

5

WAYS THAT
MOBILE TECH
CAN **TRANSFORM**
YOUR MINISTRY

by **SCOTT ROMIG**



TouchPoint

People Focused. Ministry Maximized.

I remember when I got my first mobile phone. It was the fall of 1996, and I was living with my wife in Austin, Texas. I had gone to the mall to buy some jeans and came across a kiosk for Sprint. They were offering “free” cell phones when you signed a two-year agreement.

It was a Nokia 2160, and by today’s standards it was heavy, ugly, and had limited functionality but . . . it was mine. And it was GLORIOUS. It could do everything I needed it to. I could call my friends and family whenever and wherever I was.

These were also the early days of the Internet when my private email was hosted by AOL, accessed via an old-school dial-up modem. Email made it possible to communicate with people you had never met face-to-face from all parts of the world.

It was the dawn of a new era. Everyday people had access to tools previously used exclusively by business moguls and government officials.

It was only the beginning.

Today, people are connected to everything and everyone 24/7 via smartphones. Recent statistics reveal how mobile Internet access has become integral to our lives today:

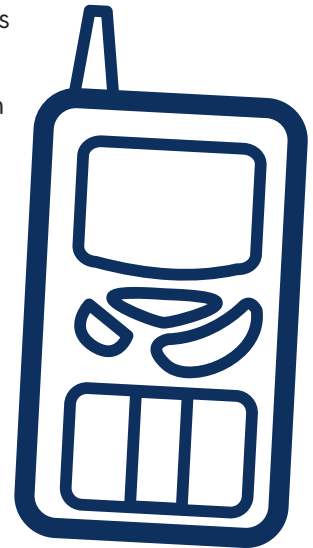
- More than 50 percent of smartphone users immediately pick up their smartphones when they wake up. (**ExpressPigeon**)
- By 2018, 8-in-10 email users will likely access their email accounts exclusively from their mobile devices (**Source**)
- Within 2 years, there will be more than 3 billion smartphones in use. (**Source**)

The mass adoption of smartphones has transformed how people shop, get their news, and communicate.

This raises an important question in ministry:

How can the Church leverage mobile technology to equip their staff and lay leaders in a mobile-first world?

In this resource, we’ll unpack five practical ways you can begin leveraging mobile technology to maximize ministry and reach more people with the Gospel. Along with each idea, we’ll also provide an example of how this idea is being used in the real world.



5 WAYS

THAT MOBILE TECH CAN IMPACT YOUR MINISTRY



1. Check-ins for small group leaders

I have a confession. I like small groups. They are a great way to foster relationships with other believers and encourage spiritual growth . . . once you get over the initial discomfort of baring your soul to a real person. Right?

Managing small groups can easily devolve into an unwieldy black hole when it comes to tracking participation and engagement. Church leaders who measure ministry effectiveness by the health of their small groups want to know:

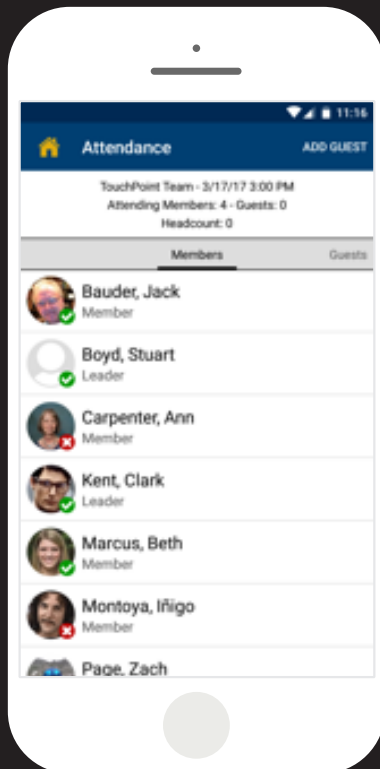
- Who is attending?
- When are they attending?
- Who has stopped attending?

Some churches ask their small-group leaders for an average estimate of the number of attendees. Others require their group leaders to use sign-in sheets. This method can be effective, but it comes with its own set of challenges inherent to any manual analog system.

Any system that relies on manual processes for accuracy is likely to succumb to human error. The good news is there are now mobile apps available that empower lay leaders to report attendance and make notes about the members they are discipling.

The apps automatically update the Church management system with who did and didn't attend. Later, Church staffers are able to run attendance reports from which Church leaders can gauge overall small-group engagement levels. It's so easy!

MOBILE MINISTRY IN ACTION



“A number of our young adult leaders are using the mobile app to take the attendance for their Life Groups. They can add any guests who attend. This is a real timesaver for our office staff, and it ensures that the information entered is correct.”

Karen Worrell, Bellevue Baptist Church



2. Task management for ministry/discipleship

In 2003 I was a guitarist in a secular rock band. I had given my life to Christ the prior year and ever since had been serving on the worship team in my local Church. I was often at Church four to five times a week leading worship or attending a rehearsal. I loved, loved, loved my new friends, my pastors, and my life. I was connected. And then I wasn't. My band went on tour, I hit the road, and my support system went from 5,000 to nothing. Sure, a couple of friends occasionally reached out, and one of the pastors gave me a call, but it was hard. I was a young believer and I felt alone. There were some people who knew that I was away and unable to engage in the body. But to most everyone else, it looked like I had suddenly dropped off the face of the earth.

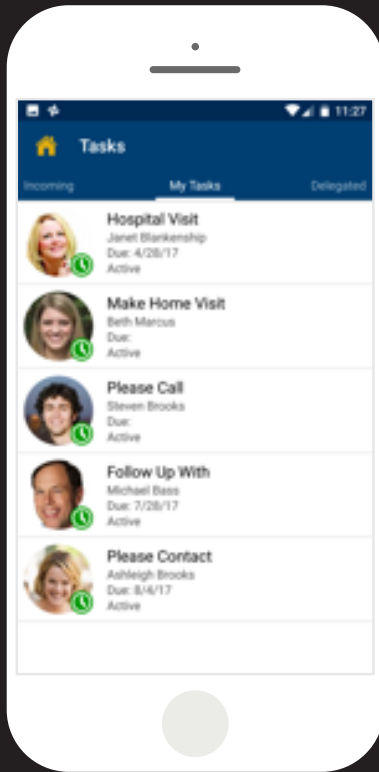
Jesus spent a lot of time talking about the Lost. One of my favorite stories in the Bible is the parable of the lost sheep:

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?”

The good news is, today Church leaders don't have to rely on human memory to keep track of all the “sheep” in their flocks. These tools make it simple to track all of the members of your Church and assign outreach tasks to the folks on your ministry team. These tasks trigger push notifications on lay leaders' mobile phones and enable them to see the task along with the phone number, address, Google map, and notes for the assignment.

I wish this kind of technology had existed back when I was a new believer and longing to feel connected when my schedule conflicted with my attendance.

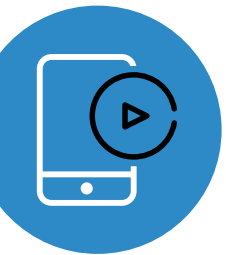
MOBILE MINISTRY IN ACTION



“Life doesn’t wait, so having these appear immediately and giving you all the information at your fingertips is really a timesaver, and a ministry-enhancer. This was one of the main reasons Bellevue wanted the app - to make ministry easier for our staff and lay leaders.”

For example - if a minister is already on his way to visit the hospital, another staff member can assign him a Task about someone else who was just admitted to that same hospital. Then that minister will see the notification, accept the Task, make the visit, and mark the Task complete before he leaves the hospital. Without the app, someone would have to make a phone call, text over the information, and you would never even have a record of the visit.”

Karen Worrell, Bellevue Baptist Church



3. Sermons on-the-go

I love my Church. I love the worship, the message, the leadership team, and I have built a close circle of friends in both the music and men's ministries. On rare occasions I may not get to attend on a Sunday (sick child, out of town, etc.) and, while I may miss the fellowship, I no longer have to miss the service.

Many churches are now using technology to spread the Gospel beyond the four walls of the Church. You no longer need a million dollar budget and a satellite channel to broadcast your weekly services.

Here a few super easy options to offer your sermons online for mobile users:

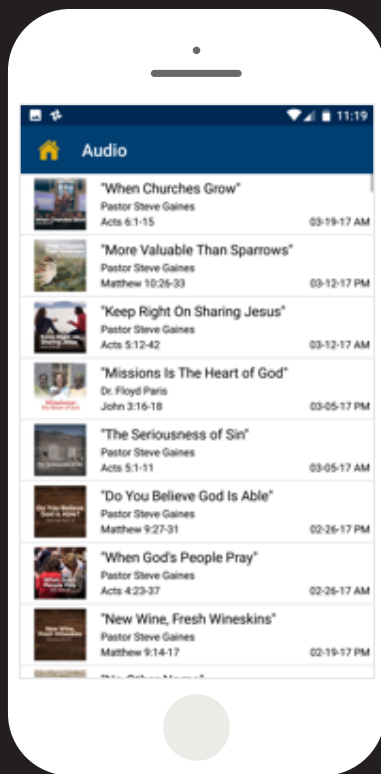
Facebook Live - is a great way for your congregation to view sermons on-the-go, and all it requires is a mobile phone and the Facebook app.

iTunes Podcasts - are my favorite way to pass the time whenever I have to brave the Austin traffic.

SoundCloud Podcasts - are a fantastic alternative to iTunes.

Offering mobile-ready versions of your sermons is a great way to keep your congregation engaged when life gets in the way of attending a service.

MOBILE MINISTRY IN ACTION



“We have a lot of requests from church members wanting to listen to sermons and worship services, so being able to direct people to the app where they can access them easily is a real benefit. We have also heard how people love to listen to worship services while driving or exercising and having them in the app makes them easy to find and use. The mobile app is a simple way to take the Church with you wherever you go.”

Karen Worrell, Bellevue Baptist Church



4. Mobile giving

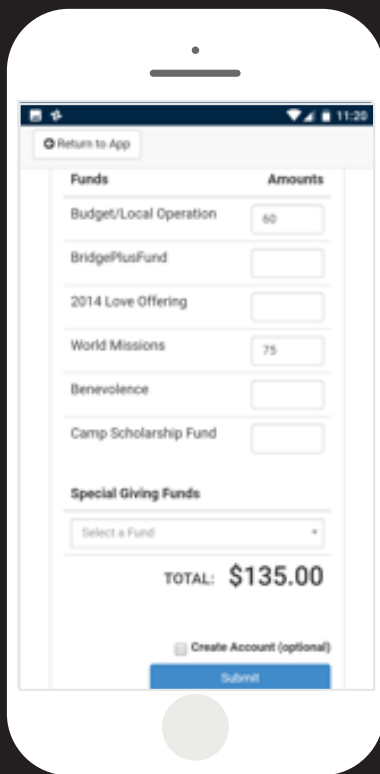
When I was a kid we passed the collection plate every week, and I was always excited when I had the opportunity to give a couple of quarters. Keep in mind that back then if you needed some cash you had to go to the bank during business hours. This was the 80's, and ATM's were not in widespread use. Over the last few years we have seen a vast migration of business transactions move from the traditional brick-and-mortar storefront to the digital world. Amazon Prime anyone? Can I get an Amen?

While many Churches are now offering an online portal, it is time to step it up and offer a mobile first solution. Today our attention is being pulled in a million different directions, and many of us do not carry cash or checks anymore.

In a recent "State of the Plate" report, only 21% of millennials were interested in giving on the Church website but 49% were interested in giving on a mobile app!

Providing folks an opportunity to give on their phones is a great addition to passing the collection plate, and you can link to the mobile-giving app from an SMS text.

MOBILE MINISTRY IN ACTION



“Bellevue wants to remove any barriers to giving and make these types of transactions drop-dead simple. Once you log into the app you are already logged in to give or register for an event. You have the added benefit of saving your bank or credit card information, so you don’t even have to take the time to enter it – it’s already there.”

Karen Worrell, Bellevue Baptist Church



5. Church maps

Remember when you had to stop at a gas station to get directions when you were lost? Mobile phones with built-in GPS have been a miracle for folks like me with no sense of direction. But what do you do when you are new to a large Church with a huge campus?

Fortunately TouchPoint offers a mobile app that can be branded to your Church. The app also offers a custom Church map feature that allows the user to search for a room number and see exactly where the room is on the map.

MOBILE MINISTRY IN ACTION



“When assisting guests in the building, the maps feature is really nice. We can show them exactly where they are in relation to where they need to go. I’ve seen teenagers come into the building, stop and look on their phone and then say ‘Here’s where we are supposed to go!’. The app makes it so simple to find your way around a large campus.”

Karen Worrell, Bellevue Baptist Church

Moving forward with tech-enabled ministry

From my earliest days with my first Nokia phone to my 10 years of being an iPhone fanboy, I've always been a bit of a nerd and love keeping up with the latest advances in technology. But for folks who don't have the passion or time to follow the recent changes in software, there are companies that are focused on helping the Church move to the digital age.

The best place to start is with a cloud-based Church Management Solution like TouchPoint. TouchPoint was built by Bellevue Baptist Church for the Church and includes a mobile responsive design giving you full access to your database on any internet capable device and a branded mobile app. Whether you are a staff member at a church, a lay leader, or a church member, TouchPoint allows you to maximize your ministry wherever you are.

As technology continues to become more pervasive in our culture, it is important that we, the Church, leverage it in creative ways to spread the Gospel . . . for such a time as this.

Get started with your **FREE TouchPoint Trial**

<http://try.TouchPointsoftware.com/TouchPoint-church-management-software/>

Connect with our team to learn more at info@TouchPointsoftware.com

About TouchPoint

TouchPoint provides a robust yet affordable church management software system for mobile devices and computers that enables and equips church leaders to manage their church, engage their people, and fund their vision. The software solution was developed by founder and lead developer, David Carroll, as a way to help his home congregation, Bellevue Baptist Church, manage their members more effectively and efficiently. Today, 285 churches use TouchPoint as their go-to church management system.

About Scott Romig



SCOTT ROMIG

Vice President, Sales & Marketing Technology Products at Pursuant

Scott Romig has always had a passion for the intersection of technology and people. A self-proclaimed “nerd evangelist,” Scott has a strong drive to help nonprofits and churches reach donors and raise dollars to further their mission. Currently, Scott serves as vice president of sales/marketing for Technology Products at The Pursuant Group. His strength is to come alongside nonprofit organizations and help them leverage technology solutions to achieve their long-term vision and goals.

Scott can also be found playing on the worship team at One Chapel in Austin Texas or with his band, Dexter Freebish. Scott and his family live in Dripping Springs Texas, the gateway to the hill country.



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