



Many churches have migrated to using an online platform for their daily operations, which simplifies their tasks and improves the transparency of their activities. Technology has made it possible to digitize different functions of the church for better service delivery, better staff performance, and volunteer experience. With the added advantage of technology in your church operations, you still need to do an IT audit to ensure the integrity of your system. Get our five tips for tidying up your church's IT.

Auditing your IT system shows you whether you are maximizing the use of your technology in your daily operations or under using it. God expects each one of us to be a good steward of the resources He places in our hands to advance His Kingdom in this world. Performing an audit does not have to be a complicated activity, and with the right knowledge and professional help, you can get the most of the information you gather.

#1 Gauging your online giving platform

More churches are accepting donations, tithes, and offerings using an online giving platform, making it easy for people to give at their pleasure and convenience. Those who enjoy the sermons or teachings of a church can give donations and offerings without having to visit the church premises. An audit of your website or online giving platforms will determine how easy it is for others to give to your church.

If there are too many steps to take before a person can make a payment, it will ruin their giving experience and discourage them from using your online platform. Auditing your giving channels will show you how easy it is to process payments using the methods you have listed and the online receipts issued to givers. An audit trail will reveal where you can make improvements in your system.

#2 Measuring the effectiveness of your online communication strategy

The days of relying on paper bulletins and handouts to notify your members and visitors of events are long gone. It is essential to have an online communication strategy that provides timely information and increases the engagement of your members and visitors. An audit of your online communication strategy will reveal how well you notify members of upcoming events, provide the right information to church shoppers, or highlight projects that require funding.

The level of traffic on your website or social media profiles will reveal if your strategy is working. Soon you will know the channels that have the highest engagement and those that are a waste of time. Auditing your email communication will show if it is the best channel of communication with your staff or visitors. Effective online communication means pastors and ministry leaders are not the only ones with all the critical information.

#3 Fraud risk assessment

You have heard of several cases of church staff embezzling funds and wondered how it happened. That the church entrusts to handle finances and other transactions are people of integrity. However, some succumb to the temptation of stealing money from the church coffers. Others engage in fraudulent purchases involving the procurement of services or goods.

Auditing your IT system will reveal your fraud risk, and this allows you to take measures to reduce it. An audit will entail finding out activities carried out and checking your internal controls and those with access to the church system. Do your current checks and balances reduce the likelihood of fraud? Are there existing transactions that will need authorization before processing? Do multiple users log in using one username? Can all users access all the required information? A fraud risk assessment will reveal system weaknesses and how to prevent fraud in those areas. Ensure you reduce your fraud risk, as it is difficult to recover all your losses when an actual fraud happens.

#4 Access to the system

With daily tasks requiring digitization, it has become necessary for every staff member to access different functions in the operating system. An audit will reveal the identity of those with access to the system and the tasks they perform. It will show what time they log in and out. You can gather additional information like multiple logins or hacking attempts. With this information, you can take measures to reduce the likelihood of stolen identities in the system. You can also eliminate the risk of staff members changing transaction details by limiting access. After reviewing your IT system, you can allocate different access levels to staff depending on their duties, which will reduce access to confidential information and unauthorized transactions. Additionally, allow assigning the access levels of each user depending on their roles.

#5 Effectiveness of your church software

Church Management Software (ChMS) helps churches and other non-profit organizations automate their daily operations. It handles members' database, emails, events, finances, reports, and other related tasks. It's imperative to have software that meets the needs of your church to justify its cost. Auditing your church software will reveal whether users can easily navigate its features, generate the required reports, send emails, and how it will integrate with your computer's operating system. After checking these things, it will be clear whether the software is worth its price tag.

A good software will enhance the work output of your staff and eliminate bottlenecks in daily processes. Before buying or replacing your software, ensure its features meet your operational needs. Compatibility will cut down the time a user takes to complete a task and eliminates

duplication of work.

Conclusion

Technology increases your performance as a church. Having all your activities effortlessly integrated into your system helps you better manage your church affairs, keep up to date with information in your database, and enhance the online experience of your members. To get the most out of technology, have a plan for how and when you will audit your system. Organize a committee that can oversee the auditing of your IT system. Technology saves you time spent doing administrative tasks and frees you to spread the gospel and impact more people.