# Interview analysis

**Subject:** Issues related to technology in church  
**Date and length**: Aug 8, 2017, 45 minutes

**Church:** Southern Baptist church, Missouri  
**Average attendance**: 150 **Interviewees**: Big Guy, lead pastor; Important Guy, Family & Discipleship Pastor  
**Interviewer**: Doug Hoff

**Software**:

* **The City** – member social connection, child security <http://www.acstechnologies.com/products/the-city>
* **Planning Center** – project management for volunteer staffing, calendar to identify blackout periods <https://planning.center/>
* **Microsoft Excel** – membership tracking
* **TextInChurch** – retaining new members - <https://textinchurch.com/>
* **PowerChurch** – financial software for offerings and giving <https://www.powerchurch.com/>
* **Accounting** – Accounting Management Systems is the service provider for taxes and other accounting.
* **Microsoft PowerPoint** – slide presentations
* Music software?

**Hardware**

* personal Windows laptops for Pastor Big and Pastor Important
* child security check-in kiosks
* sound system and instruments
* security system
* projection system

## Strategy

### Financial forecasting

To better do budgeting, the forecasting of contributions should be more reliable. PowerChurch does have an export for Excel if a spreadsheet could be developed.

### Management best practices

The Southern Baptist Convention has no direct consulting service or leadership advice for technology usage in the church. The Convention allows each church to be under autonomous control including the choice and usage of technology for management of the church. This was more of an observation and confirmation by me rather than an issue. The new church plant choice of different software would make it more difficult and time-consuming to manage without having experienced users to consult.

## Design

### System integration

Too many systems have data that is not being shared requiring re-entry of data and difficulty in getting a management overview. This was the first topic of discussion from Pastor Big and seemed to be the **highest priority** because of the amount of time that was used to manage the systems.

## Transition

No specific issues were found relating to implementing, changing, or shutting down of projects. The church is initiating a significant project for building on to the existing church but is still in the planning stage.

## Operations

### Training

Volunteers are the backbone of service. 50 volunteers work in each Sunday service. About 130 volunteers are the base from which staffing is chosen. This was the **second most significant issue** in the interview, again because of the amount of time invested in the task.

Specific issues were:

* Unsuccessful results of training leading to staff frustration
* No documentation. (Possible misunderstanding or different steps in process)
* Turnover requires repeated sessions often

### Attendance tracking

When a member does not show up for four weeks or so, the ability of the staff to recognize that is limited. The use of video surveillance to watch those coming in and leaving still requires the analysis of the video in real time making it unpractical unless looking for a specific person. Regular attendees do not fill in the attendance cards available in the congregation seats. Pastor Big greets the members after the service which helps.

### Contributions

Would it be possible to add credit card processing during the offering? Currently, online giving or giving through texting is not implemented.

### Graphics

Specific issues were:

* Video loops on background screens are not seamless and have irritating jumps when completing the loop

**Notes to contributors**: The use of this data for class exercises will not include any specific person, place, or name and may include some fictitious elements to provide a more real case study. Feedback will be sent to you with the original exercise so you can determine if you would like to act on it in anyway. If you feel that the data or analysis is flawed in any way, please let me know ([email@doughoff.com](mailto:email@doughoff.com), [dhoff@mbts.edu](mailto:dhoff@mbts.edu)). Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed.