

TECHNOLOGIES FOR WORSHIP

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TECHNOLOGY SPOTLIGHT

The Gathering Place



Out of the Box:

NEXO'S GEO M12 LINE ARRAY

KL-8 RACKMOUNT KEYBOARD MIXER
FROM RADIAL ENGINEERING

POINT SOURCE AUDIO'S
CO2 CONFIDENCE COLLECTION

LK953ST SHORT THROW 4K UHD PROJECTOR
FROM BENQ

TECHNOLOGIES FOR WORSHIP

COVER:
The Gathering Place Install
Video courtesy of
Tim Adams



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HOW TO GET BLOOD FROM A STONE

Working with Budgeting Committees

BY HOLLAND DAVIS



Dave Ramsey says that a budget is telling your money where to go instead of wondering where it went. But for many, a budget is more like Fort Knox. You know there is money in there, but there is no chance of getting it – and Budgeting Committees are seen as messengers of Satan sent to buffet us. In reality, Budgeting Committees and budgets help us think through what we really want to do and make sure you have the resources to do it. Because costs and revenue (through tithes and

offerings) are flexible, budgets must be reviewed and adjusted on a regular basis. Here are some things to consider when working with Budgeting Committees.

START WITH WHAT YOU HAVE

Before I ask for more money for a new tech purchase, I always begin with the existing tech budget. Often by reorganizing how resources

are allocated, I can free up existing funds for tech purchases that I desire. It's easier to get Budgeting Committees to agree to reallocating funds than it is to increase funds, especially when they are dealing with tight operating budgets. Some churches are careful with budgets. They may not want you to see employee salaries or other sensitive information. If that's the case, ask for a limited budget that includes

expenses without salaries, insurance costs, or other sensitive information.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Doing your homework doesn't mean getting all the information and giving it to the Budgeting Committee. Doing your homework means presenting options for scalability. Most Budgeting Committees don't want to make decisions over multiple options. They expect you to know what you want. However, they do want to know if there are ways to ease into a tech purchase;

for example, breaking 15K into stages, instead of having to provide that amount all at once. But here's the catch: each stage has to be a standalone solution in the event that there is a drop in funds after you complete a stage, and you have to wait longer than you want to.

Another aspect of doing your homework is to make sure your purchases fit the vision of the church. Maybe you have a vision to make live worship recordings, but your church leadership doesn't.

wise to look at options for financing a large purchase. Some companies offer in-house funding options, or payment plans.

Another way to fund tech purchases is through designated gifts. In the United States, it's technically illegal to designate funds.

However, most churches do their best to honor the wishes of their donors. You would need to check the giving policy of your church to find out how people could give to a tech equipment purchase.

technology that will not be discontinued or dramatically changed before you complete your total gear purchase.

PURCHASE FEATURES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE, NOT PRICE

Remember, price isn't the most important thing to consider; it's what the equipment actually does. Features are nice, but they are useless if you don't use them. Make sure the gear

REMEMBER BUDGETS ARE WORKS IN PROGRESS

Most Budgeting Committees treat budgets as immovable walls. However, a good budget is more of a guideline than a law. It is a tool to help you make decisions and prioritize what you need to achieve your vision. As vision changes or technologies advance, your budget will need to be adjusted and updated. Remember, budgets don't

MAKE SURE THE GEAR YOU PURCHASE DOES WHAT YOU WANT IT TO DO, AND DON'T BE SUCKED INTO BUYING FEATURES YOU REALLY DON'T NEED.

If your church doesn't support making live worship recordings, then don't suggest purchasing a top of the line digital recording board. Most digital boards will allow you to connect to a laptop with recording software via USB. Suggest a more cost-effective digital board that you can use to create live recordings and produce recordings the church can have for free. It's easier for a Budgeting Committee to approve an upgrade purchase for better equipment when they see actual product being produced.

PRESENT SOLUTIONS FOR FUNDING

On large purchases, I like to present funding options. Some Budgeting Committees have strict policies against going into debt. Some are open to looking at payment options. Depending on your particular situation, it's

Normally churches do not want departments to raise their own funding, but there are times when donors hear of a need and contribute to it on their own accord.

THINK WAY IN ADVANCE

Our church sets an annual budget, but many Budgeting Committees plan up to five years in advance. If you want your budget to be approved, you need to know how your church budgeting process works. Larger purchases need to be planned, which means whatever gear you present might be discontinued when the funds are actually available for purchase. That's why it's essential that you constantly update your information while you are waiting for a gear purchase to be approved. This is important to consider if you need to purchase equipment in stages. You want to select equipment brands or

you purchase does what you want it to do, and don't be sucked into buying features you really don't need. The second most important thing to consider is customer service. At some point in time your gear will need maintenance. You want to purchase equipment where parts are readily available and customer service is easy to reach. Unfortunately, I've made the mistake of buying based on price alone, only to find out when the equipment had problems the only real solution was to toss it and buy something else. Something to keep in mind with lower priced options is the fact that the cost is reached by using lesser quality parts. When a piece of gear is installed, this may not be a huge issue. However, in a portable church situation, where your gear is constantly getting set-up and packed away, it's better to spend a little more for quality components.

limit your fun, budgets reduce waste so you have more resources to have fun with. ■

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