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ABSTRACT

TECHNOLOGY TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND  
PASTORS IN THE GREATER NEW YORK CONFERENCE  
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

by

Rohann D. Wellington

Adviser: Gerson P. Santos

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: TECHNOLOGY TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND PASTORS IN  
THE GREATER NEW YORK CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTISTS

Name of researcher: Rohann D. Wellington

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Gerson P. Santos, DMin

Date completed: September 2017

Problem

The Greater New York Conference (GNYC) is located in what is considered the media capital of the world. Media and technology have changed our lives in meaningful ways, both globally and locally. The church in its local context, in this technological age, is struggling to adapt technology in meaningful and effective ways to impact discipleship and evangelism practices. I observed that the administrators and most of the pastors in the GNYC do not understand how to adapt today's media technology effectively, and therefore, lack a vision regarding how this tool can be effectively adapted for ministry delivery.

## Method

A training strategy on new media technology was done in three phases. First, a minimum of four digital presentations was given to a large group of GNYC pastors. Second, pastors elected to become participants in a small, peer-training group of a minimum of five participants and a maximum of ten for reporting purposes. An annual ministers' technology conference was established as an ongoing effort towards continuing education training in new media technology for the general pastoral workforce.

## Results

A series of five digital presentations were made to the pastors in the GNYC to increase awareness of technology in ministry. Eight pastors became a part of the yearlong peer group training on new media technology in areas such as social media, Facebook, Twitter, webstreaming, mobile apps and texting programs, blogging, digital discipleship and evangelism tools.

All eight participants were successful in adapting new media technology within their ministry context. An annual Ministers Technology Conference was established within the conference. A training strategy for possible organizational adaptation called *ITEM* emerged from the training.

## Conclusion

New media technology is not to be feared. Pastors can develop an effective strategy for ministry adaptation unique to their local ministry. This adaptation may be quick or slow depending on personnel, budget and timing. The pastors in this study were

trained and, in most cases, adapted multiple new media technologies successfully to their ministry context. This represents a template for the ever-new and changing world of technology which, when rightly adopted, can be a powerful tool for effective discipleship and evangelism.

Andrews University  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

TECHNOLOGY TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND  
PASTORS IN THE GREATER NEW YORK CONFERENCE  
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

A Project Document  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by  
Rohann D. Wellington

September 2017

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TECHNOLOGY TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND  
PASTORS IN THE GREATER NEW YORK CONFERENCE  
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS


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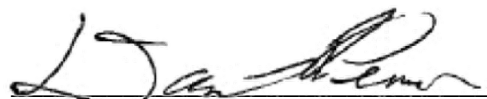
by

Rohann D. Wellington


APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Adviser  
Gerson P. Santos

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Alanzo Smith

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Penno

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, DMin Program  
Kleber D. Goncalves

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean, Seventh-day Adventist  
Theological Seminary  
Jiří Moskala

\_\_\_\_\_  
September 6, 2017  
Date approved



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Praise to the Lord!

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Personal Journey**

My pastoral ministry in the Greater New York Conference (GNYC) began in February 2001. Before entering pastoral ministry, I worked in broadcast media at *Cable News Network* (CNN) as a Technical Director in the live broadcast production department in the Manhattan Studios. Since the call was extended to me to join the ministry of this conference as a pastor, I have had the privilege to serve as an associate pastor at the Grand Concourse and North Bronx churches, and as senior pastor of the Mizpah (now Wakefield) Emmanuel churches in the Bronx and the Berean Church in Brooklyn. While serving as an associate pastor to Dr. Steve Cassimy, I had the privilege of sharing in the establishment of the All Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In December 2007, I was asked to serve as the Associate Communications Director to Dr. Alanzo Smith, and in 2010, I was elected Communications Director. Since my appointment as Communications Director, it has been part of my responsibility to raise public awareness of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in New York City through mass media and new media technology. In 2015, I was also asked to serve as the Assistant to the President for Strategic Planning to then Conference President, Dr. G. Earl Knight. In December 2007, Dr. Donald King, President of the Atlantic Union Conference, recognized my passion for media in ministry and invited me to serve the

Atlantic Union Conference in a non-salaried position as Managing Director of the Atlantic Union Adventist Media, in addition to my other responsibilities. Since then, my childhood vision of a marriage of media and ministry has become a reality.

### **Ministry Context**

This project was implemented in the Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which is an association of 154 churches and 22 companies. The conference was founded in 1902 and covers the following counties of the state of New York: Bronx, Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Kings (Brooklyn), Nassau, New York (Manhattan), Orange, Putnam, Queens, Richmond (Staten Island), Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester.

This multicultural conference is comprised of 29,000 members. Approximately 77% of the church membership of this conference is within the five boroughs of New York City. There are approximately 15 different official language worship groups in this conference. The membership is distributed ethnically into five major groups: English (Black), Spanish, French (Haitian), Korean, and Multi-Ethnic ministries. The membership is spread across these ministry groups accordingly: English (Black), 31%; Spanish, 37%; French (Haitian), 11%; Korean, 2%; and Multi-Ethnic, 18%.

This conference has a history of media ministries and the use of technology for mission. The television program *Faith for Today* started in this conference with the first program airing on May 21, 1950, on WABC-TV. By 1954, 100 stations were broadcasting Faith for Today. In 1982, the conference had a very successful television program known as the *Power to Cope* with Juanita Kretschmar. The conference even established a television station (W20CQ-D) that had scores of local programming

produced and aired. However, since the 1980s, this conference has experienced a decline in the use of media ministries.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The technology boom that began around the year 2000 has changed the way we do banking, learning, and even our spirituality. Thirty-eight percent of the millennial generation, or digital natives as they are called, say they want to find a way to connect with God in the world in which they live (Barna Group, 2013). The majority of the pastors in the Greater New York Conference are mature immigrants with a limited understanding of how to integrate technology in their current ministry context. There is no defined organizational strategy or training for the adaptation of new media technology in ministry delivery for the pastors of the Greater New York Conference.

### **Statement of the Task**

The task of this project is to increase awareness of technology in ministry to the administrators, directors, and pastors in the Greater New York Conference via several general pastors training sessions. The project will also educate pastors and directors about technology options available to them via a series of peer group trainings, as well as one-on-one training sessions. The peer group participants will be trained on how to adopt, lead and implement this technology within their local context. Finally the project will equip pastors with the competencies necessary to succeed.

### **Delimitations of the Project**

This project is delimited to the administrators, directors, and pastors of the Greater New York Conference. A purposeful sample of a minimum of five pastors was



invited to become core participants for a 12-month period. The training did not explore all possible forms of new media technology, but will be curtailed to the needs and visions of the pastors in training.

### **Description of the Project Process**

The Bible forms the foundational quest to unearth the methods of divine communication with humanity and this project highlights their correlations to new media technology and how to use these contemporary methods effectively in ministering in today's world. The writings of Ellen G. White, which challenge our traditional understanding of mission, discipleship, and evangelism in a technological age, were also explored.

Chapter 2 provided biblical themes that are adaptable for new media technology in ministry. These came from the study of key prophetic passages in both the Old and New Testaments that challenge the minister of today to be technologically relevant in his or her ministry delivery. The spiritual mandates unearthed provided a framework for adaptation of discipleship and evangelism in this age.

Contemporary writers and other literature on the subject of technology in ministry were reviewed on how it impacts ministry delivery. Chapter 3 provided a substantial case for technology in ministry, its benefits, and challenges.

Pastors were invited to join the training sessions voluntarily. Those who responded became core participants in a training session to last between seven and 12 months. A pre-assessment was used to determine how comfortable the trainees were with technology. A post-assessment was done to assess what progress had been made. This was not a scientific survey.

A series of four seminar presentations were used to bring awareness to the Greater New York Conference pastors about the possible use of technology in ministry delivery. These presentations acted as a part of the strategic training for pastors and were presented at their regular workers' meetings. A ministers' technology conference was also developed as an annual training event for general pastors as part of their strategic development. The four proposed digital presentations were on the following topics:

1. Core set of competences in technology for pastors
2. Technology in evangelism
3. Mobile ministry: connecting the message
4. Social media and the gospel: the missing connection

Individuals who have developed effective uses of technology for ministry were invited to make presentations on one or more of the above topics.

A series of group training sessions on various new media technology subjects was done with core participants in an effort to inspire them to adopt various principles for their respective ministry situations. Guest presenters were invited from time to time to speak to the core participants on specific ministry technology opportunities. Seminars also established a core set of competencies every pastor should have with new media technology. The training was opened to conference administrators and departmental directors.

The effectiveness of the training was assessed in a qualitative manner. Each pastor provided a written, maximum two-page report on their personal growth, as well as the adaptation made in their local ministry context. Progress made by those trained and

the feedback given provided the framework for future development of a strategy for the conference.

## CHAPTER 2

### A THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

#### **Theological and Biblical Foundation**

The emergence of modern technology in the past two decades has challenged the way we do church, Bible study, and witnessing. It has affected us on a personal and collective level. Kallenberg (2011) asserts, “Technology is shaping our discipleship in ways we do not easily recognize” (Chapter 1, para. 15). This chapter will explore the multisensory approach God used in communicating to His people, from challenging spiritual leaders’ understanding of the need to be technologically relevant, to its biblical imperatives and models from the Old and New Testament. The prophetic contribution of Ellen G. White to this subject will be reviewed, though not exhaustively.

This chapter seeks to highlight principles from the Bible, which speak to the benefits and challenges of technology in ministry. Contributions from other authors will be reviewed to support this position. From the biblical foundations presented, a clear understanding of the need to embrace technology will emerge as a means of sharing the gospel in order to provide inspiration to spiritual leaders to embrace and adopt technology in their ministries, which will lead to encouraging their members to embrace technology in discipleship practices and faith development.

## **Leadership and the Times**

The prophetic role of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its leaders requires an understanding of the times and how best to engage those they must reach and assist in faith development. This concept of “understanding the times” is found throughout Scripture. The sons of Issachar were regarded as men who had a good understanding of their world. “From Issachar, men who understood the times and knew what Israel should do—200 chiefs, with all their relatives under their command” (1 Chr 12:32, NIV).

The sons of Issachar were the leaders of their time and thought to be exceptionally knowledgeable in astronomy and war strategy with significant influence over their companions. The prophetic significance of this verse cannot be overlooked. It reverberates a profound call from God and a spiritual mandate for leaders to possess and exercise wisdom within their time.

Ministers who are most effective today are regarded as those who have a visionary understanding of the times (Wise, 2014, p. 56) and know what they ought to do. This has a significant impact on how evangelism and faith development in our members works and is encouraged. Ministers should remember the effect of the printing press on the use of the Bible of 1456 until today and find new ways to encourage and adopt the use of the electronic Bible in the hearts and minds of people in our society. Today’s world is driven by technological reliance and, like the sons of Issachar, spiritual leaders cannot ignore this reality, but must prepare themselves for what is needed to remain relevant to today’s community.

The cry for relevance in ministry leaders as it relates to technology in ministry has theological and biblical support. The “Issachar minister” of today must move from

his/her comfort zone of just preaching from the printed Word to the sometimes unknown and unfamiliar territory of engaging the church and community in the Word through new media technologies. The Issachar men were ready to do war with the enemy; they were prepared to engage the enemy to secure success. Technology is not the enemy.

Technology, when employed correctly, can be a powerful tool in the spiritual fight against the enemy. The apostle Peter clearly warns about this enemy and his intent: “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Pet 5:8).

The biblical account of the sons of Issachar tells us that with their understanding of the times, they were able to secure victory for David. Likewise, it is my conviction that the Issachar minister of today can secure victories for King David—Jesus—with the wise and effective use of new media technology.

### **Theology and Technology**

God’s desire to have a connection with humanity can be seen through the biblical accounts of creation (Gen 1:26) and the crucifixion (Matt 27). Rice (2009), in addressing the relationship between technology and our spirituality, stated, “At the root of human existence is our great need for connection: connection with one another, with our own hearts and minds, and with a loving God who intended intimate connection with us from the beginning” (p. 28). The Genesis account gives us an insight of this desired connection from the beginning.

The nature of the triune God’s passive connection with humanity is demonstrated in Genesis 1:26, which states, then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our

likeness” The phrase “in our likeness” when translated from the Hebrew דְּמִוּת (*demuth*), suggests similarity in appearance and character. This passage indicates a triune God who, by name, Elohim, which is in the plural form, and by His creative mode, wants to have a connection with His created.

This concept is further amplified as an active connection throughout the Bible. The nature of God’s desired active connection with humanity is demonstrated through the work of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 2:11 states, “For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.” Thus, we can infer that since we are created in the image or in the likeness of God, our own human spirit is analogous to the Spirit of God, though not identical. Romans 8:16 further clarifies this concept by stating, “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.” God wants to have a spiritual connection with us, His children, through His Holy Spirit.

This active connection may be manifested in various ways. Hebrews 1:1-3 states:

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

In Hebrews 1:1, the Greek word *πολυτρόπως* (*polutropós*) suggests that God does not have only one medium of communication, but is open to new and varied forms. In times past, he used prophets and communicated to Moses both visibly and audibly at the burning bush experience (Exod 3:1-7). New media technology, when employed correctly, can be one of those various ways of maintaining that connection with God.

In Hebrews 11:2, God declares that He has also communicated directly through His Son. Jesus Christ is the physical manifestation of God's love (John 3:16) for humanity and a physical reminder of God's desire for eternal connection as demonstrated in His crucifixion (Matt 27:32-56). This passage (Heb 11:2-3) is also a reminder of the created beings' connection to the creator through the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being.

At the root of theology and technology is connection. God wants to have and maintain that connection with His created beings. Likewise, new media technology is created to maintain connections with humanity and when rightly adopted, can be used to maintain and sustain a healthy relationship with God. In both cases, the decision of how well that connection is maintained spiritually or technologically is ours.

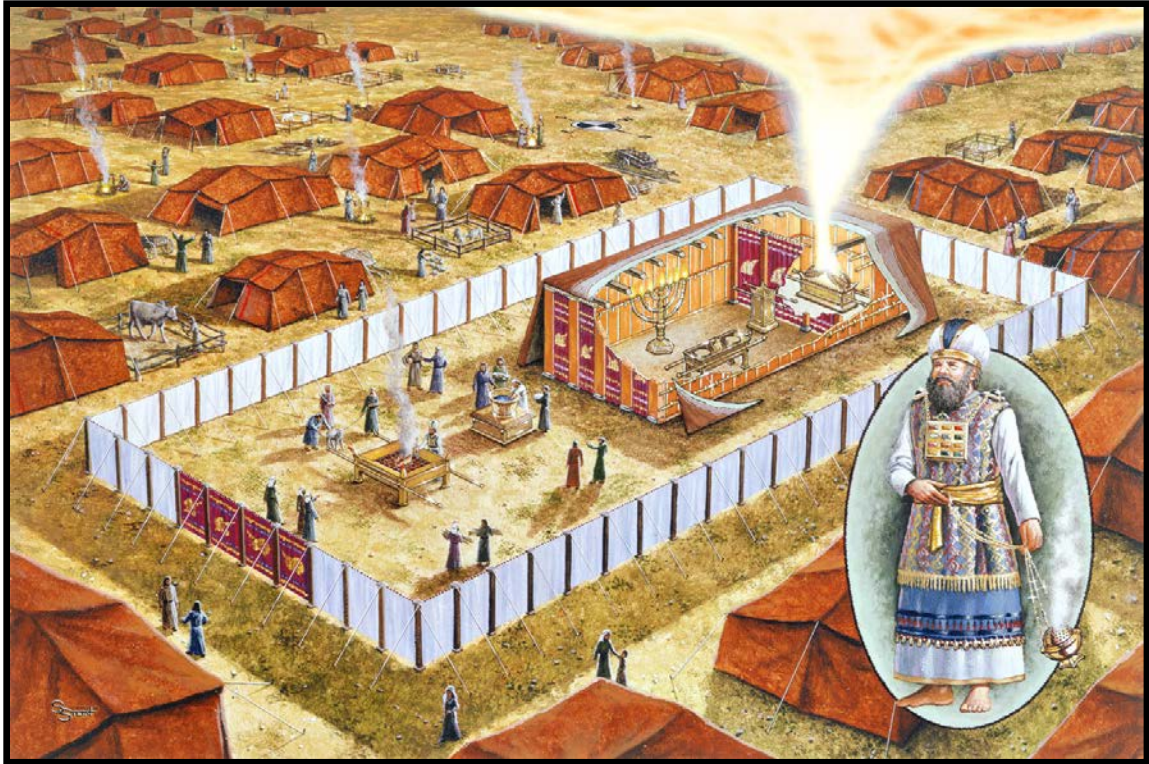
### **Sanctuary, Sanctification, and Technology**

The wilderness sanctuary was given to the children of Israel as God's dwelling place on earth (Exod 25:8; Ezek 37:26-28). The sanctuary (Galán & Ashby, 2008, p. 1) was also God's medium of communicating the plan of redemption to us as a way of understanding better our calling to be holy. It is evident that God was intentional in communicating to His people through more than just one medium. Within the sanctuary services, God communicated through the five basic senses of humanity. He communicated through use of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste.

This multisensory approach to communication has biblical foundation and compelling support in studies done. According to Hendricks (1998), "People tend to remember about ten percent of what they hear, 50 percent of what they hear and see, but 90 percent of what they hear, see, and do" (p. 127). He also asserts that learning and



retention are greater when we use all five senses. Figure 1 further highlights the use of all five senses in the divine communication with humanity.



*Figure 1.* Image of the Wilderness Tabernacle © 2008 RW Research - Rose Publishing, Inc., Torrance, CA. Used with permission.

The sense of sight was manifested throughout the tabernacle. The majestic outlay of the sanctuary itself, along with its colorful curtains, the breastplate of the priest, the golden Ark of the Covenant and the visible Shekinah Glory, are all examples of the appeal to the sense of sight in the sanctuary. The sense of hearing was highlighted by the cry of animals that were sacrificed as a symbol of the Lamb of God. The sense of taste is used in the small portion of flour, unleavened cakes, and roasted grain that was burned and the remaining portion, consumed. Touching the animal and letting it go into the

wilderness was a symbol of the transference of sin manifested through the sense of touch. The smell of blood and incense were all reminders of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus.

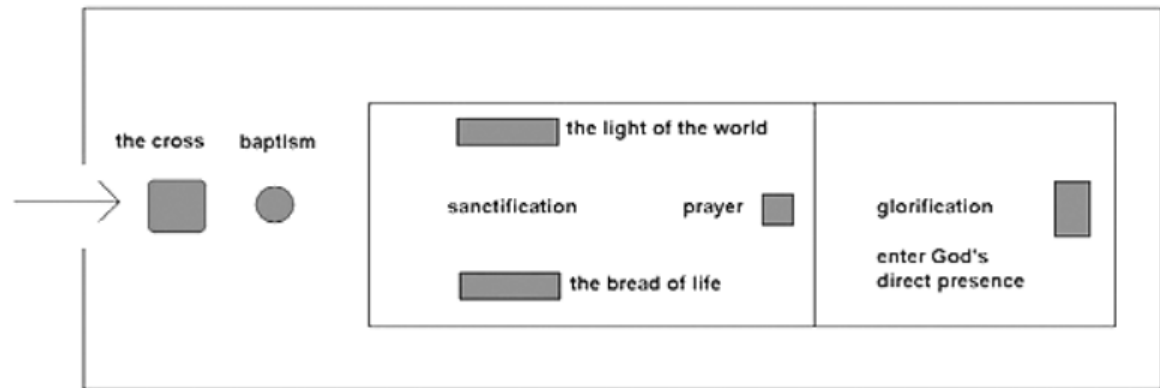


Figure 2. The journey through the Sanctuary. Rasell, M. (2011). Exploring the Heavenly Sanctuary: Understanding Seventh-day Adventist Theology (p. 79). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software. Used with permission.

The three parts of the tabernacle, as illustrated in Figure 2, provide a parallel to the process (Rasell, 2011) of justification, sanctification, and glorification. This section of the chapter will focus on the holy place. Sanctification is seen as a spiritual discipline of focusing on Christ. Some Christians have adopted the term “becoming more like Christ” as a common reference to the process of sanctification. Along this journey of sanctification, a few spiritual disciplines are necessary for becoming more like Christ. The holy place has three items worthy of reflection on this subject. They are the table of shewbread (Exod 25:23-30), the altar of incense (Exod 30:1-10), and the golden lampstands (Exod 25: 31-40; 26:35).

Rasell (2011) argues that these three items parallel areas of spiritual discipline in the life of the believer. Rasell (2011) asserts that the table of shewbread parallels the Bread of Life (the Word), the altar of incense represents the need to pray continually, and the seven-branched lampstand represents the light of the world in our lives. These

disciplines of reading the Word, praying, and witnessing are all-important in the process of sanctification.

Selected examples of technology in use include the Bible on an electronic device, which can be used to strengthen faith by being read whenever and wherever a physical, printed Bible may not be present. The sense of touch comes alive through the process of engagement as believers interact via their hands with technology. Complete Bible lesson apps such as Pillars of Faith (available for electronic download in Apple and Android stores) are available to help someone give Bible studies or just strengthen their faith. This is an engagement of the eyes, hands, and heart by way of response. Prayer requests can be distributed through emails, text messages, and sent directly to others or from the member to the pastor for immediate acknowledgment and processing.

The tabernacle also reveals a pattern of worship prescribed by God that asserts that those within the faith community are to encourage each other. One can draw from this passage a sense of fellowship that exist within a spiritual community that can be a source of faith development and discipleship while embracing technology.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Heb 10:19-25)

Issachar ministers, when properly prepared, can encourage and engage others by use of technology to reignite faith and strengthen hope in worship by what they see, hear, and do. It is my conviction that the effective use of technology in ministry can be a

medium of assisting the believer in the process of sanctification (holy place elements of Bible reading, prayer, and witnessing) as they are prepared for glorification, i.e., entering the presence of God, the heavenly Sanctuary.

### **The Garden and Multisensory Communication**

The negative effect of multisensory communication manifested itself in the Genesis account of Adam and Eve in the Garden. The devil was successful in getting Eve and subsequently Adam to sin by using the multisensory approach. The Bible states in Gen 3:6,

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Eve saw the fruit that represented the sense of sight. The sense of sound was manifested when she heard the serpent say, “You will not certainly die,” and the sense of touch was felt when she reached out and picked the fruit. Finally, the sense of taste was manifested when she ate the fruit. This is evidence that the misuse of multisensory communication can have a negative effect on our spirituality. It is my conviction that the positives outweigh the negatives.

### **The Prophetic Voice and Technology**

The Seventh-day Adventist church is known for its prophetic studies and interpretation. A clear understanding of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation reveals that in the last days, knowledge (חַכְמָה *ha-dat*) shall increase. “But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge” (Dan 12:4).

## The Prophetic Voice of Daniel

The prophet Daniel was being instructed about the significance of the last days and how knowledge will play a part. An examination of the text reveals that this “knowledge” that would increase is not only intellectual, but also spiritual. The presence of the Hebrew הַ (*ha*), which is a definite article ‘the,’ makes knowledge more specific. In the English translation of the verse, the definite article is not translated. The verse should, therefore, be understood that, from the time of sealing until the last days, there would be an increase in spiritual knowledge. This spiritual knowledge that would increase would include prophetic understandings of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Miller (1994) states, “as the time of fulfillment draws nearer, the ‘wise’ will seek to comprehend these prophecies more precisely, and God will grant understanding (‘knowledge’) to them” (p. 321).

A cursory reading of the passage suggests a general understanding of the word “knowledge.” Indeed, knowledge has moved us to a world where humans have travelled to outer space and back. The cloning of animals is now a reality, and cruise missiles can travel thousands of miles in the air guided by Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) to eliminate an enemy, without humans entering that country physically. Doctors are able to operate on babies within the womb and soldiers can communicate with their families visually from the battlefield to their home on the other side of the globe. The Burj Khalifa, built in Dubai in 2009, stands as the tallest structure in the world, measuring 828 meters or 2,717 feet. This is significant when compared to the then known tallest structure of the Bible, the tower of Babel, which measured approximately 300 feet. The

21st century has experienced a technological revolution as a result of the increase in knowledge.

This provides a significant opportunity for the Issachar minister to see the prophetic correlation between the prophesied spiritual increase in knowledge and the increased knowledge in the world, thus discerning the best way to integrate technology in increasing the knowledge (understanding) of Jesus Christ and thus enabling the truth to stand out in the last days.

### The Prophetic Voice of Ellen G. White

The Seventh-day Adventist church values the prophetic voice of Ellen G. White and has embraced technology to keep her writings relevant and accessible to its membership. A dedicated website, [www.whiteestate.org](http://www.whiteestate.org), along with mobile apps for smartphones and tablets, allows its members to access her writings at any time. White seemed to be affirming to the Issachar minister of today that the use of technology is an inescapable path if one is to cause the truth to stand out in the last days. She wrote,

In the cities of today, where there is so much to attract and please, the people can be interested by no ordinary efforts. Ministers of God's appointment will find it necessary to put forth extraordinary efforts in order to arrest the attention of the multitudes. And when they succeed in bringing together a large number of people, they must bear messages of a character so out of the usual order that the people will be aroused and warned. They must make use of every means that can possibly be devised for causing the truth to stand out clearly and distinctly. (White, 1855, p. 109)

White called for Issachar ministers to use extraordinary efforts in order to arrest the attention of the multitudes. Issachar ministers must make use of every means that can possibly be devised to cause the truth to stand out clearly and distinctly. White's prophetic voice still reverberates today; ministers must move with the times to be relevant to maximize efficiency in sharing the gospel. The use of technology and social

media is a great way of causing the truth to stand out clearly and distinctly. Analogous to the call to preach is the prophetic call to engage (arrest the attention of the multitudes). This does not only happen in the pulpit. Issachar ministers must therefore take the opportunity to use technology as an asset in spiritual development and a “spiritual weapon” in the fight against the enemy. Technology provides the most powerful opportunity to arrest the attention of the multitudes in a world that has grown to be more individualistic and technologically driven.

The prophetic instructions in the writings of White (1946) are further amplified by another statement she originally wrote in 1893:

Let every worker in the Master's vineyard, study, plan, devise methods, to reach the people where they are. We must do something out of the common course of things. We must arrest the attention. We must be deadly in earnest. We are on the very verge of times of trouble and perplexities that are scarcely dreamed of. (p. 122)

White (1946) affirmed that there must be an intentional effort to do something out of the ordinary to reach people. White (1946) highlighted the importance of preparation or education in connecting with the people “where there are.” Where are they? According to the online statistical research company Statista (n.d.b), as of the 4th quarter of 2016, over 1.8 billion people are active monthly users on the social media platform of Facebook (See Figure 3).

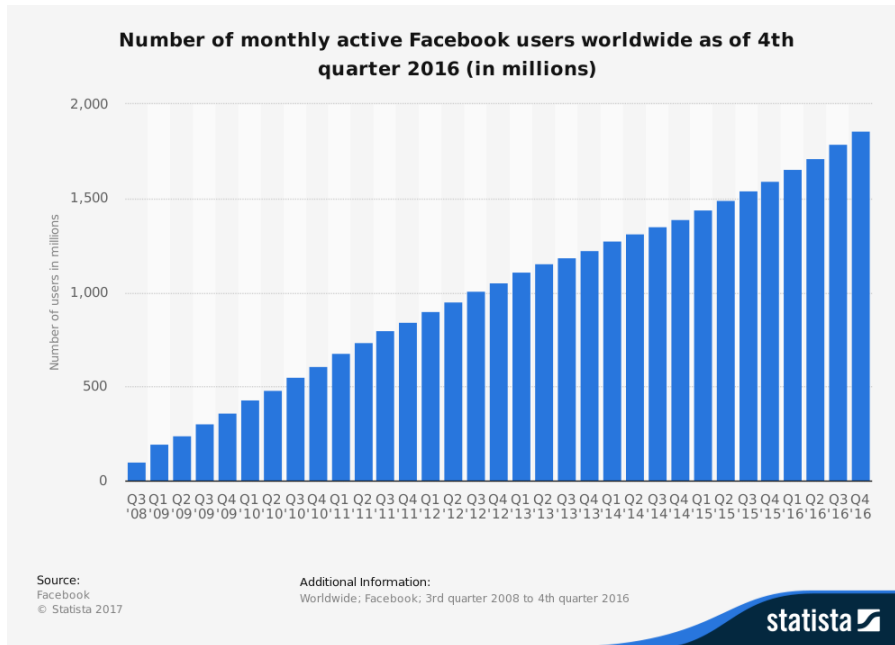


Figure 3. Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 4th quarter 2016 in millions. (Source: Statista, n.d.c) Used with permission.

White (1946) would have us understand that it is our spiritual mandate to “go” to social media and arrest the multitude and cause the truth to stand out.

### Mission and Technology

The gospel mandate for the Christian church is found in Matthew 28:19-20:

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Christians are called to go and make disciples. Walker (2012) asserts that the process of making disciples, also known as discipleship, “is essentially about relationships—living organic relationships that are life-giving and will result in building up the kingdom of God” (p. 15). This relationship can be built through personal contact and digital contact. The digital contact may be through social media, mobile technology, websites and blogs, which are also known as new media technologies. The proximity of



these relationships is no longer defined by physical space or geographical territory. It appears that technology becomes a vehicle of fulfilling this biblical commission.

Nichol (1980) affirms, “the gospel commission effectively eliminates national boundaries, and men of all nations find themselves members of one great brotherhood in which ‘there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female,’ for all are ‘one in Christ Jesus’” (p. 557). It is my conviction that there is no greater tool that eliminates national boundaries, extends the range of relationships, and creates a universal brotherhood for witness than modern technologies such as media, social media, mobile technologies, and websites.

It is this boundaryless living and organic relationship that will come under scrutiny as disciples live out their lives in the digital space (Lewis, 2014). Thus, our online relationships, posts, tweets, and conversations should be ones that reflect that we are disciples of Christ. This is our personal and global witness.

The “how” of our Christian mandate, in the process of outreach, is wrapped up in another passage of Scripture. Proverbs 11:30 declares, “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and the one who is wise saves lives.” The effectiveness of our outreach is demonstrated in the wisdom we demonstrate and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

There is no seven-step guide; no “one size fits all” prescribed method of outreach declared by Scripture. The unresolved tension in the text leaves us to assert that God does not have only one way of reaching people. It is, therefore, up to Issachar ministers to allow God to reveal ways they can fulfill His witness to others, recognizing that wisdom comes from God.

Birdsong and Heim (2012) suggest starting the day with prayer, reading the Word,

and seeking God’s agenda for one’s life. Seeking the Holy Spirit’s help to grow and deepen a circle of influence online and equip one with the right tools, words, and topics to communicate through the digital world is our greatest asset for effectiveness in digital witnessing because it is the Holy Spirit who guides, convicts, and transforms lives (John 16:13). “The goal of sharing your faith with another person isn’t simply to broadcast information; it’s to be a channel that aids the Holy Spirit in His work of transformation” (Birdsong & Heim, 2012, Chapter 2, para. 35).

### **The Spiritual Distractions of Technology**

Modern technology does not replace the Bible or our witness. It is not God versus technology. It is, rather, helping people find God through technology. Some would argue to the contrary and see technology as significantly disruptive to faith development and spiritual outreach. They may cite the consuming effect it has on time and resources as distractions. Challies (2011) asserts that one of the great dangers to Christians as a result of the distractions from technology in our lives is that “we are quickly becoming a people of shallow thoughts, and shallow thoughts will lead to shallow living” (Chapter 6, para. 13). He went on to argue that as Christians, God wants us to live thoughtful, virtuous lives that will honor Him.

Philippians 4:8 says, “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

It is this desire for positive Christian thinking and living that drove the creation of a website known as FaceGloria; branded as a sin-free alternative to Facebook. Web designer and developer, Atilla Barros, told the *Associated Press* in an interview that “on

Facebook you see a lot of violence and pornography. That's why we thought of creating a network where we could talk about God and love and spread His word” (as cited in Ma, 2015). The site bans 600 specific words, erotic content, and violence and there is an “amen” button to express appreciation for any post. The site [www.facegloria.com](http://www.facegloria.com) was established in June 2015 in Brazil, and is available only in Portuguese. *CNN Money* reports that Facebook sent a cease and desist letter warning that the company is infringing on its trademark and could create consumer confusion.

Wise (2014) sees technology as amoral, inherently neither good nor bad. He likens technology to a brick that does not have moral qualities and can be used for good or bad.

Communication technology can be used to benefit us—reuniting long lost childhood friends on Facebook, connecting people in need of an organ transplant to donors, donating money online to a worthy cause, or seeing the ripples of a Baptist preacher telling the world, ‘I have a dream ...’. As we’ve seen, communication technology can also be used to harm us—online bullying, sexual harassment through disposable media apps like Snapchat, child pornography, and intentionally manipulating the minds of the general public for financial gain. (p. 42)

The distractions of technology are real and cannot be denied. However, greater than the battle between two companies, Christians and non-Christians, or between technology and faith, is the biblical call to fulfill mission in a world of sin wherever that may be. Lewis (2014) argues, “a significant number of Christian disciples are in the online spaces, with concerns about Christian presence online how we are impacted, and how we can impact with theological questions of ‘being,’ and more practical questions related to ethics and practice” (p. 4). The Scriptures affirm in Matthew 5:16 that we have a responsibility to be positive witnesses: “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Wise

(2014) asserts that our online presence allows us “to extend our reach into the lives of people we know, love and care about. Because we are ambassadors of Jesus, His presence accompanies us into the nooks and crannies of the web” (p. 112). Thus, our online presence can and should be used in a positive way.

In support of not having a digital presence, some may quote John 15:19: “If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.” Some may also quote 1 John 2:15: “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.” The use of these texts in defense of not having a presence in the digital world is an affront to the call to mission and a misinterpretation and misapplication of the Scriptures. John 15:19 indicates that God has chosen you to be a witness for Him in this world. Challies (2011) affirms that even though modern technology may be a distraction in the world in which we live, “we must learn to remain undistracted, to wholeheartedly focus our attention on the things that matter most, and to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength” (Chapter 6, para. 73).

### **Digital Discipleship and Evangelism**

There are two terms in Matthew 28:19 that provide a biblical foundation for the concept of digital discipleship. The first is “go,” and the second is “make disciples.” “Go” *Πορεύομαι* (*poruomai*) is also used in the sense of conduct in one’s life, and “make disciples” *μαθητεύω* (*matheteuo*) can also be rendered as “make followers” (Balz & Schneider, 1990, p. 137). It is important to observe that some translations of the Bible, including the King James Version, inadequately translate *μαθητεύω* (*matheteuo*) in verse

19 as “teach,” and correctly translates *διδάσκοντες* (*didaskontes*) in verse 20 as “teaching.” In verse 19, *μαθητεύω* (*matheteuo*) is an active verb in the imperative, second person, which is more involved than just teaching, but carries with it a sense of causing people to become followers.

The command, “go,” “make disciples,” can thus be viewed through contemporary eyes as saying, “As you conduct your life, make followers.” With this interpretation, the “go” is not defined by ethnicity, territory, or geography, but whenever and wherever one may be. Technology now becomes an enabler of this reality of making followers wherever someone may be.

Our online presence is just as important as the offline presence. Our online presence may be characterized as a “#digidisciple.” A #digidisciple is a term developed in 2011 by the BIG Bible Project based in the United Kingdom and is defined as “someone who seeks to live out their biblically-informed Christian faith in the digital space, exploring both what it means to be a disciple in the digital age, and also how the digital age affects or alters discipleship” (Big Bible, n.d.). The BIG Bible project sees the digital world as “space” or “culture” and encourages Christians around the world to take seriously both their online and offline presence, and live by the same values in both “spaces.” Birdsong and Heim (2012) seem to support this concept and believe that “Only the Holy Spirit can save people from themselves. Conducting oneself in a manner worthy of following Christ online and off-line is a daily practice of humility and surrender” (Chapter 6, para. 59). For these authors, it is all about character. The BigBible.org provides various articles on how one can engage various spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible study, witness, and worship in the digital space.

We must be careful not to assume that our online presence and witness negates our duties and responsibilities in the real world. Kallenberg (2011) warns,

evangelism does not escape the bodily constraints that our Creator placed on all human communication. It takes time, it takes bodies, and it takes location. In a bewitching contrast, technology seems to offer a shortcut. But we must discern the point at which technology distorts Christian practices lest we end up with merely a ‘virtual’ Christianity. (Chapter 2, para. 92)

Technology should not be seen nor used as an alternative to the human touch or presence in witness. However, it is important to note that technology can be successfully employed in evangelism. Therefore, we can now evaluate another significant terminology that contributes to the church’s mission in the digital space or culture: “techno-vangelism.”

### Techno-vangelism

The term Techno-vangelism is a hybrid of two words, “technology” and “evangelism,” and was first officially adopted as a spiritual focus by the Inter-American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2010. The term is used to inspire its 3.8 million members to the wise and effective use of technology in accomplishing mission. The terms #digidisciple, techno-vangelism and e-vangelism all represent an effort to inspire, motivate, and engage effective spiritual living in a digital world. The concept of e-vangelism saw its early pioneering authors in the 1990. Authors such as Kellner (1996) and Careaga (1999) started the conversation on this important subject.

White (1946) reflected on the many valuable lessons that can be gleaned from Christ’s methods of evangelism: “He did not follow merely one method; in various ways He sought to gain the attention of the multitude; and then He proclaimed to them the truths of the gospel” (p. 123). Public evangelism in some parts of the world is an effective method of gaining the attention of the multitude; however, this is not the only method. In

more urban cities today, this can be a significant challenge, if not impossible to achieve.

Evangelism ought to be understood as a process and not an event. White (1905) asserted:

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me." (p. 143)

Evangelism as a part of the discipleship process is relational. Santos (2016) asserts, "spending time with people and developing close personal relationships is imperative" (p. 107) and something everyone can do as a part of his or her call to be a witness. The Savior mingled or socialized with humanity and, as a result, won their confidence. Southerland (2014) supports this position and argues, "social media tools are useful, efficient, and beneficial in helping you strengthen these relationships" (p. 27), thus enabling and strengthening our ability to be relevant in accomplishing the mission.

Southerland states:

Evangelism is the process of the group (church) getting its message (the gospel) to outsiders (unbelievers). And the problem with evangelism has always been access. We need access to unbelievers so that we can tell them our story and the message of the gospel. Today, as compared to yesterday, access is becoming easier although unconventional. (p. 26)

Techno-vangelism is an unconventional method that gives us access to those we need to reach with the gospel of Jesus Christ. It also gives us an opportunity to realize that effective evangelism is not limited to one method, but is open to many methods of accomplishing the mission.

Web streaming of church services and evangelism initiatives, blogging on issues of faith, social media forums, and communities are examples of digital methods of gaining the attention of the multitude and proclaiming the gospel truth. Never forget our call is to be witnesses of the good news of salvation. The call to be a witness for God is a

personal one that is enabled by the Holy Spirit: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The New Testament story of the sower and the seeds gives support to the effects of technology in evangelism.

### Sowing Versus Reaping in the World of Technology

There is a significant lesson about evangelism that can be learned from the parable of the sower and the seed (Luke 8:4-15). The seed in the story represents the word of God (v. 11). Observe that as the sower sowed his seed (the gospel), some fell along the wayside, some fell upon a rock, some fell among thorns, and some fell on good ground. As expected, those that fell on good ground bore much fruit, whereas the others were either taken by the ravens, sprang up and withered away, or choked among the thorns. Notice that the germination of the seed (the Word of God) to its fullest potential only takes place in the hearts of those who were willing to receive it (v. 15). The gospel should be spread (sowed) in every place possible, whether it is social media, web broadcasting, mobile technology, or blogging because we will never know when and where the good soil (receptive hearts) is for the gospel. God calls us to evangelize and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict and to guide people to the truth. Sowing is our responsibility, and reaping is God’s responsibility.

### **The Science of “Captology” and Its Persuasive Power**

“Captology” is the study of computers as persuasive technologies. B. J. Fogg developed this terminology in 1996 at Stanford University Persuasive Tech Lab. The study included the design, research, and analysis of interactive computer products



(computers, mobile phones, websites, wireless technology, mobile technologies, etc.).

The study highlights the fact that fundamental to changing a behavior is the need to focus on something small and quick, and then find out what it is that is stopping people from doing it, which in most cases seems to be a combination of a lack of motivation, ability, and a trigger. It is from this study that we glean some significant correlations between technology and spiritual growth.

There are presently over 200,000,000 downloads of the “youversion” Bible on smartphones and tablets worldwide (YouVersion, n.d.). There is no official documentation to tell how many smart users are actively engaged in reading their Bibles on electronic devices. According to YouVersion, 77% of smartphone and tablet Bible users turn to their phones because of proximity. However, what provides the motivation to engage technology in spiritual development?

Hutchings (2013) argues that with the proliferation of Bible apps, people will be most persuaded to become more engaged in Bible reading if there is community. Online communities are on the rise as a source of spiritual renewal. The Google Plus hangout group called Christian Discipleship (Christian Discipleship, 2016) reported over 16,000 members sharing their faith, stories of God’s deliverance, and biblical nuggets to encourage faith. It is the engaging effect of community that keeps the motivation alive within an individual in the digital world. I do believe, however, that the motivation to be engaged in the digital world in techno-vangelism or as a #digidisciple should not be externally, but internally motivated. It is my conviction that it is our love for God that provides this motivation. Tozer (2015) states, “We pursue God because, and only

because, He has first put an urge within us that spurs us to the pursuit” (Preface, para. 12).

### **Follow Me**

It was Jesus who used the words “follow me,” which have today become the operational principle of some social media technologies in the digital world. In speaking to Peter and his brother Andrew, Jesus declared in Matthew 4:19, “Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people.” The implications of the call and the warning are evident in the term “Come, follow me.” Christians must resist the dangerous urge to exhibit pride and a narcissistic behavior in the digital world. The goal is not to have people “follow us online,” but as we are online, we help people “follow Jesus.” An obsession with self is diabolical to anyone’s efforts to share Christ and have others follow Him. “You will see and hear the expressions “follow me” or “I’m following” many times in the social networking realm, but to date, no one has yet to offer the return on investment (eternity) that Jesus offered” (Birdsong & Heim, 2012, Chapter 2, para. 29).

Brown (1975) states, “Discipleship and the process of developing a disciple are often associated most closely with following. We hear the invitation of Jesus, ‘Come follow me,’ and we rarely take the time to consider that discipleship implies taking someone to a destination” (as cited in Bell, 2014, Chapter 2, para. 29). The ultimate goal of living in the digital world whether it is by blogging, streaming, social media, or mobile technology is to help those online “follow Jesus.” Jesus affirms by saying, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for

the gospel will save it” (Mark 8: 34-35). The call to “follow me” is the heart of discipleship.

Walker (2012) asserts, “Jesus poured his life into twelve men and fitted them for mission. He trained them and sent them into the world (Matt 10:5-8; John 17:18). Their work is representative of what is expected of every disciple: developing a meaningful relationship with Christ and with others and helping others to have a relationship with Christ. This work continues until the end of the world” (p. 16). It is this relationship with Jesus Christ that drives us to have meaningful relationships with others just as the disciples did. It should be the prayer of every #digidisciple to have Jesus pour His life (Holy Spirit) into our lives so we can be agents of transformation in our digital space, wherever that may be.

### **Essential Tips for a #digidisciple**

The YouVersion (n.d.) blog offers an online seven-day tip for engaging new technology in the study of the Word. These tips are multisensory in nature and provide practical ways in which people can adopt technology in their lives as #digidisciples. The first step is to start a Bible reading plan, which can be done with the youversion Bible app. Next, enjoy the Bible with friends. This creates community and an opportunity to engage and share one’s faith. Watching Bible stories in videos is appealing to the visual senses through media video files, which are also accessible through the app and other portals. An important next step includes listening to the Bible with audio. This is appealing to the sense of hearing. Listen to the Bible while we drive to work, doing our exercise or at home. Create a “verse image” and share it. This is appealing not just to the visual, but also to our creativity and encourages sharing our faith. Try highlighting,

bookmarking, and creating notes, which allows for engagement and reflection. Finally, subscribe to the verse of the day. This is an invitation to become a #digidisciple.

Youversion.com has built on the multisensory way God has chosen to communicate with us. The challenge is now for spiritual leaders to find ways to build on the biblical foundation and adopt technology in ministry to accomplish fulfilling the mission.

### **Conclusion**

God communicated His love for us through our senses. He who created us knows that we are multisensory beings. Issachar ministers who understand the times and this concept will see the judicious use of technology in worship and faith development as a biblical imperative in these prophetic last days. Both the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White give foundation to its adoption. The gospel commission of Matthew 28:19 to make disciples must be understood to have implications in both the physical and the online worlds. The emergence of new media and mobile technologies such as Facebook, twitter, Instagram, smart phones, blogging, and Internet streaming have all removed the boundaries of the physical world and provided online communities spanning continents. This provides a powerful opportunity to engage in witnessing and evangelism within our local context and our global community which, when shared through these mediums, will germinate in the hearts of those searching for the good news.

Cannell (2014) states, “The key to accepting the marriage of the gospel with new forms of technology is to understand that, while the methods of delivery are always evolving, the message of the gospel is timeless and unchanging” (Introduction, para. 5). Technology should then be adopted by ministers in their local context and used to enhance their outreach both inside and outside the walls of the church. Strategic plans for

the employment of technology in ministry delivery can be created and adopted by clergy and laity, recognizing that the call is to be a witness of the gospel and allow the Holy Spirit to convict and transform.

## CHAPTER 3

### CURRENT LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Introduction**

More and more churches are adapting technology into their worship services. Schultze (2004) states that technology in the Christian realm is made up of devices (or tools), meanings, and uses, all of which we apply to God's creation. He argues that the church generally adapts technology from society to fulfill its mission. The challenge presented to many spiritual leaders is a lack of understanding regarding how technology can be adopted effectively in fulfilling this mission. This chapter will explore some forms of new media technology available, its benefits and dangers, and provide material support for its adaptation and engagement in ministry delivery by spiritual leaders and churches.

Technology in ministry is much more than song lyrics projected onto a projector screen. Jordache (2010) says technology in ministry is engaging people in our community within and without our church building in strengthening their relationship with Jesus Christ. There are many pathways to achieving this objective; however, if not done rightly, an over-emphasis on technology can be a deterrent to the mission instead of an intended blessing.

Hipps (2006) says it best when defining the impact that technology has upon the church: "In the same way the printing press gave rise to modernity, electronic media were the primary agents in bringing about postmodernity, demolishing our concentration on

abstract doctrine, and changing our beliefs about Truth” (p. 64).

In a Hartford Research Center survey, Thumma (2012) asserts that ministry today should be a technological hybrid venture that must be strategically and intentionally developed as a part of the holistic ministry plan. As a theological hybrid, technology does not replace nor displace, but complements and accentuates the mission of the church both internally for worship, and externally for mission.

### **The Case for Technology**

Technology has changed the world. It has changed the way we do banking, shopping, and even educating with virtual classes online. Some call the time in which we now live and exist as the digital age. Kaye (2014) believes, “the digital age also brings with it considerable benefits and opportunities for preaching, evangelism, fellowship, discipleship, community, teaching, outreach and missions” (Introduction, para. 20).

The use of technology by churches has become a necessary tool in advancing the mission of the church (Thumma, 2012; Wilson & Moore, 2008). Thumma (2012) asserts that ministers, congregational leaders and local church communication/media teams can experience spiritual growth as a result of the use of these tools. It is impossible for the church to exist in today’s world and not be impacted by the technological revolution, as our world no longer revolves around words only, but images as well (Higgs, 2006; Root, 2008). That impact of the emerging technologies of the 1990s has yet to be totally assessed regarding whether it has turned out for mainly good or bad.

Technology has the power to be used as a core element in the process of communicating spiritual messages (Jordache, 2010; Wilson & Moore, 2008). Borgmann (as cited in Vergel, 2010) asserts that while many may view technology as a mere tool, it

is much more than that: “It is persuasive, and can have a way of insinuating itself into routines mostly as a way of making life less strenuous” (p. 17). People are searching for ways to make their lives much less arduous, and ministers can make a wise investment in the use of technology that can impact the daily routines of their parishioners in a positive way. A significant challenge is that many church leaders do not have enough knowledge of how to integrate technology in ministry, nor know or understand where to begin (Jiao, 2013; Thumma, 2012). It is, therefore, imperative that our ministers today understand and use technology effectively in worship (Wilson & Moore, 2008).

Technology can have a negative impact on our worship experience if there is not a focused strategy (Quanbeck, 2008; Vergel, 2010). Quanbeck argues that using technology such as PowerPoint in sermon delivery is a distraction and he believed that the congregation would prefer looking at the screen, rather than listening to the preaching of the Word. Root (2008), however, rebuffed this thought by saying that the use of technology in preaching should enhance and connect the message with the audience. He gives some suggestions on its effective use such as limiting slides to as few as possible and not referring to pictures or images on screen directly.

Schultze (2004) purports a “yes, but” approach to the use of technology in worship. He articulates four approaches—rejection, adoption, adaptation, and creation—to technology that churches can benefit from. It is likely that a church will experience one or more of these four approaches. Yes, technology is a plus, but churches must go through the process to determine what is best for their local context.

These positions represent a larger discussion on the appropriateness of technology in worship. An understanding of the Visual–Auditory–Kinesthetic (VAK) model of



learning will help affirm Root's position as most accurate (Gould, 2013). The long standing VAK model was developed in the 1920's by teaching specialists and asserts that learning is not a "one size fit's all," but that learning can be a combination of the visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, or any one of the three. This gives further evidence to the Issachar minister described in Chapter 2 as supporting the judicious use of technology, understanding its impact on one's senses in sharing the gospel.

God created us as sensory beings, and this multisensory approach to worship is biblical (Kimball, 2003; Schultze, 2004). Kimball (2003) asserts that we must not be afraid to revisit a holistic, multisensory approach to worship. This holistic approach is not a 21<sup>st</sup> century model, but is drawn from Bible times. Chapter 2 highlights and expands on this concept from a spiritual perspective which comes alive in the multisensory communication God had with the children of Israel as manifested throughout the tabernacle. If we are to reach the emerging church of today effectively, which is post-seeker-sensitive, then we must be holistic in our approach while remaining authentic to Scripture.

Another poignant thought on this discussion is that proclaiming the written Word appeals to our left brain while the visuals appeal to our right brain. Hipps (2006) believes that technology in worship can make Christians shallow and lack depth in their faith because technology, which appeals to the right brain, has relegated faith to just images, screens, and short sentences called posts. He asserts that as long as our religion is based on a book, that is the Bible, people of faith will need the left brain capacities and knowledge necessary for accessing and interpreting Scripture faithfully. Since Hipps was not against technology, it may be best to assert that churches would do best if they

provide a balance in their worship experience that appeals to both the left and right brains of worshippers.

### Benefits of Using Technology in Ministry Delivery

The quintessential act in many religions is worship (Royle, 2012; Schultze, 2004). It is in this act that we affirm and grow our faith, whether done collectively or privately. Schultze (2004) argues that an understanding of the eight liturgical practices of the Christian church can guide us better in adopting technology for worship so that it remains both meaningful and biblical.

In his survey, Thumma (2012) asserts that the scope of Christian worship is changing, and those congregations that adopt technology in worship have seen greater attendance and growth in their per capita giving. Church members have already begun the techno-spiritual revolution by using their iPads/iPhones and other devices for spiritual devotion and Bible reading. While there are many benefits to be gained from the use of technology, it is important to note that increased use of technology is no guarantor of collective numerical growth (Thumma, 2012).

In a longitudinal survey by the Hartford Institute of Religion Research entitled *Facts on Worship: 2010*, the study reports that of the random 11,077 individuals across over 100 faith groups, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church, 84% say they prefer a worship that is meaningful, not innovative (Royle, 2012). Royle purports that innovative churches are more likely to have a contemporary worship service, which may include drums, guitars, and a projection screen system. These churches are more in urban areas, newer and older suburbs, and less in rural areas.

Hadaway (2011) in his survey on *Facts on Growth*, says churches that experience

the most growth today make use of not just one form of technology, but a minimum of five or six forms. These include email, a website, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, podcasts, electronic newsletters, and other social media/technologies. These media technologies allow growing churches to connect internally with their members and inform potential new comers.

### Dangers of Technology

Schultze (2004) avers an overuse of technology can lead to individualism, isolation with families, and a breakdown of community. He argues that there are six essential habits of the heart that must be guarded in relation to technology: discernment, moderation, wisdom, humility, authenticity, and diversity, and asserts that these habits require organic community life, rather than the virtual community of the Internet. It is important to note that Schultze was not arguing for doing away with technology, but warned us against what he saw as an eminent danger for the unsuspecting.

Hipps (2006) asserts that churches that take the use of technology to the extreme in an effort to be culturally relevant do more harm than good to the cause of Christ and compared that to putting our lamp under a bowl. Neither Hipps nor Schultze seemed to make the case that technology is inherently bad; however, there lurks a certain danger in using technology as replacement tools for one's spirituality and for the faith community.

## **The Internet and Ministry**

### Websites and Ministry

The Internet had its birth in 1995 with approximately 14% American adult users; today 87% of American adults use the Internet for one reason or another (Fox & Rainie,

2014). The Internet is the only emergent technology, including email and the World Wide Web, which provides so much content, interactivity, and increased productivity (Malphurs & Malphurs, 2003). Brooks (2013) asserts that every church must have a website and says a website provides the platform for greater electronic footprints such as Facebook, Twitter, and mobile apps. Southerland (2014) believes, “in today’s world, the church’s webpage is becoming the front door of the church. People almost always do an online search of the church before attending, and others use Facebook to do a quick check” (p. 27). Brad Forbes, Director of Advent Source (personal communication, September 4, 2014) affirms the need for every church to have a website and revealed that there are over 6,700 Seventh-day Adventist churches and companies in North America with an active website. How many are updated and actively engaged is difficult to assess.

Kaye (2014) believes a church’s “website is a vital part of [their] overall mission and growth plan. It needs a strategic plan” (Chapter 2, para. 3). A church that has a website without a strategic plan for mission is missing its focus. She offers three important questions that can help every church begin the process of planning for an effective church website:

1. What is the main purpose of your website? Is your website focused on teaching? Is it about outreach? Is it dedicated to community and discipleship? The more clearly you can describe the purpose behind your website, the more clarity you will be able to program into it.
2. What is the vision behind your website? Can you describe what makes your website unique? What sets it apart from other websites?
3. Who are your site visitors? Are they members of your church, visitors from your social media or mission efforts? Are they young or mature? Are they single or do they have families? Do they live in the inner city, the suburbs, or rural areas? The more detail you can bring to your church demographics, the more effective you can make your website. (Chapter 2, paras. 4-6)

Stephenson (2006) affirms the importance of church websites, but highlights that

what matters most is not its appearance and technology, but its content which. He argues that the content must be relevant to the visitor: “A website may be filled with information, but if people don’t care about the information, then they don’t care about the website. The first step in deciding what content to add is deciding who forms your audience” (p. 42). Issachar ministers ought to provide the vision for an effective web ministry.

### **Email, Church Bulletins and Electronic Newsletters**

Caston (2012) believes the future of technology and ministry is mobile. Kaye (2014) supports and believes, “readers are increasingly likely to read your church bulletin or newsletter on their laptop or on one of their mobile digital devices such as a smartphone or tablet” (Chapter 5, para. 1). She argued in favor of churches doing a digital makeover to their bulletins that can increase their email and electronic newsletter’s subscriptions. Stephenson (2006) asserts, “email is a useful tool for ministry” (p. 138) as emails are “pushed” out to the subscribers and as such, subscribers do not have to visit a website for information. Email lists provide the opportunity for mass communication directly with individuals and are ideal for such things as e-newsletters, announcements, church bulletin distribution, messages from the pastor, upcoming events, volunteer information, prayer requests, and more.

### **Community and Multisite Ministry**

Morris and Finch (2007) see the Internet as an opportunity for the church to offer its services to a wider community. They point to Forest Lake Seventh-day Adventist Church in Florida, and say that a church service’s live stream Internet presence is a

blessing to those who cannot attend church for one reason or another. When a church manifests its online presence, it has the opportunity to share information, dialogue, and even start a cyber church (Cheong, Fischer-Nielsen, Gelfren, & Ess, 2012). These various online communities that are created through these diverse new medium technologies “can also break down human barriers for those who are of different cultures or races, shy or uncomfortable around people, or self-conscious about their appearance” (Stephenson, 2006, p. 149). New media technology communities provide an exponential opportunity for fulfilling the mission of the church.

Brooks (2013) asserts that the Internet has provided the platform for an emerging way of doing church known as the multisite church. These multisite churches allow worshippers in other locations the opportunity to join in the main worship service via satellite, Internet, or a DVD recording. Spyker (2007) and Brooks (2013) agree that the multisite church model helps mission-focused congregations extend themselves and their ministry in physical and online communities.

Malphurs and Malphurs (2003) see the Internet as an opportunity to witness to unique groups in unique ways, such as Muslims who cannot be seen spending time with a missionary or even a Christian. They point to missionaries who are using the Internet to witness to Muslims who, from the privacy of their homes, are discovering more and accepting Christianity by way of the Internet (p. 95). Larsen (2001) says that those who browse the Internet for religious materials are called “religion surfers” and asserts in her Pew Research Study that over 28 million Americans have used the Internet to get religious or spiritual information and to connect with others of faith.

## **Virtual Worlds**

Online communities (Rice, 2009) such as Facebook and virtual worlds (Estes, 2009) such as “Second Life” are results of the nascent of the Internet. Rice (2009) argues that the Internet has redefined our understanding of community and points to Facebook as an example. Facebook has become an online communal home, a place to connect and reconnect with family and friends. Estes (2009) takes it a step further by declaring that our world is moving into the virtual realm and the church must move with it, too.

Virtual communities are digitally constructed environments where peer-to-peer interaction can take place (Bittarello, 2008). Teague (2007), producer of *NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams*, reports about a three-dimensional (3D) world known as “Second Life,” where good and evil exist and where people actually live their “virtual second life” and engage in such things as virtual work, sex, shopping, worship, and recreation. In these virtual worlds, there are virtual small groups, virtual communions, and virtual baptism and people get to come as they are (Estes, 2009).

LifeChurch.tv is one such entity that has established online church campuses and a virtual church in Second Life. However, some religious leaders such as Elaine A. Heath (as cited in Teague, 2007) oppose the idea of virtual church and dismiss it as not real religion. She affirms that the church cannot be the church without flesh and blood interaction, which does not exist in this virtual world. Curtice (2010), founder and developer of the Prophecy Island on Second Life, asserts that Second Life is not a game, but real people with real relationships, even though they may have a different name or look online in the form of an avatar. Curtice further asserts that he has a Seventh-day Adventist church in Second Life that is supported in part by the Global Mission

department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Research suggests it maybe too early to assess fully the impact of virtual churches in Second Life. My research further reveals that at the time of this writing (August 2014), there were no official virtual Seventh-day Adventist churches in Second Life. However, Second Life recorded that its first Adventist church presence began with Pastor Evandro Falck in Brazil (Curtice, 2010).

Landmark Internet researcher Rainie (2014) views the future of the Internet as being intertwined in the fabric of our being (Malphurs & Malphurs, 2003). Rainie (2014) says it best this way: “The Internet will become ‘like electricity’—less visible, yet more deeply embedded in people’s lives for good and ill” (p. 7). Malphurs and Malphurs (2003) say the Internet took only seven years to reach 30% of American homes, as compared to electricity that took 46 years to reach 30% of American homes, or 38 years for the telephone to reach 30% of American homes (p. 97). The Internet continues to evolve in its endless opportunities. It provides us the opportunity to be creative in our outreach, recognizing that Christians of today will not be content to limit themselves only to traditional forms of worship. They will constantly be exploring new and different ways to worship God (Malphurs & Malphurs, 2003).

### Social Media and Ministry

Caston (2013) defines social media as “interactive communication reaching the masses” (p. 9). He asserts that it is social media that transformed the Internet through its various platforms/communities and has allowed organizations greater power to communicate with the world. Humans have a quest for an authentic connection with friends, our own hearts and minds, and a loving relationship with God (Rice, 2009). Online communities such as Facebook facilitated this human desire and represent the

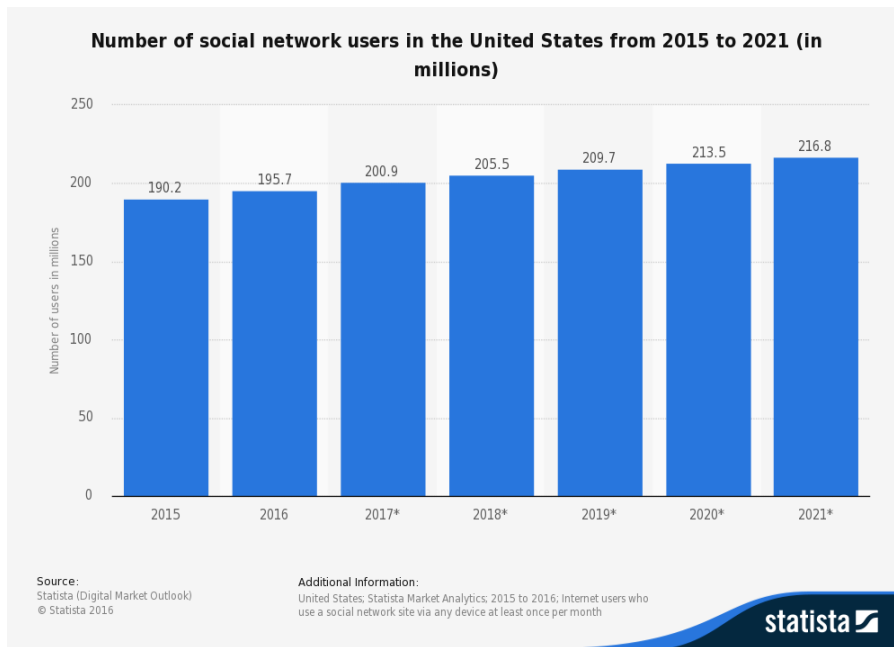


largest social media platform today with 57% of Americans as active users and over one billion users worldwide (Smith, 2014). This vast audience provides a unique opportunity to fulfill the gospel commission of Matthew 28:19: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.”

A leading online research and statistical portal (Statista, n.d.e) revealed that at the end of 2016, there were 195,700,000 social media network users in the United States, with a projection of 200,900,000 at the close of 2017. These 195,700,000 users represent approximately three quarters of the United States population. The future forecast suggests a continuous upward usage of social media networks in the hundreds of millions (See Figure 4).

Social media allows us the privilege of engaging this online community that may be from around our local church or on the other side of the globe. Hansel (as cited in Gould, 2013) says it best in describing the benefit of social media: “Social media is both a stethoscope, magnifying your ability to listen to your congregation and community, and a megaphone, magnifying your ability to proclaim God’s word to your community” (Forward, para. 8).

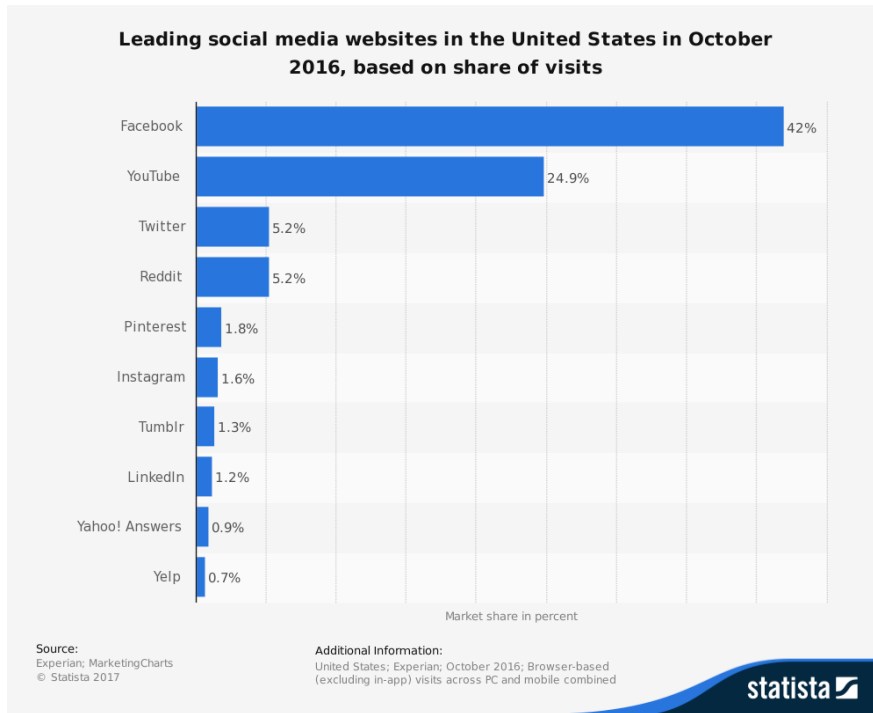
Social media is a present-day reality that is here to stay and is not a fad. This has brought about a fundamental shift in the way we communicate (Smith, 2013). Southerland (2014) says, “Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are powerful tools of



*Figure 4.* Number of social network users in the United States from 2010 to 2021 in millions. (Source: Statista, n.d.d) Used with permission.

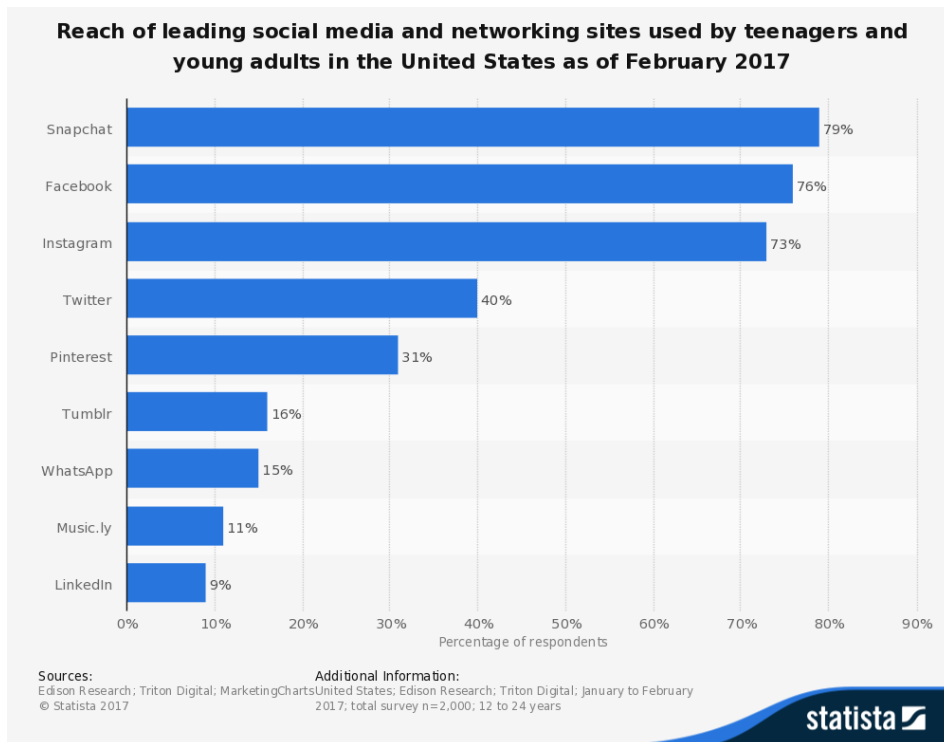
communication” (p. 105). These three represent the major social media platforms in use today and is the rationale for focusing on these top three in this chapter. According to Statista (n.d.b), Facebook represents a 42% visit ratio followed by YouTube at 24.9% and Twitter at 5.2% as of October 2016 (See Figure 5). The actual numbers are significantly higher since these numbers exclude in-app access and are the combined results of browser-based visits across PCs and mobile devices only.

The chart below is significant in that, while it highlights the leading social media sites based on share visits, it does not reveal the sites preferred by youth and young adults. This chapter speaks to social media in general; however, it is important to highlight the preferred social sites used by our youth and young adults.



*Figure 5.* Leading social media websites in the United States in October 2016, based on share of visits. (Source: Statista, n.d.b) Used with permission.

The site statista.com indicates the reach of leading social media sites in a February 2017 study (Statista, n.d.e). The survey revealed that even though social networks such as Instagram and Snapchat are preferred social media platforms, Facebook still remains one of the top three social media network among youth and youth adults. Notice that the use of multiple social media networks has not significantly reduced the use of Facebook (See Figure 6).



*Figure 6.* Reach of leading social media and networking sites used by teenagers and young adults in the United States as of February 2017. (Source: Statista, n.d.e) Used with permission.

Hipps (2006) takes it a bit further and personifies social media by allowing one to understand media, whether it be radio, television, Internet, or social media, as extensions of oneself (Spyker, 2007); as such, it is crucial in understanding their hidden power and effects. Gould (2013) argues in support of this concept when she highlights,

Christ has no online presence but yours,  
 No blog, no Facebook page but yours.  
 Yours are the tweets, through which love touches this world,  
 Yours are the posts through which the Gospel is shared,  
 Yours are the updates through which hope is revealed.  
 Christ has no online presence but yours,  
 No blog, no Facebook page but yours. (Chapter 2, para. 8)

Social media is not the answer to all our needs in sharing the gospel. Some churches have the perception that social media is free and if their church engages in

social media, then it will make them relevant. Both these perceptions are wrong (Smith, 2013). Remember Hansel's definition of social media as a megaphone, magnifying the local church's activity. If a church is not active or relevant in its locality, it will not be relevant online. Social media costs time. A lot of it! Another drawback to social media such as Facebook is that while it may be great for members, it may be less functional for those shopping for a new faith community if it does not have a mission strategy (Thumma, 2012).

According to Vitello (2009), social media does not have control over all that people will say about someone or the church. He purports that any church organization trying to control its perception, must be aware that social media does not discriminate with its criticisms. A Pew Research Center survey (Fox & Rainie, 2014) reveals that 76% of Internet users say that people they have witnessed to or encountered online are mostly kind to each other (p. 7). Cheong et al. (2012) see a church's online presence as an opportunity for relationship building. It is from these relationships that we have the opportunity to witness. Campbell (2012) argues that while some may view technology as good or evil, technology should be viewed as a gift from God to do the work in the community. Last (2005) asserts that by some measure, religion is second only to pornography as the most popular activity on the Internet.

### **Evangelism in a Digital World**

Evangelism may be defined by some in its simplistic form as sharing the story of Jesus and His love. It is this compelling story that we are called to share in the gospel commission of Matthew 28:19-20 and that is highlighted in Revelation 14:6, 7. Bailey and Storch (2007) assert that churches must engage the online community by telling this

story through various mediums such as blogging, online churches (Cheong et al., 2012), and the use of digital media (Wilson & Moore, 2008).

In their interview of international evangelist and author Mark Finley, Satelmajer and Hucks (2008) affirm that evangelism in today's world requires interactivity and connectivity between the evangelist and the audience. Finley has conducted over 15 satellite (NET) evangelism series, over 200 evangelistic meetings worldwide, and has baptized thousands of individuals around the world. Finley (as cited in Satelmajer and Hucks, 2008) said that, in his 2008 Discoveries satellite series, he adopted emergent technologies in his evangelism such as website, social media (Facebook & Twitter), YouTube, podcasting, webcasting, livestreaming, live chat rooms, and live video chats on the screen during the service where people can ask questions directly from their computers.

This adaptation of technology by Finley represents a progressive shift as he recognized the significance of technology in evangelism in reaching the postmodern mind. Organizers of the technology-enabled NET evangelism series of the Seventh-day Adventist Church asserted that over 2,000,000 people had been baptized as a result of technology in evangelism, and they estimated that one in every nine Adventists is a member as a result of technology in evangelism (M. Finley, personal communication, August 31, 2014).

Hipps (2009) asserts that missionary-minded individuals must remember that methods always change, but the message remains the same. Cannell (2014) affirms, "The MESSAGE is timeless" (Introduction, para. 7), and encourages that we embrace all the new media technologies available. Malphurs and Malphurs, (2003) propose a theology of

change that they say, if adopted, can help pastors lead their churches through the process of adapting new and innovative forms of outreach in this technological age. The theology of change is predicated on a key understanding of the differences between the functions and the forms of a church (p. 67). Functions are timeless, unchanging, and non-negotiable regarding Scripture, while the forms are temporal, negotiable, and changeable. Any spiritual leader who is able to lead his congregation through this process will help them overcome the fear of using technology for evangelism.

Hadaway's (2011) survey reveals that congregations that are willing to adapt to changing times and community are more likely to experience substantial growth. The use of technology in worship and evangelism must go beyond radio and television to include emerging technologies such as smart phones and online worship communities. This must not come at the expense of remaining authentic representatives of Christ.

### **Mobile Ministry**

Ministry is going mobile (Kaye, 2014; Caston, 2012). The evidence is clear that the world has embraced mobile technology and the church must face this reality and devise ways of ministry and mission outreach using this technology. Mobile technology is impacting the way we shop, bank, study, play, utilize social media, and even worship.

The research and statistical portal, [www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com), reveals that at the close of 2013, there were over 144,500,000 smartphone users with a projected 196,700,000 users in the United States at the close of 2016. Actual numbers for 2016 were in excess of 200,000,000 and registered at 207,100,000 smartphone users with a projected 264,300,000 users in the United States at the close of 2021 (See Figure 7).

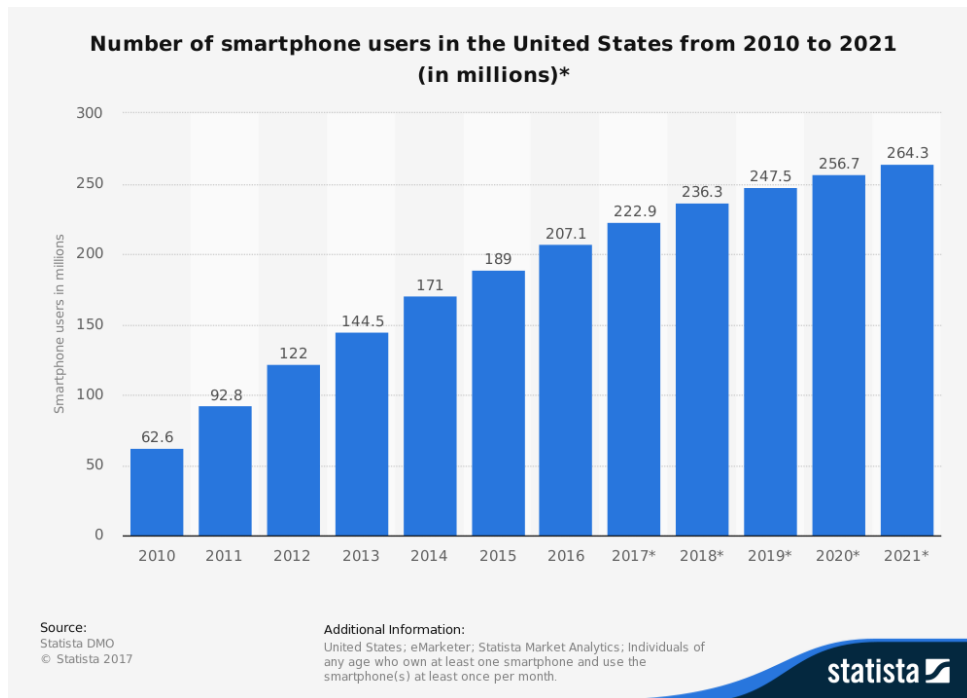


Figure 7. Number of smartphone users in the United States from 2010 to 2021 in millions. (Source: Statista, n.d.a). Used with permission.

## eGiving

Brooks (2012) believes every church should be part of this vast community as it gives churches the ability to communicate better now and in the future, and can increase their offering returns by connecting with people through mobile technology. A 2009 Minneapolis *StarTribune* article (as cited in Sam & Alexis, 2013) reveals that American’s giving to charitable organizations through technology-enabled processes grew from \$250,000,000 in 2000 to more than \$15,000,000,000 in 2008.

Smith (2012) asserts in his Pew Research Internet project that one in five (20%) US adults has given a charitable contribution online and that one in ten (9%) have donated using a text-messaging feature on their mobile phone. The research further suggests that of the \$43,000,000 contributed to the charitable organizations in the wake



of the Haiti earthquake, 74% of those who donated to the cause were first time mobile givers.

David Greene, Associate Director for Security and Web Programming for the Seventh-day Adventist church in North America, reveals that the church instituted online giving for its churches in the United States in 2006 and in Canada in 2007 (personal communication, September 4, 2014). At the end of 2014, they had collected a cumulative sum of \$450,000,000 in tithe and offerings and just over \$3,000,000 from the GNYC. Greene reports (personal communication, March 30, 2017) that as of February 2017, the Adventist Church in North America has collected just over one billion dollars (\$1,050,376,176.83) through its online giving program, and over seven million dollars (\$7,385,128.63) from the GNYC. Adventist churches stand to benefit significantly from the organization's online giving system because 100% of the tithes and offerings go to the church, with no deductions for administrative or transactional fees.

Caston (2012) asserts that churches stand to benefit significantly by adopting mobile commerce (mCommerce) for their mobile ministries or electronic commerce (eCommerce) to their websites (pp. 105-107). He suggests additional benefits beyond eGiving such as online event registrations and an online bookstore for their churches. Church and community members can then register for an event, such as a spiritual retreat, as well as purchase DVDs, eBooks, or other materials from their website. The benefits of eGiving, mCommerce, or eCommerce are that anyone can give, donate, register, or purchase anytime and anywhere.

### Mobile Apps

Sam and Alexis (2013) assert that four major blessings to be derived from mobile

technology in ministry—community expansion, discipleship, evangelism, and eGiving—can connect the church with members and non-members in numerous ways. Brooks (2012) expands this concept and believes every church should have a mobile app. Caston (2012) states, “Mobile applications can create a much more engaging experience for mobile users because the application is native on their phone and not dependent on the Internet or a mobile web browser” (p. 162). From a practical standpoint, a mobile app delivers information to your members through what is known as “push notifications.” Church events, directions, news, and Bible study materials can be readily accessed through a mobile app with or without Internet connection. Mobile apps, along with text messages, provide a greater connection between the church and its membership. This is significant because more than 97% of text messages are opened and 83% of those are opened within an hour, when compared to a 20% open-rate for emails (Sam & Alexis, 2013).

The reported numbers are in no way an attempt to dismiss the importance of an email ministry. Remember, Hadaway (2011) affirms that successfully growing churches use a minimum of five to six technologies in ministry. Churches can benefit significantly from a robust email ministry. Sam and Alexis (2013) assert that churches can use email to send out and collect prayers and prayer requests, advertise and manage events, promote evangelistic and prayer meetings and lifestyle seminars, as well as send out timely and important alerts. These alerts, such as a new birth in a church family, a picture of a recently married couple, or news of the death of a loved one, have the potential of giving a sense of community and belonging.

Mark Finley, international evangelist for the Seventh-day Adventist Church,

invested in mobile technology and in 2013, released a mobile app called “Studying Together.” In this powerful resource app, pastors, Bible workers and members can use the Bible lessons available to witness to their friends from various faith communities. It is all at their fingertips with far more resources available in a few seconds than they are able to carry around in book form. The benefits continue to be enumerated as mobile technology is adopted and developed.

### **New Media Technology and Faith Development**

Larsen (2001) asserts that 64% of religion surfers believe that the Internet provides easier access to religious study and educational materials than they can otherwise find offline. With emerging mobile technology, religious apps are being developed to enhance spiritual disciplines and devotion and help individuals understand and interpret their religious belief systems or theology better (Spyker, 2007). The Seventh-day Adventist Church has apps for personal devotion such as Sabbath School, Family Worship, and Ellen G. White writings. A personal Bible study app such as Pillars of Faith (released August 2014) by Gerson P. Santos offers “seekers and finders” the opportunity to study fundamental religious beliefs and, upon completion of the study, to request baptism and become a disciple of Jesus.

Lamb (2010) reveals that opponents to mobile apps say these apps do not guarantee deep spiritual engagement; however, they can broaden community relations internally and externally. Lamb (2010) closes his discourse by making a very important point that we have come to live in a world where it is difficult to get people to come to church and suggests that mobile apps may lead the way in bringing people back to church.

Kuruvilla (2013) argues that the rise of mobile Christian apps could be compared to what the Gutenberg printing press in the 14<sup>th</sup> century did for the world by mass printing the Bible (Brooks, 2013). Today [www.Bible.com](http://www.Bible.com) reveals that the YouVersion digital Bible is the most popular Bible app in the world, with more than 151,000,000 downloads (August 2014) globally, and 3,700,000 Facebook likes. As of March 2017, [www.Bible.com](http://www.Bible.com) reveals that the YouVersion digital Bible has had over 264,000,000 downloads. This app provides more than just a Bible reading experience, but also includes devotionals and an opportunity for users to connect with others. This provides the clearest example that there is a genuine desire for religious material online. The Barna Research Group said in its Barna Trends 2017 Report that millennials lead the way with 78% active use of the Bible on a mobile device in the past 12 months (See Figure 8). It is noteworthy that the print edition is still significantly high when compared to the Bible being accessed on mobile devices.

Pellot (2014) asserts that religious app developers, however, must contend with the reality that the company, Apple, may reject their native app due to its stringent religious and porn app policies. Opponents of this policy have tried without success to have Apple relax its stringent position on religious apps. Apple, unlike Android, must approve every app and points to its developers' guidelines that they have the right to reject an app, which Apple determines, may be found objectionable by users. This suggests that churches may have to adjust their prophetic voice to gain Apple's approval.

A church

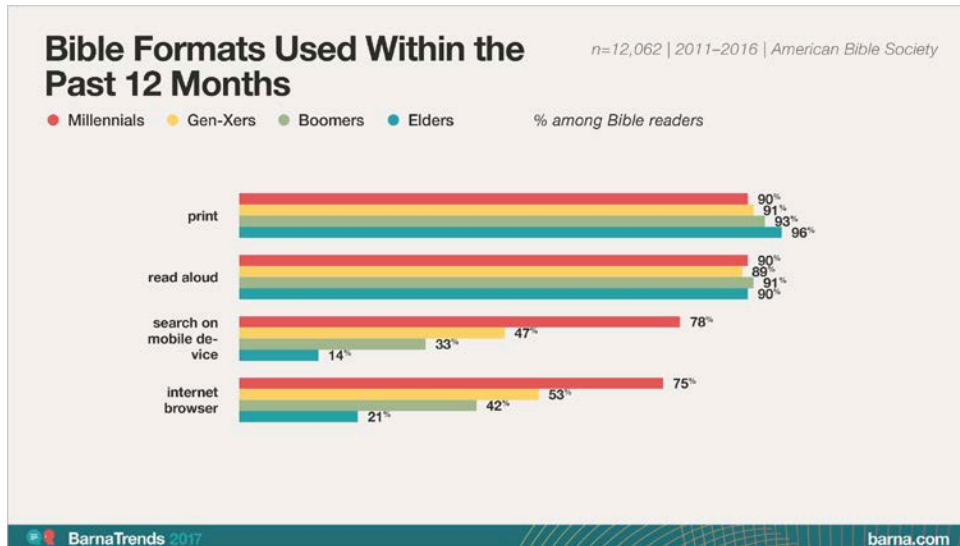


Figure 8. Bible formats used within the past 12 months (Source: Barna Trends 2017 Spiritual Growth PowerPoint Presentation) Used with permission.

can maintain its prophetic voice in such a case by developing web apps that do not require Apple’s approval.

### Webstreaming

Webstreaming gives the ability of broadcasting the message to a local and global audience via a live video feed. Webstreaming can be categorized as either live or archived streams. Livestreaming is rapidly becoming an integral part of church websites, yet some churches are struggling to take advantage of this technology. Webstreaming can be done on a church’s local website, via a paid or free medium such as YouTube. Cannell (2014) believes that YouTube is one of the most powerful and easy to use tools available. He asserts that this free “online platform helps get YOU and YOUR MESSAGE in front of the eyes of potentially millions of people worldwide” (Introduction, para. 12). He believes legitimate results can be accomplished when this platform is used effectively.

Santos (personal communication, March 19, 2017) gave evidence to support this

position. In a one-week evangelistic outreach February, 2017, at the Washington Brazilian Seventh-day Adventist Church, there were over one million cumulative viewers via its online streaming portal in its first week, and reached more than 12 million during the subsequent two or three weeks. The exponential potential of the gospel seed, which was planted in the hearts of the viewers, cannot be quantified.

Online church communities such as Praizevision provide a powerful opportunity for faith development through its portal. Gary Saunders, Founder and Chief Executive Officer (personal communication, August 28, 2014), said Praizevision (PV) has grown from its 2005 start and today provides an online worship community for over 30 Adventist churches with over 200,000 users and 1,800,000 page views at the close of 2012. This is one of the many online church communities that are being used for worship and devotion by millennials as a result of the technological revolution.

Brooks (2013) affirms that technology today has redefined communities, impacted the way we worship, and has the power to aid us in being spiritually stronger. Technology is not to be feared, but to be embraced; not to run from, but to run to. Malphurs and Malphurs (2003) assert that for churches to be effective, they must choose an effective team of individuals; develop a strategy; know their purpose, community (online or offline) and content; and finally, launch their eMinistry.

### **Conclusion**

The literature reviewed gives good support to the need for adaptation of new media technology in ministry delivery by churches and spiritual leaders. New media technology is the tool that compliments ministry. It does not replace it. New media technology has its distractions; however, its positive possibilities outweigh any negatives

when used strategically. Social media technology provides that place where authentic relationships can be built and the gospel can be shared.

The implications for this study are significant for churches and spiritual leaders who seek to develop websites, adapt social media platforms, and build their church financially through eGiving. The digital revolution is here to stay, and the church and its spiritual leaders are challenged to adapt to the changing times. This technological revolution has significant implications for the way we execute discipleship and evangelism.

The Internet has made the response to the gospel commission to “go into all the world” possible in vivid ways. New media technology has redefined community, impacted the way we worship, and has the power to aid us in faith development and mission outreach. The key to the successful adaptation of technology in ministry is developing a strategy for each technology adopted that is unique to the ministry context. General principles can be adopted, but each ministry context must first know their purpose, build an effective team, tailor the technology accordingly to their ministry context, and then accomplish mission with the support of technology.

## CHAPTER 4

### DESCRIPTION OF THE TRAINING INITIATIVE

#### **Introduction**

The mission territory of the Greater New York Conference (“GNYC”) covers the densely populated and technologically advanced city of New York and surrounding counties. Globally, New York City is of strategic importance and is also regarded as spiritually significant. White (2003) asserts, “Those who bear the burden of the work in Greater New York should have help of the best workers that can be secured. Here let a center for God’s work be made, and let all that is done be a symbol of the work the Lord desires to see done in the world” (p. 384). Workers in New York City should be the best at what they do, and I believe this includes adapting new media technology for effective ministry delivery. In chapter 2, these ministers are referred to as Issachar ministers because they are wise in understanding the times.

The spiritual effectiveness of the ministerial work force in New York, and in particular the GNYC, is enhanced by a savvy knowledge and integration of technology in ministry delivery in a city whose citizens’ lives are driven daily by technology. The purpose of this training initiative is to:

1. increase awareness of the possible benefits of using technology in ministry delivery,



2. educate pastors and departmental directors about the technology options available for adoption in ministry delivery,
3. train pastors and departmental directors on how to adopt and implement technology in their respective local context, and
4. train pastors through the process of adapting technology in their local ministry context through personal sessions.

The GNYC work force is a largely immigrant one, and many are adapting to the American culture as they are doing ministry. Many of these pastors are in need of support regarding how to integrate the technologies available in the American cultural context in order to enhance ministry effectiveness. This they need to do while remaining faithful to their biblical call of relevance and missional outreach. There are 93 full-time pastors in this conference, working within five ethnic groups of English, Spanish, French, Korean, and multi-ethnic and serving a membership of just over 29,000.

### **Background**

In 1902, the GNYC had a Bible training school and a reputation as a conference that trained its constituency. Luppens (1990) quoted Ellen White as saying: “It is designed that the Greater New York Conference shall be more of a training school to prepare workers to go out and do practical missionary work in all parts of the world—that it shall be more of an educational mission field than conferences usually are” (p. 51). This statement was made in 1902 and is still relevant today. This awareness and training program for our pastors on the adaptation of technology in ministry delivery is a 21<sup>st</sup> century approach to training our pastors on ways to connect and engage their members to be relevant witnesses in this technologically cosmopolitan society.

It is interesting to note that historically, the GNYC has had involvement with media. It had a television program called “Power to Cope” with program Director Juanita Kretschmar. This program was a variety program and helped people deal with stress and other life issues. The program was aired on several cable stations. The conference eventually got its own television station, but today lacks local programming and operational financial input for successful viability. The pioneering spirit that existed in the GNYC in the past for the use of technology in ministry should be revived and expanded again in new ways. Ministers must be trained to adapt to new mediums available for adopting technology to ministry delivery.

This chapter will outline the process of training that will be provided to our pastors. Based on the timing of the advent of digital technology and social media, the GNYC pastors have not been formally exposed to, nor formally trained in, the local conference context regarding the possibilities of the adaption of technology and its effectiveness. This is new and uncharted territory, but nevertheless, provides a unique opportunity for the conference to research the possible effectiveness of this process on ministry delivery in the GNYC context.

The conference communication director is, therefore, charged with the responsibility of educating the pastors, directors, and administrators about the wealth of possibilities, while providing guidance and, where necessary, training on the adoption and implementation of technology in ministry context.

### **Process of Intervention Training**

The process of intervention training was three-pronged. First, awareness of the possible use of technology in ministry delivery was by use of digital presentations to the

general pastoral staff at general workers meeting. Second, a Ministers Technology Conference was established which was open for general pastors to attend. Third, a core set of pastors were invited to become participants in small group training sessions as they adopt and implement strategies from these general sessions and technology conferences. The purpose of the general session was to educate and bring awareness to the pastors in general. The general sessions also acted as a catalyst to inspire and motivate individuals to become part of the training experience and eventually, apply methodologies learned in their individual ministry context.

This project was limited to and was evaluated with core participants and their adaptations only. A non-scientific question was posted on social media, and was used to gauge from people in general what they expected as required key competencies in technology for pastors. This acted as a catalyst for one of the key presentations to pastors on competencies in technology.

### **Core Participants and Project Promotion**

To commence the project, approval was received from the Conference President, Dr. G. Earl Knight, to conduct this research with the pastors and directors in the conference. This approval was necessary to make presentations to the pastors in general ministers' meetings as well as to host the ministers' technology conference.

Core participants were recruited by verbal invitation and became the nucleus of the study and implementation. I extended an invitation at a regular called meeting of all the GNYC pastors to those who might be interested in joining this small group to sign up with me after the meeting. Each ethnic group of pastors in the conference was encouraged to select someone to become part of the group. This invitation to the small

group also included one or two directors/administrators to give a breath of perspective from these groups. Once a minimum of five core participants were registered to be part of this group, the quota was considered reached and then the project proceeded. If this quota was oversubscribed, I would limit participation to a manageable number of 10 persons for this purpose.

### **Participation Criteria**

The core participants were expected to attend the monthly technology training meetings to be held at the GNYC office as agreed upon by group members. The participants also submitted journal reflections to me, providing evidence of the adaptation of a particular form of technology concept and the effects of the training process in their particular ministry context. Participants were required to complete a pre- and post-survey assessment of their knowledge of and use of technology in ministry delivery (see Appendix D).

I consulted with the pastors who had responded in the affirmative and decided on subsequent meeting times. The project began in the spring of 2015 with a minister's technology conference followed by peer training contact sessions thereafter. A flyer was developed to promote the technology conference, and participants were asked to register online for the workshop. An online web portal such as Constant Contact was used to facilitate the online registration process.

### **Pre- and Post-Survey Questionnaire**

A survey questionnaire was used to assess a pastor's knowledge base and use of technology in his ministry delivery. The pre- and post-survey (see Appendix D) was not

tested for validity and reliability; therefore, its intention was to inform the researcher, rather than a quantitative analysis. The survey remained the same for each participant as he exited the training module. This gave us an indication of the growth and adoption of technology by each pastor.

## **Training**

### **Pastoral Awareness Training**

A series of a minimum of five presentations was developed and presented to the general GNYC workers meetings. The goal of these presentations was to inspire the general pastoral staff to adopt technology for their ministry. These presentations represented a total of one year of awareness training for the GNYC pastors in a general workers' meeting setting. Here are the five digital presentations and a brief highlight of each presentation.

### **Core Set of Competencies in Technology**

Every pastor in the GNYC should have a basic knowledge of technology for ministry. The knowledge to be taught will not be limited to the knowledge and use of technology only, but even more important, to learn the language associated with the technology options of today. Technology will always change, but if the pastor knows and understands the basic language and the principles associated with it, then his or her ministry will be enhanced by its adaptation. It is important to note that one is often judged by how comfortable one is with the use of technology and how willing one is to adopt it in ministry.

## **Technology in Evangelism**

Evangelism as a part of discipleship is the number one priority of the church. The commission of Matthew 28:19-20 to “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” is not void of a context for effectiveness. Effective methods of evangelism and discipleship have been developed or enhanced with every generation. We are now submerged in a technological age and it will be the focus of this presentation to remind pastors of this significance. I will draw from the writings of Ellen G. White and her counsel on the need for us to use every means possible to cause the truth to stand out.

## **Technology and Spirituality**

This will focus on the qualitative aspect of technology in ministry delivery. This presentation will help pastors see the need to encourage their members to embrace technology for their spiritual development. The call of the presentation will be to encourage members to grow spiritually through Bible study lessons, video podcasts, and apps on a daily basis as a source of spiritual inspiration. This can be as simple as pastors encouraging members to adopt the use of lesson studies on their digital devices and assess how it engages them more or less for spiritual development. It is essential to note that this aspect of the study is more a qualitative approach than quantitative, as it will be extremely difficult to completely assess accurately its total impact on spirituality in members. Some will never report. The presentation will also focus a bit on the concept of #digidisciple. This will also provide tips on how pastors can effectively use social media to encourage the faith of their followers.

### **Mobile Ministry: Connecting the Message**

More and more companies are making their services available through a mobile platform. Websites for banking, schools, and other entities have all embraced a more mobile friendly environment. This presentation will focus on the fact that mobile technology has changed the way we not only communicate, but also carry out the functions of our daily lives from banking to school to social media. It will highlight the need to connect the message in this digital mobile generation with the end user. I will highlight how streaming can be an effective way of connecting with others through mobile technology.

### **Social Media and the Gospel: The Missing Connection**

This presentation will highlight the fact that social media is not a passing fad and is here to stay. It will also highlight the fact that the church is missing out on a medium of effectively connecting with its community. This presentation will also highlight the challenges to the adaptation of social media as an effective outreach tool while exploring possible options of overcoming these challenges.

These presentations in no way sought to be the final voice in their respective focus areas. I am mindful of the fact that technology continues to change rapidly and, as such, I reiterate that these presentations are to be viewed as a catalyst for change in the way ministry is done in the GNYC. I am reminded of the counsel of Ellen White that the best workers are needed in New York. The Issachar ministers of New York who wisely and effectively use every resource available (including technology) in causing the truth to stand out can be considered the best workers in New York as alluded to by White. These

presentations also provide the platform on which to build in the training sessions with pastors.

### Technology Conference

A minister's technology conference was held in March 2015 to begin the process of training for those pastors who were passionate or desirous of learning more about the adaptation of technology in ministry delivery. Guest presenters were asked to join me in this one-day event. A flyer was designed to promote the event and participants were asked to complete an online registration process. The experts in this area of technology development in ministry context who were invited are Dr. Dave Gemmell, Dr. Jesse Johnson, Dr. Bryant Taylor, and Jason Caston. A brief description of the guest speakers and their competences are given below.

Dave Gemmell is an Associate Director of the North American Division (NAD) Ministerial Department. His role in the Ministerial Department is to discover, develop, and distribute resources for the pastors of the NAD. He received his Doctor of Ministry with an emphasis in multi-cultural leadership from Fuller Theological Seminar in 1992, Master of Divinity at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in 1981, and his Bachelors in Theology from Pacific Union College in 1978. He has also taken coursework in television production. He began pastoring in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1978, continued pastoring in Maui, and served for 10 years as Senior Pastor of Las Vegas Mountain View Church. He transferred his service to the NAD in 2002 where he has served in Adventist Communication Network, Church Resource Center, and in June of 2011, the Ministerial Department.

Jesse Johnson holds several masters and doctoral degrees in business, education,



and technology. He is a businessman and entrepreneur with extensive experience in ministry leadership and currently serves as manager for the It Is Written television ministry. He has worked with many local conferences, helping them innovate their technology departments, as well as the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and has been president of Adventist Layman and Services Industries (ASI) Mid-America. Dr. Johnson is also an active member of his local church congregation and has been involved in a wide range of ministry initiatives.

Bryant Taylor is a native of St. Louis, Missouri and is a product of Christian education from the 4th grade through receiving his doctorate. He is a graduate of Oakwood University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology and Psychology. He received his Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University Theological Seminary in 1994. In 2003, the United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, conferred the Doctor of Ministry degree upon him. He has served in the Seventh-day Adventist gospel ministry for 27 years in the Central States, Ohio, Allegheny West, and Southeastern Conferences. In addition to his conference responsibilities, he remains passionate about technology; he is the co-host of Tech Talk, an Internet show on technology. He loves reading, cycling and photography. Dr. Bryant is currently the Communications/IT Director of the Southeastern Conference.

Jason Caston is the author of the iChurch Method series ([ichurchmethod.com](http://ichurchmethod.com)), and a digital platform specialist for churches. Having worked with major organizations and built websites and social media properties that reach over eight million people daily, Caston has proven that his cutting edge technological knowledge and business acumen have made him a sought-after Digital Platforms, Internet Church, and Mobile and Social

Media Specialist. Caston has developed an innovative approach to helping organizations advance their online presence by using a five-part approach of websites, multimedia, eCommerce, social media, and mobile venues. In addition, Caston is the spokesperson of AT&T's national #InspiredMobility campaign that highlights how we use mobile technology to enhance our spiritual and personal lives.

The collective expertise and years of experience of the presenters mentioned above enhanced the training opportunities for our local church pastors.

### **Peer Training Sessions**

The peer training sessions focused on pastors and departmental directors. A minimum of five group sessions of training took place; however, one-on-one time was made available for any of the participants to have personal time on adaptation or implementation in their local context. Those five sessions built on core presentations. The sessions went for a minimum of one hour and a maximum of two hours in length. The first 30-40 minutes focused on an allotted time for a general presentation, then 15-20 minutes to review a product sample, and the remaining time for questions and answers. In an effort to provide flexibility on subject material presented in these sessions based on the discovered contextual needs, I reserved the right to determine the presentations needed and will give an update in Chapter 5.

The training focus for each pastor was based on the individual vision of the pastor and need of the churches or department the participant represented. It is important to note that the adoption of new media technology solutions possibly varied according to each situation. While there are general principles that can be gained from the general peer training session, participants may have felt best supported if the trainer was flexible in

order to meet their desired outcomes. This was very important to the success of the training since the participants would have been sufficiently exposed to the possibilities of adopting technology in their local context and would, therefore, only require someone to train them along the way.

The departmental directors who chose to be participants in this research project collaborated closely with me on their departmental projects. The goal was to enable pastors and directors to adopt technology in their ministry and evangelism programs.

### **Journaling**

Each participant in the training sessions was expected to write a journal report of one or two pages. The journal would indicate that the participant attended the training sessions, and indicate what particular technology had been adopted in their local context. If there was any cost associated with the implementation, the participant was asked to reveal the cost. An estimated amount was accepted if the exact dollar amount was unknown. The participant was also expected to report on the outcomes of the particular technology employed in ministry delivery. The outcome could be positive, negative, or neutral.

### **Measuring Instruments**

This project research was best assessed qualitatively. The one- to two-page journal entry from each participant post-project provided a qualitative insight on the success of the peer-training program.

### **Training Plan Debriefing and Luncheon**

At the close of the training program with the pastors on adaptation, I invited all pastors for a fellowship meal and debriefing. The group reviewed what they felt went well for them and what they thought did not go well. I also used that meeting as a catalyst for developing an ongoing plan of technology summits for pastors in the GNYC.

## CHAPTER 5

### NARRATIVE OF INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION

#### **Introduction**

This chapter outlines the process used in the training provided to the pastors, directors, and administrators of the GNYC. This study represented an unprecedented effort to inform, inspire, and transform the ministries of the pastors in this conference concerning technology and ministry.

God has called on all to fulfill a mission. Jesus strategically chose twelve disciples to lead the process and commissioned them to “go into the world” and share the message of His love and saving grace. The world is brought before us by technology. No longer is the Issachar minister’s ministry limited to his/her local church sanctuary or immediate physical community, but because of new media technology, the mission field is now exponentially larger. Krokos and Pratt (2012) say it best: “A mission field is nothing more than a gathering of people who need the saving love of Jesus” (Chapter 1, para. 25). There is a great mission field that must be ministered to on the Internet and in social media.

The call to fulfill mission digitally includes digital discipleship and digital evangelism. Drescher and Anderson (2012) see digital ministry as a “set of practices that extend spiritual care, prayer, evangelism, and other manifestations of grace into online spaces like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, where more and more people gather to

nurture, explore, and share their faith today” (Introduction, para. 4).

New media technologies are not inherently bad, but are meant to improve our lives. Detweiler (2013) asserts, “the church of the twenty-first century must contend with the significant cultural changes wrought by the iGods” (Conclusion, para. 11) and questioned whether more access and information to these iGods have made our lives better. An iGod can be either a technology or a person who is bewitched by the power promised by the gadget (Detweiler, 2013). This highlights the fact that new media technology ought to be understood and employed as a tool to assist in accomplishing the mission.

The challenge is, therefore, for us to develop a healthy perspective on new media technology, possible ministry adaptation, and an effective strategy that will enhance and not mitigate ministry opportunities. The key to effective adaptation of technology in ministry requires education and training.

### **Rationale for Training**

New media technology is constantly changing. Issachar ministers need to be educated on the available technical equipment and social media language, and trained on effective implementation strategies. They must lead the way by personally adopting new media technology. Ministry must have an authentic presence and voice in the digital sphere. Drescher and Anderson (2012) expand on this by stating:

Our presence as digital ministers should be compassionate, engaged, inspiring, accessible, and informative, but above all it must be real. It must be an authentic representation of ourselves as real human beings and as ministers. The cultivation of a distinct voice helps to distinguish us among the cacophony of voices in social media communities. (Chapter 2, para. 1)

The purpose of this training initiative was

1. to increase awareness of the possible benefits of using technology in ministry delivery,
2. to educate pastors and departmental directors about the technology options available for adoption in ministry delivery,
3. to train pastors and departmental directors on how to adopt and implement technology in their respective local context, and
4. to train pastors in the process of adapting technology in their local ministry context through personal sessions.

### **Research Intervention**

The process of intervention training proposed was three-pronged and the objectives were realized. The first was to raise the awareness of technology in ministry delivery by the use of digital presentations to the general pastoral staff at general ministers' meetings. Second, a ministers' technology conference was established. Third, a small group of pastors responded to a small group training invitation, attended the training sessions, and was equipped for the adaptation of new media technology in their respective ministries. The research intervention methodology may be best described strategically in the following four areas: inspire, educate, train, and equip.

### **Recruiting and Outcomes**

I received the approval of GNYC President Dr. G. Earl Knight to proceed with the research training of the pastors and directors in the conference. This allowed me to make the presentations to the pastors in a general ministers' meeting, as well as host the

ministers' technology conference. I was able to make a public invitation for anyone interested in the training sessions to meet with me in small group training sessions. A total of eight—six pastors and two departmental directors—signed up to be a part of these training sessions. The minimum of five required for the small group was reached and exceeded. One administrator was unable to attend the training sessions; however, he requested personal guidance from me on key conference initiatives.

### Research Participation

All eight small group participants attended the training sessions. The training sessions were not always held on a monthly basis as proposed, but were scheduled according to the availability of the participants and conference calendar activities. I was flexible in adjusting training session times and venues to accommodate any conflicts. Training session meetings were held via the videoconference platform known as ZOOM. There were no video or audio recordings of any of the video conferencing meetings.

All participants completed the pre- and post-survey questionnaire as proposed in Chapter 4; that gave an overview of their comfort level with technology and its adoption before and after the training sessions. The participants who completed the training each provided a one- or two-page report regarding how the training impacted their ministry and what adaptations they have made to it. The results from the reports are highlighted in Chapter 6 and full-page reports are in Appendix C.

## **Training**

### Technology Conferences

The process of training began with a historic ministers' technology conference in



March 2015. This conference was promoted by a flyer (Appendix A) to the pastors of the GNYC. Dave Gemmell, associate director of the North American Division Ministerial Association and Jesse Johnson, managing director of It Is Written Ministry were guest presenters. Dave Gemmell gave a digital presentation entitled “Reaching the Technotribe” (See Figure 9).



*Figure 9.* Dave Gemmell’s reaching the Technotribe PowerPoint cover slide. (Source: Dave Gemmell PowerPoint presentation). Used with permission.

Gemmell highlighted the cultural shift from the boomers who were born without new media technology, to the Gen Xers who helped develop new media technology, and now the millennials who were born in a technological world. It is interesting to note that the millennials know nothing else but a world that is driven by technology. How the

church ministers to millennials will influence its discipleship and evangelism methods. The church must confront this reality and adapt its methodologies to increase effectiveness.

The other presenters did not use a digital presentation. Dr. Jesse Johnson spoke, instead, with the pastors about various new media technologies available for adoption for their personal development. He spoke about mobile technology and the need not to fear the use of it, but to embrace it.

The first ministers' technology conference had around thirty pastors in attendance. This represented approximately 25% of the pastoral work force in attendance voluntarily. The participants verbally expressed the desire to see this as an annual event. This desire was paralleled to my goal and became an annual event in 2016 and 2017.

In January 2017, I joined together the conference communication workshop training for local church communication directors and the ministers' technology conference (Appendix A). The goal was to get pastors and their local communication directors within the same conference to support better the efforts for the harmonious visioning and collaboration between the two in the local church context. The GNYC ministerial secretary, Dr. Reginald Barthelemy, was very impressed with the previous year's ministers' technology conference. In 2017, his department, along with the communications department, helped finance and co-sponsored free technology gifts which were given to the pastors for their attendance. This was done to encourage pastors to embrace technology in ministry.

#### Pastoral Awareness Training

A series of five digital presentations was made to the pastors of the GNYC. Two

of the proposed presentations, Technology in Evangelism and Technology and Spirituality, were merged into one presentation and an additional presentation was added entitled “Broadcast Him.” I created this presentation and responded to the needs as expressed by some pastors in attendance and in the small group training session. Four of the five seminars were done within the first year of training and the fifth was done in the second year. This was due to several schedule adjustments made by the administration to the agenda of the ministers’ meetings. Following is an overview of the seminars as presented.

### **Core Set of Competences in Technology**

The pastors were taught basic competences about technology’s influence on the spiritual leader (see Appendix B for full presentation). They were encouraged to learn some of the basic language used in new media technology such as hashtag, platform, viral, search engine optimization (SEO), trending, and traffic. Mass email systems, phone tree systems, and text messaging services were all introduced to the pastors as options for communicating with their members directly and in engaging ways. They were also taught how they could improve their preaching with the use of visual aids, video illustrations and digital images and how to discern what is graphically appealing. They were given basic exposure on how to connect to their internal and external audience using media technology such as websites, web blogging, and social media.

Media technology is constantly changing; however, when Issachar pastors know and understand the basic language and principles associated, then their ministry will be enhanced by its adaptation.

## **Social Media and the Gospel**

This presentation (Appendix B) affirmed that social media is not a passing fad, but here to stay. It highlighted the power and success of social media in the world and its implications and possibilities for the way we execute church, discipleship, and evangelism. One of the keys to successful media strategy is engagement. Social media's dos and don'ts were taught, and the benefits of it were discussed. Numerous social media platforms were mentioned; however, Facebook and Twitter were the two chosen to be highlighted in the allotted time.

White's (1855) counsel was shared with the pastors where she admonished ministers that "they must make use of every means that can possibly be devised for causing the truth to stand out clearly and distinctly" (p. 109). The pastors were encouraged to appreciate this counsel as a source of encouragement to their being adaptive to new media technology opportunities in ministry. They were challenged to establish a social media presence if their church did not already have one. Effective social media strategies were taught as a part of the small group training sessions.

## **Mobile Ministry: Connecting the Message**

From its 1982 debut, the mobile phone that then weighed about 22 pounds has now evolved to a hand palm-sized smart device (Appendix B). In addition to cell phones, mobile technology has expanded to include devices such as iPads, Androids, and Windows tablets. The revolution and evolution that has happened in mobile ministry is unprecedented. Its impact is seen in our educational, financial, and religious organizational systems. I explored the capabilities of the cell phone and the ministry possibilities that could develop as a result of these technological advancements.

The concept of mobile applications was introduced. A mobile app in its simplest form is a software program downloadable to a mobile device. Several faith-based apps were presented as possibilities for personal growth, discipleship, and evangelism tools. The powerful use of text messages and mobile polls showed ways of engaging a live audience while doing a sermon or presentation. This can be extremely engaging when ministering to young adults. eGiving through mobile technology and its significant potential was taught as a medium of encouraging faithfulness in tithes and offerings and as a possible way of greater participation in fundraising activities.

### **Technology in Evangelism**

Evangelism as a part of discipleship is the number one priority of the church (Appendix B). The commission of Matthew 28:19-20 to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” is not void of a context for effectiveness. To fulfill this commission, we must employ tools that can be used effectively to accomplish this mission. I also educated the pastors on the terms technology, #digidisciple, and e-vangelism as discussed earlier in Chapter 3.

One new media technology tool that stood out in this presentation is the use of an IntelliPaper USB drive. This powerful technology is basically a USB drive delivered in a business card paper format. This provides a unique method of connecting with young adults in discipleship methods and evangelistic outreach. Much more will be said about IntelliPaper in the next section. On its website, IntelliPaper (Who is IntelliPaper, n.d.) says it is the leading manufacturer of Intelligent Paper.

## **Broadcast Him**

This was a presentation about webstreaming the worship service (Appendix B). The pastors were exposed to the two elements of effective broadcast: experience and engagement. They were admonished to remember always that their online audience is a real audience with a real person on the other side of the computer watching with real emotions and real needs. The pastor must remember that the worshipers on the other end want to be part of the experience of the worship service even though they are not physically there. It is important, therefore, that the worship experience be intentionally designed to allow the online worshiper to have a positive spiritual experience. Pastors were reminded that they were sharing their worship experience with the world, not their technology, so while equipment is important, the worship experience is paramount.

I proposed that there are “three p’s” that make any worship experience meaningful: praise, prayer, and preaching. Any of these three, if not done well, can be a deterrent for the online worshipper. Therefore, it is important that pastors be intentional about who does each of these parts at any given worship service.

The presentation also highlighted that the second element of effective broadcast is engagement. Online worshippers do not only want to watch, but also to be engaged. Pastors should be intentional that their sermon delivery and worship experience engages their online audience. Suggestions were given of ways to engage the online audience, which included having prayer requests submitted, read, and responded to live during the worship service, as well as having online worshippers respond to sermon questions or surveys. Online worshippers can also be engaged to be faithful stewards by returning their tithes and offerings directly on the church’s website in response to an offering

appeal. Recognizing that these online worshippers are real relationships, pastors can extend a direct call to them to accept Christ in their lives. While they cannot be baptized online, they can be invited to come and be baptized in the local church or a church of their choosing in response to the call. The seed planted by webstreaming may or may not directly germinate in the local church, but the gospel has been proclaimed and it is the Holy Spirit who does the convicting at a time and place of His choosing.

Various webstreaming services were recommended to the pastors, including the ability to livestream to their Facebook page, in addition to their church website. I strongly discouraged the use of free webstreaming services that had advertisements running during a live stream. These ads that break the livestream can have a negative impact on the experience of online worshippers and can be very disruptive to the pastor's message coming across at crucial moments.

These presentations became the foundation on which the small group training participants built and adopted for their ministry context.

### Small Group Training

The participants in the small group training sessions verbally indicated their interest to me about becoming part of the group training. The training session meeting times were agreed upon and held accordingly, in person and via the online platform known as ZOOM. While the training sessions were originally planned to take 12 months, they lasted more than a year due to conflicts with conference scheduling and participant church or department program scheduling. I found times, which were mutually accessible, to all. The small group participants agreed to attend all training sessions as much as possible, and agreed to fill out the pre- and post-questionnaire and submit a one-

or two-page report of their growth and adaptation for me. The participants gave written consent (see Appendix E) to have their names and churches published in this project document. They were

Participant 1: Dr. Ricardo Bain  
Participant 2: Pastor Eddly Benoit  
Participant 3: Dr. Manuel Rosario  
Participant 4: Dr. Andres Peralta  
Participant 5: Pastor Neil Turner  
Participant 6: Dr. Donnieval Walker  
Participant 7: Pastor Conrad White  
Participant 8: Pastor Hubert Wilkie

I gave general topics to be covered in the training sessions, which sprang from the five presentations stated earlier. The participants were given the opportunity to give their feedback and express the areas in which they desired to receive training. I made myself available to each participant for one-on-one consultations, as well as personally visiting the pastors in their ministry context to assess and support their efforts to adapt new media technology in ministry.

The topics for discussion and training were sometimes taken from the general presentations and covered such areas as social media, Facebook, Twitter, webstreaming, mobile apps and texting programs, blogging, digital discipleship, and evangelism tools. Other topics included the needs of technical equipment such as church sound and projection equipment for enhanced worship experience and mission outreach. Several guests made presentations to the participants. Guest presenters included Pastor Paul Graham and Andrew DePaula. Following is more information about the guest presenters and what they had to present, which is worthy of being highlighted.

Paul Graham is the senior pastor of the Restoration Praise Center in Bowie,



Maryland. He is also the founder of Full Circle Ministries, which was developed to empower youth and young adults to reach both churched and unchurched individuals. Every other month, he leads an online morning devotion called “Bible Boot Camp” from 5:00am to 5:30am on [www.pastorpaulgraham.com](http://www.pastorpaulgraham.com), on social media Facebook live and twitter periscope (see Figure 10).



*Figure 10.* Screenshot of 5 a.m. Facebook live video of the Bible Boot Camp Series with Pastor Paul Graham. (Source: Paul Graham Facebook live video feed). Used with permission.

This online media ministry started as a result of a snowstorm in 2011 and an inspiration from his mother who wakes up every morning at 5 am to pray and have her devotions. Each morning in the online series, Graham has reported that he has an average of 500 in attendance when combined from all mediums. Pastor Graham has been doing this consistently for four years, and reports he can personally attest to 30 persons who were baptized as a direct result of this online ministry. His personal testimony was a

source of inspiration to the small group participants who requested a future field trip date to interact with Pastor Graham in his local ministry context.

Caston (2012) asserts that consistency is the most effective strategy in engaging in social media. Pastor Graham's faithfulness to the mission and consistency in the task is an effective example of pastoral social media discipleship and evangelism practices. His strategy is clear and he is consistent, and that gives him credibility. Through his daily morning devotions, authenticity emerges as he builds relationships with his online viewers. The training group participants expressed great appreciation for the inspiration gained from his presentation and expressed a desire to find ways to engage in effective social media discipleship and evangelism methods.

Andrew DePaula is the founder of IntelliPaper®. The company states on their website that they are the first company in the world to embed digital flash memory inside ordinary plain paper. In addition, they work with printers and marketing specialists to create innovative cross-over marketing and advertising products that combine paper media with digital content and analytics (See Figure 11).

DePaula joined our small group in May 2016 and presented this technology. This IntelliPaper technology has been used in the secular world and he has partnered with the Adventist Church to produce the paper USB version of the book "The Great Hope" in a business card size. The card allows users to interact within their context and the owner of the content can be notified when the resource has been utilized. The user can then request more information, future Bible studies, or baptism if the card is programmed to elicit such a response. It is fully customizable in how the user interacts with the card. DePaula



Figure 11. intelliPaper USB design contrasted with the traditional USB technology. (Source: intelliPaper PowerPoint presentation.) Used with permission.

presented this technology as a power medium of connecting with millennials, especially in the area of discipleship and evangelism.

Group training participants, Drs. Andres Peralta and Manuel Rosario, expressed their desire in adapting this technology and launching it in the GNYC as a first usage in the conference. Both are authors of the *Loving Father* Bible study series and worked with me in developing the intelliPaper version of the Bible series.

The group training sessions were opportunities for the participants to address the technical questions of how to adopt and implement the new media technologies that they felt were relevant and urgent to their context. A summarized report of each participant's progress is presented in Chapter 6, with full reports in Appendix C.

#### GNYC Administration Adaptation

Greater New York Conference President Dr. G. Earl Knight did not attend the

training sessions, but did express his desire to see the adoption of technology in ministry in the GNYC as a part of the strategic plan for the conference. His commitment to this is documented in the 2015 strategic plan of the conference (see Figure 12).

I am also the assistant to the president for strategic planning and was tasked with implementing technology in the strategic planning process and working with the communications department to help directors in the office make use of it completely. The conference president has since allocated funding for a new software management system for the strategic planning process of the conference, which is the backbone of accountability and reporting on the progress of the strategic plans. His commitment to



The image is a screenshot of a document titled "AT-A-GLANCE" with the subtitle "Strategic Imperatives & Organizational Goals". In the top right corner, there is a circular logo for the "GREATER NEW YORK CONFERENCE of Seventh-day Adventists" established in "1902". The main heading is "1 - REACH GREATER NEW YORK STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES" followed by "ORGANIZATION GOALS". The first goal is: "1. We will reach every major ethnic group within the Greater New York Conference territory with the distinctive, Christ-centered Seventh-day Adventist message of Hope." Below this, there are three numbered sub-points: "1. Identify major under-represented groups to be evangelized.", "2. Adapt technology in fulfilling mission.", and "3. Plant 50 new churches by 2020." A large black redaction bar covers the bottom portion of the document.

Figure 12. GNYC Strategic Plan Imperative #1.2 showing the conference’s commitment to adapt technology in fulfilling its mission. (Source: <http://www.gnyc.org/plan>.) Used with permission.

adopting this software technology, which includes a mobile component, makes the conference strategic plan update a living, rather than a shelved document with up-to-the-minute reporting on the status of all departments and the conference as a whole.

### **Training Plan Debriefing and Luncheon**

At the close of the training program with the pastors on the adaptation, I was able to debrief via one of our videoconference mediums, ZOOM. The participants indicated that they would like to go on a field trip and luncheon to meet with Pastor Paul Graham in Maryland. The group reviewed what they felt went well for them and what they thought did not go well. Findings and recommendations were made on how to improve this training experience. These recommendations will be explored in Chapter 6.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, the research intervention dealing with the challenge of GNYC pastors in adopting technology in ministry was presented. The narrative of intervention addressed the three-pronged training approach. Chapter 6 will share the results of the training, assessment, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER 6

### EVALUATION AND LEARNING

#### **Introduction**

This chapter will highlight the results from the project implementation and its implication for future learning and practice in the GNYC. The project intervention was designed to increase awareness of the possible use of new media technology for ministry delivery by the pastors in the GNYC. The project also provided training to a small group of participants who saw the important relationship between technology and ministry. The training sessions realized their desired outcome to educate and equip the small group of pastors and assisted them in acquiring the language and basic proficiency in administering the task of implementation in the local context.

#### **Evaluation**

The pre-survey questionnaire was used as a tool to help me assess the necessary steps and direction I needed to follow in the training process. The results helped me focus on possible growth areas for each participant. The survey was not tested for validity and reliability; therefore, its intention is to inform the researcher, rather than a quantitative analysis. The results from the post-survey indicated that the small group of participants experienced personal growth regarding the adaptation of new media technology. (See Appendix D for pre- and post-survey results).

This project was evaluated in a qualitative manner. The reports presented in Appendix C fully articulate the growth and adaptation of new media technology in ministry by the eight small group participants. According to their official reports, the project was a success as all eight participants made some type of adaptation that enhanced their ministry context.

## **Results**

The eight participants received training on new media technology in areas such as social media, Facebook, Twitter, webstreaming, mobile apps and texting programs, blogging, digital discipleship, and evangelism tools. Training was also extended to include the adoption of technical equipment such as church sound and projection equipment for an enhanced worship experience and mission outreach. In part, all participants adapted some areas listed above as relevant to their ministry context. The results of the project will be highlighted in the following areas: social media and blogging, website and streaming, digital discipleship and evangelism tools, and finally media ministry and worship equipment. For detailed individual reports from each participant, see Appendix C.

### **Social Media and Blogging**

With his team, Dr. Ricardo Bain, one of the small group training participants, successfully adopted the social media platform, Facebook.com, to promote, engage, and recruit youth and young adults for the new church plant, MYGEN. Bain's report (Appendix C) gives evidence to the fact that their social media and website presence resulted in relationship-building with millennials and Gen Xers who were the target

audience for their new church plant. This new church plant initiative, MYGEN, that was launched on March 4, 2017, saw their social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, reach over 8,000 persons within the first month, even though their membership is under one hundred. Dr. Bain led the team as they developed a social media strategy of posting highlights from the sermons, engaging their online audience, and promoting weekly what worshippers can expect at the MYGEN church. I was invited to preach at the church and experienced the positive impact of this ministry on the scores of youth and young adults in attendance.

### Website and Streaming

Most of the participants either made new websites or redesigned and updated their current websites as a result of the training. Dr. Donnieval Walker of the North Bronx Seventh-day Adventist Church charged his associate pastor Dudley François with redeveloping their website and establishing their streaming presence online. This was significant, as the largest church in the conference did not have an effective social media presence. The pastors were able to lead their team through transitioning to a redesigned website, a weekly webstreaming presence, and a live social media Facebook presence where, combined, they reach hundreds of individuals weekly. Dr. Walker's report indicates that this webstreaming presence has helped reach unchurched individuals, as well as sick and shut-in members (see Appendix C).

### Digital Discipleship and Evangelism Tools

This was an area that was very well received by the participants. Mobile apps were explored as ways to engage members in faith development such as well as online



Bible study chat rooms and early morning mobile conference prayer calls and social media engagement. The participants learned from two guest presenters, Pastor Paul Graham and Andrew DePaula, regarding how to engage their members in faith development and evangelism. Pastor Graham's report of 30 known persons who have been baptized as a result of the online social media devotions he conducts inspired the group participants.

Two members of the group, Drs. Andres Peralta and Manuel Rosario, both embraced the new media technology IntelliPaper USB cards and made it a reality. They are authors of *The Loving Father* Bible study series and worked with me to secure over 500 IntelliPaper USB cards (See Figure 13). The IntelliPaper USB card is a modern day replacement to the traditional USB technology and is in the form of a business card.

This IntelliPaper USB card technology represents a first-of-its-kind adaptation within the GNYC. The authors of this Bible study series both asserted in their report (Appendix C) that hundreds of young adult leaders are now conducting Bible studies with this resource. I was unable to determine at the time of writing how many direct baptisms have resulted from this process. However, the Bible study authors affirmed that this is a long-term adaptation process to reach millennials and Gen Xers and should not be assessed only on baptism, as their goal is to engage young adults in giving Bible studies, and as well as studying for themselves. That objective has been achieved, as various small groups are now active in giving Bible studies using this technology. The engagement with this technology will increase their faith and strengthen their commitment to mission.



Figure 13. Cover art for The Loving Father intelliPaper USB Bible study cards. (Source: intelliPaper design team.) Used with permission.

### Media Ministry and Worship Equipment

Pastors Benoit, Turner, White, Willkie, and Walker all made adaptations in the area of media ministry and worship equipment. I was able to conduct one-to-one consultation with each pastor in his local church context, which resulted in the respective churches rebuilding their media ministry team, as well as purchasing new equipment. I was invited by these participants to meet with and conduct contextual support training to their team to help in accomplishing the overall vision.

I was able to assist one of the training participants, Dr. Donnieval Walker, with securing a \$10,000 technology grant from the conference administration for a church equipment upgrade. This donation went towards the purchase and upgrade from standard definition (4:3) to widescreen (16:9) Da-Lite parallex thin projection screens and the acquisition of two Sanyo HD 6500 lumens laser projectors, which gave greater clarity to

visuals displayed on the screen. This combination of technology represents a first in the Adventist church in New York City, as laser projectors and the parallex (ambient light repellent) screens are newly released technologies. Without the conference's support, the participant indicated that this adaptation would not be financially possible. The new technology employed solved the constant complaints from the church members that they were unable able to see the messages adequately on the screens because of the sunlight that came directly on the screens from the skylights above. The solution was not something readily accessible, but required in-depth research and consultations that I was able to assist the participant and his congregation to resolve.

Some of the participants have indicated that due to the budgeting process of their church, they have had to delay some adaptation of technologies they would like to employ in the worship service. I am working with some participants to identify adequate discipleship software that can help them lead and manage a large team of disciples who are engaged in Bible studies in the community. The pastor and I have explored a possible software solution called "Disciples," but desire further research and exploration on other possibilities. This represents a future learning possibility that can be a tremendous blessing to pastors who have various Bible workers, Bible studies, or small group mission activities that they would like to manage more effectively.

### Challenges to Outcomes

Adaptation is not always a quick process. This study showed that timing and money stand as two significant challenges to the adaptation of technology in ministry. Most of the small group participants were able to adapt some form of new media technology, such as Facebook or online webstreaming, for their church services. In one

particular case it took almost a year to get the negotiated purchase of \$17,000 worth of audiovisual equipment and a financial commitment from the church to pay for its online streaming services. Notwithstanding the challenges faced by the various participants, most were able to successfully adapt some form of technology in their ministry context.

## **Recommendations**

### Strategy

This project has opened my eyes to more possibilities for accomplishing mission through technology than I first imagined when entering this project. The conclusions of the study have implications in two main areas: practice and future research. The research holds implications for pastors, directors, administrators, church leaders, and members. Therefore, the recommendations are as follows:

1. Develop a strategy for engagement on the Internet. This is crucial for the success of any Issachar minister. Begin with the ultimate goal in mind: to reach people for Jesus Christ. The “how you reach” will be defined by a combination of area and resources available to support that mission. Resources include personal, technology, and finances.

2. Find the niche that best suits your ministry goals. Krokos and Pratt (2012) say, “Your niche of the internet is a beautifully distinct place” (Chapter 4, para. 3). A social media strategy is not vague, but specific in the platform chosen and the audience to be reached. Find that niche and be consistent with it. Develop the content, be consistent, engage the audience, and a successful social media presence can be achieved.

Targeting all social media platforms without a viable plan can lead to frustration and a feeling of failure in accomplishing the mission. Each church is unique and its

circumstances for ministry are likewise unique, so find the niche and develop a-unique strategy with a unique team of individuals.

### Equipment and Finances

1. Allocate finances that support the strategy. New media technology costs time and equipment. An investment of time without the adequate equipment needed to accomplish the mission is never to be undertaken. In adopting new media technology, the Issachar minister must ask what equipment is needed to support this mission and how will it be funded.

Both small group participants, Drs. Rosario and Peralta, wanted to have the IntelliPaper USB Bible study cards. This required a financial investment for designing, purchasing, and programming these cards to the desired outcome. For some, it may be the purchase of a new worship software, computer, projector, and screens for their worship services, while for others it may be the investment of finances to develop a mobile app or rebuild a new website.

Whatever the strategy or technology to be employed, the Issachar minister must be mindful that this is not a typical business transaction where the return on investments must be seen immediately for reporting purposes. The returns may or may not have an immediate impact, but the seeds of the gospel that have been planted as a result of these efforts will germinate in the hearts of those reached and, in time, God will do the transformation.

2. Allocate finances to support local church technology initiatives. A conference administration can provide financial assistance to local churches that have developed a strategy for the use of new media technology in accomplishing mission. This will inspire

creativity in the workforce and encourage pastors to practice discipleship and evangelism outside their comfort zones.

3. The GNYC administration may consider revisiting and funding its policy of subsidy to pastors who would like personally to secure technology for ministry. An increased allocation from \$500 to \$1,000 would greatly assist pastors in securing equipment, software, or training in technology that could be an asset to their ministry and the conference in general.

### Technology Training

1. Host an annual ministers' technology conference. A conference communication director can utilize this study and adapt a ministers' technology conference as a part of their yearly conference calendar. This will act as a yearly inspiration to the pastoral staff of what emerging technologies are available for use in ministry delivery.

2. Have ongoing small group training sessions for pastors on the adaption of technology for ministry delivery. It is not always easy for pastors in the small group training sessions to accomplish the adaptation of technology in ministry in six months or one year due to several factors such as local church calendar events, conference calendar events, and finances. As such, the small group training is being recommended as a bi-annual event and the minister's technology conference, an annual event. This gives adequate time for adaptation, implementation, and assessment.

3. Adopt the "ITEM" training model. A designed strategy of training on the adaptation of new media technology that emerged from my training experience is called *ITEM*, which stands for I–inspire, T–train, E–equip, and M–mobilize. The strategy represents a template for the new and changing world of technology, which is easily

adoptable for the training process. The content will always be based on the currently emerging technologies unearthed at the annual minister's technology conference. The ITEM strategy is designed to inspire the small group participants, train them in the emerging technologies, equip them with the tools necessary to accomplish the mission (which may also require financial assistance), and finally, mobilize them to fulfill the task within their respective context of ministry.

While the training sessions were opened to all the pastors, it was interesting to note that most of those who volunteered to be part of the small group participants were either Gen Xers or millennials.

#### General Recommendations

1. It is recommended that administrators and pastors be more supportive of technology in ministry, knowing that technology is a neutral tool that can be used as an effective way to support mission, while not replacing it.

2. Technology in ministry is not limited to the church and pastor(s), but includes the conference directors as well; therefore, it is recommended that departmental directors become more technologically knowledgeable in their ministry delivery.

3. A replication of this study could be done in other conferences in the United States. It would be helpful to compare the findings of these studies.

4. The research could be helpful to pastors who see the need for technology in ministry, but are not sure where, why, or how to begin. It would provide a working platform for them to utilize and understand the advantages to their ministry.

5. The pastors who formed the purposeful sample for this study will be empowered to provide similar training to other pastors within the conference.

6. An article will be generated from the study and findings of this research and a peer-review journal will be sought for publication.

7. A book could be written from this research for administrators, pastors, and members on how they can adapt new media technology in discipleship and evangelism practice.

### **My Transformation as a Ministry Professional**

This research project has broadened my worldview of technology in ministry as a tool that can assist in effective discipleship and evangelism initiatives. The project has impacted my core values in a positive way in that I am a much firmer believer in the use of new media technology. The evidence is compelling. It has also allowed me to become more proficient in this area, and I believe the knowledge and experience gained will impact my ministry for years to come. More important, I hope that its impact on me will have a lasting impact on those whom I may have the opportunity in the future to train and help in their adaptation of new media technology. This research dissertation has made me more competent, proficient, and current in the area of new media technology in ministry.

### **Conclusion**

The project technology training for administrators and pastors within the GNYC has realized its objective. The development, implementation, and assessment suggest that this is an area of significant opportunities for the GNYC and the local pastor who desires to enhance his or her ministry delivery. Substantial theological and literature evidence has been provided to affirm the use of technology in ministry. The theological support given affirms the Issachar minister in the judicious adaptation for discipleship and



evangelism opportunities. Technology is a tool that is neither inherently good or bad that, if rightly employed, can be an asset to ministry delivery and faith development.

After completing this project, I am convinced of the importance and relevance of technology in ministry. The project has had an immediate effect on some of the pastors in this conference; the future possibilities for ministry and mission are bright if the administration affirms the recommendations for adoption in the GNYC.

APPENDIX A

FLYERS

2015 MINISTERS' TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE FLYER



**Ministers**  
**TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE**

**03. 22.15** | Greater New York Conference Headquarters  
7 Shelter Rock Road; Manhasset, NY 11030 | **10AM - 2PM**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

**DAVE GEMMELL**  
Reaching the Technotribe,  
21st Century Tools for Evangelism

**JESSE JOHNSON**  
Edge Technology for Evangelism,  
using StudyTracker and iStudy

**ROHANN D. WELLINGTON**  
Mobile Ministry: Connecting  
the Message

**REGISTER NOW FOR YOUR FREE SEAT**  
(Registration is required and lunch is provided for all registrants.)

**Visit: [www.gnyc.org/techcon](http://www.gnyc.org/techcon) or  
Call: Lisa Gonzalez at 516-627-9350**

*Sponsored by the following departments of the Greater New York Conference: Communication • Ministerial • Personal Ministry*

2016 MINISTERS' TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE FLYER



**Ministers**  
**TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE II**

**THURSDAY** | Greater New York Conference Headquarters | **10AM - 2PM**  
**03.24.16** | 7 Shelter Rock Road; Manhasset, NY 11030

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

**JASON CASTON**  
Advancing Your Ministry Online

**DR. JESSE JOHNSON**  
Digital Evangelism Tools

**ROHANN D. WELLINGTON**  
Web Broadcasting Essentials 

**REGISTER NOW FOR YOUR FREE SEAT**  
(Registration is required and lunch is provided for all registrants.)

Visit: [www.gnyc.org/techcon](http://www.gnyc.org/techcon) or  
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# ***GNYC Communication Workshop & Pastor's Technology Conference***

# **2017**

**JANUARY 22, 2017 • 8:00AM – 3:00PM**  
**AT THE NORTH BRONX SDA CHURCH**  
3743 Bronxwood Ave., Bronx, NY 10469

**FEATURED SPEAKERS:**

---



**Bryant Taylor**  
Emerging Media for Communication



**Cassie Martsching**  
Using Communication Tools  
to Create a Welcoming Experience



**Rohann Wellington**  
Broadcasting Him:  
Principles of live Streaming



**Steve Scorzetti**  
Vaddio Video Systems for your church

**SPECIAL TECH TALK FOR PASTORS WITH FREE TECHNOLOGY GIVE-AWAYS**  
(FOR THOSE WHO PRE-REGISTER)



**Ednor Davison**  
Writing tips that gets  
your article published.



**Hue Sang Kim**  
Video Editing



**Dawin Rodriguez**  
The Power of  
lighting in Photography



**Gary Saunders**  
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**North Bronx SDA Church**  
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APPENDIX B

DIGITAL PRESENTATIONS

# BASIC COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY FOR PASTORS



**CORE SET OF COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY FOR PASTORS**

Presented by:  
Pastor Rohann D. Wellington

This slide features a large smartphone icon on the left side, displaying various app icons. The background is a light blue gradient with a white curved shape on the right side.

1



**DMIN PROJECT**

- TRAINING IN TECHNOLOGY FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND PASTORS IN THE GREATER NEW YORK CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

This slide features a small smartphone icon on the left side. The background is a light blue gradient with a white curved shape on the right side.

2



**DMIN PROJECT PRESENTATIONS OVERVIEW**

- Core set of competences in technology for pastors
- Technology in evangelism
- Mobile Ministry: Connecting the message
- Social media and the Gospel: the missing connection

This slide features a small smartphone icon on the left side. The background is a light blue gradient with a white curved shape on the right side.

3

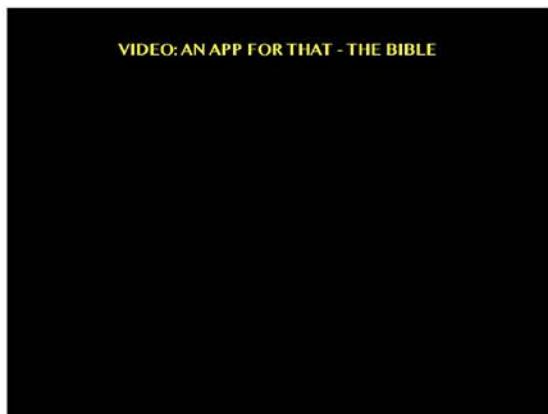


**BASIC COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY**

- Technology has the power to be used as a core element in the process of communicating spiritual messages (Costin Jordache, Ministry Magazine 2010)

This slide features a small smartphone icon on the left side. The background is a light blue gradient with a white curved shape on the right side.

4



**VIDEO: AN APP FOR THAT - THE BIBLE**

This slide has a solid black background with the text centered in white.

5



**TECHNOLOGY AND THE SPIRITUAL LEADER**

- Technology's influence on the spiritual leader by Paul Hennings.
  - How you use technology influences how people view your relevance.
  - In particular, younger generations assess churches through technology.
  - Today, your web presence is directly related to your image.
  - Social media impacts your influence

This slide features a small smartphone icon on the left side. The background is a light blue gradient with a white curved shape on the right side.

6

## BASIC COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY

- **1 - Learn the language of Technology**
- **Viral:**
  - Anything shared across social networks that get passed along rapidly, eg. Youtube videos
- **Platform:**
  - A System that manages content, eg. Wordpress
- **Hashtag**
  - A word or string of characters that begin with a number sign, #GNVC



Source: incamediahd.com

7

## BASIC COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY

- **1 - Learn the language of Technology**
- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):**
  - A way of getting your website appearing at the top of search engine rankings.
- **Trending:**
  - A word, phrase or topic that is popular or being discussed on facebook or twitter.
- **Traffic**
  - Number of visitors to your website or social media page.



Source: incamediahd.com

8

## BASIC COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY

- **2 - Preach the Word**
- **With Visual Aid**
  - Video illustration, pictures etc.
- **Digital Delivery when appropriate**
  - Ipad/Android/Windows Tablet
- **Keynote/PowerPoint Presentation**
  - People learn through the various senses.
  - Know the basics of what is graphically appealing.



9

## VIDEO: Stewardship Promotion Possibilities

10

## BASIC COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY

- **3 - Communicate with members**
- **Email System**
  - Constant Contact, (Emails & Newsletters)
- **Phone Tree System**
  - Use to call all members re meeting notices and cancellations, stewardship and capital campaign reminders.
- **Text messaging service**
  - Symbota



11

## COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY

- **4 - Connect with internal and external audience**
- Website blogging on pastors page
- Website update\*
- Social Media Outreach (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google Plus, LinkedIn).



12



## COMPETENCES IN TECHNOLOGY

- 4 - **Connect with internal and external audience**
  - Website blogging on pastors page
  - Website update\*
  - Social Media Outreach (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).



13

## TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE FOR PASTORS

- Sunday March 22, 2015 at the GNYC Conference office.
- Dr. Dave Gemmell
  - Creator of the Pastors DVD's
- Dr. Bryant Taylor
  - TechTalk





14

### VIDEO: POWER OF THE GOSPEL - JESUS



15



## THANK YOU

16

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE GOSPEL



**Social Media & the Gospel - the missing connection!**  
by Rohann D. Wellington

## Social Media

- TRAINING IN TECHNOLOGY FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND PASTORS IN THE GREATER NEW YORK CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

## Social Media

- E. G. White:  
By Extraordinary Methods.--In the cities of today, where there is so much to attract and please, the people can be interested by **no ordinary efforts**. Ministers of God's appointment will find it necessary to put forth **extraordinary efforts in order to arrest the attention of the multitudes**. And when they succeed in bringing together a large number of people, they must bear messages of a character so out of the usual order that the people will be aroused and warned. **They must make use of every means that can possibly be devised for causing the truth to stand out clearly and distinctly.**--Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 109. (1909) [Ev 122.3]

## Social Media

**A day in the INTERNET**

Over 210 billion emails are sent out daily, which is more than a whole year's worth of letter mail in the United States.

There are 3 million images uploaded to Flickr everyday.

...enough images to fill a 375,000 page photo album

## Social Media

**Twitter vs Facebook**

Monthly active users



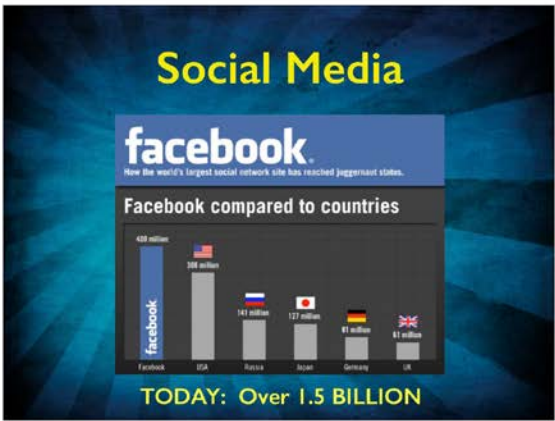
## Social Media

Time spent on Twitter and Facebook by platform

Platform	86% (Tweets)	14% (Retweets)	32% (Likes)	68% (Comments)
Twitter	86%	14%		
Facebook			32%	68%

150 thousand Tweets per Minute

350 thousand Likes per Minute



## Power of Social Media

- US President Barack Obama
- Called the First Social Media President
- One of the Most popular Twitter account
- One of the most popular Facebook pages
- His Campaign included:
  - Youtube
  - Flickr
  - LinkedIn
  - Myspace & Second Life

World Baby Shower  
Saving children's lives

Shakira Musician/Band  
www.worldbabyshower.org

107,331,167 likes

Shakira with Gerard Pique  
Yesterday at 1:04pm · Edited · Liked

Provide cool boxes to help keep UNICEF's vaccines effective.  
www.worldbabyshower.org #WorldBabyShower  
Proporcionen cajas refrigeradas para mantener las vacunas de Unicef en estado efectivo. www.worldbabyshower.org/es

Vin Diesel Actor/Director

90,322,589 likes

Happy V day...

## Power of Social Media

- Social Media allows a two way conversation in real time.
- Social Media allows one to influence the lives of others and in some cases the decisions they make.
- Social Media allows the development of real relationships with real people in a virtual world.



## Power of Social Media

### Burger King Whopper Sacrifice

Launched the Whopper Sacrifice that Facebook eventually had to limit forcing it to close down.

They offered Facebook users a free Whopper coupon if they "UNFRIEND" 10 of their social network connections



<http://youtu.be/Y14uzOAtPIE>

## Power of Social Media



## Social Media - Facebook

### Facebook Language worth knowing:

**Status:** the question "what is on your mind?" is where you post your thoughts and feelings that you want your friends to read.

**Pages:** profiles for businesses and brands to connect to your followers.

**Groups:** close circles of people that share and keep in touch

**Timeline:** your collection of the photos, stories and experiences that tell your story

**Share:** posting someone else's status or connect with things you care about.



## Social Media - Facebook

### Facebook Downside for Churches:

**Status:** posting a status update or sharing a link on your Facebook Page will only get it into 15-25% of your fan's news feeds, due to an algorithm developed by Facebook called EdgeRank. To be able to reach all 100% of your fans and more, you will have to pay for every post you wanted promoted.

**Status updates for organizations require some financial investment for maximum exposure.**

**Groups may be an alternative.**



## Social Media - Facebook

Facebook remains the top social network for U.S. teens. Nearly half of teen Facebook users say they're using the site more than last year, and Facebook has more daily teen users than any other social network.

Read more: <http://www.bostonherald.com/2014/04/04/facebook-remains-top-social-network-for-u-s-teens/>



### Young Americans Haven't Abandoned Facebook (Yet)

% of Americans aged 12-24 who currently ever use the following social networks\*



\* Based on 2,002 interviews of people aged 12 and older conducted between January 5 and February 3, 2015.  
Source: Edison Research & Triton Digital

statista

## Social Media - Facebook

### Facebook Strategies worth using:

#### ENGAGEMENT

- **Maximize your timeline Cover Photos:** Whatever you want to display on the photo, recognize that this is a premium opportunity for your ministry to advertise one event that is happening, church times, or upcoming sermon topics. By no means should you sacrifice the whole cover photo to marketing because people really do want to see faces..
- **Facebook Photos for More Reach:** Action photos are the best. If you want to reach and get more likes its best to post photos of your events and take the time to tag people in each.



## Social Media - Facebook

### Facebook Strategies worth using:

#### ENGAGEMENT

- **Pay for boost of selected posts:** There is NO WAY around this to date.



[www.facebook.com/greaternyconference](http://www.facebook.com/greaternyconference)



[www.facebook.com/greaternyconference](http://www.facebook.com/greaternyconference)  
[www.twitter.com/gnyconference](http://www.twitter.com/gnyconference)

Twitter is an online social networking service and microblogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters, known as "tweets". It was created in March 2006 by Jack Dorsey and launched that July. The service rapidly gained worldwide popularity, with over 300 million users as of 2011.[6] generating over 300 million tweets and handling over 1.6 billion search queries per day.[3][8][9] It has been described as "the SMS of the Internet."[10] Twitter Inc. is based in San Francisco, with additional servers and offices in New York City. - wikipedia



## Social Media - Twitter

### Twitter Commands worth knowing:

- **FOLLOW username:** this command allows you to start receiving notifications for a specific person on your phone. Example: follow jeremy
- **LEAVE username:** this command allows you to stop receiving notifications for a specific person on your phone. Example: leave benfu
- **@username + message:** directs a twitter at another person, and causes your twitter to save in their "replies" tab. Example: @meangrape I love that song too!





## Social Media - Twitter

### Twitter Commands worth knowing:

**D username + message:** sends a person a private message that goes to their device, and saves in their web archive. Example: d krissy want to pick a Jamba Juice for me while you're there?

**WHOIS username:** retrieves the profile information for any public user on Twitter. Example: whois jack

**GET username:** retrieves the latest Twitter update posted by the person. Example: get goldman

**NUDGE username:** reminds a friend to update by asking what they're doing on your behalf. Example: nudge biz



## Social Media - Twitter

### Twitter Commands worth knowing:

**FAV username:** marks a person's last twitter as a favorite. (hint: reply to any update with FAV to mark it as a favorite if you're receiving it in real time) Example: fav al3x

**STATS:** this command returns your number of followers, how many people you're following, and your bio information.

**INVITE phone number:** will send an SMS invite to a friend's mobile phone. Example: Invite 415 555 1212



## Some Social Media Benefits for Pastors

Direct Marketing Options - zipcode specific  
Live Stream Events - New! (Ustream & Live Stream)  
Forums & Discussion Groups (eg Bible studies)  
Relationship building with members of your church and people in the community.

## THE MISSING CONNECTION

Does your church have a social media presence?  
Are you on social media?

## We are encouraged to meet the people where they are.

### Devise New and Unusual Plans.

Let every worker in the Master's vineyard, study, plan, devise methods, to reach the people where they are. **We must do something out of the common course of things. We must arrest the attention. We must be deadly in earnest.** We are on the very verge of times of trouble and perplexities that are scarcely dreamed of.—Letter 20, 1893. {Ev 122.4}

## Social Media Don'ts

### Eleven Things NOT To Do on Social Media

- By John Lusher - [www.wbuildbuzz.com](http://www.wbuildbuzz.com)

Do Not share pictures, photos or artwork that could potentially incriminate or embarrass you.

Do Not self-promote or only promote yourself or your brand.

Do Not re-share or re-post links without checking them out first on your own.

Do Not ignore comments, responses or conversations by your followers.

Do Not jump into the social media pool without a plan!



## Social Media Don'ts

### Eleven Things NOT To Do on Social Media

- By John Lusher - [www.webuldbuzz.com](http://www.webuldbuzz.com)

- Do Not set it and forget it.
- Do Not be negative.
- Do Not share too much personal information.
- Do Not respond to comments or posts out of anger or resentment.
- Do Not copy material and use it as your own!
- Do Not forget, these ARE real relationships, with real people.



find  
Us



[www.facebook.com/greaternyconference](http://www.facebook.com/greaternyconference)

# MOBILE MINISTRY – CONNECTING THE MESSAGE





## Mobile Devices Today



## MOBILE TECHNOLOGY FACT SHEET

- Devise New and Unusual Plans.
- Let every worker in the Master's vineyard, study, plan, devise methods, to reach the people where they are. **We must do something out of the common course of things. We must arrest the attention. We must be deadly in earnest. We are on the very verge of times of trouble and perplexities that are scarcely dreamed of.**—Letter 20, 1893. {Ev 122.4}



Source: PewResearchCenter

## MOBILE TECHNOLOGY FACT SHEET

- Christ Used Various Methods.—
- From Christ's methods of labor we may learn many valuable lessons. He did not follow merely one method; in various ways He sought to gain the attention of the multitude; and then He proclaimed to them the truths of the gospel.—Review and Herald, Jan. 17, 1907. {Ev 123.1}



Source: PewResearchCenter

## MOBILE TECHNOLOGY FACT SHEET

- As of January 2014: (2015 not yet released)
- 90% of American adults have a cell phone
- 58% of American adults have a smartphone
- 32% of American adults own an e-reader
- 42% of American adults own a tablet computer



Source: PewResearchCenter

## MOBILE TECHNOLOGY FACT SHEET

67% of cell owners find themselves checking their phone for messages, alerts, or calls — even when they don't notice their phone ringing or vibrating.

44% of cell owners have slept with their phone next to their bed because they wanted to make sure they didn't miss any calls, text messages, or other updates during the night.

29% of cell owners describe their cell phone as "something they can't imagine living without."



Source: PewResearchCenter

## MOBILE MINISTRY

- Cell Phone Capabilities
  - email & web browsing
  - MP3/video player
  - radio/TV reception
  - global positioning and maps
  - still/video camera
  - games console
  - book reading, word-processing and other Smartphone capabilities
  - diary, planner and appointment reminder
  - wifi connectivity when in a wifi hotspot
  - Bluetooth capability



Source: PewResearchCenter

## TO APP OR NOT TO APP

- **APP:** a self-contained program or piece of software designed to fulfill a particular purpose; an application, especially as downloaded by a user to a mobile device.



## VIDEO: AN APP FOR THAT - THE BIBLE

## TO APP OR NOT TO APP

- **Two types of Apps**
  - **Native App** - specifically developed for one platform and live on your device and usually downloadable through an application store.
  - Push Notification
  - **Web App** - Are not real apps but websites that look and feel like real apps.




## FAITH APPS



## FAITH APPS



**Fighter Verses** - memorize bible...



**Gracelink**



**Hope Channel**



**Sabbath School 4**



**PrayerMate - Christian**



**Praisevision**



## SUGGESTED APPS FOR MINISTERS



**Touch Bible Loaded**



**CALL nadMin**  
NAD Pastors Family...



**Studying Together**  
Mark Finley



**GoodReader**



**Presentation Clock**



## THE POWER OF TEXT MESSAGES

- 1. To send timely or important alerts
- 2. To collect contact information
- 3. To advertise and manage events
- 4. To conduct live “townhalls” and “polls.
- 5. To promote or connect to other media campaigns eg. Sermon Series



## MOBILE POLLS

- **TEXT:**  
**ROHANNWELLIN781**
- **TO**
- **22333**



Your poll will show here

1

Install the app from [pollev.com/app](http://pollev.com/app)

2

Make sure you are in Slide Show mode

Still not working? Get help at [pollev.com/app/help](http://pollev.com/app/help)  
or  
[Open poll in your web browser](#)

Your poll will show here

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or  
[Open poll in your web browser](#)

## MOBILE MINISTRY IMPACT

- **Community expansion**
  - host an event and have community text in their number to join.
- **Discipleship**
  - Links to sermons, prayer requests, counseling and live stream via mobile app or mobile website.
- **Evangelism**
  - The power of like, Share and Retweet buttons enable you to have your social media presence and message shared by your members with their friends and family. (average 1000 friends)



Source: Mobile Ministry

## MOBILE MINISTRY IMPACT

### • eGiving

- Tithes return, offerings and special gifts are up through mobile technology.
- Expand donor base to include visitors and people in the community.
- GNYC website received over \$100,000 in tithes and offerings online.
- EVERY CHURCH SHOULD PROMOTE eGIVING
- 100% of the money goes to the church if you use adventist giving.



Source: Mobile Ministry

## MOBILE MINISTRY IMPACT

### • 12 Commandments of Mobile Ministry (Adopted).

- Thou shalt start NOW
- Thou shalt not spam
- Thou shalt not slander
- Thou shalt engage thy users
- Thou shalt engage thy competition
- Thou shalt test before launching



Source: Mobile Ministry

## MOBILE MINISTRY IMPACT

### • 12 Commandments of Mobile Ministry (Adopted).

- Thou shalt integrate thy products
- Thou shalt draft a mobile user guideline for thy church
- Thou shalt draft a mobile ministry marketing strategy
- Thou shalt protect thy brand
- Thou shalt use graphics, videos, and photos as much as possible
- Thou shalt hire or consult a professional



Source: Mobile Ministry

THANK YOU



# TECHNOLOGY IN EVANGELISM



1



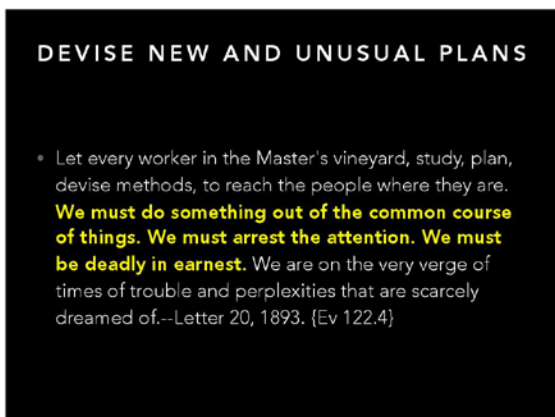
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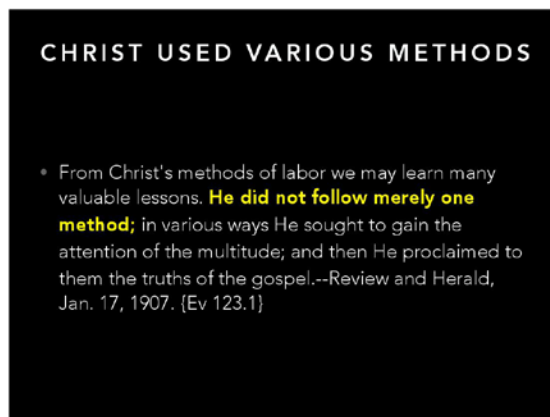
3



4



5



6

## TECHNOLOGY IN EVANGELISM

- #Digidisciple
  - Developed in 2011 by the BIGBible Project in the UK
  - Someone who seeks to live out their Biblically informed faith in the digital space, exploring what it means to be a disciple in the digital age, and also how the digital age affects or alters discipleship.



7

## TECHNOLOGY IN EVANGELISM

- #Techno-vangelism
  - A hybrid of 2 words: technology and evangelism
  - First officially adopted in adventism by the Inter-American Division in 2010
  - Used effectively resulting in multiply baptism.



8

## TECHNOLOGY IN EVANGELISM

- #digidisciple
- #techno-vangelism
- #e-vangelism
  - All are efforts to inspire, motivate and engage effective spiritual living in a digital world.



9

## TECHNOLOGY IN EVANGELISM

- Greater New York Conference has rich history with media and evangelism.
  - Faith for today started in GNYC territory in 1950 by William Fagal on ABC and today is the oldest religious television broadcast in the world! ([www.theevidence.org](http://www.theevidence.org))



10

## TECHNOLOGY IN EVANGELISM

- Greater New York Conference has contributed to evangelism through technology over the years.
  - Bible Study: DVD/CD's & APP- Pillars of Faith
  - Media: Pathway of Hope & Families 4 Heaven



11

Courtesy of IntelliPaper




12

Courtesy of IntelliPaper

## Who is IntelliPaper?

- An Adventist-owned Christian company
- Light manufacturing
- Based in Spokane, WA



13



14

Courtesy of IntelliPaper

## The Technology

IntelliPaper

Old Technology



15



16



17



18



19



20



21



22



23



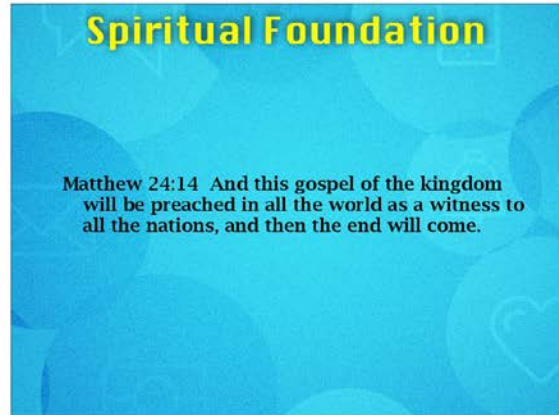
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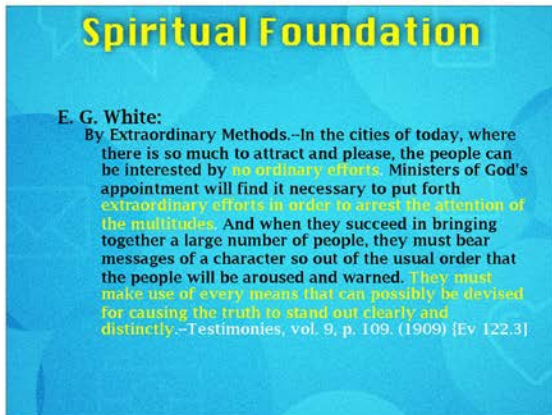
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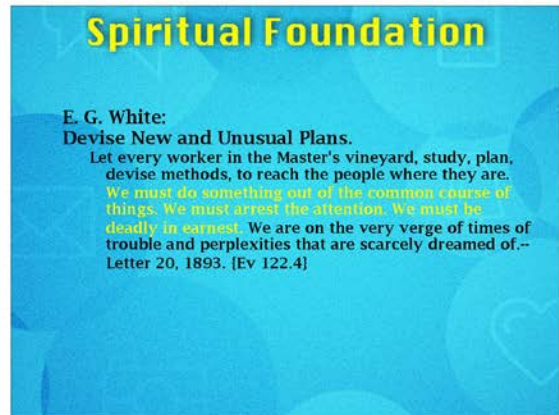
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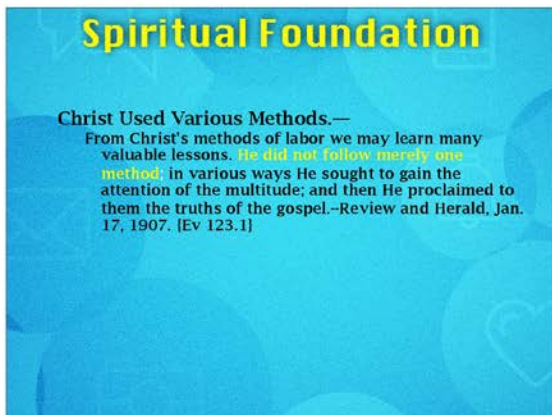
2



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4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



**To Whom  
does your worship  
appeal?**

**Baby Boomers or  
Millennial?**

13

## WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

### 2015, Millennials will overtake Baby Boomers

The Census Bureau projects that the Millennial population was 74.8 million in 2014. By 2015 Millennials will increase in size to 75.3 million and become the biggest group.

**Projected Population by Generation**  
In millions

Year	Millennial	Baby Boomer	Silent	Gen X
2014	74.8	76	26	60
2015	81	-	-	-
2010	-	63	10	50

Note: Millennials refers to the population ages 18 to 34 as of 2015.  
Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of U.S. Census Bureau population projections released December 2014  
PEW RESEARCH CENTER  
<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/01/26/its-just-millennials-all-over-the-baby-boomers/>

14

## Technology in Worship

The choice today is not "between Mozart and the Internet," but between what is sensible and what is not. - Nathan Mitchell

Wisdom should compel us to use presentational technologies within the context of worship - not to use worship to celebrate technology. - Quentin J. Schultze

15

## ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE BROADCASTS

**REMEMBER: You are sharing your worship experience with the world not your technology!**

**How you feel about your worship experience will drive how willing you are to invest in sharing through technology**

16

## ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE BROADCASTS

- EXPERIENCE
- ENGAGEMENT

17

## Ideas for Engagement.

- Speak directly to your online audience
- Appeal to your audience
- Request participation and feedback from your audience

18

## TIPS FOR BROADCASTING YOUR SERVICE

- Engage your online audience
- Watch for time lapse
- Appoint a floor manager
- Educate your church
- Plan a run sheet

19

## The Rubidoux Effect



20

## THE POTTER'S HOUSE



21

## Let's Talk Equipment & Streaming Services

- Praizevision
- spassomedia.tv
- Youtube - FREE
- Equipment
- Camera, Computer, Streaming Service, Lights.

22



23

APPENDIX C

PEER GROUP PARTICIPANT TRAINING REPORTS

PARTICIPANT 1  
DR. RICARDO BAIN

The use of technology in ministry is as important as relevance is to Christian living. This usage is so critical because we live in a techno-crazed world that utilizes computer gadgets, instruments, and the Internet as a feature of everyday life. If we are going to properly and effectively communicate with the average member in our churches, and jive with the world in which we seek to share Jesus, it is imperative to have a solid Internet and social media presence.

At the MYGEN Church we are intentional about making our church experience connective for our young adult target audience, and those who seek information about our church. This is one of the strategic imperatives for our church: “To create a connective cyber experience for our church thus sharing Christ’s love with all humanity.” We aim to ensure that this is achieved through multiple connective experiences using technology, and the communication super highway: the Internet.

One of the ways we deliberately remain connected with others is through the use of our highly interactive website. As one interfaces with our site, features like our welcome, our introduction, our values, and videos, pop up to engage the browser. The main feature that most of our visitors love very much is our frequently updated blog posts. We have seen our traffic increase within the first week of launching the site by more than 60% because of well-designed and relevant material. Many of the persons who read our blogs leave positive comments that highlight the effectiveness of our communication using this tool. Also, through the reading of our blogs, we have added members to our leadership team and to members our church. These persons signed up for our mailing list and consequently joined our church. Relationship building through our

website has proven to be very helpful in the process of connecting millennials and “Gen Xers” to Jesus and our church.

Apart from our website, even though closely linked, are our social media connections. We have noticed within the first three days of launching our social media campaign that we had more than 100 likes on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We have included links from these pages to our website, which has also increased the traffic there.

I believe what makes our social media ministry so compelling is the fact that we have fresh stuff everyday. Our communications team enjoys posting commercials, biblical texts, quotable quotes and much more. We also like to post promotional material before every Sabbath service to properly advertise what is coming for that week. And following the service we post what we dub, “mini-sermon notes” to help us review the important points from the message the previous Sabbath. Using social media with our posts we now have reached more than 8,000 persons. This is noteworthy because we are a church that has been launched and worshipping together for just a little over one month at the time of this writing. Every team member of MYGEN Church is committed to sharing all our posts on their timelines, tagging all their friends (whether they live in the area, country, or not) and promoting our website on their pages. We also encourage them to ask their friends to like and share social media and web pages.

In all, our website and social media campaigns have been very encouraging for our new church, as we see many persons connect with our spiritual encounters. We believe there is much more to explore as we grow. We are committed to being alert and prepared, always looking for innovative ways to press the boundaries of this gospel of Jesus Christ to the gates of hell, and not be detoured by the enemy, Satan. Please feel free

to visit us at [www.mygen.church](http://www.mygen.church). Once there, please click the link to all of our social media pages and like us on each platform.



PARTICIPANT 2  
DR. EDDLY B. BENOIT

Being an effective minister in the twenty-first century, where the numerically predominant, under-served, and under-reached population are Millennials and Post Millennials (iGens), requires a completely different approach to ministry. When I started in my current district in 2012, one of the many challenges I faced was the clear generational gap between how technology was being used by the average individual at work, in the open market, and at home, as compared to its non-existence at our church. Therefore, it was discussed and agreed that an important part of what we needed to do in our effort to revitalize our church was to make it compatible with what is driving society today: technology. We started by electing a Media Ministries Team and made media ministries a board position. A multiple year strategy was put in place, which included audio, visual, and a robust Internet presence, all with the very simple objective of taking the small but deliberate steps required to get us out of the Stone Age.

However, one of the greatest challenges with technology and how it's implemented, is the fact that it evolves so quickly. For that reason, having someone like Rohann D. Wellington, helping us as a coach, walking us through the digital murky waters, and pointing us in the right direction was indispensable and invaluable. Pastor Wellington made himself available when he came to our church, conducted workshops on technology that were extremely well received and continue to pay dividends to this day. The multiple Pastor Technology Conferences he conducted were extremely informative, in that we were exposed to new and creative methods of using technology to do ministry in an effective and transformative way.

We have since installed a new Audio/Visual System in our church, which has totally transformed the quality of the worship experience. We have a robust Internet presence ([hssdac.org](http://hssdac.org)) that enables us to do ministry well beyond our natural borders. We connect and communicate with our members using the latest and most effective forms of technology. The church and its surrounding area has become a strong Wi-Fi and internet hub which facilitates the transfer of data and gives our members and visitors access to the internet and internet-only apps, which also enhance the worship experience.

While we still have some ways to go, we are very pleased that most of our short-term goals and objectives as a church are being met. Pastor Wellington's contribution was without a doubt instrumental in making much of what we accomplished possible, and for that we are grateful.

PARTICIPANT 3  
DR. MANUEL ROSARIO

I had the honor of being part of pastor Rohann D. Wellington's doctoral dissertation training team and I must be faithful in stating how beneficial these encounters have been to me, personally, and to the departments I lead as well. First of all this experience has been an eye-opening one. I have been exposed to a great diversity of hi-tech options, such as the IntelliPaper, and top evangelistic technology tools with great potential, especially with millennials and young adults.

Another great tool I became acquainted with was the Mobile Ministry. I didn't know how useful this could be with the wise use of our cellphones in our daily mission. This is a revolutionary concept, especially to involve the new generations in the church in proclaiming the Gospel. Of course, we dedicated a lot of time to the impact of social media to the Three Angels Message and the scatological Loud Cry we are expected to give.

Pastor Wellington was very accessible and met with me in several extra sessions to make sure that I was able to gradually apply the new concepts to my work field. He visited me in my office and at my events, but also made himself available in his own office and even in colloquial conversations.

This new knowledge has opened many doors and horizons for me and has given us hope and assurance of the possibilities to fulfill the Great Commission in Jesus' name. Challenges are also fabulous since there's still a big generational gap, especially at the local church leadership level, which sometimes hinders the implementation of these out-of-the-box technologies. Thank God it comes at a time when great changes are happening and people in general appear to be more open to new points of view.

We are living in a paradigm-shifting era, and as Jesus taught we are called to put new wine into the new wineskin. It has been a tremendous opportunity to connect these new technologies with our church planting initiative. The use of these new technologies in the context of our church growth approach has definitely helped us to be more effective in reaching our goals.

Thanks to the great training, we have had the opportunity to meet in person and via web with an amazing and diverse group of experts. As a result we have incorporated the cited IntelliPaper as a tool that our youth and young adults can use at their small group meetings. We are also recording and/or video streaming our big events and our Church Planting Institute Classes. We will be making these videos available on our YouTube channel and some of them are actually there now.

We are promoting the use of the cellphone to share the Bible and give Bible studies as we normally do with the prayer lines. Another great initiative has been the seminars across the Conference on how to integrate technology in mission and as a tool to revitalize Sabbath School. Another great initiative is that in March, 2017, during the GNYC church planting festival, 14 of our lay church planters leaders were equipped with Samsung tablets as an effort to have them connected with the technology and help them be more efficient in their ministries. I should also mention that many of our new church plants already have a strong presence on social media.

I have also had the blessing to assist in the different Pastors Technology Conferences, and at each one of them I was challenged as an individual and as a professional since the content was extremely pertinent and the topics very well chosen.

Another great aspect was that the conferences were practical and participants were able to see firsthand, and even touch many of the devices that were referred to or described.

I recommend that every pastor and leader be exposed to a similar techno coaching/training process. I also recommend that this kind of program and training be part of the pastoral continuing education of each conference.

Thank you very much!

PARTICIPANT 4  
DR. ANDRES PERALTA

I participated in several of the technology training sessions both in person and via ZOOM meeting. I found the training extremely relevant to my ministry as Youth Director, both of the Greater New York Conference, and the Atlantic Union. In today's society the youth are extremely tech savvy. It is necessary for us to properly utilize technology in order to meet them where they are, engage them and point them to Christ. The sessions were extremely insightful, highlighting several forms of technology which, when properly utilized will have a great impact on my ministry.

Pr. Wellington is a supportive trainer. In addition to being clear and detailed with the information he presented, he was also accessible. He was instrumental in organizing conferences, allowing access to various experts in communication technology. He has supported me in youth ministry for many years. In spite of his busy schedule he continued to support my ministry, visiting several of our activities and highlighting areas where technology could be leveraged.

One area where I wanted to leverage technology in my ministry is small group Bible study for youth and young adults. I wanted to be able to provide relevant materials to them in an easily accessible mode. I wanted to integrate current technology to make it interactive and easy to share information learned with others.

The training was instrumental in helping us utilize technology to impact young adult small group Bible study. We were able to use IntelliPaper technology to produce small group Bible study guides. This is where print and digital technology meets. The books, which were printed, on business cards size USB paper are easily transportable and easy to distribute. We have produced and distributed several hundred of "The Loving

Father Bible Study Guide” in this digital format. As a results hundreds of young adult leaders are now conducting Bible studies with this resource.

Using the intelliPaper technology is one adaptation of technology that has already been effectively implemented. We intend to continue to produce materials utilizing intelliPaper.

PARTICIPANT 5  
PASTOR NEIL TURNER

I went to the Pastors' Technology Conference by Pastor Rohann Wellington with an open mind, mostly curious about the new technological resources available in ministry today. Meeting after meeting I was pleasantly surprised with the presenters and the information that they shared. I was even more amazed by the one product, which was soon to be on the market. It was a business card with a USB support that hold many Bible studies which can be tracked anywhere in the world. Even if someone is not too keen on technology, because of the ease of access I can see many people, especially the younger generation, using something like this.

The presenters in general were knowledgeable and they presented relevant material for us as pastors to incorporate in our churches. The sessions reminded us of the age we are living in, and how much technology can be used to boost our worship services and evangelism.

I found Pastor Wellington to be very accessible and he made it easy for me to get questions answered outside of the sessions, and was available for training or presentations at my church. Over the period I was involved in this training, Pastor Wellington visited my church on more than one occasion and had valuable insights for my audio-visual team.

Because of the Pastors Technology Conference, I have updated my audio-visual equipment in one of my churches, and we are in discussion to implement other ideas I got from the training. It was well worth my time and the effort with Pastor Wellington.



If I had any recommendation, it would be to start with an assessment of each individual church's need of technology so the discussions in the one-on-one meetings could surround the opportunities for improvement.

PARTICIPANT 6  
DR. DONNIEVAL WALKER WITH  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR DUDDLEY FRANCIOS

The two pastors of the North Bronx Church were incorporated in a series of video conferencing providing training for us in the various aspects of communication technology. The training we received from Pastor Wellington and his knowledge of communications technology has radically improved the full range of communication options we have now at North Bronx. Here are a few things he has helped us with over the last two years.

Our first goal was to enhance the quality of worship for those that attend our services regularly. Unfortunately, we did not have the adequate projection equipment to service the large sanctuary. We ran basic VGA projectors on white screens that were difficult to see for a number of reasons. Sunlight and positioning played a part in limiting people from seeing what we displayed. Through one of the pastors' technology conferences and subsequent training sessions, Pastor Wellington guided us as we developed a new blueprint for projection at North Bronx.

Pastor Wellington helped us develop and execute a step-by-step plan of eliminating our old projectors and providing brand new laser projectors that now display 6,500 lumens and a 100,000:1 contrast ratio. He assisted us in getting the president, Dr. G. Earl Knight, to commit to donating ten thousand dollars to this project. The two Da-Lite parallax screens and two Eiki laser projector represent new technology and solved our problem of members complaining they are never able to see what's on the screens because of the sunlight that came directly on the screens from the skylights above. This was a significant hindrance in our worship services. Now everybody can see!

Our second goal, livestreaming from our church website, was a passionate desire of my associate, Pastor François, who was tasked with its implementation. Pastor Wellington counseled with my associate and I, and came to our church to meet with our elders to educate and train them on the benefits of livestreaming and how to navigate the process. Pastor Wellington gave full support to us not only in the early stages, but also in the upgrade of our livestreaming service for our sick and shut-in members. We were using an unpaid streaming service that did not provide us the flexibility to do much and our stream was often interrupted by commercials that disturbed the worship experience. Pastor Wellington heard our concerns and was able to lead us to a better way of doing it that was ad free and allowed us the added benefit of streaming to the church's social media presence, Facebook Live.

Our new livestreaming service gives us the ability to archive our own services as well as download them to a new podcast channel for listeners who are on the go. This new service provides a Roku station for our church that will help our shut-in members. Our new livestream service gives us options to provide video testimonials, virtual Bible studies, video church announcements, etc.

The training sessions were eye opening for me and my associate. They certainly helped to advance our knowledge and skills in better navigating the world of communication technology. We have made some significant adaptations with technical equipment, website and social media presence. We are more comfortable in the digital world and are relating to our youth population with more ease. There is still more to be done on our part but these training sessions helped us, informed us, and helped us lead the process more effectively.

PARTICIPANT 7  
PASTOR CONRAD WHITE

**1. How relevant were the training sessions to you?** The training sessions given by Rohann Wellington were very relevant. As someone who is interested in technology and tries to keep up with the latest information, I was pleasantly surprised because some of the information that was introduced in the workshops was new and was also information that I was not familiar with. I learned about new technologies that could make a great difference in ministry.

**2. Was the trainer available/accessible to you for one on one sessions and visited you in your church/ministry setting?**

Yes, Pastor Wellington preached at our church and also made himself available through the communication workshops which were presented by the Greater New York Conference, under his leadership. One of his strengths is availability. You can call him almost any time and be able to reach him.

**3. What challenges/opportunities were you hoping to achieve as a result of the training?**

Anything that would make my ministry more effective, efficient and practical. I'm always looking for that edge. I am always looking for ways to make contact with the community and also to make an impact with people. One of the workshops did provide an upgrade to efficiency in my ministry. It was quite amazing, a Bible study made from a business card. This card can be folded to fit into the port of any USB drive. That was tops, by far.

**4. Did the training help you and your church/ministry reach your goals?**

Currently I am transitioning to another church that is nearer to my home. I was at my previous church for a short period of time. The ideas that I learned under Pastor Wellington will be put to use in my new district. What I am looking forward to is trying to implement the use of technology for my church board members. Being able to use webinars, and things such as conference Internet programs that will help set up and assist our meetings so that they could run smoother.

**5. What adaptation of technology has been made in your church/ministry as a result of these training sessions?**

As I stated before I will be moving to a new district but things such as webinars, conference calls, surveys on the internet, interactive Bible studies, website management and sermon tools are instruments that I took up from the leadership of Pastor Wellington.

**6. Did you attend any of the Pastors Technology Conferences, and how did this impact your ministry?**

Yes, this enhanced the quality of my ministry by providing tools that streamlined my work. For example productivity software tools such as pClock and Survey Monkey. He informed us about the innovation concerning USB Bible studies, a technology that is unique even in secular business circles.

**7. Any recommendations?**

It would be great if we had documented examples for use as references. For example maybe the students could be required to do a web page or digital reference or interactive PDF that could be used to advance the people who are doing the training.

PARTICIPANT 8  
PASTOR HUBERT WILKIE

Queens Faith Temple is a Bible based, Christ-centered, Holy Spirit filled community of faith seeking to equip changed people to reach a changing world through evangelism, education, enlightenment and empowerment. We are constantly seeking ways to creatively present Biblical themes and ideas utilizing worship technologies.

The ministers' technology conference and various other seminars conducted by Pastor Wellington and his team, have greatly enhanced our vision for the effective and innovative use of audio, visual, and lighting production technologies in worship and ministry. Through these seminars, I have been empowered to train church volunteers in various roles of worship audio and video production. In addition, I have become better equipped to work with ministry leaders to plan, organize, and effectively execute audio and visual requirements for live events of the church, and their recording and distribution through various media outlets.

Through the general as well as one on one sessions conducted in our church, we are now able to develop hardware/software platforms for the live webstreaming of worship services and other events. Also, the media team is better equipped to build presentations for weekly worship services using Power Point, ProPresenter and Easy Worship.

While this technology conference and complementary seminars have been of great benefit not just to our church but throughout the conference, I would like to see us develop a Technology Institute where church volunteers can be trained and mentored to effectively use technology in worship.

## APPENDIX D

### PRE- AND POST-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE & RESULTS

## Pre- and Post-Survey Questions

Name:

Church:

1. How comfortable are you with the use of technology in general?
  - a. Poor
  - b. Below Average
  - c. Average
  - d. Good
  - e. Excellent
  
2. How have you adapted the use of technology for your personal life?
  - a. Poor
  - b. Below Average
  - c. Average
  - d. Good
  - e. Excellent
  
3. How have you adapted the use of technology in the general practice of ministry, e.g., power point, overhead projection, electronic announcements?
  - a. Poor
  - b. Below Average
  - c. Average
  - d. Good
  - e. Excellent
  
4. How engaged are your members in their quest for technology delivery in ministry?
  - a. Poor
  - b. Below Average
  - c. Average
  - d. Good
  - e. Excellent
  
5. Does your church use projection software in worship?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Sometimes
  
6. Does your church have a social media presence? (*Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, etc.*)
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not Sure



7. How regularly do you update your social media presence?
  - a. Weekly
  - b. Monthly
  - c. Quarterly
  - d. Other
  
8. Does your church incorporate the use of a phone tree or texting service to communicate directly with members?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Sometimes
  
9. How often do you communicate with your members through email?
  - a. Weekly
  - b. Monthly
  - c. Quarterly
  - d. None
  
10. How committed is your church to online streaming of its services?
  - a. Very weak
  - b. Weak
  - c. Average
  - d. Strong
  - e. Very Strong
  
11. Have you used technology specifically in the delivery of ministry, e.g., evangelism, Bible study, online giving, etc.
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Sometimes
  
12. How committed are you to having a mobile app for your church/department?
  - a. Very weak
  - b. Weak
  - c. Average
  - d. Strong
  - e. Very Strong

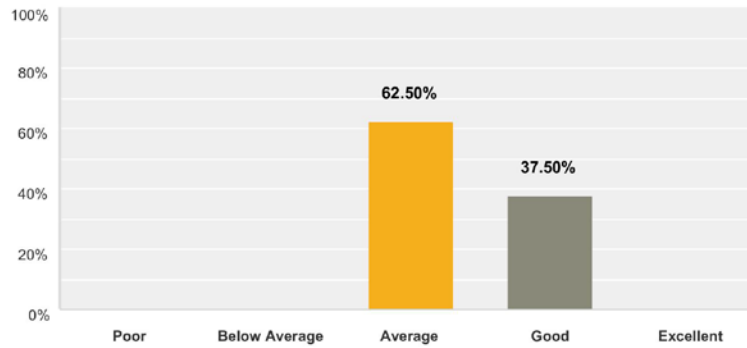
# PRE-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Pastoral Pre-Technology Training Assessment

SurveyMonkey

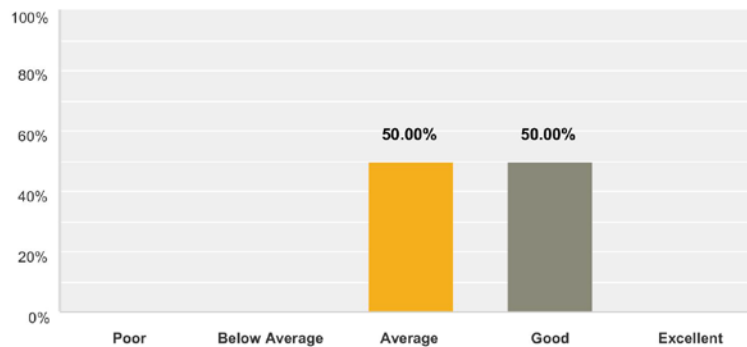
## Q1 How comfortable are you with the use of technology in general?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



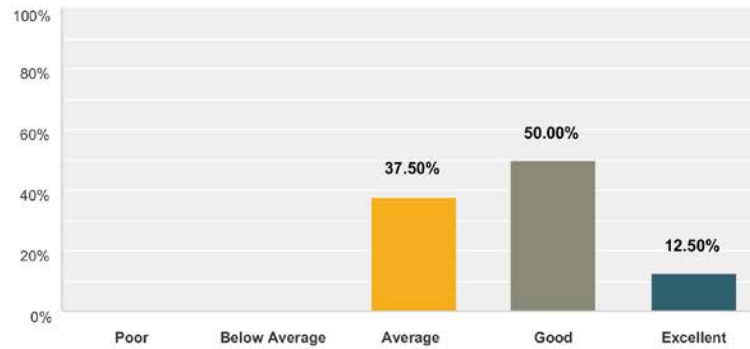
## Q2 How have you adapted the use of technology for your personal life?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



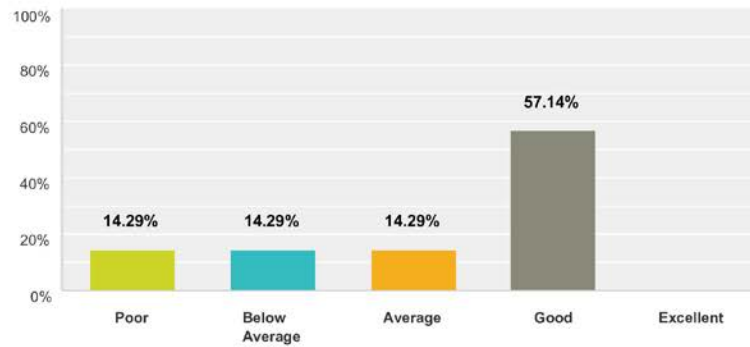
## Q3 How have you adapted the use of technology in the general practice of ministry, e.g., PowerPoint, overhead projection, electronic announcements?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



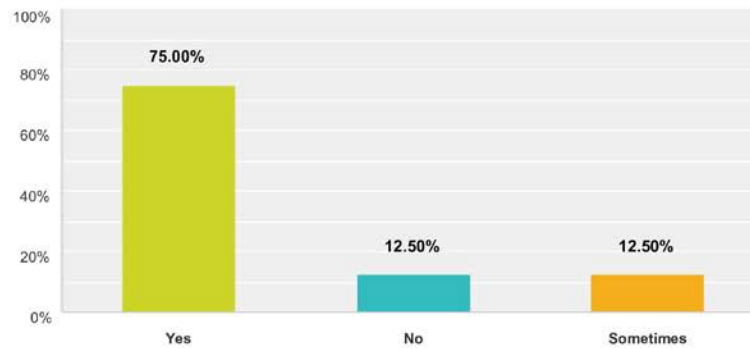
**Q4 How engaged are your members in their quest for technology delivery in ministry?**

Answered: 7 Skipped: 1



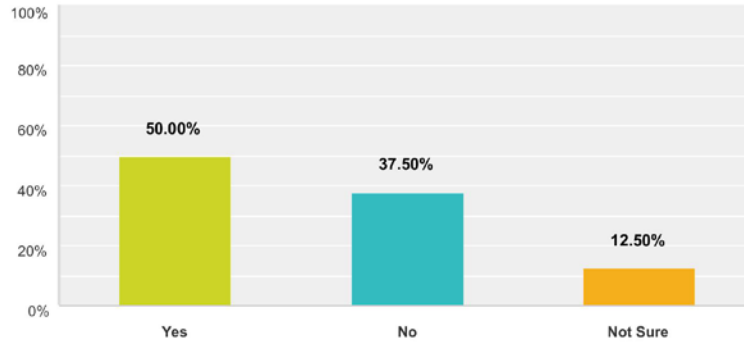
**Q5 Does your church use projection software in worship?**

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



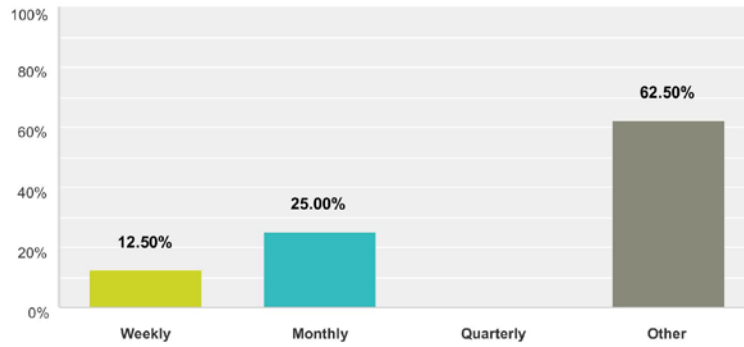
**Q6 Does your church have a social media presence? (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google plus etc.)**

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



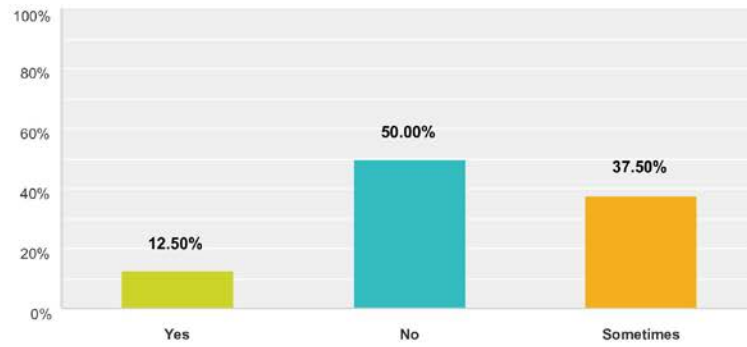
**Q7 How regularly do you update your social media presence?**

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



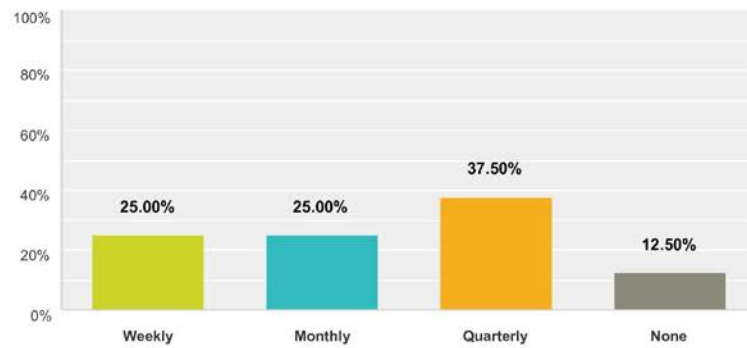
**Q8 Does your church incorporate the use of a phone tree or texting service to communicate directly with members?**

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



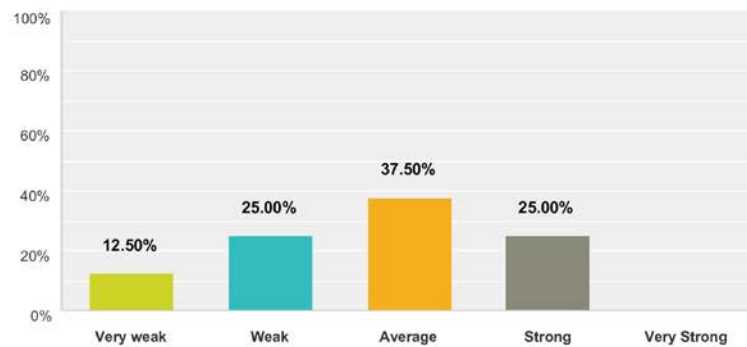
**Q9 How often do you communicate with your members through email?**

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



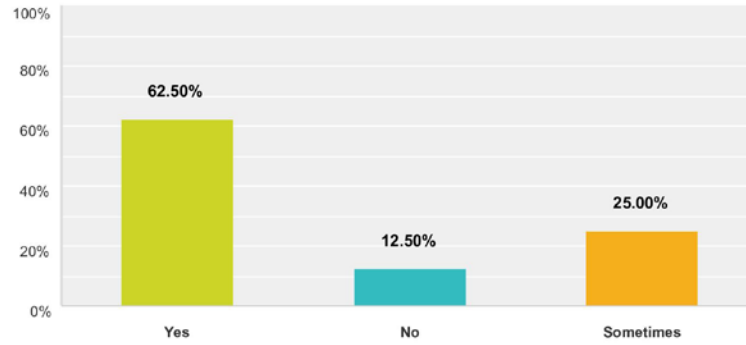
**Q10 How committed is your church to online streaming of its services?**

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



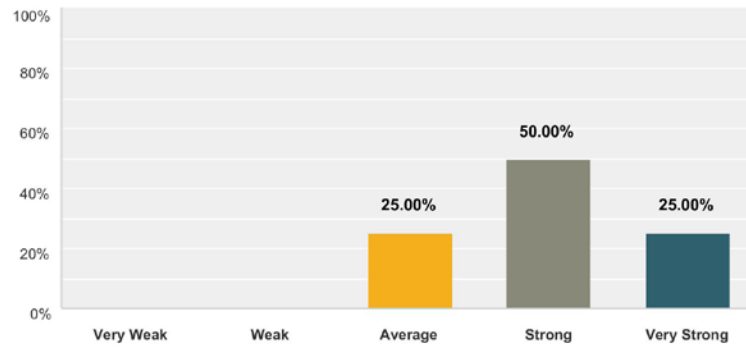
**Q11 Have you used technology specifically on the delivery of ministry, e.g. Evangelism, Bible study, online giving etc.**

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



**Q12 How committed are you to having a mobile app for your church/department?**

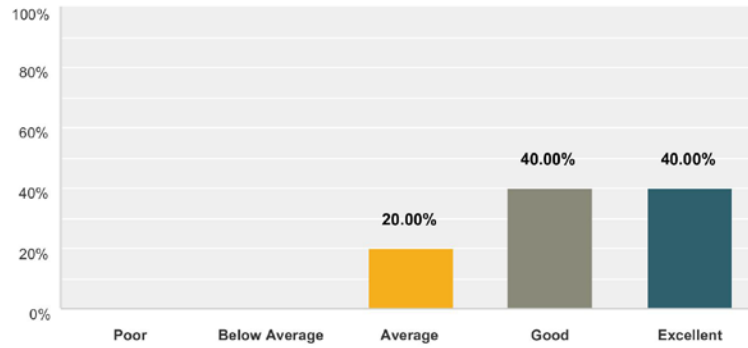
Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



# POST-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

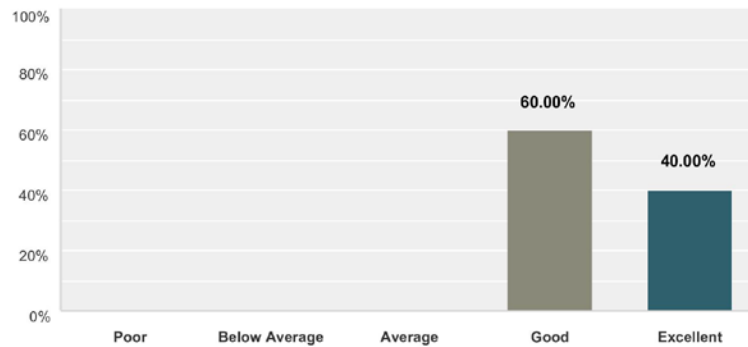
## Q1 How comfortable are you with the use of technology in general?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



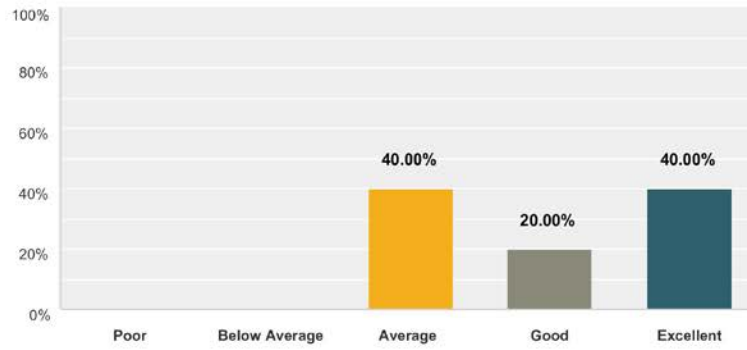
## Q2 How have you adapted the use of technology for your personal life?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



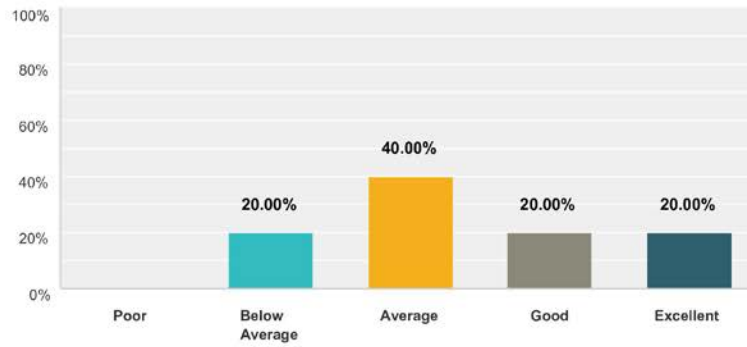
## Q3 How have you adapted the use of technology in the general practice of ministry, e.g., PowerPoint, overhead projection, electronic announcements?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



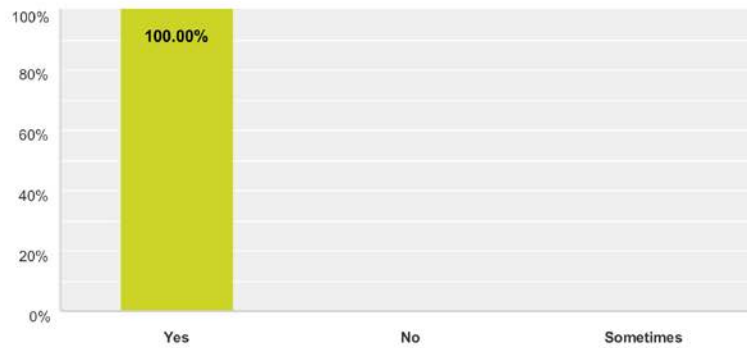
**Q4 How engaged are your members in their quest for technology delivery in ministry?**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



**Q5 Does your church use projection software in worship?**

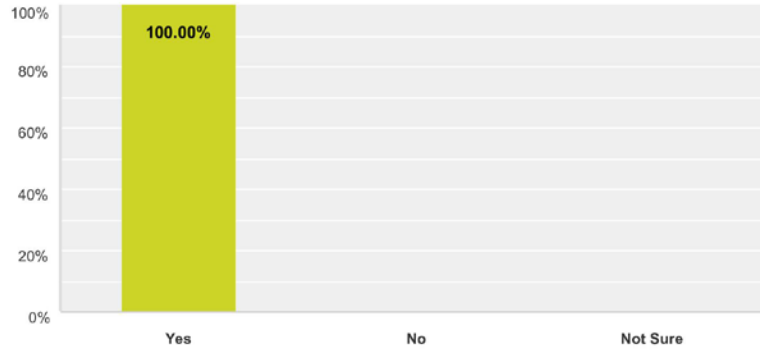
Answered: 5 Skipped: 0





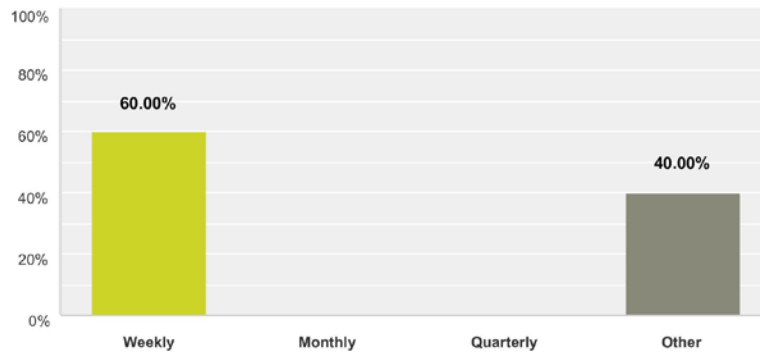
**Q6 Does your church have a social media presence? (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google plus etc.)**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



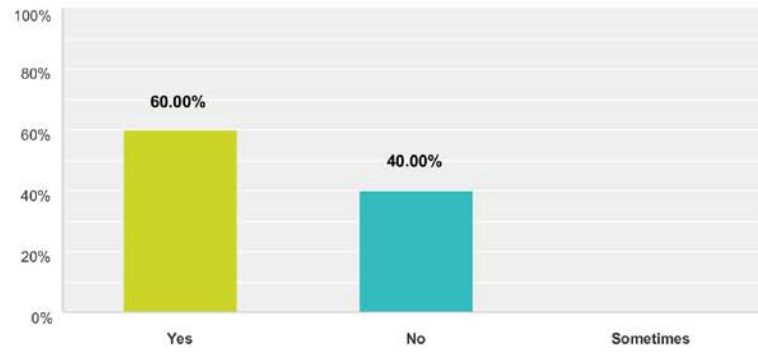
**Q7 How regularly do you update your social media presence?**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



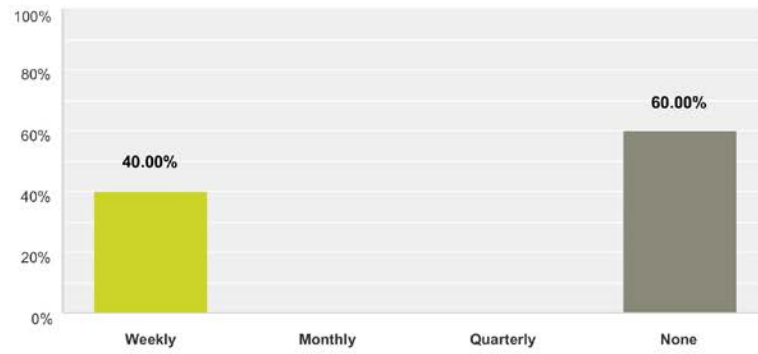
**Q8 Does your church incorporate the use of a phone tree or texting service to communicate directly with members?**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



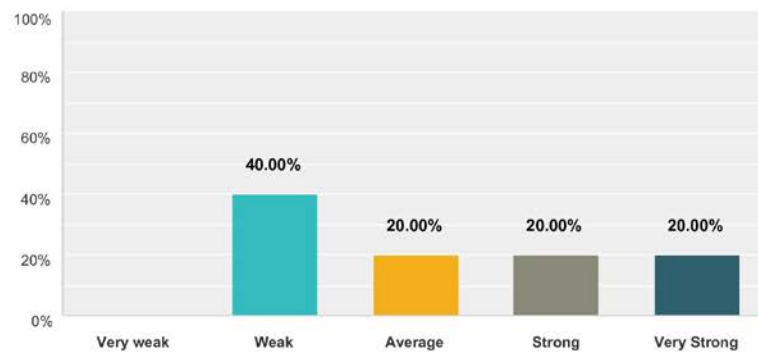
**Q9 How often do you communicate with your members through email?**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



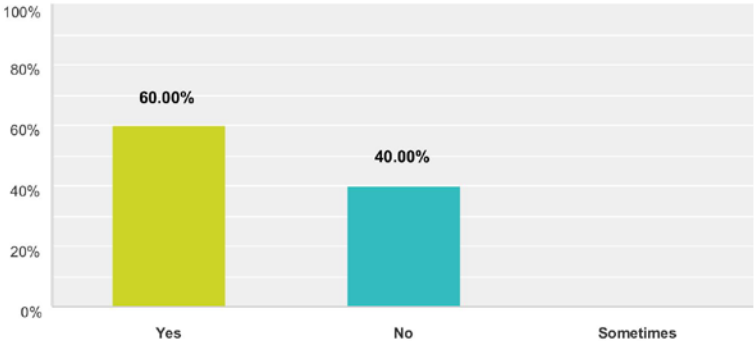
**Q10 How committed is your church to online streaming of its services?**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



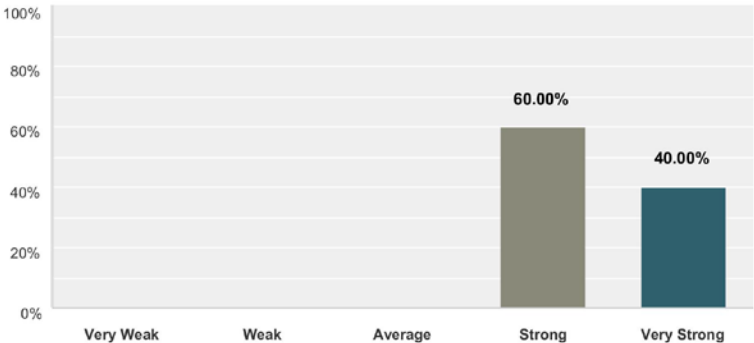
**Q11 Have you used technology specifically on the delivery of ministry, e.g. Evangelism, Bible study, online giving etc.**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



**Q12 How committed are you to having a mobile app for your church/department?**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



APPENDIX E

PEER GROUP PARTICIPANT CONSENT

## PEER GROUP PARTICIPANT CONSENT

### **Participant #1: Dr. Ricardo Bain**

In an email dated September 7, 2017, Dr. Bain wrote, “I hereby give you my consent to use any and all the information that I proffered for your research in written, digital, or by any other forms and means that you choose”. Signed Ricardo V. Bain.

### **Participant #2: Pastor Eddly Benoit**

In an email dated September 10, 2017, Pastor Eddly Benoit wrote, “I Eddly B. Benoit, hereby give Rohann D. Wellington permission to use my name in written format as part of his Doctor of Ministry project document”. Signed Eddly B. Benoit, JD. MDiv.

### **Participant #3: Dr. Manuel Rosario**

In an email dated September 11, 2017, Dr. Rosario wrote, “It was my joy and privilege to be one of the participants in your dissertation. Also, I authorize you to use my name and case in whatever exposition or publication that comes as a result of such research”. Signed Manuel Rosario PhD.

### **Participant #4: Dr. Andres Peralta**

In an email dated September 10, 2017, Dr. Andres Peralta wrote, “I give full permission for my name to appear in a written format in your project.” Signed Andres Peralta.

### **Participant #5: Pastor Neil Turner**

In an email dated September 6, 2017, Neil Turner wrote, “You have full permission to use my name (Neil Turner) in your dissertation. May God bless you”.

**Participant #6: Dr. Donnieval Walker**

Pursuant to our conversation regarding permission to quote me in your research: I consider it an honor and pleasure to be considered for making a contribution to your work. Please feel free to quote/reference any portion that will be helpful to you.

**Participant #7: Pastor Conrad White**

In an email dated September 6, 2017, Pastor Conrad White wrote, “I hereby give permission to Rohann Wellington to use my name in relation to the projects in your doctorate program”.

**Participant #8: Pastor Hubert Wilkie**

In an email dated September 7, 2017, Pastor Wilkie wrote, “I am delighted to have been a part of the journey, albeit in a very minute way. You have my permission to use my name in whatever way necessary on your printed document. I would consider it an honor. Best wishes in your future endeavors”.

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VITA

## VITA

**Name:** Rohann D. Wellington

**Date of Birth:** August 9

**Education:**

2014 - DMin (Organizational Leadership), Andrews University  
2004-2008 M.A. in Pastoral Ministry, Andrews University  
1999-2000 M.A. in Communication (Media Management and Television  
Production), New York Institute of Technology  
1996-1999 BA in Religion, Northern Caribbean University  
1994-1996 Assoc. Business Administration, West Indies College

**Ordained:**

2007- Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

**Experience:**

2015- Assistant to the president for Strategic Planning for Greater New York  
Conference (Metro NYC area)  
2010- Communication Director for Greater New York Conference (Metro  
NYC)  
2008- Managing Director, Atlantic Union Adventist Media (MA/NY/CT/RI)  
2008-2010 Associate Communication Director for Greater New York Conference  
2008-2012 Senior Pastor of Berean SDA Church (Brooklyn, NY)  
2004-2008 District Pastor of Mizpah and Emmanuel SDA Churches (Bronx, NY)  
2002-2004 Associate Pastor of the North Bronx Seventh-day Adventist Church  
(Bronx, NY)  
2001-2002 Associate Pastor of the Grand Concourse SDA Church (Bronx, NY)  
2000-2001 Line Director/Control Room Technician for Cable News Network  
(NYC)  
1999-2000 Television News Reporter & Videographer for Long Island News  
Tonight (New York Institute of Technology on Long Island)  
1997-1999 Radio and Television Production Engineer for Northern Caribbean  
University (Mandeville, Jamaica)



