

# 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: 843.413.8087  
 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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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