

Church & Ministry Management Software

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Ministry Business Services, Inc. President

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The face of church and ministry management software is changing! It changed from green text screens to colored text screens in the 1980s, and then to graphical user interfaces. Now it's changing again— with access via the Internet!

There are some great opportunities that come with Internet-accessible databases:

- They can be accessed by almost any computer that can run a browser, eliminating many computer platform restrictions.
- They can be secure, whether you host them on your internal network or they're hosted on a server in some other part of the world.
- They can allow your team— paid and volunteer— to view or modify data even when they're not at the office.
- You may be able to create custom browser pages that are modeled after your data-collection forms. This could streamline the input process when, for instance, you have new visitors that need to be entered into the database.

Why Church and Ministry Management Software?

Many of the systems on the following pages match the sophisticated needs churches and ministries have. Tracking more than just names, addresses, and phone numbers, many of these also track spiritual gifts, talents, interests, attendance, contributions, family relationships, and more.

Church and ministry offices can be stressful environments due to the many deadlines that must be met by an administrative staff typically smaller than what would be found in a similar-sized secular business. Church and ministry management software, if well written, can be a soothing balm in these settings. If it's powerful, capable, fast, and stable, the ministry team can rely on it to help them get the most possible work done with minimal time and stress.

Church Management Software Defined

Some years ago Steve Hewitt, Editor-in-Chief of *Christian Computing Magazine*, labeled the software category that is tailored to meet the needs of churches and ministries as "Church Management Software," or CMS. Following is a well-researched list of all CMS providers at the time of this writing.

The field has narrowed considerably since we first compiled it in 1987. That first list included 262 CMS providers! Today there are less than fifty. The following list includes those that are actively developing their software to meet church and ministry needs.

Fund Accounting

Churches and ministries exist in a unique accounting niche that most software (and even CPA's!) can't help with: fund accounting. But many CMS packages can help in this area.

One of a ministry's most vulnerable areas is finance. We hear often of churches and ministries that have been embezzled by a trusted team member. One of the best protections is an accounting system that has a good audit trail that tracks the detail of every transaction and cannot be altered in any way.

Many in ministry rely on accounting software that doesn't properly handle the nuances of fund accounting or that doesn't have a good audit trail. One of those products, QuickBooks, has made significant progress in meeting ministry fund accounting needs. One caution about QuickBooks, however, is that it still does not have a secure audit trail. In other words, accounting entries can be easily changed by anyone who knows the password.

For these reasons, some CMS providers have chosen to write their own accounting software.

Feature Chart

We've tried to give you as comprehensive a list as possible in a quick format of those CMS functions ministry teams request most often. We've also given you information on how to reach the CMS providers, how long they've been serving the ministry community in this way, how many ministries they currently serve, their technical support hours, and how often they update their software. All of the information was provided by the CMS providers.

The chart is a compilation of responses from the software providers. The "■" symbol is used on those options they said are currently available and that they provide directly. The "x" symbol is used on those needs they meet through an outside (third party) source.

Happy Hunting!

Shop wisely. We counsel all prospective buyers to do their due diligence and check with current users of the software. Ask questions like:

- Does the software do what was promised?
- Is their technical 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!

ACS Technologies

Phone: (800) 736-7425
 Email: solutions@acstechnologies.com
 Web: www.acstechnologies.com
 Company Founded in 1978
 Years Marketing CMS: 28
 Ministries Currently Using: 22000
 Number on Team: 300
 Tech Support Hours: 9a-8p (-6p F) EST
 Last Major Release: 5/2005
 Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

Advanced Data Solutions

Phone: (540) 743-4910
 Email: adv_data@ads-software.com
 Web: www.ads-software.com/ch_sec.htm
 Company Founded in 1990
 Years Marketing CMS: 8
 Ministries Currently Using: 500
 Number on Team: 1
 Tech Support Hours: 8a-5p EST
 Last Major Release: 1/2003
 Updates per Year: 4 to 5

Blackbaud

Phone: (800) 443-9441
 Email: solutions@blackbaud.com
 Web: www.blackbaud.com
 Company Founded in 1981
 Years Marketing CMS: 24
 Ministries Currently Using: 308
 Number on Team: 900
 Tech Support Hours: Online 24*7
 Last Major Release: 6/2004
 Updates per Year: 2 to 3

By The Book

Phone: (800) 554-9116
 Email: info@bythebook.com
 Web: www.bythebook.com
 Company Founded in 1991
 Years Marketing CMS: 14
 Ministries Currently Using: 1000
 Number on Team: 3
 Tech Support Hours: 8a-6p M-Th CST
 Last Major Release: 8/2004
 Updates per Year: 1

C.A.A. Ministries

Phone: (800) 864-4055
 Email: mike@caaministries.net
 Web: www.caaministries.net
 Company Founded in 2005
 Years Marketing CMS: 1
 Ministries Currently Using: 3
 Number on Team: 2
 Tech Support Hours: 8a-7p EST
 Last Major Release: 7/2005
 Updates per Year: 1

CCIS Church Software / Salem Corp

Phone: (800) 295-7551
 Email: sales@ccissoftware.com
 Web: www.ccissoftware.com
 Company Founded in 1981
 Years Marketing CMS: 25
 Ministries Currently Using: 6832
 Number on Team: 60
 Tech Support Hours: 8a-5p EST
 Last Major Release: 8/2005
 Updates per Year: 2

CDM+ (Suran Systems)

Phone: (877) 891-4236
 Email: sales@cdmplus.com
 Web: www.cdmplus.com
 Company Founded in 1986
 Years Marketing CMS: 19
 Ministries Currently Using: 3500
 Number on Team: 20
 Tech Support Hours: 8:30a-7p (-5 F) EST
 Last Major Release: 8/2005
 Updates per Year: 1

Church Community Builder

Phone: (866) 242-1199
 Email: solutions@churchcommunitybuilder.com
 Web: www.churchcommunitybuilder.com
 Company Founded in 2001
 Years Marketing CMS: 5
 Ministries Currently Using: 350
 Number on Team: 10
 Tech Support Hours: 8a-5p MST
 Last Major Release: 7/2005
 Updates per Year: 6

Church Windows/Computer Helper

Phone: (800) 533-5227
 Email: info@churchwindows.com
 Web: www.churchwindows.com
 Company Founded in 1986
 Years Marketing CMS: 20
 Ministries Currently Using: 8500
 Number on Team: 25
 Tech Support Hours: 9a-6p EST
 Last Major Release: 3/2005
 Updates per Year: 1 to 3

ChurchAssist Technologies

Phone: (877) 857-7404
 Email: sales@churchassist.com
 Web: www.churchassist.com
 Company Founded in 1998
 Years Marketing CMS: 3
 Ministries Currently Using: 100
 Number on Team: 2
 Tech Support Hours: Email 24*7
 Last Major Release: 4/2005
 Updates per Year: 4

ChurchInfo

Phone: (603) 475-0736
 Email: mikewiltwork@users.sourceforge.net
 Web: www.churchdb.org
 Company Founded in 2001
 Years Marketing CMS: 4
 Ministries Currently Using: 0
 Number on Team: 8
 Tech Support Hours: Online 24*7
 Last Major Release: 5/2005
 Updates per Year: 4

ChurchOffice

Phone: (877) 539-2246
 Email: walter.johanson@churchoffice.com
 Web: www.churchoffice.com
 Company Founded in 1997
 Years Marketing CMS: 10
 Ministries Currently Using: 3000
 Number on Team: 4
 Tech Support Hours: On Call 24*7
 Last Major Release: 3/2003
 Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

Cornerstone Software

Phone: (860) 874-7764
 Email: sales@cornerstone-sw.com
 Web: www.cornerstone-sw.com
 Company Founded in 2001
 Years Marketing CMS: 2
 Ministries Currently Using: 3
 Number on Team: 2
 Tech Support Hours: 9a-5p EST
 Last Major Release: 8/2004
 Updates per Year: 3 to 4

Daymark Software Systems

Phone: (800) 228-5857
 Email: info@daymarksys.com
 Web: www.daymarksys.com
 Company Founded in 1999
 Years Marketing CMS: 6
 Ministries Currently Using: 520
 Number on Team: 4
 Tech Support Hours: 8a-5p CST
 Last Major Release: 11/2004
 Updates per Year: 1

Diakonia

Phone: (800) 325-6642
 Email: info@faithfulsteward.com
 Web: www.fithfulsteward.com
 Company Founded in 1992
 Years Marketing CMS: 11
 Ministries Currently Using: 951
 Number on Team: 0
 Tech Support Hours: 9a-5p PST
 Last Major Release: 11/2004
 Updates per Year: Varies

Disciple Software

Phone: (866) 271-8416
Email: info@disciplesoftware.com
Web: www.ministryware.com
Company Founded in 2001
Years Marketing CMS: 4
Ministries Currently Using: 2900
Number on Team: 4
Tech Support Hours: 9a-5p CST
Last Major Release: 1/2004
Updates per Year: 1

Fellowship Technologies

Phone: (866) 383-2437
Email: sales@fellowshiptech.com
Web: www.fellowshiptech.com
Company Founded in 2004
Years Marketing CMS: 2
Ministries Currently Using: 212
Number on Team: 36
Tech Support Hours: 6a-10p, 7 Days CST
Last Major Release: 7/2005
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

Greentree Applied Systems

Phone: (800) 928-6388
Email: info@greentreeky.com
Web: www.churchmembershipssoftware.com
Company Founded in 1982
Years Marketing CMS: 9
Ministries Currently Using: 400
Number on Team: 17
Tech Support Hours: 9a-5p EST
Last Major Release: 1/2003
Updates per Year: 2

Helpmate Technology Solutions

Phone: (888) 858-3247
Email: sales@helpmate.net
Web: www.helpmate.net
Company Founded in 1996
Years Marketing CMS: 8
Ministries Currently Using: 1400
Number on Team: 0
Tech Support Hours: 9:30a-5p EST
Last Major Release: 8/2004
Updates per Year: 2

Icon Systems - Cornerstone CMO

Phone: (800) 596-4266
Email: sales@iconsystemsnetwork.com
Web: www.iconsystemsnetwork.com
Company Founded in 1992
Years Marketing CMS: 13
Ministries Currently Using: 3200
Number on Team: 0
Tech Support Hours: 8:30a-5p CST
Last Major Release: 2/2005
Updates per Year: 1

J.S. Paluch (PCMS)

Phone: (800) 621-6732
Email: pcmsupport@jspaluch.com
Web: www.jspaluch.com
Company Founded in 1913
Years Marketing CMS: 19
Ministries Currently Using: 1000
Number on Team: 500
Tech Support Hours: 8a-4:30p CST
Last Major Release: 12/2003
Updates per Year: Varies

Kintera

Phone: (858) 795-3000
Email: info@kintera.com
Web: www.kintera.com
Company Founded in 1999
Years Marketing CMS: 6
Ministries Currently Using: 82
Number on Team: 550
Tech Support Hours: 24*7 PST
Last Major Release: 6/2004
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

Logos Management Software

Phone: (800) 266-3311
Email: dsmith@logoslbe.com
Web: www.logoslbe.com
Company Founded in 1980
Years Marketing CMS: 25
Ministries Currently Using: 5000
Number on Team: 52
Tech Support Hours: 6a-5p PST
Last Major Release: 8/2005
Updates per Year: 2

Members to Action

Phone: (877) 328-2949
Email: thefolks@memberstoaction.com
Web: www.memberstoaction.com
Company Founded in 1998
Years Marketing CMS: 7
Ministries Currently Using: 150
Number on Team: 1
Tech Support Hours: 8a-5p EST
Last Major Release: 3/2003
Updates per Year: 4

Membership Plus/ Findex

Phone: (888) 459-0078
Email: sales@quickverse.com
Web: www.memplushome.com
Company Founded in 1988
Years Marketing CMS: 15
Ministries Currently Using: 50000
Number on Team: 25
Tech Support Hours: 8a-5:30p CST
Last Major Release: 2/2005
Updates per Year: 1 to 2

MyFlock.com

Phone: (866) 852-6648
Email: steve@myflock.com
Web: www.myflock.com
Company Founded in 2001
Years Marketing CMS: 4
Ministries Currently Using: 225
Number on Team: 4
Tech Support Hours: 8a-5p EST
Last Major Release: 8/2005
Updates per Year: 4

Nuverb Systems, Inc.

Phone: (888) 479-4636
Email: info@nuverb.com
Web: www.donarius.com
Company Founded in 1993
Years Marketing CMS: 7
Ministries Currently Using: 575
Number on Team: 1
Tech Support Hours: 9a-5p EST
Last Major Release: 3/2005
Updates per Year: 12

ParishSOFT

Phone: (866) 930-4774
Email: info@parishsoft.com
Web: www.parishsoft.com
Company Founded in 1998
Years Marketing CMS: 7
Ministries Currently Using: 3400
Number on Team: 45
Tech Support Hours: 9a-7p EST
Last Major Release: 3/2005
Updates per Year: 2

People Driven Software

Phone: (866) 737-9273
Email: info@peopledrivensoftware.com
Web: www.peopledrivensoftware.com
Company Founded in 2002
Years Marketing CMS: 3
Ministries Currently Using: 500
Number on Team: 5
Tech Support Hours: 9a-5p EST
Last Major Release: 5/2005
Updates per Year: 6

PowerChurch Software

Phone: (800) 486-1800
Email: info@powerchurch.com
Web: www.powerchurch.com
Company Founded in 1984
Years Marketing CMS: 21
Ministries Currently Using: 23500
Number on Team: 0
Tech Support Hours: 9a-6p EST
Last Major Release: 9/2004
Updates per Year: 1

RDS Publishing

Phone: (800) 337-6328
Email: rds@rdsadvantage.com
Web: www.rdsadvantage.com
Company Founded in 1983
Years Marketing CMS: 22
Ministries Currently Using: 0
Number on Team: 0
Tech Support Hours: 8a-5p CST
Last Major Release: 8/2005
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

Sage Software (formerly Best)

Phone: (800) 647-3863
Email: info@mip.com
Web: www.mip.com
Company Founded in 1982
Years Marketing CMS: 23
Ministries Currently Using: 5000
Number on Team: 150
Tech Support Hours: 7a-7p CST
Last Major Release: 8/2005
Updates per Year: 2

Servant PC Resources

Phone: (800) 773-7570
Email: admin@servantpc.com
Web: www.servantpc.com
Company Founded in 1994
Years Marketing CMS: 12
Ministries Currently Using: 16000
Number on Team: 18
Tech Support Hours: 9a-6p EST
Last Major Release: 7/2001
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

Shelby Systems

Phone: (800) 877-0222
Email: mktg@shelbyinc.com
Web: www.shelbyinc.com
Company Founded in 1976
Years Marketing CMS: 29
Ministries Currently Using: 8500
Number on Team: 78
Tech Support Hours: 7a-6p CST
Last Major Release: 5/2005
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

Shepherd's Staff (Concordia Pub)

Phone: (800) 325-2399
Email: softwaresales@shepherdsstaff.org
Web: www.shepherdsstaff.org
Company Founded in 1869
Years Marketing CMS: 24
Ministries Currently Using: 7200
Number on Team: 16
Tech Support Hours: 7:30a-5p CST
Last Major Release: 6/2005
Updates per Year: 1

Software For Ministry

Phone: (817) 219-1243
Email: mic@softwareforministry.com
Web: www.softwareforministry.com
Company Founded in 1983
Years Marketing CMS: 21
Ministries Currently Using: 450
Number on Team: 2
Tech Support Hours: 9a-5p CST
Last Major Release: 3/2005
Updates per Year: 3 to 4

Specialty Software

Phone: (800) 568-6350
Email: sales@specialtysoftware.com
Web: www.specialtysoftware.com
Company Founded in 1983
Years Marketing CMS: 22
Ministries Currently Using: 6000
Number on Team: 10
Tech Support Hours: 9a-5p EST
Last Major Release: 8/2005
Updates per Year: 2

Torbert Data Systems

Phone: (800) 755-2641
Email: tds@churchsoftware.com
Web: www.churchsoftware.com
Company Founded in 1990
Years Marketing CMS: 15
Ministries Currently Using: 1400
Number on Team: 4
Tech Support Hours: 8a-5p, Sat 9-1 EST
Last Major Release: 12/2004
Updates per Year: 1

Vian Corporation

Phone: (908) 537-4642
Email: vian@vian.com
Web: www.vian.com
Company Founded in 1982
Years Marketing CMS: 21
Ministries Currently Using: 3312
Number on Team: 2
Tech Support Hours: 4:30p-6:00p EST
Last Major Release: 8/2005
Updates per Year: Ongoing via Web

White Mountain Software

Phone: (877) 955-3657
Email: admin@churchwatch.com
Web: www.churchwatch.com
Company Founded in 1999
Years Marketing CMS: 6
Ministries Currently Using: 397
Number on Team: 2
Tech Support Hours: 5p-10p CST
Last Major Release: 11/2003
Updates per Year: Varies
