



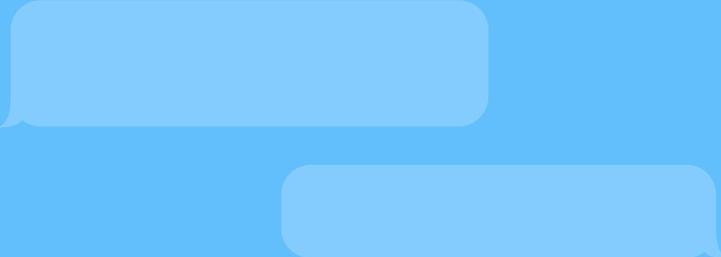
Managing Relationships with Technology

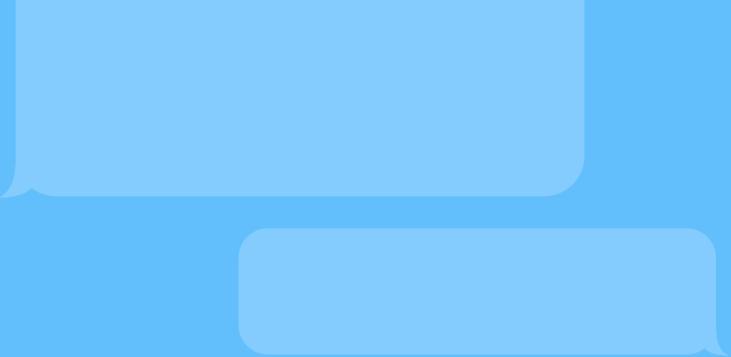




Relationships are critical to a healthy church.

Connecting with people is how you help them grow spiritually. In smaller churches, this is easy. A staff member can know most— if not everyone—who attends a service. This knowledge builds relationships and helps ministry leaders be more effective.





In larger churches, though, things work differently. More people attending means it's harder to know everyone. Growing churches and churches in transient communities struggle to keep up.

What works in small groups doesn't work in large groups. Average church members only attend a couple of times per month. So a church with 1,200 in weekly attendance easily has 1,500 - 2,000 who regularly attend. It's hard to know that many people.

Combine the number of potential relationships with the complexity of running an organization that size, you see how easy it is to overlook building connections. People want to be known. We want someone to celebrate the highlights and grieve the difficulties. As church leaders, you and your team want to do that too.

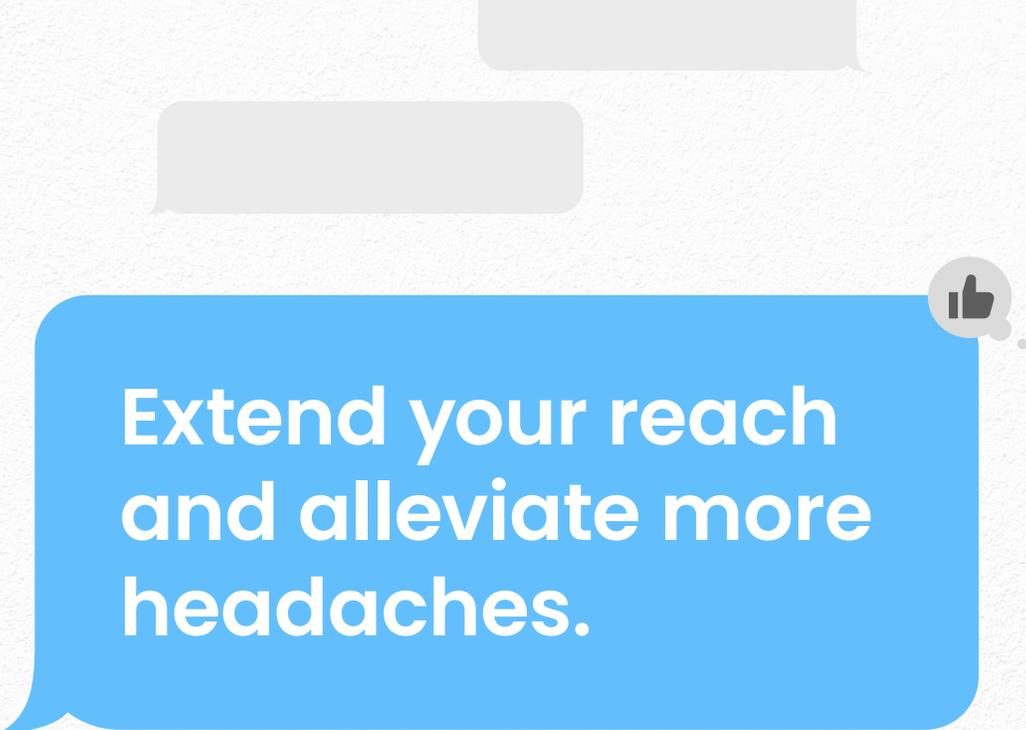
So many things demand your attention. As you look at your team, calendar, and resources, questions flood your mind:

How do you build more relationships in such a rapid world?

How do you reach more people without more resources?

How do you foster more connection and community?

Enter technology.



Extend your reach and alleviate more headaches.

Technology can accelerate the speed of relationships. By putting information in one place, your team has access to what's going on in someone's life. Instead of missing someone's birthday or forgetting someone had surgery, technology puts that information at your fingertips.

Reach more people with fewer people.

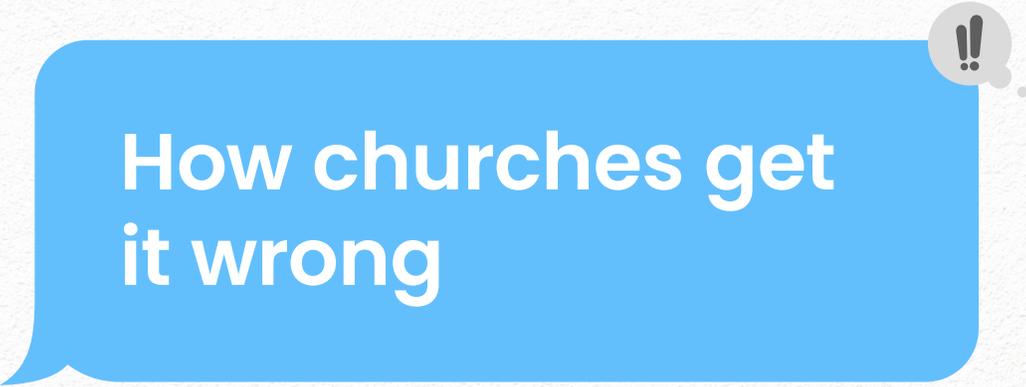
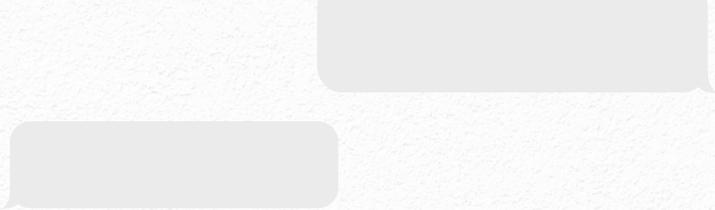
Technology is a massive asset for teams. It's like a 24/7/365 staff member managing and delivering key information when you need it. A strong tech system means you can better build more relationships with a smaller staff. No more having to remember what happened to who and when.

No one feels left out.

Church should feel like home for everyone. One way this happens is by celebrating with people on special days and grieving in tough moments. By using a tool like a ChMS to manage all of this information, you ensure everyone feels connected.

You build a stronger community.

Community is the result of connections. Focus on relationships and community grows. Tech assists by managing the details so you focus more on the people. As the sense of community grows, your church gets stronger.



How churches get it wrong

These days everyone uses technology on a daily basis. Email, shared docs, spreadsheets, service planning, you name it. While technology isn't new in churches, using it effectively for relationships is new. Many churches attempt to do it well. Yet too often these attempts follow a few common mistakes.

They expect tech to do everything.

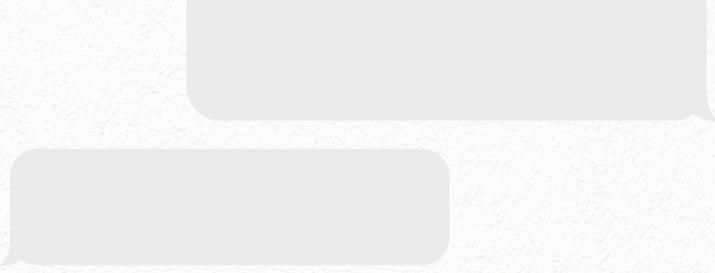
There's a saying in business: Do things that don't scale. You prioritize tech as a relationship tool so you can do things like send handwritten cards to people on their special days, call them directly to check in, etc. Technology can't do it all, but it can thrive in the right role. Put tech in the wrong role and everything gets much harder.

They assume it's "set it and forget it."

Technology is constantly evolving and changing. So is the information you put in. You can't set up something like a ChMS one time; it's an ongoing effort. But most churches get distracted by new events, seasonal opportunities, outreach projects, and more. The context demand for "new" overshadows the ongoing work of data.

They don't keep data current.

You can't build relationships with old information. Imagine asking someone about their new role after a promotion six years after that change happened. They probably have had a new job or two since. Your relationship won't be strong with that person. The same is true in your church. If you talk to someone with old information, it accidentally communicates that you don't care. While this isn't true, it appears true.



Managing relationships through tech starts with three things.

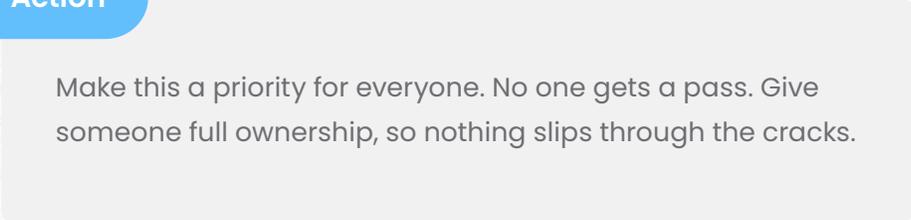
Your staff already uses technology for relationships: email and social media. No matter their age, people are accustomed to doing it. Now you have the chance to do this at an organizational level. While it may feel like an overwhelming task, it's not. Start with just a few simple steps.

Develop the discipline of putting everything in your database.

None of this works if the data isn't current. Since your staff interacts with a wide range of people, it's hard to track who talked to whom. Establish and reinforce the need to put everything in the database. No exceptions.



Action



Make this a priority for everyone. No one gets a pass. Give someone full ownership, so nothing slips through the cracks.

Decide the key things you need to know.

Your ChMS tool should allow flexibility to customize profiles. This means you can add things like birthdates, wedding anniversaries, dates a loved one passed, and so on. Customizing your data means you stay aware of what you want to know in someone's life.

Action

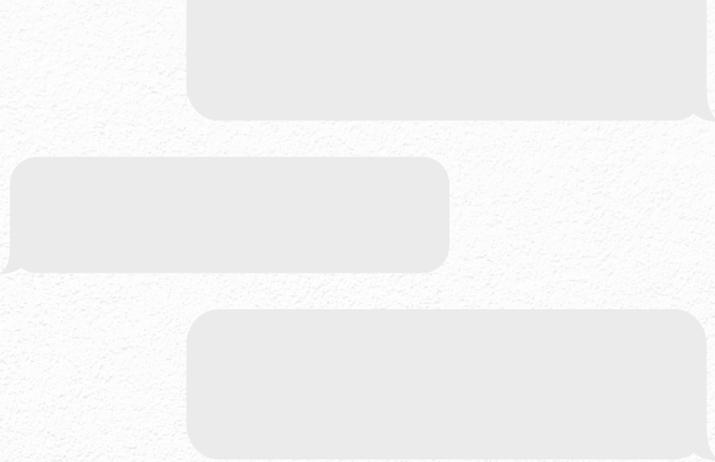
Set time with your leadership to decide what information you need to know.

Work with your ChMS company to ensure you're getting the most from the platform.

ChMS tools like Realm make ministry easier and more effective. Everyone at the company knows how to better use what they built. Use the expertise of someone who spends all day using it and knows it well. Their insight helps your ministry thrive.

Action

Schedule time with your customer success representative. Have them show you the best ways to manage offline relationships with the platform you use.

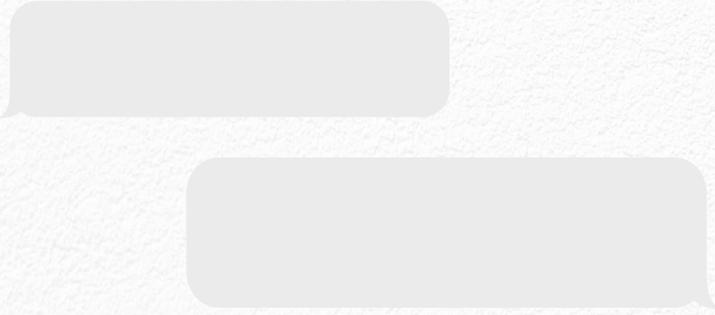


Now it's your turn



Technology should be a powerful tool for building stronger churches. It's inexpensive, efficient, and extends the efforts of your team. When used well, it accelerates relationships. But when it isn't maintained and used correctly, it becomes one more burden impeding ministry. Put technology in the role of relationship assistant. Use it as a way to stay connected, engage deeply, and grow your churches.

Large churches mean greater impact. They also mean more challenges, especially for growing churches. Each new phase of growth introduces new issues to solve. This guide, along with the other guides in the series, help you navigate the potential roadblocks with clarity and confidence. Avoid the gaps and continue leading a stronger church.



Choosing the Right Ministry Partner

The know-how you need from experts you trust.

ACS Technologies is the original pioneer of Church Management Software (ChMS). We are firmly dedicated to serving local churches all over North America by providing the best-in-class ministry software and service solutions that help you fulfill Christ's mission for your Church.

Tools and support to strengthen churches.

We build great software, but we don't stop there. We have a "service-first" approach that truly sets us apart. With hundreds of dedicated support and consulting personnel, your staff can reach our team 24/7. We're in your corner to help you with the ministry challenges you face every day.

Ideas and solutions powered by integrity.

Integrity is real for us, and it means consistently being faithful stewards by doing the right thing for church success. We have earned the trust of pastors, church staff, congregants, our employees, and colleagues for over 40 years.

A plan to meet your needs and move your ministry.

We're not just interested in satisfied customers. We see ourselves as your real ministry partner and will work with you to make disciples that will last for an eternity. We're excited to talk about your goals, create a plan together, and set you up with the software, service, and resources you need.

We believe in YOU!

ACS Technologies believes in the local church. Over 75% of our team has experience serving in their local churches. We know firsthand that serving the Church means serving people, and we take seriously our commitment to helping ministries like yours achieve their God-given mandate - to make disciples in their communities, states, and across the world.

Let's Talk

We know the challenges of switching or implementing new technology and how that can be intimidating. But we also know the unbelievable changes that have happened within churches that have partnered with us for their ministry needs. Let's connect and see how we can assist you in the greatest thing you do - grow God's Kingdom.

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