

Church & Donor Management Software (ChMS)

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Ministry Business Services, Inc. President

Reprinted from The Church Network's *TCN Professional Journal*

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 an essential tool and 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 for their own church to share them with others that the number of solutions more than doubled! Our research this year found 54 solutions focusing on the church and ministry market, of which 37 qualified for this article (requirements include active marketing, minimum market acceptance / customer growth, and active software development).

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 new ways.

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 simple CRM datasets like 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 reliable, the ministry team can use 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.

ChMS Defined

We refer to this category of solutions as **Church Management Software**, or ChMS. parachurch ministries track similar data, so we invited those solutions into this article too. Following is a well-researched list of the leading church and donor management solution providers at the time of this writing, with each stating at the top of the feature chart whether their solution is focused on meeting the needs of church, parachurch, or denominational offices. Some even provide their solutions in non-English languages!

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 a church or ministry that has 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 other accounting systems such as those in the chart that provide standalone nonprofit accounting solutions.

The ChMS Challenge

ChMS is a challenge for many of those who work on church and ministry teams. Usually it's because they haven't been trained, sparking the concern that the ChMS is not simple or intuitive. As mentioned, though, there are too many types of deep data to be simple or intuitive.

We've added to the feature chart the ability to create custom workflows for tasks and roles that help make it simpler and more intuitive. But the key will always be training. We strongly recommend that new team members be trained before being given access to update the ChMS, and that the solution provider be contracted to come on-site or provide interactive remote training at least annually.

Making ongoing training part of your ChMS strategy will ensure that your ChMS investment will last longer and serve your team better.

Feature Chart

We've tried to give you the most comprehensive and quickest format possible of those ChMS database and accounting functions that 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 solution available, how many organizations they currently serve, their support hours, and how often they update their software. We have trusted the software companies to provide this data accurately; all of the information was provided by them.

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 doing your due diligence and checking 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: sales@acst.com
Web: www.acstechnologies.com
Company Founded in 1978
Years Marketing ChMS: 41
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 7903
Number on Team: 421
Support: 9 - 8 M-Th, 9 - 6 Fri Eastern
Last Major Release: Dec, 2020
Updates per Year: 6

Atom

By Micro System Design
Phone: 888.371.6878
Email: info@excellerate.com
Web: www.excellerate.com
Company Founded in 1989
Years Marketing ChMS: 1
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 33
Number on Team: 2
Support: 9 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Blackbaud Faith Solutions

By Blackbaud
Phone: 800.443.9441
Email: solutions@blackbaud.com
Web: www.blackbaud.com/faith
Company Founded in 1981
Years Marketing ChMS: 20
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2000
Number on Team: 3000
Support: 24•7
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Breeze Church Management

By Breeze
Phone: 888.320.6030
Email: support@breezechms.com
Web: www.breezechms.com
Company Founded in 2013
Years Marketing ChMS: 7
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 8704
Number on Team: 49
Support: 9 - 6 Eastern
Last Major Release: Dec, 2020
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

CahabaWorks Church Software

By CahabaCreek Software
Phone: 205.621.9649
Email: sales@cahabacreek.com
Web: www.cahabacreek.com
Company Founded in 1997
Years Marketing ChMS: 12
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1620
Number on Team: 8
Support: 9 - 4 M-Th Central; Email 24•7
Last Major Release: Dec, 2020
Updates per Year: 3

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: 40
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6800
Number on Team: 60
Support: 8 - 5 Eastern
Last Major Release: Jan, 2021
Updates per Year: 3

CDM+

By Suran Systems, Inc.
Phone: 877.891.4236
Email: sales@cdmplus.com
Web: www.cdmplus.com
Company Founded in 1987
Years Marketing ChMS: 33
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3175
Number on Team: 19
Support: 8:30 - 6 Eastern
Last Major Release: Oct, 2020
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Church Community Builder

By Pushpay
Phone: 844.787.4729
Email: team@pushpay.com
Web: www.pushpay.com
Company Founded in 2011
Years Marketing ChMS: 22
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 4182
Number on Team: 412
Support: 7 - 6 Mountain
Last Major Release: Sep, 2020
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Church Membership Directory

By Software for Ministry
Phone: 817.219.1243
Email: info@softwareforministry.com
Web: www.softwareforministry.com
Company Founded in 1984
Years Marketing ChMS: 36
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 325
Number on Team: 2
Support: 9 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Jan, 2020
Updates per Year: 4

Church Windows

By Computer Helper Publishing
Phone: 800.533.5227
Email: sales@churchwindows.com
Web: www.churchwindows.com
Company Founded in 1987
Years Marketing ChMS: 26
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 12000
Number on Team: 30
Support: 9 - 6 M-Th Eastern, 9 - 5 Fri
Last Major Release: Dec, 2020
Updates per Year: 1

Church360°

By Concordia Technology Solutions
Phone: 800.325.2399
Email: softwaresales@cts.cph.org
Web: www.church360.org
Company Founded in 1869
Years Marketing ChMS: 10
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1400
Number on Team: 25
Support: 7:30 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Churchteams

By Churchteams.com, Inc
Phone: 817.405.9750
Email: info@churchteams.com
Web: www.churchteams.com
Company Founded in 2000
Years Marketing ChMS: 7
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 804
Number on Team: 8
Support: 9 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Dec, 2020
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

ChurchTrac

By ChurchTrac Software, Inc.
Phone: 877.704.0222
Email: support@churchtrac.com
Web: www.churchtrac.com
Company Founded in 2002
Years Marketing ChMS: 18
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 9800
Number on Team: 10
Support: 8 - 8 Eastern
Last Major Release: Mar, 2021
Updates per Year: 4

COMS and/or EFA for Windows

By Specialty Software
Phone: 321.821.9422
Email: sales@specialtysoftware.com
Web: www.specialtysoftware.com
Company Founded in 1984
Years Marketing ChMS: 37
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2500
Number on Team: 5
Support: 9 - 4 Eastern
Last Major Release: Oct, 2020
Updates per Year: 4

Connection Card Pro

By Connection Card Inc.
Phone: 888.777.0928
Email: sales@connectioncard.net
Web: www.connectioncardpro.com
Company Founded in 2017
Years Marketing ChMS: 3
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 200
Number on Team: 4
Support: 7 - 7 Pacific
Last Major Release: Jan, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Donarius Church Management Software

By Nuverb Systems Inc.
Phone: 888.479.4636
Email: question@nuverb.com
Web: www.donarius.com
Company Founded in 1997
Years Marketing ChMS: 22
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2532
Number on Team: 1
Support: 9 - 6 Eastern
Last Major Release: Aug, 2020
Updates per Year: 20

DONATION and ACCOUNTS

By Cooperstock Software
Phone: 416.423.7722
Email: info@software4nonprofits.com
Web: www.software4nonprofits.com
Company Founded in 1999
Years Marketing ChMS: 22
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 5660
Number on Team: 3
Support: 9 - 9 Eastern
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: 12

Elexio Community

By Elexio, a division of Ministry Brands
Phone: 888.997.9947
Email: Sales@Elexio.com
Web: www.elexio.com
Company Founded in 2002
Years Marketing ChMS: 19
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2785
Number on Team: 31
Support: 9 - 5 M-F, 8 - 4 Sun Eastern
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Excellerate Desktop

By Micro System Design
Phone: 888.371.6878
Email: info@excellerate.com
Web: www.excellerate.com
Company Founded in 1989
Years Marketing ChMS: 22
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2824
Number on Team: 2
Support: 9 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Sep, 2020
Updates per Year: 8

Faithful Steward

By Diakonia LLC
Phone: 314.256.9073
Email: info@faithfulsteward.com
Web: www.church-software.com
Company Founded in 1992
Years Marketing ChMS: 27
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1088
Number on Team: 3
Support: 9 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Jan, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Faithlife Equip

By Faithlife
Phone: 888.503.2186
Email: sales@faithlife.com
Web: https://faithlife.com/products/equip
Company Founded in 1986
Years Marketing ChMS: 2
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1000
Number on Team: 400
Support: 6 - 6 Pacific
Last Major Release: Jan, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

FastFund Online Accounting

By Araize
Phone: 866.840.7449
Email: sales@araize.com
Web: www.araize.com
Company Founded in 1985
Years Marketing ChMS: 9
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1100
Number on Team: 8
Support: 9 - 5 Eastern
Last Major Release: Jan, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

FellowshipOne

By FellowshipOne, a division of Ministry Brands
Phone: 844.459.8525
Email: salesadmin@fellowshipone.com
Web: www.fellowshipone.com
Company Founded in 2004
Years Marketing ChMS: 17
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1200
Number on Team: 30
Support: 7 - 6 Central
Last Major Release: Dec, 2020
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

IconCMO

By Icon Systems
Phone: 800.596.4266
Email: sales@iconcmo.com
Web: www.iconcmo.com
Company Founded in 1992
Years Marketing ChMS: 29
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2600
Number on Team: 8
Support: 8 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Iglesia en Conexión

By JR Software
Phone: +52 661.145.0151
Email: info@iglesiaenconexion.com
Web: www.iglesiaenconexion.com
Company Founded in 1999
Years Marketing ChMS: 3
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 200
Number on Team: 6
Support: 8 - 6 Pacific
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: 4

Iglesia HOY

By JR Software
Phone: +52 661.145.0151
Email: informacion@iglesiahoy.com
Web: www.iglesiahoy.com
Company Founded in 1999
Years Marketing ChMS: 21
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3600
Number on Team: 6
Support: 8 - 6 Pacific
Last Major Release: Apr, 2020
Updates per Year: 2

MinistryPlatform

By Think Ministry
Phone: 678.404.2467
Email: sales@ministryplatform.com
Web: www.ministryplatform.com
Company Founded in 2006
Years Marketing ChMS: 13
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 835
Number on Team: 20
Support: 9 - 6 Eastern
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: 6

Parish Data Systems (PDS)

By ACS Technologies
Phone: 800.736.7425
Email: sales@acst.com
Web: www.acstechnologies.com
Company Founded in 1978
Years Marketing ChMS: 40
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 5703
Number on Team: 421
Support: 9 - 8 M-Th, 9 - 6 Fri Eastern
Last Major Release: Jul, 2020
Updates per Year: 4

ParishSOFT Family Suite

By ParishSOFT, a division of Ministry Brands
Phone: 866.930.4774
Email: parishsoftsales@parishsoft.com
Web: www.parishsoft.com
Company Founded in 1998
Years Marketing ChMS: 22
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 9900
Number on Team: 65
Support: 8:30 - 7 Eastern
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

PowerChurch

By PowerChurch Software
Phone: 800.486.1800
Email: info@powerchurch.com
Web: www.powerchurch.com
Company Founded in 1984
Years Marketing ChMS: 36
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 38000
Number on Team: 17
Support: 9 - 6 Eastern
Last Major Release: Oct, 2019
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Realm

By ACS Technologies
Phone: 843.610.1126
Email: sales@acst.com
Web: www.acstechnologies.com
Company Founded in 1978
Years Marketing ChMS: 8
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 9321
Number on Team: 421
Support: 9 - 8 M-Th, 9 - 6 Fri Eastern
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: 26

Sage Intacct

By Sage Intacct
Phone: 512.470.3929
Email: joan.benson@sage.com
Web: www.sageintacct.com
Company Founded in 1999
Years Marketing ChMS: 22
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3000
Number on Team: 1000
Support: 6 - 5 Pacific
Last Major Release: Nov, 2020
Updates per Year: 4

SeekerWorks.NET

By SeekerWorks Inc.
Phone: 763.262.0333
Email: sales@seekerworks.com
Web: www.seekerworks.net
Company Founded in 2011
Years Marketing ChMS: 1
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1
Number on Team: 1
Support: 10 - 8 Central
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

ShelbyNext

By Shelby Systems, a division of Ministry Brands
Phone: 800.877.0222
Email: salesreps@shelbyinc.com
Web: www.shelbysystems.com
Company Founded in 1976
Years Marketing ChMS: 44
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2803
Number on Team: 95
Support: 7 - 6 Central
Last Major Release: Jan, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Shepherd's Staff

By Concordia Technology Solutions
Phone: 800.325.2399
Email: softwaresales@cts.cph.org
Web: www.shepherdsstaff.org
Company Founded in 1869
Years Marketing ChMS: 27
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2800
Number on Team: 25
Support: 7:30 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Jul, 2020
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Tithe.ly ChMS

By Tithe.ly
Phone: 424.228.8870
Email: hello@tithe.ly
Web: get.tithe.ly
Company Founded in 2015
Years Marketing ChMS: 2
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2581
Number on Team: 125
Support: 6 - 10 Pacific
Last Major Release: Nov, 2020
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

TouchPoint Software

By TouchPoint Software Inc.
Phone: 214.866.7777
Email: sales@touchpointsoftware.com
Web: www.touchpointsoftware.com
Company Founded in 2008
Years Marketing ChMS: 12
Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 600
Number on Team: 18
Support: 8 - 5 Central
Last Major Release: Feb, 2021
Updates per Year: Ongoing via web