that they cannot get, or maybe already are getting, somewhere else?

The answers to these two questions have changed more in the past fifteen years than at any other time in history.

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