

Church & Donor Management Software - ChMS

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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 more than doubled! Our research this year found 53 solutions focusing on the church and ministry market, of which 35 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 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 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

Decades ago Steve Hewitt, then Editor-in-Chief of *Christian Computing Magazine* (recently re-branded as *MinistryTech Magazine*), labeled this software category tailored to meet the needs of churches as *Church Management Software*, or CMS. To help prevent confusion since there are now so many software categories called 'CMS', it is now referred to as ChMS. 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 in an accounting system is 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. We have trusted the software companies; all of the information in this article was provided by them and has not been audited.

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!

CLICK CHART IMAGE TO MAGNIFY



List of ChMS Providers in Chart	
<p>ACS By ACS Technologies Phone: 800.736.7425 Email: solutions@acst.com Web: www.acstechnologies.com Company Founded in 1978 Years Marketing ChMS: 40 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 8000 Number on Team: 400 Support: 9 - 8 M-Th Eastern; 9 - 6 Fri; 24•7 option Last Major Release: 11/2017 Updates per Year: 8</p>	<p>FastFund Online By Araize Phone: 866.840.7449 Email: sales@araize.com Web: www.araize.com Company Founded in 1997 Years Marketing ChMS: 21 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1200 Number on Team: 10 Support: 9 - 5 Eastern Last Major Release: 6/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>
<p>Aplos By Aplos Phone: 888.274.1316 Email: sales@aplos.com Web: www.aplos.com Company Founded in 2009 Years Marketing ChMS: 7 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 5400 Number on Team: 44 Support: 8 - 4 Pacific Last Major Release: 10/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>	<p>FellowshipOne By Ministry Brands, a division of Ministry Brands Phone: 844.459.8525 Email: Sales@fellowshipone.com Web: www.fellowshipone.com Company Founded in 2004 Years Marketing ChMS: 14 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2000 Number on Team: 43 Support: 7 - 7 Central; Critical 24•7 Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>

Blackbaud Church Management

By Blackbaud
 Phone: 800.468.8996
 Email: solutions@blackbaud.com
 Web: www.blackbaud.com
 Company Founded in 1981
 Years Marketing ChMS: 1
 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 10
 Number on Team: 500
 Support: 8:30 - 8 Eastern; Critical 24•7
 Last Major Release: 10/2018
 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

FlockBase

By FlockBase Software
 Phone: 877.883.5625
 Email: kevin@flockbase.com
 Web: www.flockbase.com
 Company Founded in 2007
 Years Marketing ChMS: 11
 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2500
 Number on Team: 4
 Support: 9 - 5:30 Central
 Last Major Release: 1/2018
 Updates per Year: 1

Breeze ChMS

By Breeze LLC
 Phone: 888.320.6030
 Email: support@breezechms.com
 Web: www.breezechms.com
 Company Founded in 2013
 Years Marketing ChMS: 5
 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 5441
 Number on Team: 33
 Support: 9 - 6 Eastern
 Last Major Release: 10/2018
 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

Fresh Vine

By Fresh Vine
 Phone: 888.708.1905
 Email: contact@freshvine.co
 Web: freshvine.co
 Company Founded in 2008
 Years Marketing ChMS: 7
 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 380
 Number on Team: 3
 Support: 10 - 5 Central
 Last Major Release: 3/2017
 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

CahabaWorks Church Software

By CahabaCreek Software, a division of 2AB
 Phone: 205.621.9649
 Email: sales@cahabacreek.com
 Web: www.cahabacreek.com
 Company Founded in 1997
 Years Marketing ChMS: 10
 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1489
 Number on Team: 10
 Support: 9 - 4 Central M-Th; Email 24•7
 Last Major Release: 12/2017
 Updates per Year: 4

IconCMO

By Icon Systems
 Phone: 800.596.4266
 Email: sales@iconcmo.com
 Web: www.iconcmo.com
 Company Founded in 1992
 Years Marketing ChMS: 26
 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3000
 Number on Team: 9
 Support: 8 - 5 Central
 Last Major Release: 11/2018
 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web

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: 38
 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6740
 Number on Team: 60
 Support: 8 - 5 Eastern
 Last Major Release: 3/2018
 Updates per Year: 3

Iglesia HOY

By JRSoftware
 Phone: 52.1.664.2515478
 Email: informacion@iglesiahoy.com
 Web: www.iglesiahoy.com
 Company Founded in 1999
 Years Marketing ChMS: 19
 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 3260
 Number on Team: 6
 Support: 8 - 6 Pacific
 Last Major Release: 8/2018
 Updates per Year: 4

<p>CDM+ By Suran Systems Phone: 800.891.4236 Email: sales@cdmplus.com Web: www.cdmplus.com Company Founded in 1987 Years Marketing ChMS: 32 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6500 Number on Team: 24 Support: 8:30 – 6 Eastern Last Major Release: 9/2018 Updates per Year: 3</p>	<p>MinistryPlatform By Think Ministry Phone: 678.404-2467 Email: sales@thinkministry.com Web: www.ministryplatform.com Company Founded in 2008 Years Marketing ChMS: 10 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 541 Number on Team: 14 Support: 9 – 6 Eastern Last Major Release: 10/2018 Updates per Year: 6</p>
<p>Church Community Builder By Church Community Builder Phone: 719.266.2888 Email: marketing@churchcommunitybuilder.com Web: www.churchcommunitybuilder.com Company Founded in 1998 Years Marketing ChMS: 18 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 4400 Number on Team: 110 Support: 6 – 6 Mountain Last Major Release: 8/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>	<p>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: 40 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 8000 Number on Team: 395 Support: 9 – 8 M-Th Eastern; 9 – 6 Fri Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: 8</p>
<p>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: 31 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 12000 Number on Team: 25 Support: 9 – 6 M-Th Eastern; 9 – 5 Fri Last Major Release: 8/2018 Updates per Year: 1</p>	<p>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: 20 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 11400 Number on Team: 65 Support: 8:30 – 7 Eastern Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>
<p>Church360° By Concordia Technology Solutions, a division of Concordia Publishing House Phone: 800.325.2399 Email: softwaresales@cts.cph.org Web: www.church360.org Company Founded in 1869 Years Marketing ChMS: 8 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1250 Number on Team: 25 Support: 7:30 – 5 Central Last Major Release: 10/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web</p>	<p>PowerChurch By PowerChurch Software Phone: 800.486.1800 Email: info@powerchurch.com Web: www.powerchurch.com Company Founded in 1984 Years Marketing ChMS: 34 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 38000 Number on Team: 17 Support: 9 – 6 Eastern Last Major Release: 11/2017 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>

<p>Churchteams By Churchteams.com Phone: 817.405.9750 Email: support@churchteams.com Web: churchteams.com Company Founded in 2001 Years Marketing ChMS: 10 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 850 Number on Team: 8 Support: 8:30 - 5 Central Last Major Release: 9/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>	<p>Realm By ACS Technologies Phone: 800.736.7425 Email: salesteam@acst.com Web: www.acstechnologies.com Company Founded in 1978 Years Marketing ChMS: 5 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6646 Number on Team: 370 Support: 8 - 8 Eastern Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: 26</p>
<p>ChurchTrac Online By ChurchTrac Software Phone: 877.704.0222 Email: support@churchtrac.com Web: www.churchtrac.com Company Founded in 2004 Years Marketing ChMS: 14 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 10200 Number on Team: 7 Support: 8 - 7 Eastern Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: 4</p>	<p>Servant Keeper By Servant PC Resources Phone: 800.773.7570 Email: sales@servantpc.com Web: www.servantpc.com Company Founded in 1994 Years Marketing ChMS: 24 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 35000 Number on Team: 30 Support: 9 - 6 Eastern Last Major Release: 2/2017 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>
<p>COMS and EFA for Windows By Specialty Software Phone: 800.568.6350 Email: sales@SpecialtySoftware.com Web: www.specialtysoftware.com Company Founded in 1984 Years Marketing ChMS: 35 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 6400 Number on Team: 5 Support: 9 - 5 Eastern Last Major Release: 10/2018 Updates per Year: 4</p>	<p>Shelby Arena By Shelby Systems, a division of Ministry Brands Phone: 800.877.0222 Email: sales@shelbyinc.com Web: www.shelbysystems.com Company Founded in 1976 Years Marketing ChMS: 11 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 650 Number on Team: 95 Support: 7 - 6 Central Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: 4</p>
<p>Cool Life Ministries By Cool Life CRM Phone: 800.988.8850 Email: sales@coollifecrm.com Web: www.coollifecrm.com Company Founded in 2005 Years Marketing ChMS: 2 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 7 Number on Team: 6 Support: 9 - 5 Eastern; Email 24•7 Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>	<p>ShelbyNext By Shelby Systems, a division of 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: 1600 Number on Team: 95 Support: 7 - 6 Central Last Major Release: 10/2018 Updates per Year: Monthly</p>

<p>Donarius ChMS By Nuverb Systems Phone: 888.479.4636 Email: question@nuverb.com Web: www.donarius.com Company Founded in 1993 Years Marketing ChMS: 20 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 2360 Number on Team: 1 Support: 9 - 6 Eastern Last Major Release: 6/2018 Updates per Year: 20</p>	<p>Software4Nonprofits By Cooperstock Software Phone: 416.423.7722 Email: info@software4nonprofits.com Web: www.software4nonprofits.com Company Founded in 1999 Years Marketing ChMS: 19 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 8000 Number on Team: 3 Support: 9 - 9 Eastern Last Major Release: 10/2018 Updates per Year: 6</p>
<p>ELEXIO Community By ELEXIO, a division of Ministry Brands Phone: 888.997.9947, x1 Email: sales@elexio.com Web: www.elexio.com Company Founded in 2000 Years Marketing ChMS: 18 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1200 Number on Team: 50 Support: 9 - 5 Eastern Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: 24</p>	<p>Software4Nonprofits By Cooperstock Software Phone: 416.423.7722 Email: info@software4nonprofits.com Web: www.software4nonprofits.com Company Founded in 1999 Years Marketing ChMS: 19 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 8000 Number on Team: 3 Support: 9 - 9 Eastern Last Major Release: 10/2018 Updates per Year: 6</p>
<p>Faithful Steward By Diakonia Phone: 800.325.6642 Email: info@faithfulsteward.com Web: www.church-software.com Company Founded in 1992 Years Marketing ChMS: 24 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 1086 Number on Team: 3 Support: 9 - 5 Central Last Major Release: 4/2018 Updates per Year: Ongoing via web</p>	<p>TouchPoint By TouchPoint Software, a division of Pursuant Phone: 901.654.7179 Email: sales@touchpointsoftware.com Web: touchpointsoftware.com Company Founded in 2008 Years Marketing ChMS: 10 Ministries/Campuses Currently Using: 554 Number on Team: 15 Support: 8 - 5 Central Last Major Release: 11/2018 Updates per Year: 12</p>