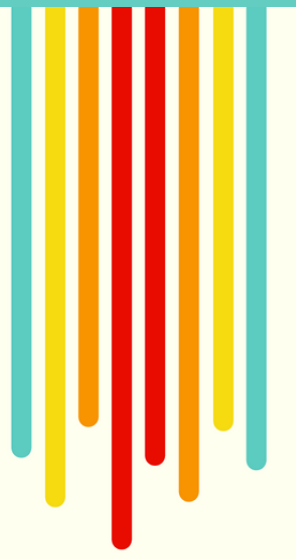
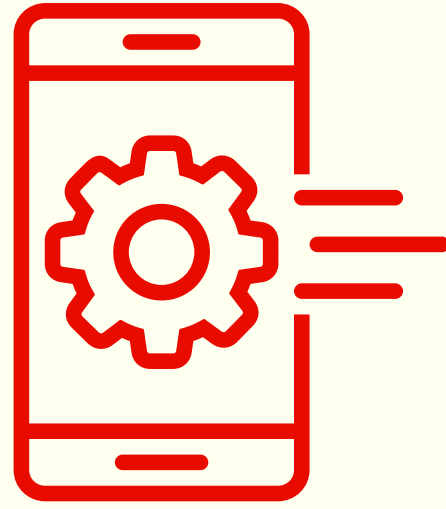


81 TOOLS & APPS FOR A DIGITAL CHURCH STRATEGY

A free resource from Nick Blevins and the
New Digital Church course

NEWDIGITALCHURCH.COM



WELCOME!

Hey!

I created this resource to help your church find and utilize the BEST online tools and apps for creating your digital strategy.

I have used the vast majority of these tools and apps in my online businesses or at my church, and in most cases, both.

Most of these tools and apps are discussed as part of my course, **The New Digital Church**. I talk about how to use them as part of creating a digital ministry strategy for your church.

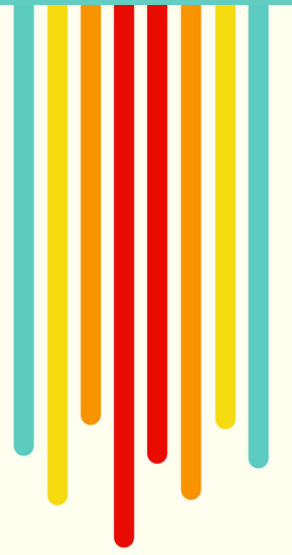
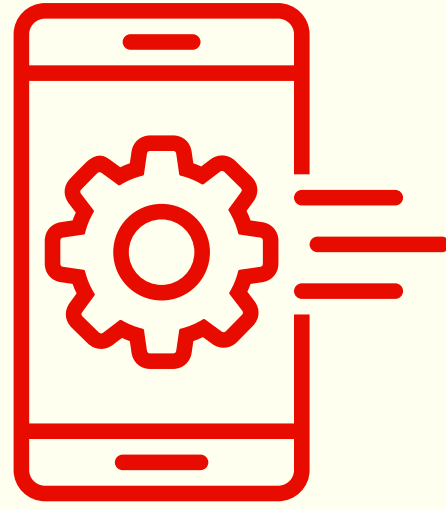
Whether you decide to take the course or not, this free guide is designed to help you learn about the tools and apps that are out there, learn how they can be used for churches, and get my opinion on which options are preferred.

I am an affiliate for some of the solutions covered in this guide, but you always get my unfiltered, honest recommendations based on my experience whether I am an affiliate or not (*as with many examples in this guide where I recommend the cheaper option or one without an affiliate*).

Every church needs a digital strategy and I hope you'll learn about and utilize some of the tools and apps in this guide in your church.

Nick

Nick Blevins
nickblevins.com



TOOL & APP CATEGORIES

4

WEBSITE

WEBSITE PLATFORMS
WEBSITE HOSTING
WEBSITE CHAT/INTERACTIVE
SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

8

CONTENT

GRAPHIC EDITING
STOCK PHOTOS
PHOTO STORAGE
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EMAIL MARKETING SOFTWARE
MASS TEXTING SERVICES

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LIVE STREAM

STREAMING SERVICES
STREAMING SOFTWARE

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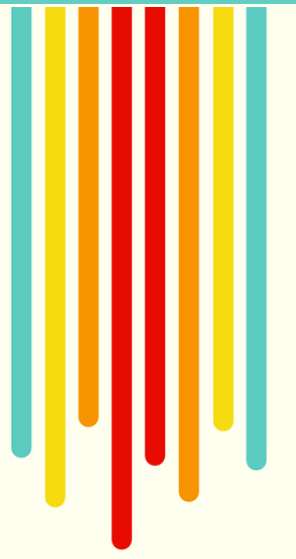
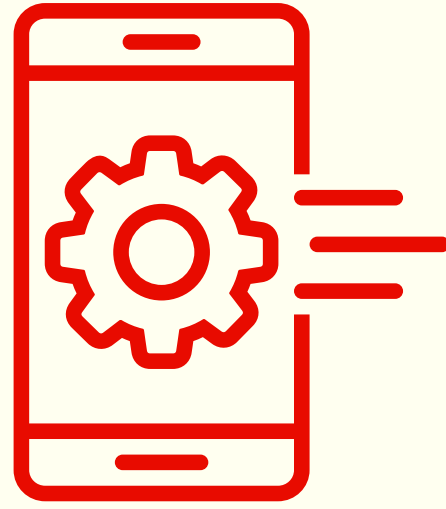
MEETING/GROUPS

VIRTUAL GROUP TOOLS
MEETING SCHEDULES
GROUP MESSAGING

20

SOCIAL MEDIA

SCHEDULING TOOLS
SOCIAL CONTENT CREATION
MESSENGER BOTS



WEBSITE

PLATFORMS

Choosing the platform your website will be built on is the most important choice, as it will determine which host you should use.

WORDPRESS

WordPress powers over 1/3 of all websites, and for good reason. It's a powerful, versatile platform that's fairly easy to manage once it's set up.

CHECK OUT
WORDPRESS



SQUARESPACE

Choosing the platform your website will be built on is the most important choice, as it will determine which host you should use.

CHECK OUT
SQUARESPACE



MY CHOICE: WORDPRESS

WordPress is my favorite because it's free, it's flexible, it's very well-supported, and it's pretty easy to use.

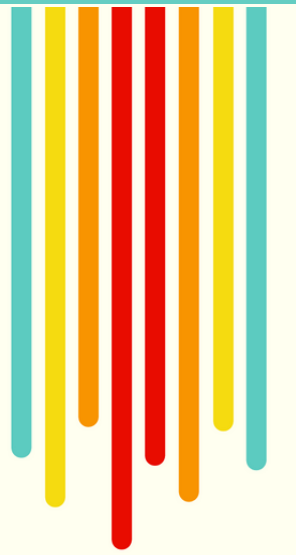
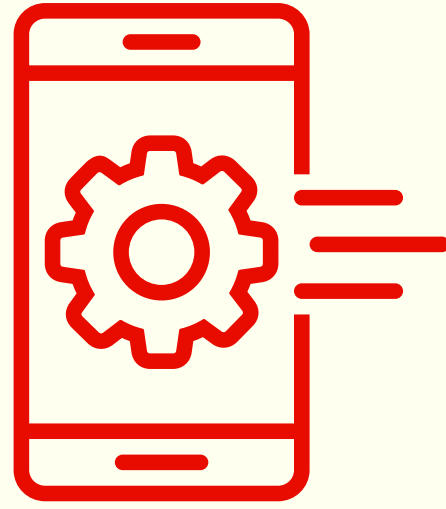


PRO TIP: USE THE DIVI THEME

The Divi theme is excellent with plenty of flexibility for design and an easy to use page builder.

CHECK OUT
DIVI THEME





WEBSITE

HOSTING

Once you have chosen your platform, you can decide which hosting option is best. For instance, if you use Squarespace or WIX, they host the site, so the decision is already made. Here are some hosting options.

BLUEHOST

BlueHost is one of the most popular hosting platforms and it's one of the most affordable.

CHECK OUT
BLUEHOST



HOSTGATOR

Like BlueHost, Hostgator is pretty affordable and has a similar look and feel for users.

CHECK OUT
HOSTGATOR



FLYWHEEL

Flywheel is managed WordPress hosting designed to free you from some of the messy details.

CHECK OUT
FLYWHEEL



WPENGINE

WP Engine is one of the most popular managed WordPress hosting options out there and is a great solution.

CHECK OUT
WPENGINE

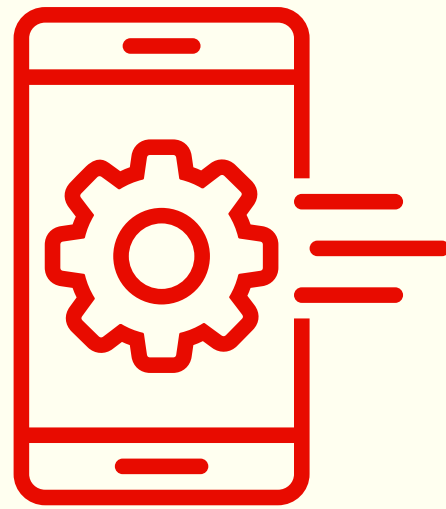


MY CHOICE: FLYWHEEL

Flywheel is a dedicated WordPress hosting platform with great support, excellent uptime, and it's easy to use. It's what I have used for years.

CHECK OUT
FLYWHEEL





WEBSITE

CHAT BOTS / INTERACTIVES

Chat bots, or conversational apps, can be used on websites to encourage interaction with visitors. My favorite use of them is to help people take small steps in their faith journey online (which is the reason for my favorite choice below).

DRIFT

Drift is a solid option, primarily built for businesses to make a profit, but it can work for churches, too.

CHECK OUT
DRIFT



CHATBOT

ChatBot is similar to Drift, built for business but it includes a lot of options for customization.

CHECK OUT
CHATBOT



INTERCOM

This is probably the most popular chat bot app and certainly the one I see most churches uses. A fine option.

CHECK OUT
INTERCOM



RIGHTMESSAGE

RightMessage is less of a Chat Bot and more of a segmentation tool designed to help people take a step.

CHECK OUT
RIGHTMESSAGE

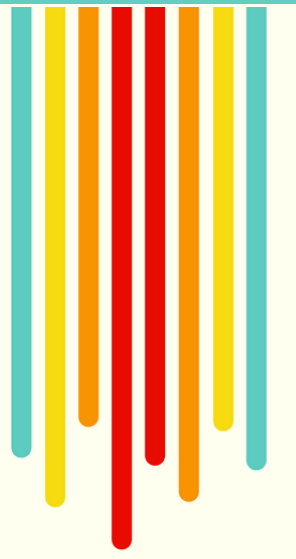
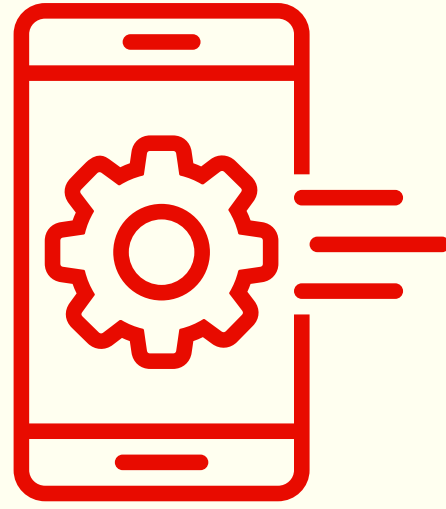


MY CHOICE: RIGHTMESSAGE

A ChatBot is a fine app, but my favorite benefit is the ability to segment people so you can invite them to take their best next steps and RightMessage is the app for that.

CHECK OUT
RIGHTMESSAGE





WEBSITE

SEO OPTIMIZATION

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization, and the goal is to get your website to show up at the top of search results on Google. For Churches, the goal is to do well with **Local SEO** - so people in your area that are searching for things, see your church in results.

YOAST SEO

Yoast is a great SEO Plugin for WordPress. It can help you optimize your content, but it is geared towards general SEO - not local.

CHECK OUT
YOAST



MISSIONAL MARKETING

Missional Marketing exists to help churches reach people online and Local SEO is something they do very well.

CHECK OUT
MISSIONAL



MY CHOICE: MISSIONAL MARKETING

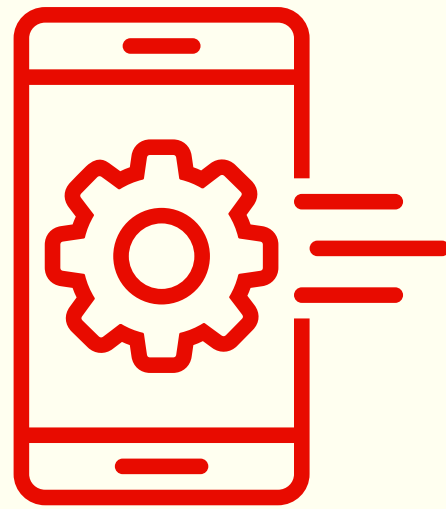
Yoast SEO is a great plugin and I do recommend it, but the team at Missional Marketing are excellent and I am a big believer in outsourcing much of our digital efforts to people who are experts, like Missional Marketing.

CHECK OUT
MISSIONAL



PRO TIP: GET YOUR FREE LOCAL SEO REPORT

Click the button above for Missional Marketing to get a **FREE** Local SEO Report from them for your church site.



CONTENT

GRAPHIC EDITING

Most churches already have a graphic editing solution they use on their team, or they outsource this to a service and they don't need the tools/apps themselves. However, as you expand your digital strategy it's helpful to empower more staff to create digital content. These apps can help.

PHOTOSHOP

This is the gold standard of graphic design programs and I've used it for over 20 years.

CHECK OUT
PHOTOSHOP



CANVA

Canva is the best free app for creating and editing graphics. There's a learning curve, but it's user-friendly.

CHECK OUT
CANVA



GIMP

GIMP is another free graphic editor that more closely mimics Photoshop.

CHECK OUT
GIMP



WORD SWAG

Word Swag is a simple app for mobile allowing you to put text over images.

CHECK OUT
WORD SWAG



MY CHOICE: CANVA

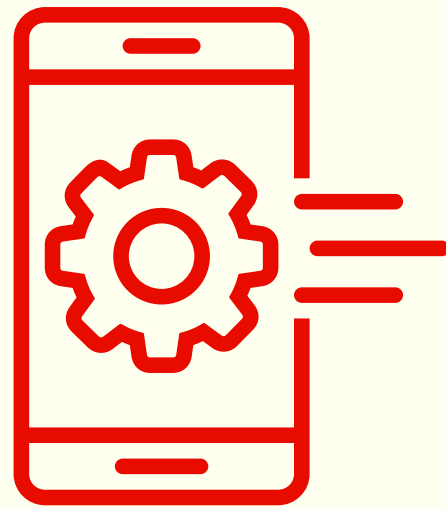
Photoshop is the best editor, no doubt, but Canva is the best for widespread use in creating digital content.

CHECK OUT
CANVA



PRO TIP: GET THE NON-PROFIT EDITION

Get the Non-Profit Edition to get Pro features for free.



CONTENT

GRAPHIC OUTSOURCING

Outsourcing your graphic needs might be one of the best decisions you make. Here are some options to consider.

CHURCH MEDIA SQUAD

Get unlimited graphics for a set monthly price.

CHECK OUT CHURCH MEDIA



CHURCH MOTION GRAPHICS

Specialize in motion graphics, but that's not all you get.

CHECK OUT CMG



DESIGN PICKLE

Outsources work overseas for overnight turnarounds.

CHECK OUT DESIGN PICKLE



SHAREFAITH

Lots of graphics and the option of a custom editor.

CHECK OUT SHAREFAITH



VIVE MEDIA

Another option for unlimited graphics for a monthly price.

CHECK OUT VIVE MEDIA



PRO MEDIA FIRE

Outsourcing option for graphics, social, and video.

CHECK OUT PRO MEDIA FIRE

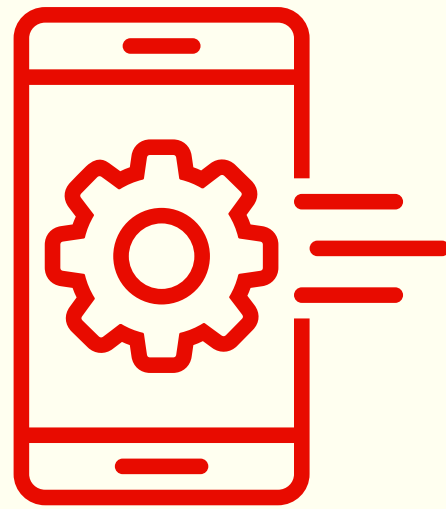


MY CHOICE: PRO MEDIA FIRE

These are all great options, but I recommend Pro Media Fire simply because of my experience with the people.

CHECK OUT PRO MEDIA FIRE





CONTENT

STOCK PHOTOS - FREE

There are tons of options for stock photos and I'm including some of the top ones here. One thing to note, I recommend using real photos whenever you can on your website and social.

UNSPLASH

CHECK OUT
UNSPLASH



PEXELS

CHECK OUT
PEXELS



PIXABAY

CHECK OUT
PIXABAY



STOCKSNAP

CHECK OUT
STOCKSNAP



GRATIOS

CHECK OUT
GRATIOS



FREELY PHOTOS

CHECK OUT
FREELY PHOTOS



STORYTAPE

CHECK OUT
STORYTAPE



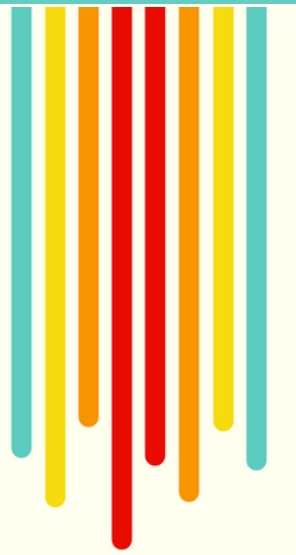
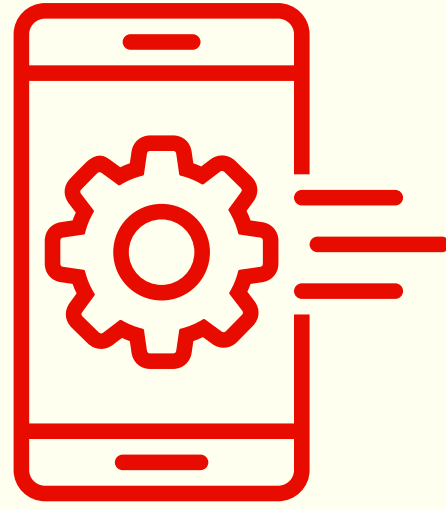
LIFE OF PIX

CHECK OUT
LIFE OF PIX



MY CHOICE: ALL OF THEM!

When it's free and you need stock photography, find the best image by using all of these options. With that said, Unsplash is where I typically find the most photos.



CONTENT

FILE & PHOTO STORAGE

A good solution for file and photo storage is a must in order to keep things organized and delegate work to multiple staff and/or volunteers.

GOOGLE DRIVE

G Suite is my favorite business suite for churches and Google Drive is good file-storage solution with it.

CHECK OUT
GOOGLE DRIVE



DROPBOX

Dropbox is a good file-sharing and storage application that makes it easy to give others access.

CHECK OUT
DROPBOX



GOOGLE PHOTOS

If we're talking photos specifically, Google Photos is a good option for storage.

CHECK OUT
GOOGLE PHOTOS



SMUG MUG

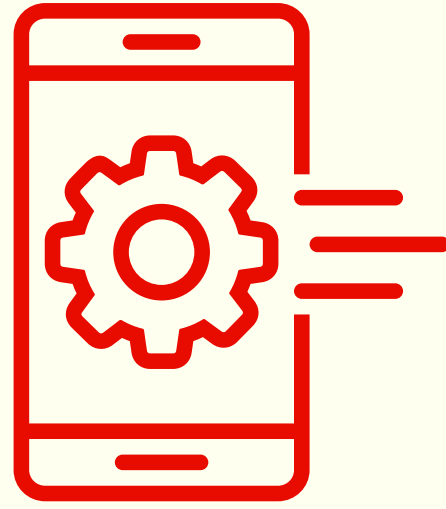
Smug Mug is built for photo sharing and storage and works well for teams.

CHECK OUT
SMUG MUG



MY CHOICE: GOOGLE DRIVE

Because Google Drive is my favorite business suite, I also prefer it for file storage. These others have advantages over Google Drive, but I prefer keeping everything in one platform when that is an option.



CONTENT

WRITING TOOLS

Content marketing is a big part of any digital strategy, and this is an area where churches have an advantage. We create content all the time. However, many churches don't use appropriate tools in content creation to ensure quality and consistency throughout the church in content creation.

GRAMMARLY

Grammarly provides basic spell-checking and proofing, but where it really shines is in helping you become a better writer.

CHECK OUT
GRAMMARLY



HEMINGWAY

Hemingway is similar to Grammarly as it can be used in a browser or desktop app to help you improve your writing.

CHECK OUT
HEMINGWAY



SCRIVENER

Scrivener is a favorite app among book writers, but it can also be a good tool for writing any content.

CHECK OUT
SCRIVENER



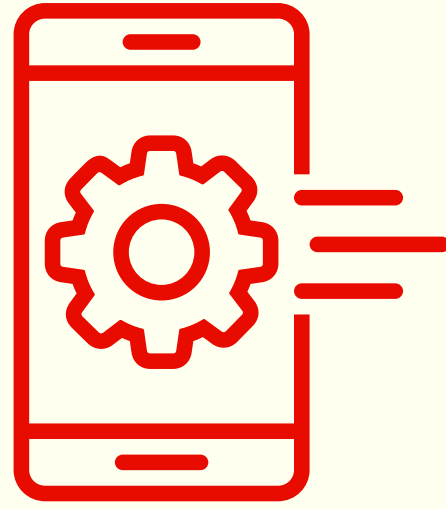
MY CHOICE: GRAMMARLY

Grammarly is my favorite option because, well, it's the best!



PRO TIP: GET THE PRO VERSION FOR YOUR TEAM

Get the Pro version for your entire team and require everyone to use it for the best, most consistent writing.



COMMUNICATION

EMAIL MARKETING

The term "email marketing" isn't one we would use in churches, but email is a critical piece in creating a digital strategy and there is a lot we can do beyond simply using email to communicate with attenders.

YOUR CHMS

Depending on your Church Management Solution, the email solution built into it may be your best option.

USE YOUR
CHMS



MAILCHIMP

MailChimp is one of the most popular email platforms out there and churches will like how affordable it is.

CHECK OUT
MAILCHIMP



CONVERTKIT

ConvertKit is an email marketing platform designed specifically for marketers.

CHECK OUT
CONVERTKIT



CONSTANT CONTACT

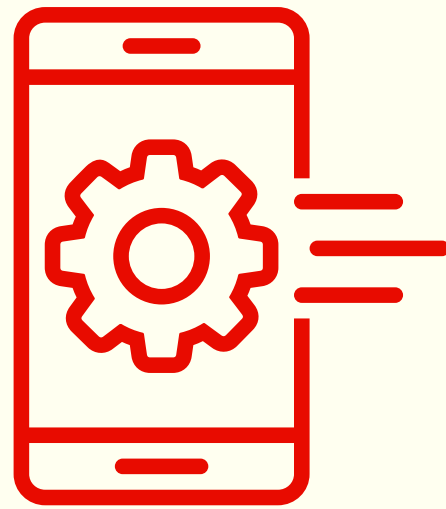
Constant Contact has been a favorite of churches for email communication.

CHECK OUT
CONSTANT



MY CHOICE: MAILCHIMP - BUT IT'S COMPLICATED

It's complicated because ConvertKit is by far the best solution among the group, your ChMS would keep everything in one platform (*which I prefer*), but MailChimp provides many of the advanced features of ConvertKit with the added benefit of integrating with most Church Management Systems.



COMMUNICATION

MASS TEXTING

Without a doubt, text is the best mode of communication if the goal is open rate (98%) or a call to action (CTA). In my opinion, it's great for guest follow up because it leverages both of those benefits without being as direct as a phone call.

TEXT IN CHURCH

Text in Church provides mass texting options along with robust follow up sequences.

CHECK OUT
TEXT IN CHURCH



TITHELY

Tithely offers a number of digital solutions, including a mass text option.

CHECK OUT
TITHELY



FLOCKNOTE

Flocknote is a text and email service designed specifically for churches.

CHECK OUT
FLOCK NOTE



EZ TEXTING

EZ Texting is not a church-specific solution, but it's a popular texting solution.

CHECK OUT
EZ TEXTING



CLEARSTREAM

Clearstream is built for churches and it's affordable.

CHECK OUT
CLEARSTREAM



TEXTEDLY

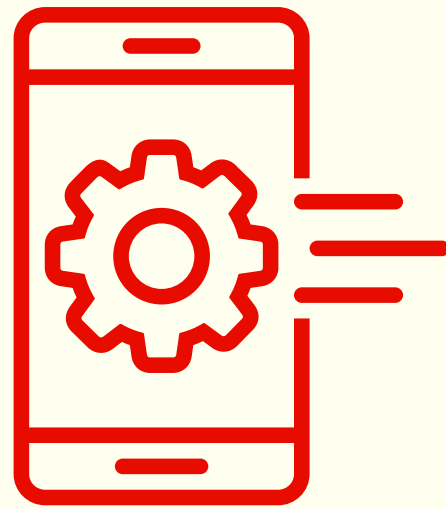
Textedly is a robust solution with lots of integrations.

CHECK OUT
TEXTEDLY



MY CHOICE: TEXT IN CHURCH

Text In Church has a great product, helpful processes, and excellent training content.



LIVE STREAM

STREAMING SOFTWARE

If you plan to live stream services, here are some software options for producing your live stream.

OBS

If cost is an issue, OBS is powerful and free.

CHECK OUT
OBS



VMX

If you're using a PC, VMix is a great solution.

CHECK OUT
VMX



SWITCHER STUDIO

Switcher Studio is a popular live video producing app.

CHECK OUT
SWITCHER STUDIO



ECAMM LIVE

Ecamm Live only runs on Mac, but it's high quality.

CHECK OUT
ECAMM LIVE



WIRECAST

Wirecast, now Telestream, is a good live stream producer.

CHECK OUT
WIRECAST



STREAMYARD

Streamyard is a solution that works inside your browser.

CHECK OUT
STREAMYARD

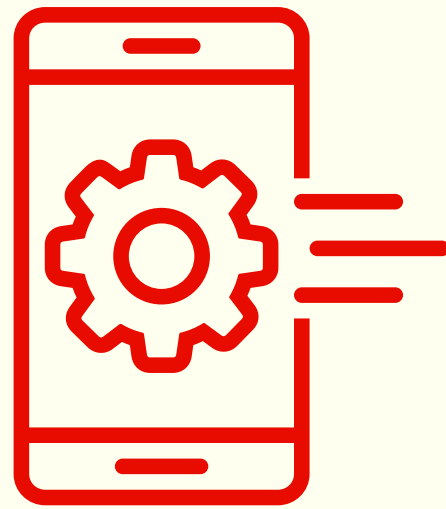


MY CHOICE: ECAMM LIVE

Ecamm Live is the software I use and it's what I used to produce the New Digital Church course. It's powerful, clean, and well-supported.

CHECK OUT
ECAMM LIVE





LIVE STREAM

STREAMING SERVICES

Once you have your streaming software picked out, you can decide which streaming service to use. Here are those options.

DACAST

Dacast is an all-in-one streaming platform solution.

CHECK OUT
DACAST



LIVESTREAM

Livestream, now with Vimeo, is a solid, well-known option.

CHECK OUT
LIVESTREAM



RESTREAM

Stream to multiple outputs and use a built-in producer.

CHECK OUT
RESTREAM



RESI LIVING AS ONE

A very popular option among churches, for good reason.

CHECK OUT
RESI



BOXCAST

Boxcast is a complete solution churches can use.

CHECK OUT
BOXCAST



YOUTUBE PREMIERE

A simple, cheap option to do simulated live.

CHECK OUT
PREMIERE

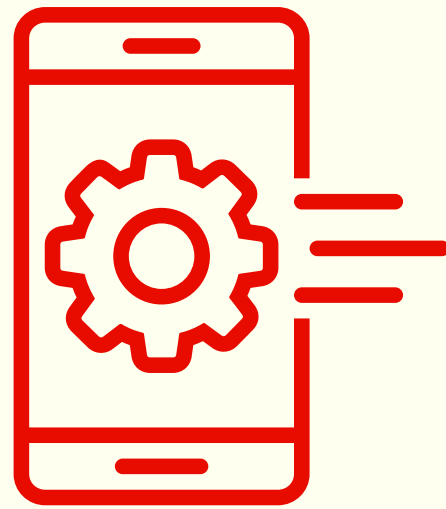


MY CHOICE: RESTREAM

These are all great options, particularly YouTube if you are okay with just one platform, but Restream gives you the ability to share to multiple platforms easily.

CHECK OUT
RESTREAM





GROUPS/MEETINGS

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

COVID-19 made everyone very familiar with the tools and apps on this page, and churches shouldn't forget about them simply because in-person gatherings are an option. It's both/and.

ZOOM

Zoom is the most-used platform by churches with lots of helpful features.

CHECK OUT
ZOOM



TEAMS

Microsoft Teams is a solid platform for meeting online for personal or business use.

CHECK OUT
TEAMS



MEET

Google Meet is a free option with most of the same features as the other guys.

CHECK OUT
MEET



WEBEX

Webex offers virtual meeting options to go along with its business suite of products.

CHECK OUT
WEBEX

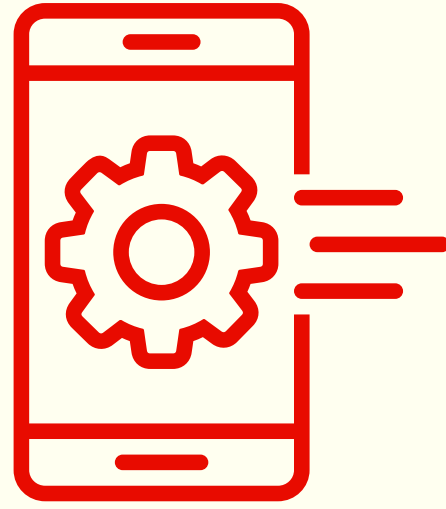


MY CHOICE: ZOOM

Zoom is my favorite choice here because of the features and the reliability, but also because of the familiarity. The vast majority of people (*in the U.S. at least*) are familiar with Zoom making it easy for them to use it with your church.

CHECK OUT
ZOOM





GROUPS/MEETINGS

MESSAGING

In addition to email and text, there are other messaging options that are helpful as part of a digital strategy for your church. Here are some to consider, a few of which could be used by staff to communicate with volunteers or by small group leaders.

HUDDLE UP

Allows you to send mass messages via email or text with accountability. Use the code **BOOST10** to save 10%.

CHECK OUT
HUDDLE UP



VOXER

Voxer is a bit like a modern walkie talkie, a simple way to leave audio messages back and forth.

CHECK OUT
VOXER



MARCO POLO

Marco Polo is a video messaging app, much like Voxer is for audio.

CHECK OUT
MARCO POLO



GROUPME

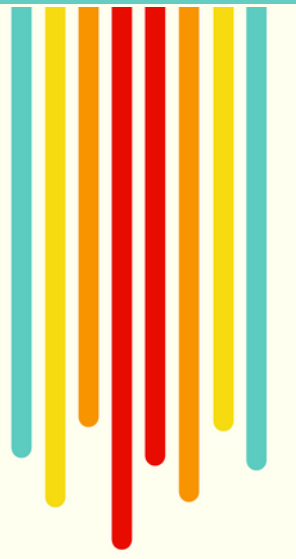
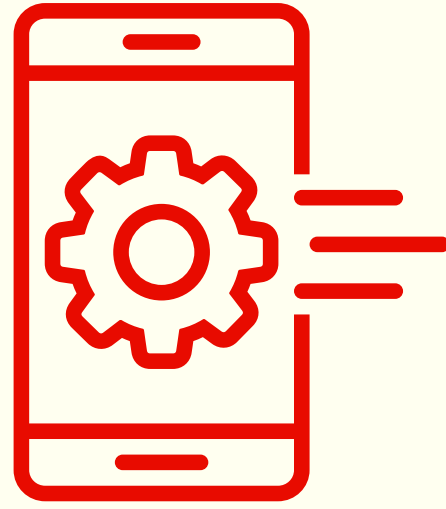
GroupMe is a group text messaging app to clear up the group text clutter.

CHECK OUT
GROUPME



MY CHOICE: ALL OF THEM

These apps all serve a different purpose and I would recommend all of them if it would fit your needs.



GROUPS/MEETINGS

SCHEDULING

A digital church strategy should have a way for visitors and attenders to easily schedule meeting time with staff in order to help them take their best next step. These apps can help with that.

CALENDLY

Calendly allows others to schedule time on your calendar based on availability and settings you determine.

CHECK OUT
CALENDLY



X.AI

X.ai offers many of the same features as Calendly for individuals or for teams with lots of helpful integrations to other apps.

CHECK OUT
X.AI



YOU CAN BOOK ME

You Can Book Me is another good option for allowing people to schedule time with you or your team.

CHECK OUT
YOUCANBOOK.ME

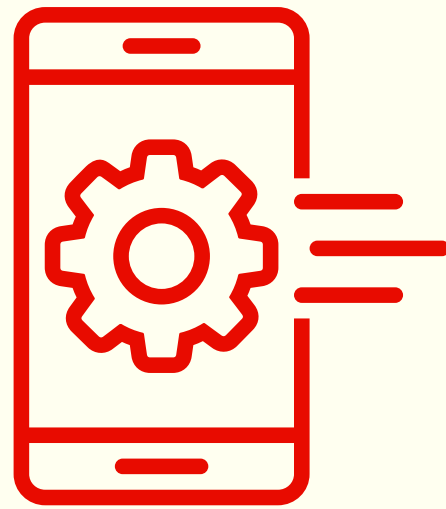


MY CHOICE: CALENDLY

Calendly is my favorite among these options and it's a tool I have used for years. It has lots of helpful settings and features and integrates with multiple calendars.

CHECK OUT
CALENDLY





SOCIAL MEDIA

SCHEDULING TOOLS

Social media is one of the best tools in the toolkit of a digital church strategy. However, it can also be a burden to manage and a challenge to do it well. These apps can help with scheduling social media posts to save time.

BUFFER

Schedule social media posts across multiple platforms and use the tool to analyze the effectiveness.

CHECK OUT
BUFFER



HOOTSUITE

Hootsuite allows you to manage everything in one place along with analytics to measure your success.

CHECK OUT
HOOTSUITE



COSCHEDULE

CoSchedule is a project management platform meets social media management tool all in one.

CHECK OUT
COSCHEDULE



SPROUT SOCIAL

Sprout is an excellent social media publishing suite, but you pay for every bit of that with their higher costs.

CHECK OUT
SPROUT SOCIAL

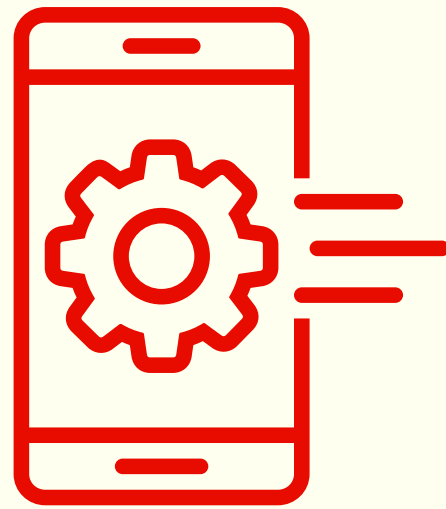


MY CHOICE: BUFFER

Buffer is my choice as I've used it forever. Sprout is the best product, in my opinion, but it's pretty expensive. CoSchedule would be a great choice if you need the project management aspect.

CHECK OUT
BUFFER





SOCIAL MEDIA

SOCIAL CONTENT CREATION

Creating engaging social media content is something every smart organization wants to do, but it's not easy. These tools can help with content creation and don't miss the pro tip below.

SERMON SNAPS

Turn short snippets of your message into shareable content for social media.

CHECK OUT
SERMON SNAPS



SUNDAY SOCIAL

Sunday Social provides done-for-you social media content for a very low price.

CHECK OUT
SUNDAY SOCIAL



CHURCH BUTLER

Choose and schedule posts from Church Butler or have them do it for you.

CHECK OUT
CHURCH BUTLER



HEADLINER

Headliner helps you create video posts for social from your audio (*like messages*).

CHECK OUT
HEADLINER



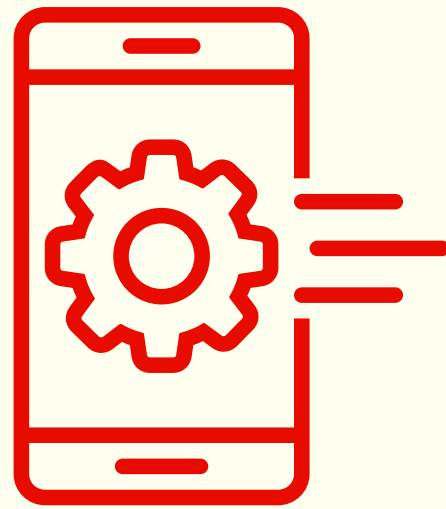
MY CHOICE: ALL OF THEM

These solutions are all different, though some of it overlaps. I would absolutely get Sunday Social and Sermon Snaps, then consider the other two depending on budget.



PRO TIP: FOLLOW THE 60/20/20 RULE

Follow the 60/20/20 rule Nils Smith [talks about here](#) to make sure you're not using social media as a megaphone.



SOCIAL MEDIA

MESSENGER BOTS

1.3 Billion people use Facebook Messenger and one step churches can take in their digital strategy is to use chatbots in Messenger to connect with page visitors.

MANYCHAT

ManyChat can combine Facebook Messenger and SMS Text to engage visitors.

CHECK OUT
MANYCHAT



CHATFUEL

ChatFuel is a bot that requires no code and will integrate with Instagram.

CHECK OUT
CHATFUEL



MOBILE MONKEY

Mobile Monkey combines messenger and web chat with a visual builder interface.

CHECK OUT
MOBILE MONKEY



MY CHOICE: CHATFUEL

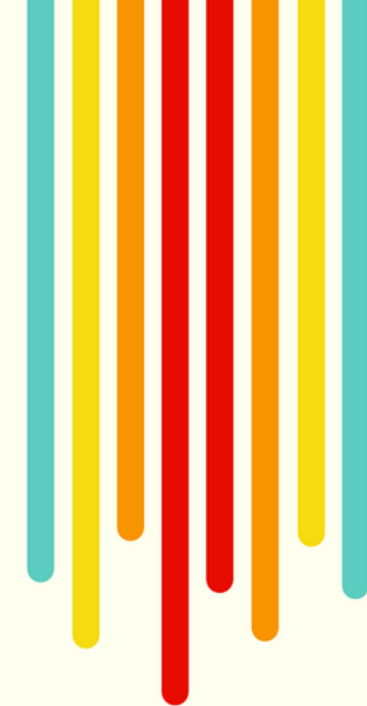
I like ChatFuel the most, but if you do want to integrate SMS Text with Messenger Chat, you'll want ManyChat.

CHECK OUT
CHATFUEL



PRO TIP: HELP PEOPLE TAKE EARLY STEPS

Use a chat bot with messenger to interact with people who are early on in their connection with your church. Use it to help them take those early steps in their journey.



Learn to apply online strategies to your church in order to reach and connect more people

- **11 Sessions**
- **How-To Videos**
- **Q&A Videos**
- **Bonus Interviews**
- **Private Community**

