



## Decision Making

Hello,

So your congregation is now in the process of deciding about a website? One of your members has happened upon our website, and wants to share their find. Now a decision must be made on the next course of action.

I have put together Information that will be invaluable in deciding whether or not your congregation should have a website, or whether it should be updated.

I would also like to convince you that I can provide your congregation with a very professional web presence. One that is very affordable.

I pray that this information will be shared with all of the decision makers involved.

John Murphy

Church of Christ Sites



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# PURPOSES OF A CHRISTIAN WEBSITE

First of all let's look at the reasons for having a church website. There are usually 3 accepted reasons for having a website for your church. They are:

1. To help people looking for a church home.
2. To assist people already attending the church to know what ministries and activities are available for them.
3. To help people grow spiritually by providing additional resources that complements the services and ministries.

## SO WHY SHOULD WE HAVE A WEBSITE?

64% of the nation's 128 million Internet users have done things online that relate to religious or spiritual matters.

Nearly two-thirds of the adults who use the Internet in the United States have used the Internet for faith-related matters. That represents nearly 82 million Americans. Among the most popular and important spiritually-related online activities:

- 38% of the 128 million Internet users have sent and received email with spiritual content.
- 35% have sent or received online greeting cards related to religious holidays.
- 32% have gone online to read news accounts of religious events and affairs.
- 21% have sought information about how to celebrate religious holidays.
- 17% have looked for information about where they could attend religious services.
- 7% have made or responded to online prayer requests



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This makes the search for religious material a more popular feature on the Internet than the performance of online banking (which has been done by 18% of Internet users), participation in online auctions (which has been done by 15% of Internet users), and the use of online dating services (which has been done by 9% of Internet users). More than two million American Internet users are seeking religious or spiritual material on any given day.

When it comes to spiritual institutions, the appeal of the Internet is quite clear. With an “always-on” presence on the Internet, congregations can provide a thorough depiction of themselves to those who might be too shy to enter the sanctuary or ask questions directly of members of the congregation. They can use their Web sites to allay those concerns and to display material about staff and members, their activities, and their faiths. And they can link to other Web sites to provide an abundance of material about their denomination’s beliefs, sacraments, and doctrine without having to create the content themselves.

Use of email can facilitate the logistics of congregational activities and create new opportunities for mission work and outreach in greater community. The communication capabilities of the Internet are equally valuable to evangelical and non-evangelical groups, to congregations seeking to increase their membership, and to congregations focused on developing their own laity. Unlike big e-commerce sites, congregations can have both a physical and cyber-presence in a community. How they leverage their resources and promote their faith are issues of great relevance to them.



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# THE FEATURES OF CONGREGATION WEB SITES

Most congregations responding to our survey indicate that the primary function of their Web sites is to promote their presence in a community and support their basic faith and worship activities. These Web sites are created principally to serve the local needs of the faith community. The three most common features of congregational Web sites are content that encourages visitors to attend services, faith texts including mission statements and sermons, and links to denominational and faith-related Web sites. “The site is used primarily to introduce us to a community which is 75% unchurched and who don’t know what goes on in a church,” said one of the respondents to the survey.

The next most important Web site features are those that enhance the spiritual and organizational life of the congregation. They include links to scripture studies and devotional material, schedules of activities, photos of congregational events, youth group material, and links to sites that assist with congregational administration, such as national associations for the clergy.

The most frequently cited use of these congregational Web sites was to attract new visitors. Furthermore, the most prevalent accomplishment of Web sites is to bring in visitors and new members. One small, new church noted that all of its new members first learned of the church through its Web page. Another church noted that it was rebuilding after going into decline 10 years ago, and that the Web site was helping bring in new visitors. In addition, a small number of congregations say their Web pages were important in bringing in new clergy.

\*Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Congregational Survey, Nov.-Dec. 2000 -2004



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### WHY OUR SERVICE IS THE BEST CHOICE.

#### 1. How having One Company do all of your website services is best.

We offer all of the following with each package:

- Design of your site
- Hosting of your site
- Domain name purchase and retention
- Email service if required.

#### 2. Having an up to date look is best.

We will provide you with a state of the art website, with a very professional and clean look. We can do this very inexpensively because we utilize predesigned templates.

#### 3. It is best to have professional input

Someone who knows about things technical, and who has experience with designing things for the Internet is invaluable to anyone who must keep and maintain a website. We can provide this for your congregation.



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### 4. It is best to change content occasionally yourself.

Keeping a site fresh and updated is the most important thing that you can do with your website. Too often the contents and information on church websites are out of date. There are many reasons for this, but the major one is that whoever was taking care of the site (the webmaster) moved away, and no one knew how to change it. We will provide you with a system that can be learned easily to change and update and improve the site.

#### A STORY ABOUT ANOTHER CHURCH WEBSITE.

"My boyfriend has been pressuring me. Lately, it's been harder to say no, but last night I made the decision to wait until I'm married. Your Bible studies have helped me a lot. Thanks." This fourteen-year-old girl did not fill out a card during a worship service or at the end of a gospel meeting. She sent me an email message from our church's web site.

Without the reach of the Internet, our church could never have ministered to this girl who lives a thousand miles away, nor could we have touched the people who've contacted us from Australia, the United Kingdom and other places around the globe.

We work to make our sites Accessible, to be Complaint to most web browsers, to be colorful and attractive, to be useful for both visitor and member, to make it very worry free, and make it something that we (and we hope you) are proud of.



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### NINE REASONS YOUR CHURCH WEBSITE SHOULD BE A CMS

“What’s the smartest, most affordable way to revamp my website?” These days when folks ask me that question, I find myself recommending a Content Management System, or CMS, almost exclusively. No other website solution offers more bang for your buck.

What is a CMS? In a nutshell, it is website management software with optional, flexible modules such as web pages, forums, calendars, and newsletters that can be easily added, subtracted, moved around within the site, or held for later publishing. A single administrative interface is used to manage all components and to assign “permissions” to various individuals and groups to include editing rights, administering other users, accessing only certain parts of the website, and more.

#### CHANGE MAKES SENSE.

The idea of a CMS isn’t new. What is new is the way CMS’s have evolved into affordable, easy-to-use systems within the average church’s reach. Here are nine advantages a CMS-based website has over a non-CMS-based site:

1. **A CMS provides an interactive experience.** Your typical church website is a static, online brochure with text and images to describe your church. It may be lovely to look at but lacking in depth. A CMS-based website provides an interactive experience that invites people to add comments about what they read, hear and experience (all within your control). This stimulates thought and helps the church and its pastors feel the pulse of the church and its website visitors.
2. **All parts of the site, even message boards and guest books, have the same look and feel.** When you start trying to add new features to a conventional website, each is provided by a different program and therefore has its own look and its own navigation menu. But since a CMS has all of these modules integrated, the CMS-based site has a consistent appearance and navigation menu throughout, making it easier for visitors to find their way around the site.
3. **The webmaster doesn’t have to be a web design professional.** The typical church website is created by a professional or volunteer who is proficient either with HTML or website development software like



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FrontPage or Dreamweaver. This severely limits who is able to change and update the site. A CMS includes a user-friendly web-based text editor that works like a word processor and is built right into the website.

4. **The website can be maintained by multiple staff** rather than a single webmaster. Church websites usually have one webmaster who acts as “gatekeeper” to the entire site. This can work well if a full-time staff member has expertise in this area, but that’s often not the case, resulting in frustration and delays. A CMS is overseen by one administrator who has the ability to grant permission to individual staff and volunteers to update specific parts of the site. The youth pastor can have access to update just the youth pages, the administrative assistant can have access to update just the church calendar, and the pastor can be given access to publish a devotional blog, but none of them are given access to change (mess up) other sections or the overall design of the site.
5. **The website is updated regularly** and remains current. If all responsibility for updating a website falls on a single “gatekeeper,” the site often languishes with outdated information when the webmaster is busy, on vacation, or leaves the church. On the other hand, since a CMS-based site can be updated by various staff and volunteers it’s usually updated several times a week or even daily.
6. **A CMS provides** the means to offer not only public site access to designated areas, but also private, internal web pages, calendars, newsletters, and forums. The average church website has all content out in the open for everyone to see, but does nothing to improve internal communication and productivity among staff and ministry teams. In addition to those public features, a CMS includes the capability to create private features to enhance the productivity of your leaders. You can create web pages, calendars, newsletters, and forums that are only accessible to staff or specific ministry teams to foster better internal communication.
7. **Site design can be easily updated.** With the typical church website, a volunteer builds the site in FrontPage and no one on staff knows how to make edits. The problem can get complicated if the design is less than desirable but the site was donated to the church, making the staff seem ungrateful if they wish to change it to something more attractive and usable. With a CMS-based site, content is housed in a flexible structure that grows and changes, with user-friendly web-based editing tools. Changing the look and feel of the site is as easy as switching out a template. Moving blocks of site content around involves a few mouse clicks.



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8. **New functionality** can be easily added in the future. If the church wants to add some additional functionality (such as an email newsletter) to a typical site, the webmaster has to go out and find new software, install it, configure it, add links to it in the menu, and so on. With a CMS, new modules can be added with just a few clicks giving your website the ability to grow and change along with your church.
9. **Affordability.** Until recently, only mega-churches could spend the thousands of dollars in programming and development required for a CMS. Plus, they would often spend hefty monthly fees for licensing and hosting. But today there are CMS programs available to the community at large.

### CMS INSTALLED AND CUSTOMIZED FOR YOU.

Churches that lack staff or volunteers with the expertise to configure a CMS can consider hiring a web developer to install and configure the software, design the template to their specifications, and provide training – often for less time and less money than a traditional, static website.

Now I'll be the first to admit, this example is packed with far more bells and whistles than you are likely to want in one site. But it does help demonstrate a large number of things that are possible. The look and feel can be customized by a professional web designer to resemble almost any site you've ever seen on the web.

Remember, with a CMS, you are in the driver's seat. You can keep what you want, get rid of what you don't, and build your site content any way you like. So give it some thought. Take a good hard look at your church website. And decide for yourself if it could be doing more.

The website we will build for you will be the state of the art CMS system. It has a slight learning curve, but requires no knowledge of HTML, or other programming languages, only a little understanding of how a computer works, and how to use a word processor.



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THE MASTER PACKAGES INCLUDE THESE FEATURES. THE BASIC PACKAGE IS INTENDED TO BE A STATIC SITE, AND DOES NOT NEED THESE FEATURES.

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### CONTACT COMPONENT

Easily update your dynamically generated staff listing and include as much or as little contact information as you need. It's a snap to include or update photos.



**Included!**

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### DAILY NEWS COMPONENT

Today, in a world that changes quickly, being responsive while staying flexible is imperative for churches. This tool allows your church to quickly post and publish up-to-the minute information or reports. As schedules change or as unexpected events occur, your members and attendees will recognize your site as the best place for current updates.



**Included!**

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### SITE SEARCH MODULE

Shop around... you'll probably find that this tool alone is worth the value of all the others put together, and then some! If your site has never had the advantages of its own integrated search engine before, you'll see right away how helpful this quick and powerful addition will be. Say good-bye to the frustration of trying to find important information deep inside your website.



**Included!**



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### SYNDICATION MODULE

Changing your content on a regular basis? Like to keep people informed about these changes? Use the RSS feature built into your site. Aggregates RSS feeds in **RSS 0.91, 1.0, 2.0, Atom 0.3, and OPML - Share It.**



**Included!**

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### LINKS COMPONENT

Like all the Your Christian Site tools, all you need is your web browser to quickly add web links to your site. Registered members can links to resources or links to other sites. The Links Tool is a quick way to list sites that your Church recommends for people to visit.



**Included!**

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### FAQS MODULE

Church newcomers often have lots of questions. This tool allows you to create and update a Frequently-Asked-Questions section of your website. Customize it to make it your own and create a safe place for seekers and attendees to find out things they want to know about your church, your beliefs, and your programs, whatever!



**Included!**

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### ARTICLES/BLOGS

Think of our articles system as an online library. With this system you can catalog self-published articles or other integral documents that are of value to your online users: meeting minutes, bulletins, articles, memos, or other related materials. Articles are dynamically catalogued so that your users can easily locate them. You can also allow users to interact with your articles by responding with their own comments. The blogging feature includes that ability to review all responses before they are posted to the website.



**Included! \*<sub>1</sub>**



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### POLLS COMPONENT

This component is an interactive way to relate to visitors to your site. This system allows you to simply enter the questions and answers for a poll and then drop it (through use of the Page Editor) into just about any area of your site. Gather opinions from visitors about your site, your organization, current events and more.



**Included! \*2**

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### LOGIN AND REGISTRATION MODULE

This tool makes it easy for you to allow users to create online content and web link suggestions.



**Included!**

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### EVENTS CALENDAR COMPONENT

Imagine a centralized calendar that's always up-to-date and always available to everyone in the church! During the day or week schedules can change, so this up-to-the-minute, dynamic calendar makes schedule modifications and communication a breeze. Include unlimited special and recurring events like weekly worship times, Classes, small group activities, prayer meetings, and luncheons.



**Included in Gold and Platinum Package upon request! \* Available as an Add-On for additional one-time fee**

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### MAILER COMPONENT

Your Christian Site makes easy-to-create an email newsletters a snap. Whether you create a stand-alone online newsletter, or a 'web-version' of an existing printed newsletter, both is as easy to build as it is to copy and paste text.



**Included in Gold and Platinum Package upon request! \* Available as an Add-On for additional one-time fee**



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### SERMON ARCHIVE TOOL

Imagine having your recorded sermons available online or even bible studies. You just need to upload your MP3 files or your FLV converted videos, and your visitor can view or listen to them online.



**Available as an Add-On for additional one-time fee**

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### NEWSLETTER TOOL

Your Christian Site makes easy-to-create an email newsletters a snap. Whether you create a stand-alone online newsletter, or a 'web-version' of an existing printed newsletter, both is as easy to build as it is to copy and paste text.



**Available as an Add-On for additional one-time fee**

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### PHOTO AND VIDEO GALLERY

Our Photo Album is a Flash-based tool which allows you to create eye-catching slide shows of your pictures on the web. A list of the features includes the following:

- direct linking to a photo or album
- a slide show can be automatically started
- a background/foreground image can be loaded
- more interface elements can be now customized
- smoother Interface
- easier to adjust the size
- improved background color adjustments
- upload/add background image through backend



**Available as an Add-On for additional one-time fee**



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### SERMON BROADCAST TOOL

This component will manage mp3 sermons for your churches website. It has an integrated Flash MP3 Player and supports iTunes integration, RSS feeds and the use of videos (.FLV and .wmv).



#### **Available as an Add-On for additional one-time fee**

\*Must be requested prior to set-up, or an additional \$25.00 fee will apply. Modules are included in the Silver and Gold Module only; please see the comparison chart below.

3 This feature operates from the back-end only, so content can be monitored




2 This feature can be set up from you administrative panel yourself.

1 The Blog feature is available on request, unless you utilize the front-end news feature as a blog



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### Compare our Plans

FEATURES:	BRONZE	GOLD	PLATINUM
			
Annually*	<b>\$45</b>	<b>\$75</b>	<b>\$95</b>
Price per Month [for comparison purposes only]	<b>\$3.79</b>	<b>\$5.89</b>	<b>\$7.99</b>
Menu Items [Initial Setup]	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>unlimited</b>
Free Sub Domain Name [yourchurch.mychristiansite.net]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Email Accounts	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>
Disk Storage [Total]	<b>2GB</b>	<b>4GB</b>	<b>15GB</b>
File Transfer [total per month]	<b>40GB</b>	<b>144GB</b>	<b>350GB</b>
Contacts Component	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Site Search Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



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FEATURES:	BRONZE	GOLD	PLATINUM
			
News Component	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
User Menus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Login Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
POLLS Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FAQS Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Links Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Unlimited Users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Syndication Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Articles/Blogs Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Most Popular Content Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



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FEATURES:	BRONZE	GOLD	PLATINUM
Latest Content Module	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Secure Areas behind password	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Events Calendar Component w/ Upcoming Events Module <sup>1</sup>	\$10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Newsletter Tool <sup>1</sup>	\$15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Newsletter Tool w/Subscription Module	N/A	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$25</b>
Photo Album Component with Gallery Module	N/A	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$25</b>
Sermon Component w/Video Player	N/A	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$25</b>
Document Manager	N/A	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$25</b>
Additional Email Boxes [10]	<b>\$10</b>	<b>\$10</b>	<b>\$10</b>
Domain Name	\$9.99	\$9.99	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lifetime Update of Core	Not Available	Not Available	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

\*Billing is done Annually - Monthly amount is for comparison purposes <sup>1</sup>request with initial order