

# Church & Donor Management Software (ChMS)

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Ministry Business Services, Inc. President

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Solutions from church and donor management software providers keep improving in their ability to help churches and ministries fulfill their mission! Their features to track and communicate with people, their web and mobile device interfaces, and their powerful database tools make this category of software a big help and a valuable asset for today's ministries in reaching many with The Gospel and discipling them.

## Church Software Historical Perspective

In the mid-1980s the number of these programs had grown to 262! Then some merged, some consolidated, and some went out of business, reducing the number to only 34. In the 1990s the Internet made it so easy for those writing solutions to share them that the number of solutions has since more than doubled! Our research this year found 58 solutions focusing on the church and ministry market, of which 40 qualified for this article (requirements include active marketing, minimum growth, and active development of their solution).

We always include new providers (those three years old or less) to give them a chance to build some momentum and compete with 'the big guys'. It also keeps all of the providers 'on their toes' as the up-and-comers sometimes develop new technologies that benefit many churches and ministries in a new way.

## Why Church Management Software?

The solution providers on the following pages meet the sophisticated and complex needs of churches and ministries. Tracking more than just names, addresses, and phone numbers, many of these also help build community and track traditional and modern family relationships, spiritual gifts, talents, interests, attendance, nursery security, contributions, fundraising campaigns, volunteerism, small groups, and more.

Church and ministry offices can be stressful workplaces because of the many deadlines that must be met by an administrative staff that is typically smaller in number than what would be found in a similar-sized secular business. Church management software, if well written, can be a soothing balm. If it's powerful, capable, fast, and stable, the ministry team can rely on it to help them get the most possible work done—efficiently and with minimal stress. And if its abilities are broad enough, every ministry in the church or ministry can focus on just one database, increasing synergy and minimizing cost.

## Church Management Software Defined

Some time ago Steve Hewitt, then Editor-in-Chief of *Christian Computing Magazine* (recently re-branded as *MinistryTech Magazine*), labeled the software category tailored to meet the needs of churches as *Church Management Software*, or CMS. More recently some began calling it ChMS to help prevent confusion since there are now so many software categories called 'CMS'. Parachurch ministries need to track similar data, so we invited those solutions into this article too. Following is a well-researched list of the leading ChMS providers at the time of this writing, with each stating at the top of the feature chart whether their focus is church, parachurch, or both.

## Not-for-Profit Accounting

Churches and ministries exist in a unique accounting niche that most software (and even most CPAs!) can't help with. But many ChMS packages *can* help in this area.

One of a ministry's most vulnerable areas is finance. All too often we hear about churches and ministries that have suffered embezzlement by a trusted team member. One of the best protections is an accounting system that has a good audit trail, tracking the detail of every transaction and whose data cannot be altered in any way. For these reasons, some ChMS providers have written their own fully-integrated accounting system.

Some churches and ministries want a ChMS that has a fully-integrated accounting system, and we list the functions they look for in the chart. Others may not care if the ChMS provider has written its own accounting system, and for them it's good to know that most ChMSes can interface with 'third-party' accounting systems such as those in the chart that only provide nonprofit accounting solutions.

## Feature Chart

We've tried to give you the most comprehensive and quickest format possible of those ChMS database and accounting functions ministry teams request most. We removed features provided by all ChMS providers to help focus on solutions' distinct feature sets.

The chart lists solutions by the name their providers use to market them rather than by the company name. We include the company name in the section following the chart in which we give information on each provider such as how to reach them, how long they've been making their solutions available, how many organizations they currently serve, their support hours, and how often they update their software. All of the information in this article was provided by the software companies.

The chart uses two symbols:

- The "■" symbol indicates features ChMS companies provide directly, and
- The "■" symbol indicates needs they meet through an outside (third party) source.

## Happy Hunting!

Shop wisely. We recommend that you do your due diligence and check with current users of the software you're interested in. Ask questions like:

- Does the software do what was promised?
- Is their support team capable and available?
- If you were faced with the same decision today, what would you do differently?

Feel free to contact any of the providers listed. They would love to help you in your ministry. Happy hunting!

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**ACS**

by ACS Technologies  
Phone: 800.736.7425  
Email: solutions@acstechnologies.com  
Web: www.acstechnologies.com  
Company Founded in 1978  
Years Marketing ChMS: 39  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 10,000  
Number on Team: 395  
Support: 9-8 Eastern, 9-6 Fri  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: 8

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**AgapeWORKS**

by AgapeWORKS  
Phone: 760.718.3273  
Email: info@agapeworks.org  
Web: www.agapeworks.org  
Company Founded in 2004  
Years Marketing ChMS: 8  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6,421  
Number on Team: 5  
Support: 9-5 Pacific  
Last Major Release: Sep, 2017  
Updates per Year: 12

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**Aplos**

by Aplos Software  
Phone: 888.274.1316  
Email: sales@aplos.com  
Web: www.aplos.com  
Company Founded in 2009  
Years Marketing ChMS: 6  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 4,000  
Number on Team: 40  
Support: 8-4 Pacific  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**Breeze**

by Breeze  
Phone: 888.320.6030  
Email: support@breezechms.com  
Web: www.breezechms.com  
Company Founded in 2012  
Years Marketing ChMS: 5  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3,582  
Number on Team: 27  
Support: 9-5 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**CCIS Shield CMS**

by CCIS Church Management Software  
Phone: 800.295.7551  
Email: sales@ccissoftware.com  
Web: www.ccissoftware.com  
Company Founded in 1981  
Years Marketing ChMS: 37  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6,722  
Number on Team: 60  
Support: 8-4 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Mar, 2017  
Updates per Year: 3

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**CDM+**

by Suran Systems, Inc.  
Phone: 877.891.4236  
Email: sales@cdmplus.com  
Web: www.cdmplus.com  
Company Founded in 1987  
Years Marketing ChMS: 30  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6,500  
Number on Team: 30  
Support: 8:30-6 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2017  
Updates per Year: 4

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**Church Community Builder**

by Church Community Builder  
Phone: 866.242.1199  
Email: support@churchcommunitybuilder.com  
Web: www.churchcommunitybuilder.com  
Company Founded in 1999  
Years Marketing ChMS: 18  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 4,421  
Number on Team: 121  
Support: 7-6 Mountain  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**Church MemberLink**

by CAA Software, Inc.  
Phone: 706.864.4055  
Email: support@caasoftware.com  
Web: www.churchmemberlink.com  
Company Founded in 2005  
Years Marketing ChMS: 3  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 60  
Number on Team: 2  
Support: 9-5 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2017  
Updates per Year: Monthly

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**Church Windows Software**

by Computer Helper Publishing  
Phone: 800.533.5227  
Email: sales@churchwindows.com  
Web: www.churchwindows.com  
Company Founded in 1987  
Years Marketing ChMS: 30  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 12,000  
Number on Team: 25  
Support: 9-6 Eastern, 9-5 Fri  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2016  
Updates per Year: 3

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**Church360°**

by Concordia Publishing House  
Phone: 800.325.2399  
Email: softwaresales@cts.cph.org  
Web: www.church360.org  
Company Founded in 1869  
Years Marketing ChMS: 7  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1,100  
Number on Team: 25  
Support: 7:30-5 Central  
Last Major Release: Sep, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**Churchteams**

by Churchteams.com, Inc.  
Phone: 817.405.9750  
Email: info@churchteams.com  
Web: www.churchteams.com  
Company Founded in 2001  
Years Marketing ChMS: 9  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 900  
Number on Team: 8  
Support: 8:30-5 Central  
Last Major Release: Sep, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**ChurchTrac Online**

by ChurchTrac Software, Inc.  
Phone: 877.704.0222  
Email: support@churchtrac.com  
Web: www.churchtrac.com  
Company Founded in 2004  
Years Marketing ChMS: 13  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 7,500  
Number on Team: 7  
Support: 8-6 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Sep, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**COMS for Windows**

by Specialty Software  
Phone: 800.568.6350  
Email: sales@specialtysoftware.com  
Web: www.specialtysoftware.com  
Company Founded in 1982  
Years Marketing ChMS: 35  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6,800  
Number on Team: 6  
Support: 9-5 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: 4

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**ConnectNow**

by ParishSoft (Ministry Brands)  
Phone: 866.930.4774 x131  
Email: parishsoftsales@parishsoft.com  
Web: www.parishsoft.com  
Company Founded in 1998  
Years Marketing ChMS: 19  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 11,673  
Number on Team: 78  
Support: 8-8 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2017  
Updates per Year: 4

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**Donarius® Church Management Software**

by Nuverb Systems, Inc.  
Phone: 888.479.4636  
Email: question@nuverb.com  
Web: www.donarius.com  
Company Founded in 1993  
Years Marketing ChMS: 19  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2,300  
Number on Team: 1  
Support: 9-6 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Apr, 2017  
Updates per Year: 20

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**Excellerate Church Management**

by Micro System Design  
Phone: 888.371.6878  
Email: info@excellerate.com  
Web: www.excellerate.com  
Company Founded in 1989  
Years Marketing ChMS: 19  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2,473  
Number on Team: 2  
Support: 9-5 Central  
Last Major Release: Feb, 2017  
Updates per Year: 12

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**Faithful Steward**

by Diakonia  
Phone: 800.325.6642  
Email: info@faithfulsteward.com  
Web: www.church-software.com  
Company Founded in 1992  
Years Marketing ChMS: 23  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1,085  
Number on Team: 3  
Support: 9-5 Central  
Last Major Release: Apr, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**FellowshipOne**

by FellowshipOne (Ministry Brands)  
Phone: 844.459.8525  
Email: sales@fellowshipone.com  
Web: www.fellowshipone.com  
Company Founded in 2004  
Years Marketing ChMS: 13  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 4,000  
Number on Team: 60  
Support: 7-7 Central  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**Fresh Vine**

by Fresh Vine  
Phone: 888.708.1905  
Email: contact@freshvine.co  
Web: https://freshvine.co  
Company Founded in 2008  
Years Marketing ChMS: 6  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 330  
Number on Team: 3  
Support: 10-5 Central  
Last Major Release: Mar, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**IconCMO**

by Icon Systems  
Phone: 800.596.4266  
Email: sales@iconcmo.com  
Web: www.iconcmo.com  
Company Founded in 1992  
Years Marketing ChMS: 16  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 4,500  
Number on Team: 12  
Support: 8-5 Central  
Last Major Release: Jun, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**Iglesia HOY**

by JRSoftware  
Phone: 52.1.664.251.5478  
Email: informacion@iglesiahoy.com  
Web: www.iglesiahoy.com  
Company Founded in 1999  
Years Marketing ChMS: 18  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3,060  
Number on Team: 6  
Support: 8-6 Pacific  
Last Major Release: Jan, 2017  
Updates per Year: 3

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**Intacct**

by Sage Intacct  
Phone: 877.437.7765  
Email: info@intacct.com  
Web: www.sageintacct.com  
Company Founded in 1999  
Years Marketing ChMS: 18  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2,000  
Number on Team: 500  
Support: 6-5 Pacific  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2017  
Updates per Year: 4

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**Ministry Tracker**

by Faithlife  
Phone: 360.450.3542  
Email: support@ministrytracker.com  
Web: www.ministrytracker.com  
Company Founded in 2004  
Years Marketing ChMS: 14  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 600  
Number on Team: 20  
Support: 9-5 Pacific  
Last Major Release: Jun, 2017  
Updates per Year: 52

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**MinistryPlatform**

by Think Ministry  
Phone: 678.404.2467  
Email: info@thinkministry.com  
Web: www.thinkministry.com  
Company Founded in 2007  
Years Marketing ChMS: 8  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 545  
Number on Team: 15  
Support: 9-6 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Jun, 2017  
Updates per Year: 20

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**Parish Data System (PDS)**

by ACS Technologies  
Phone: 800.736.7425  
Email: solutions@acstechnologies.com  
Web: www.acstechnologies.com  
Company Founded in 1978  
Years Marketing ChMS: 39  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 9,000  
Number on Team: 395  
Support: 9-8 Eastern, 9-6 Fri  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2017  
Updates per Year: 8

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**PowerChurch Plus**

by PowerChurch Software  
Phone: 800.486.1800  
Email: info@powerchurch.com  
Web: www.powerchurch.com  
Company Founded in 1984  
Years Marketing ChMS: 33  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 38,500  
Number on Team: 16  
Support: 9-6 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Nov, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**Raiser's Edge NXT/Financial Edge NXT**

by Blackbaud  
Phone: 404.323.0274  
Email: michael.blanton@blackbaud.com  
Web: www.blackbaud.com  
Company Founded in 1981  
Years Marketing ChMS: 20  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1,050  
Number on Team: 500  
Support: 8-8 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

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**Realm**

by ACS Technologies  
Phone: 800.736.7425  
Email: info@acstechnologies.com  
Web: www.acstechnologies.com  
Company Founded in 1978  
Years Marketing ChMS: 39  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 5,000  
Number on Team: 395  
Support: 8-5 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Sep, 2017  
Updates per Year: 23

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**Roll Call**

by By the Book  
Phone: 800.554.9116  
Email: info@bythebook.com  
Web: www.bythebook.com  
Company Founded in 1992  
Years Marketing ChMS: 25  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 4,600  
Number on Team: 6  
Support: 8-5 Central; 7-1 Sun  
Last Major Release: Dec, 2016  
Updates per Year: Monthly

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**Seraphim Office**

by Seraphim Software  
Phone: 855.681.6160  
Email: sales@seraphimsoftware.com  
Web: www.seraphimsoftware.com  
Company Founded in 2012  
Years Marketing ChMS: 5  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 300  
Number on Team: 20  
Support: 8-4 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Sep, 2017  
Updates per Year: Quarterly

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**Servant Keeper**

by Servant PC Resources, Inc.  
Phone: 800.773.7570  
Email: sales@servantpc.com  
Web: www.servantpc.com  
Company Founded in 1994  
Years Marketing ChMS: 23  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 30,000  
Number on Team: 30  
Support: 9-6 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Feb, 2017  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

**Shelby Arena**

by Shelby Systems, Inc. (Ministry Brands)  
Phone: 800.877.0222  
Email: sales@shelbyinc.com  
Web: www.shelbysystems.com  
Company Founded in 1976  
Years Marketing ChMS: 10  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 640  
Number on Team: 95  
Support: 7-6 Central  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: 4

**Shelby v5**

by Shelby Systems, Inc. (Ministry Brands)  
Phone: 800.877.0222  
Email: sales@shelbyinc.com  
Web: www.shelbysystems.com  
Company Founded in 1976  
Years Marketing ChMS: 42  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 8,400  
Number on Team: 95  
Support: 7-6 Central  
Last Major Release: Jul, 2017  
Updates per Year: 2

**ShelbyNext**

by Shelby Systems, Inc. (Ministry Brands)  
Phone: 800.877.0222  
Email: sales@shelbyinc.com  
Web: www.shelbysystems.com  
Company Founded in 1976  
Years Marketing ChMS: 42  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1,500  
Number on Team: 95  
Support: 7-6 Central  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: Monthly

**Shepherd's Staff**

by Concordia Publishing House  
Phone: 800.325.2399  
Email: softwaresales@cts.cph.org  
Web: www.shepherdsstaff.org  
Company Founded in 1869  
Years Marketing ChMS: 24  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3,400  
Number on Team: 25  
Support: 7:30-5 Central  
Last Major Release: Sep, 2017  
Updates per Year: Quarterly

**SimpleChurchCRM**

by SimpleChurch LLC (Ministry Brands)  
Phone: 866.392.1744  
Email: sales@simplechurchcrm.com  
Web: simplechurchcrm.com  
Company Founded in 2010  
Years Marketing ChMS: 7  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3,335  
Number on Team: 25  
Support: 9-6 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2017  
Updates per Year: 25

**Software4Nonprofits**

by Cooperstock Software  
Phone: 416.423.7722  
Email: info@software4nonprofits.com  
Web: www.software4nonprofits.com  
Company Founded in 1999  
Years Marketing ChMS: 18  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6,500  
Number on Team: 3  
Support: 9-9 Eastern  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2017  
Updates per Year: 6

**The City**

by ACS Technologies  
Phone: 800.736.7425  
Email: solutions@acstechnologies.com  
Web: www.acstechnologies.com  
Company Founded in 2009  
Years Marketing ChMS: 8  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1,000  
Number on Team: 395  
Support: 9-8 Eastern, 9-6 Fri  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2017  
Updates per Year: 4

**TouchPoint Software**

by Pursuant  
Phone: 901.654.5750  
Email: andrew.triplett@touchpointsoftware.com  
Web: www.touchpointsoftware.com  
Company Founded in 2008  
Years Marketing ChMS: 8  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 300  
Number on Team: 15  
Support: 8-5 Central  
Last Major Release: Oct, 2017  
Updates per Year: 12

**Web Church Connect**

by Web Church Connect  
Phone: 800.516.7800  
Email: info@webchurchconnect.com  
Web: www.webchurchconnect.com  
Company Founded in 2009  
Years Marketing ChMS: 6  
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 863  
Number on Team: 6  
Support: 7-5 Pacific  
Last Major Release: Aug, 2016  
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web