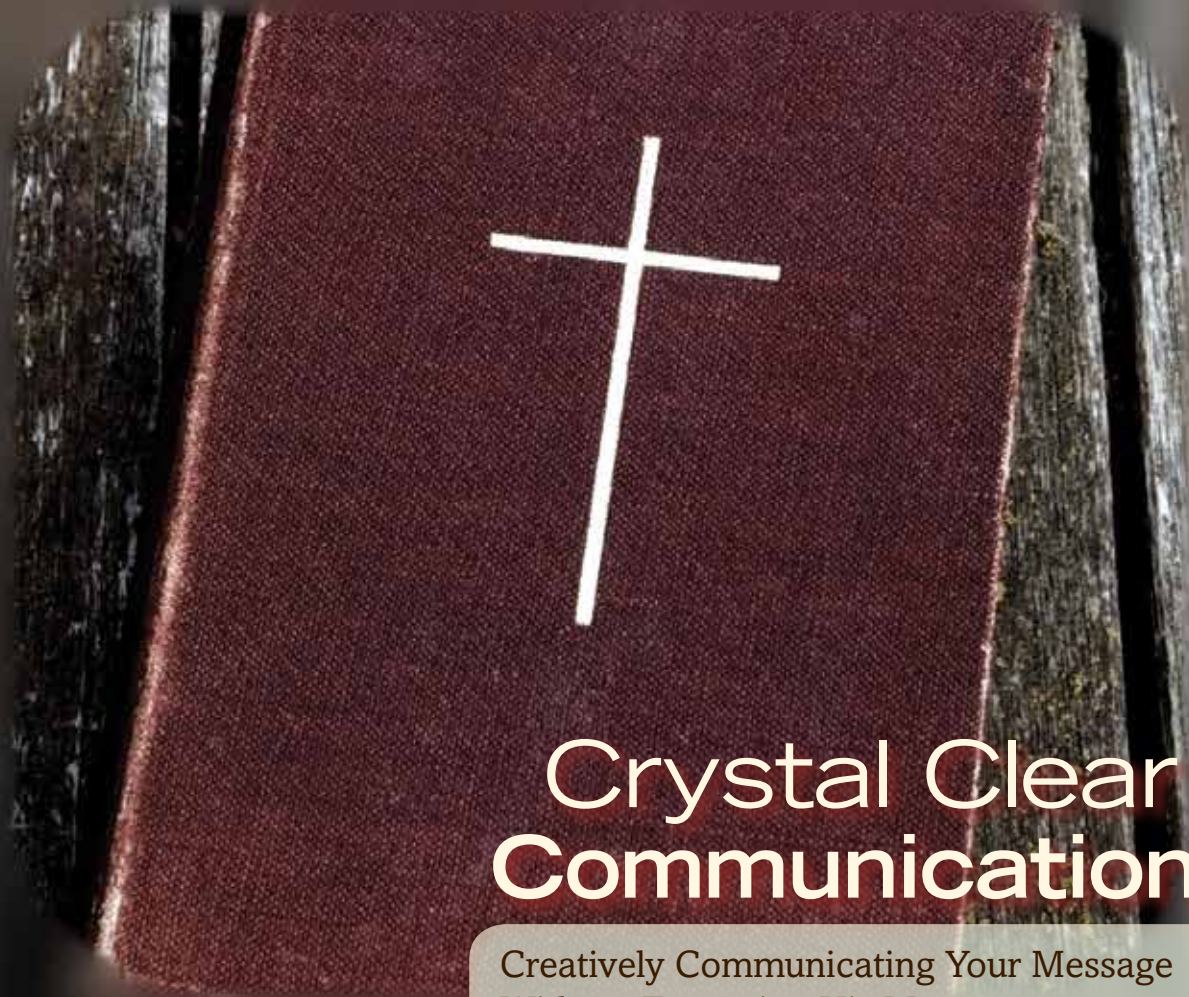


CS&S

A Publication of Church Supplies & Services | November/December 2013



Crystal Clear Communication

Creatively Communicating Your Message
Without Forgetting His Message Page 18

By Jason Paredes

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Save as much as 40% now... and even more savings are available in the *Power Buying Pool*.

Keep your contact information current. The lifeline of communication to our members is through correct contact information, i.e. key contact names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Send all updates to pattimalott@churchco-op.org. Help us keep you informed of the latest in events and savings from our vendors.

Editors Note: For submitting articles, artwork or comments about this publication, please contact: Patti Malott at 832.478.5131 patti@churchco-op.org



Church Supplies & Services, Inc CO+OP
Issue Dates: Feb, May, Aug, Nov

AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATION Church Supplies & Services, Inc.

LOCATION 9950 Cypresswood, Suite 320, Houston, TX 77070

TELEPHONE 832.478.5131 **INTERNET** www.churchco-op.org

Issue Number: 33 Subscription Price \$0.00

From the Director

My husband and I recently went on our annual bow hunting trip to Upper Michigan. This trip was a little different since we took along our Maltese dog, Toby. It didn't take Toby long to figure out that when we put on our hunting gear, we were leaving the cabin for a while and he could not go with us. Then I hooked up a basket on the front of my 4-wheeler and occasionally took him for rides. He learned that the sound of any 4-wheeler meant he had a chance of going along. Our actions clearly communicated to him and produced a response.



This made me think about how the world observes Christians. Our actions and body language speak volumes. What are we actually communicating to those around us? People learn—both positively and negatively—through verbal and non-verbal language.

The theme of this issue of CO+OP magazine is **Crystal Clear Communication** and it is full of articles addressing some aspect of communication. Don't miss the lead article by Jason Paredes, which begins on page 18, as he points out the importance of *Creatively Communicating Your Message Without Forgetting His Message*. On a side note, I asked Jason for a bio and he sent two—a serious one (he has an awesome background) and a lighter one. I got a chuckle out of the lighter one and decided to use that one at the end of the article. Those of you in ministry can relate.

Every church or ministry has a story to tell. Sometimes the best events go untold because of the lack of knowledge in getting our stories out to the public. Learn from Jeff Crilley (starting on page 15) as he explains to us the process in getting our ministry stories told to the public via the news.

Our vendor, Office Depot, not only provides discounts to CO+OP members—they also provide many ways to purchase from them. We receive calls from our members asking how various aspects of the Office Depot business works—from store purchasing cards to pricing. We thought this would be a good issue to clearly communicate answers to “all questions Office Depot.” Our National Office Depot Representative, Kelly Copeland, graciously allowed us to interview her to bring you the latest information. You can glean lots of information from her interview beginning on page 26.

Last issue we included an interview with Terry Lampman (Creative Coffee) celebrating his 25th year of being a CO+OP vendor. Don't miss reading about a new change with Terry and Marolyn on pages 34-35 in the First Choice Coffee article.

The above are just a few of the many educational and relevant articles in this issue. Grab a cup of coffee or your favorite soda, and take a twenty-minute break. You'll be glad you did.

Patti Malott
Executive Director

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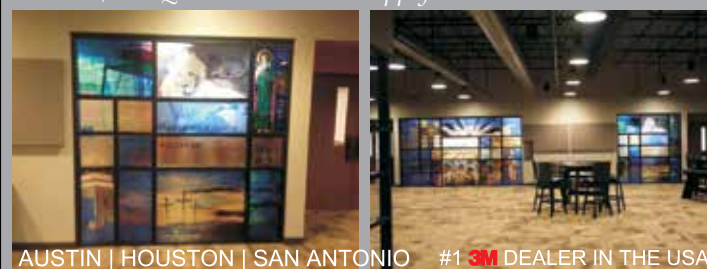
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banknotes

By Martha Martin

Communication

Or lack thereof...! Communication is not only necessary for sharing information and thoughts, but also includes the art of listening. An effective listener is an effective communicator.

Let's think about your banker...

Communicating your ongoing financial needs to your banker can be very complex. Take a step back and imagine yourself in an ideal world:

- How would you like to handle daily banking functions?
- Are your daily banking needs being met relative to electronic services?
- Are the majority of your banking transactions paper-based?
- Do you access daily balances via computer or phone?
- How are transfers made within and outside of the bank?
- Is your banker listening?

More importantly, does your banker communicate with you? Are you kept up-to-date on new and/or available electronic products and processes? And give careful consideration to services that streamline banking processes, too.

Let's think about time spent...

The time spent to prepare check deposits, driving to the bank and sitting in traffic, all just to wait to make a deposit before close of business. Then you wait for the deposit to be processed at the bank and you have even more valuable time spent waiting and waiting.

Let's think about process improvement in terms of that check deposit again...

Do you know that banks offer remote scanners for check deposits? These scanners, (like the ones used at Walmart), scan your checks, provide an image for your records, and guarantee same-day ledger credit for deposited items (deadlines differ). No more trips to the bank to make those deposits!

There are many electronic products that meet daily banking needs. Some provide balance reporting, automated stop payments, wire transfers and account reconciliation services.

However, in order to meet your banking needs, you must communicate with your banker...and more importantly, your banker should listen! ✚

Martha Martin

Martha Martin is a 20-year veteran banker in Dallas. She is a Senior VP & Manager of Texas Public Sector Treasury for Frost Bank. She can be reached at 214-515-2948 or at by email Martha.Martin@FrostBank.com.



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soundbytes

By Nick Nicholaou

Sometimes when we ask someone for recommendations, we get overwhelmed with information. As an IT guy, I fight the temptation to over-answer. With simple, crystal clear communication in mind, I'd like to share our firm's software recommendations.

We've had the privilege of serving many hundreds of ministries nationwide as network engineers and consultants. In those roles, we have found that some software works better in church and ministry offices than others. We have also found that some software seems to be more trouble-free than others. It is with that perspective that we make the following recommendations.

Software comes in three basic categories: operating systems, applications, and games. Although games are the most fun, in this article we will only look at operating systems and applications.

Operating Systems

Operating system software (often called the OS) is what helps computers know what to do with the commands they receive from users and programs. The most prevalent is Microsoft Windows.

Thanks to Apple and Microsoft, the 1980's saw a significant reduction of operating system choices. PCs and Macs became very popular and with them, custom-written operating systems nearly disappeared. From that point on, OSes came from one of only a few providers, compared to hundreds previously. Computer standardization began, and everyone benefitted.

Today we're seeing a slight reversal of that trend we enjoyed in the 1980s. And although the choices have become more complex, the operating system decision can still be fairly simple.

Desktop & Notebook Operating Systems

Desktop and Notebook OSes today are mostly from Apple or Microsoft. Some OSes, such as Linux, are gaining momentum and support. As OS competition heats up, the general public wins. Each OS provider will be driven to improve their features and reduce cost; and quality and stability will improve.

Our current PC OS of choice is Windows 7 Pro. To run Win7 Pro well, we recommend buying the fastest processor you can afford with at least 4GB of RAM. We recommend avoiding the Home edition in office environments, and Microsoft agrees. We also recommend avoiding Windows 8 because of the steep learning curve for office workers on non-touch screens, and almost all of corporate America agrees.

Mac OSX 10.8, Mountain Lion, is the latest Mac OS as of this writing, and it's a solid platform. Apple is working towards the release of its successor, Mavericks, which we're looking forward to testing once it is in final form.

Network Operating Systems

Microsoft Windows has won the NOS (Network Operating System) wars for now, and we recommend using Windows Server 2008r2. Though Microsoft has released Windows Server 2012, it has basically the same interface as Windows 8— specifically, no Start Button— which makes using it on servers a challenge. Microsoft's answer is to do more through the PowerShell, which is akin to using DOS commands. It just doesn't feel like 2012 was a step forward for Microsoft, and we hope they correct their course soon.

Hypervisors

This newer software category allows us to turn the computer we historically referred to as a server into a host for many virtual servers. Though it sounds complex, it's actually simple once seen.

Some of the reasons this new category of software has gained so much acceptance are:

- The computer's processor chip is the most expensive component in the computer. Most servers only use 5% - 10% of their processor capacity after they've been started, and so this very expensive component goes mostly unused. By installing a hypervisor and then hosting virtual servers on top of it, you are able to get more use out of your physical server computers, achieving a much higher return on your investment. It also reduces the number of physical servers needed, and that saves money and energy.

- Windows NOSes function best —that is, most reliably— when they only run one service, like Exchange, for instance. In a Windows network that means you're best to have many servers, which can be expensive if they're physical boxes. Using hypervisor technology reduces your cost significantly because you're able to run many virtual servers on one host, and the only additional cost to configuring a host is that it may need more RAM and should have two power supplies and two network interface cards.
- In most networks, the level of hypervisor software needed is completely free!

Hypervisor software is heating up to be the next battle frontier for IT domination, which is good for consumers of the technology. The company that invented the technology for the PC platform is VMware, and their software is currently the best—no contest. Microsoft, Cisco, and others are also in the market, so that may change. But for now, VMware is the software to go with, having about 70% of the worldwide market share. You can download it for free at www.vmware.com.

Applications

The programs we use to get our work done (I refer to this category as productivity software) can come in separate pieces or in suites.

Microsoft Office has the lead in this area. Office 2013 for Windows systems and 2011 for Macs make sharing files very easy across both platforms.

- **Word Processor.** Church word processing is highly layout and mail-merge oriented, as opposed to simple document processing. If your team uses Microsoft Word, then you probably augment the layout function with a light desktop publisher like Microsoft Publisher.
- **Spreadsheet.** The best spreadsheet program available is Microsoft Excel. The formula, charting, pivot table, and diagnostic functions are powerful and easy to use. And Excel spreadsheets and charts paste easily into Word documents. Excel can also link to many databases (using pivot tables), providing real-time diagnostic charting to help make good management decisions.
- **Slide Presentations.** This software lets you put together lessons, sermons, classes, and more in outline form. Those outlines can be presented as attractive slide shows that can be projected through monitors or projectors with attention-getting graphics and animation.

The two greatest benefits we've found are:

1. Reduced preparation time since the software works in outline form; and
2. Enhanced delivery of your message because it involves more senses and can be graphically memorable.

The best software in this area is Microsoft's PowerPoint.

- **Email, Calendars, Contacts, & Tasks.** Outlook and Exchange are the combination of choice for this category. Exchange is the email server, and Outlook is the client that presents Exchange's contents to the user. Since Outlook 2007, it also has the ability to receive RSS feeds (blog updates, etc.), keeping the user in one simple-to-use program (this feature is only available to Windows users).

Database

Most ministries are best to buy a ministry or church management system (ChMS) that is designed to serve the needs of ministries. There are many good ChMS providers available. But don't try to buy a database and develop your own; it takes too much time, is too hard on the staff, and will eventually cost much more than you probably want to spend.

Documents That Are Portable

Portable Document Format (pdf) files are a great way to send documents of all types to others via the Internet while maintaining fonts and layout. Acrobat Reader is free for all, but until recently you had to buy the full Acrobat product or a PDF-creating utility to create pdf files. Microsoft Office modules have the ability to save files as PDFs, saving the extra expense of purchasing another product.

Internet Browser

There are a growing number of people using Mozilla's Firefox internet browser. It can be downloaded for free from www.mozilla.com, and is easy to install. Firefox is easy to use and has some features that don't exist in Internet Explorer or Safari. It does a great job at securely remembering website IDs and passwords, and is safer to use than other browsers.

Many people like Google Chrome but at MBS, we find it to be a little thin on features, and thus prefer Firefox.

Bible Study Tools & Libraries

There are many good tools to help in this area. My favorite is the Logos Scholar's Library. One that many like to run on their SmartPhone is simply called Bible (see www.youversion.com).



soundbytes

Remote Communication

If you have a Windows Server in your network server cluster, you already have a great tool available to make your network available to those who need access from other locations. These NOSes ship with a service called Terminal Services. Enabling and configuring Terminal Services can allow authorized users to work on your network from any computer with an internet connection. This is also a great way to keep network support costs low because many network issues can be resolved through Terminal Services.

Project Management/ Whiteboard

Our team was looking for a simple project manager we could list our projects on with the tasks that need to be completed for each project. We tried Microsoft Project, but found it to be too intense.

Some colleagues recommended we look at Trello (www.trello.com). We did, and were very impressed with

how simple it was, powerful enough for our needs, and accessible to all our team members through all of our Windows, Macs, iOS, and Android devices.

Happy Shopping!

For ministries, many vendors offer to pass the manufacturers' charity pricing benefits to you. Our favorite vendor for these purchases is Dell. Because they aren't in the software business, they offer charity licensing discounts without a profit markup. ✦

Nick Nicholaou



Nick is president of Ministry Business Services, an IT consulting firm specializing in church and ministry computer networks, VoIP, and private cloud hosted services. You can reach Nick at nick@mbsinc.com, and you may want to check out his firm's website (www.mbsinc.com) and his blog at <http://ministry-it.blogspot.com>.

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Harvest for the Kingdom

By Paula Burns

*...Lift up your eyes, and look
on the fields; for they are white
already to harvest.*

– John 4:35



Fall is a wonderful time of year! The long hot summer days come to an end and ministries begin preparing for Fall Festivals filled with candied apples, hay rides, and fun! Farmers are in anticipation of the upcoming harvest and seeing the fruits of their labor come to fruition, and in general it is a festive time of year.

John 4 reminds us that the fields are ripe for harvest. The church has a mission and directive to gather the lost and bring in the Kingdom harvest! What an awesome privilege to be a part of this process, and to be the hands and feet to carry this out. Many times, as insurance advisors, we are blessed to visit with many ministries that are bringing in a harvest for the Kingdom and it is a huge perk to our job to be involved on a daily basis witnessing and hearing the testimonies of the goodness of God.

While the laborers are busy gathering the lost and carrying out the vision and mission of their prospective ministries, we often find that silos in communication can begin to appear. For example, there are various ministries in a body of Christ (see illustration below).

When policies and procedures are implemented, how are they communicated across departmental lines? Let's take the example of entering into a contractual agreement to illustrate this point.

Anywhere Church USA is hosting a Fall Festival for the community. The Children's Minister wants to have bounce houses and pony rides at the festival. The vendors are notified and the Children's Minister signs the contracts to be sure the vendors are reserved for the festival dates. The day of the Fall Festival arrives, and one of the children falls off a pony and sustains serious injuries. The vendor had insurance, but the church is only defended if the church was listed as an additional insured on the policy. The minister thought the church was covered because the vendor gave them a Certificate of Insurance; however, this vendor's coverage only extends to the church in the event that it was "as required by written contract." The children's minister does not normally handle insurance issues and did not realize the contract should have been amended to include that the ABC Pony Rides should name Anywhere Church USA as an additional insured on the General Liability policy. So, the pony ride vendor was sued and the church was also named in the lawsuit. The vendor's policy responded for the vendor, but not the church. Guess what? On the church's liability policy there is an exclusion for animals on the General Liability coverage (as is



sometimes applicable depending on the carrier). Therefore, since there is no coverage, there is no defense coverage for the church. Had the Administrator of the church been involved in this initially, they would most likely have been aware of this exclusion and that the church needed to have either the vendor name the church as an additional insured (and stipulate this in the contract) or that a Special Event policy should have been secured. This is a typical example of a silo. We also see it often concerning Human Resource policies and procedures.

One of the challenges is how to break down these silos and effectively disseminate this information. Had a policy been implemented across departmental lines that no one enters into a contract on behalf of the church unless the contract is reviewed by Administration, this may have been avoided. Or possibly the answer was training the different prospective departments regarding the importance of the additional insured status and that coverage is many times not automatic unless it is "by written contract." The main concept here is to depend on each other. Every church needs the different "gifts of the body of Christ." One person may be detailed and function in the gift of Administration, where another is very mission-focused or a visionary. The visionary needs the detailed person to take care of the details and then the church functions more completely as a team. Communication is the key.

Some points to consider when breaking down silos:

- Identifying there are silos is the first step
- Leadership must be on board
- Communication method developed
- Training done across departmental lines
- Accountability

As risk managers, our church clients tell us that, due to turn over and the ever-demanding schedules, this is a huge challenge. We welcome your input and would love to hear from you as to how you have been successful in breaking down silos of communication in your ministry. The church as a whole is challenged with this. We most definitely want to create a proactive culture rather than a reactive one to risk.

Insurance One is committed to assisting ministries and offers training classes to assist with this process. We can help build a risk management team concept and begin to break down the silos in communication that may exist in your ministry. If we can ever assist you, our mission is to serve those that serve. It would be our joy to help any way we can. ✦

Paula Burns, CIC, CRM



Paula Burns specializes in insuring larger churches and non-profit organizations. Paula has been in the insurance industry for 27 years and has earned the prestigious designations of a Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC) and a Certified Risk Manager (CRM). She is a supporter and active member of the Houston NACBA Chapter. Paula also serves on the board of Church Supplies & Services (CO+OP) and as a faculty member of The National Alliance for Insurance Education & Research.



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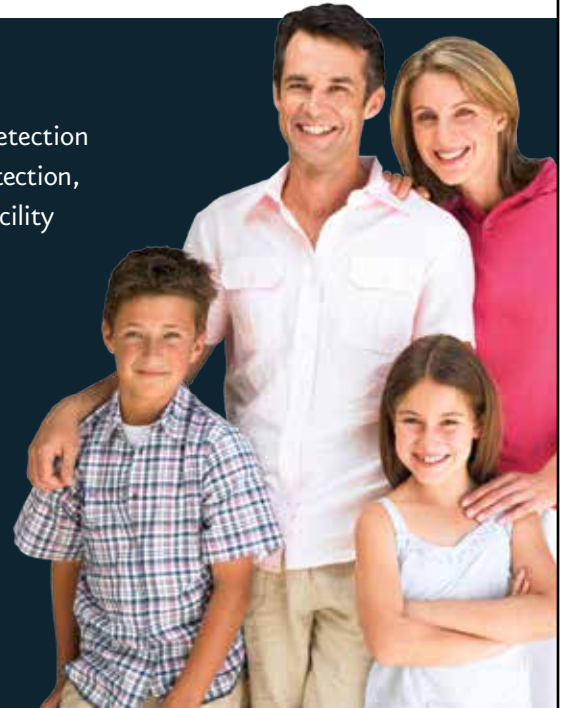
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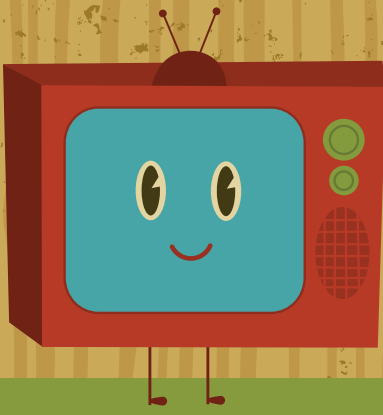
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ARE YOU READY FOR PRIME TIME?

By Jeff Crilley

When I was growing up as a preacher's kid in Detroit, I just figured everyone's father was interviewed on the TV news and quoted in the newspaper each week. It seemed like there were always cameras in my father's church recording positive stories about his ministry. It wasn't until years later, when I began my career as a TV reporter that I began to understand just how brilliant my father was. He was a master of free publicity.



Do you have a great idea for a story, but no clue how to get it in the news? Are you tired of pitching press releases the news media simply ignores?

After 25 years of beating the street as a TV reporter, I have a scoop for you: the media needs good stories. But most stories are pitched so poorly, they are lost in the blizzard of faxes that blanket every newsroom.

So, here are a few ways to increase your chances of getting covered that even some PR pros don't know:

BE UNUSUAL

The old adage about "Man Bites Dog" still holds true. The news doesn't cover what's normal. We cover the abnormal.

One non-profit in Dallas knew this when it held a "Celebrity Garage Sale." For months, the charity sent out letters to both local and national celebrities asking for the old stuff in their garages that they were ready to toss out. Before long, they had everything from Bob Hope's old golf clubs to Roger Staubach's long-neglected neckties. Not only did all the items sell, but by making an ordinary garage sale extraordinary, the media was instantly sold on the story. The story was picked up by the cable news channels and was seen around the world.

BE VISUAL

Reporters tell stories with pictures. If the pictures aren't there, chances are the reporters won't be either.

Even the most non-visual story can be made visual if you're creative. Year after year, my father received amazing publicity by releasing doves on Easter Sunday morning. To celebrate the resurrection, he would lead

the congregation outside after the service and release the birds with half-a-dozen cameras looking on. It was the visual of the crowd, the birds, and the church that captured the media's interest. I remember waking up on more than one Monday morning after Easter and seeing the photo on the front pages of the Detroit papers.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT REPORTER

Perhaps the most common mistake even some PR pros make is trying to sell a good story to the wrong person. Most reporters have a specialty, such as "crime" or "business."

So, seek out the reporter who will have the most to benefit from your story. Start studying the news. Before you call a TV station or try to pitch the local newspaper, become familiar with a reporter's work. Don't try to sell a light feature story to a hard-nosed investigative reporter.

Does your local paper have a religion reporter? Or have you ever watched a TV reporter and felt something spiritual in the way they delivered their story? That's the reporter you're looking for.

USE THE PHONE

When I'm asked to speak to church groups about publicity, I always suggest calling the reporter. With faxes and the internet, it seems we've gotten away from the personal touch of a phone call. When you find the reporter you want to pitch, call them.

Here's an example of a perfect pitch:

"Jane, you tell stories with such compassion that I thought you would like this one. Our church has a special ministry. Instead of just talking about loving our

neighbor, our youth group is doing it. Every Saturday, a group gets together to help serve food at a local homeless shelter or visit shut-ins. In fact, this coming Saturday, they're grabbing hammers and paint brushes and they're going to help fix up the home of an 80-year old woman who lives near the church and can't afford to pay for the work to be done. In fact, she doesn't even know they're coming. I want you to be there with a camera to see her face when a small army of teenagers begins fixing her house for free. She'll probably cry."

Here's the best thing about a phone-based pitch—when you strike out, you know. Let's say the call isn't going well. The reporter is typing on the computer and seems disinterested during this phone call. That doesn't mean you have a bad story, you just pitched the wrong reporter. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, pick up the newspaper and try again—"Joe, you tell stories with such compassion..."

If you simply fax or email a newsroom, you never have an answer. You don't know whether your news release was thrown in the trash. All you know is your phone isn't ringing.

WAIT FOR A SLOW NEWS DAY

The holidays are the slowest "news times" of the year. When government offices are closed, so are most of our sources. Take advantage of it.

In fact, take out your calendar and begin circling government holidays, as well as the days before and after major holidays. If the government isn't making news and the large corporations that normally supply us with press releases are shutting down their PR machines for a long weekend, we reporters are scrambling to find

something to cover. Pitch even an average story on a day when the media is starving for news, and you're much more likely to get coverage.

The news is no different than everything else. It's a supply and demand business. The demand for news is constant. TV stations have to produce the same numbers of newscasts all year long and newspapers will always have to put out another edition.

Do you see what I mean? The demand doesn't change. Only the supply of news does. And around government holidays, the supply of news dries up. The news has to be filled with something—it might as well be you!

There you go. Now you're armed with knowledge that even some well-paid public relations professionals don't practice. If your idea is unique, visual, and pitched to the right person when the supply of news is running thin, you're in! ✦

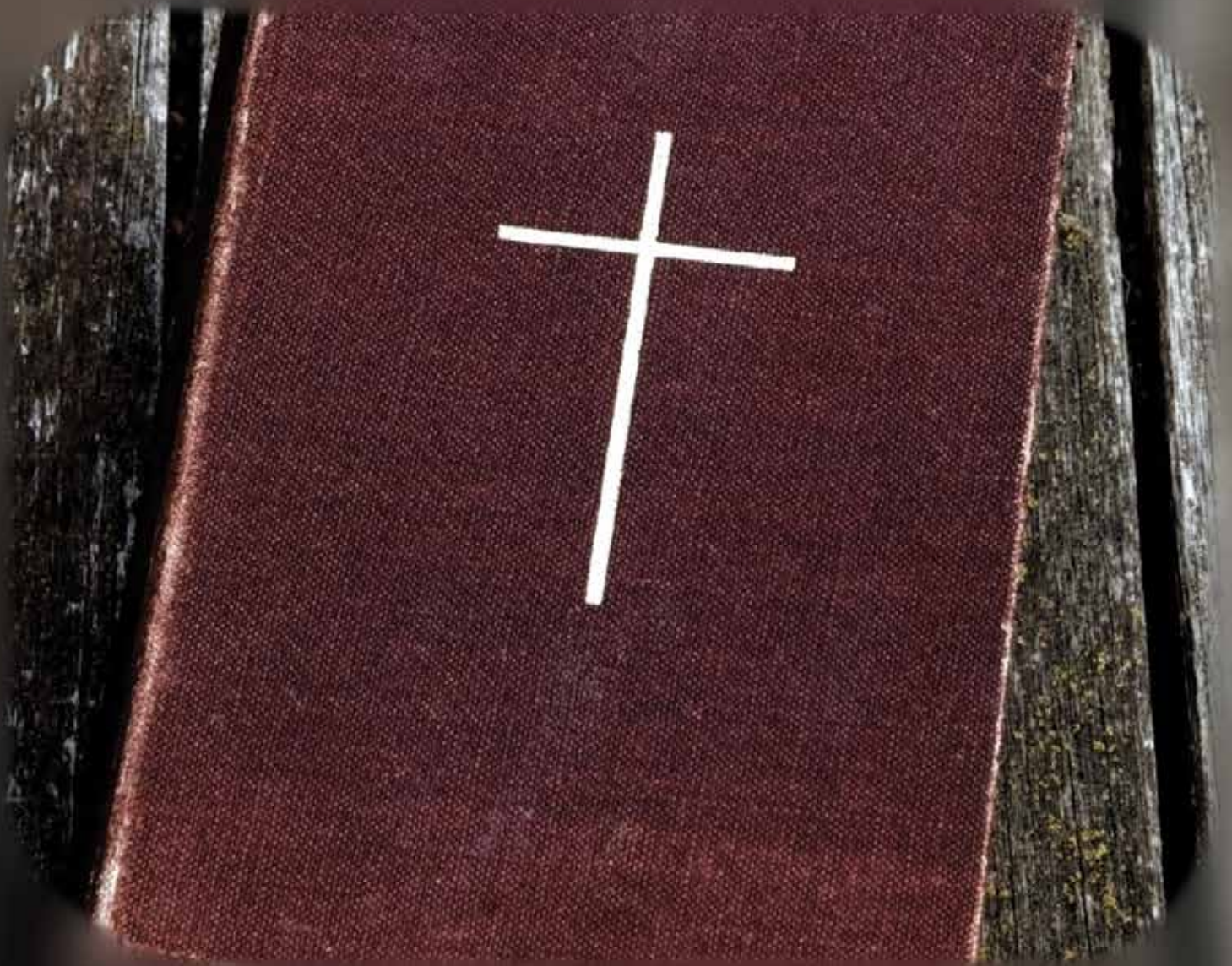
Jeff Crilley



Jeff retired from TV news after 25 years in the business to start the country's first "all journalist" PR firm. During his career, he made hundreds of national news appearances including CNN, CNN Headline News, FOX News, The Discovery Channel, Good Morning America and The CBS Early Show.

He has been recognized by his peers with dozens of national and regional awards including the Emmy, the National Headliners Award, the Edward R. Murrow Award, the Thurgood Marshall Award, and in 2004 was named by the Texas Associated Press, "The Best TV Reporter in the State."

For more information, visit: www.RealNewsPR.com



Creatively Communicating Your Message Without Forgetting His Message

By Jason Paredes

I find as a preacher that everyone wants to label me. They ask, "Are you an expository preacher or a topical preacher? Are you Calvinist or Armenian? Are you old school or are you one of those trendy preachers? Are you a fire and brimstone guy or one of those Oprah Winfrey, self-help types?" It seems as though people assume you can only be one or the other. Everyone must choose their battle stance, and once it's chosen, you better stick with it or you're a traitor in line with Benedict Arnold.



You must let the
message drive
the creativity

But here's also what I've discovered. Jesus defied labels. He could be accused of falling into any of the camps listed above. He was beyond defining. Think about his ministry. At times, He simply taught an Old Testament passage verse by verse, walking His followers through the book of Isaiah. At other times, He jumped from passage to passage teaching a topical truth. Sometimes His theology seemed reformed. Other times, He spoke of man's freedom of choice. Sometimes Jesus drew a crowd like the hottest preacher around. Sometimes He drove them away like we do when we preach about money. He could be hardcore or tender-hearted. It all depended on the situation in which He found himself.

You discover a beautiful principle by examining the communication style of Jesus. In the words of Paul, Jesus became all things to all men so that by all means He might save some. He communicated to people with complete focus on how they learned, not how rabbi's told him to communicate. The end was more important than the means when it came to teaching God's word.

As we approach the arduous task of communicating God's message to a world desperate to hear it, I suggest we follow Jesus' approach. Rise above the labels and use every means available to communicate God's message. And if you look at the scriptures, you'll find a plethora of methods to communicate the gospel. The scriptures employ parables, hyperbole, visual illustrations, poetry, stories, rabbinic methodology, shock and awe, twitter... OK, maybe not that last one, but you get the picture. If Ezekiel would break a piece of pottery to make a point, trust me, you can do the same. God told Hosea to marry a prostitute just for a picture lesson for Israel. I'm assuming He won't call you to do the same, but you can see how broad His definition is for what's acceptable in communicating his message. And God communicated His word to humanity this way for one reason... because it works! We are a multisensory people and God created us to learn in a multisensory way. Tap into that truth and make creativity a part of your challenge to communicate God's word whether you do it from the pulpit, the Sunday School classroom, or from the living room.

Creatively Teaching the Word of God

Now I must admit that real danger hides in the recesses of creatively teaching the word of God. One can easily make the means of communicating the message more important than the message itself, and if that happens, you've lost

God's message. So, for the rest of the time I have your attention, I'd like to share with you some core principles I've learned along the way that allow me to keep my creative juices flowing while still drawing people into the teachings of scripture instead of distracting them from it. And these principles apply to any situation in which you communicate the dangerous message of Jesus.

The first principle is the most important. You must let the message drive the creativity and never let the creativity drive the message. Multiple times I've found myself dreaming about the impact of a certain illustration I could do that would really grab the attention of the audience (I'm still trying to find out how to use a zip line from the balcony to the stage in a service), and if I'm not careful, it will drive me to shoehorn it into a teaching that distracts from the truth. If people walk away remembering the illustration, but not the biblical truth it intended to support, I've failed. On the other hand, when I approach the text, study it, and give myself time to dream about it, the illustration usually emerges from the passage. And when that happens, the sermon becomes unforgettable.

Recently in a Christmas sermon about Jesus as the prophesied light of the world (Matthew 4:12-17), a thought hit me while I was meditating on the text. The fact that the light of Jesus proved too intense for the Jews, led me to the idea of turning off the lights and shining a spotlight right in the eyes of the congregation. Then as I considered that Jesus' plan was for the light to pass on to billions of other smaller lights in us as his church, the thought emerged of hanging small Christmas lights all over the auditorium. It was simple enough, but I knew it would explain the text in vivid detail.

In one of the most memorable (and by God's grace spot on) illustrations, I read the passage while the lights were shut off, and I spoke to them about darkness while they sat in utter darkness. Then with their eyes fully adjusted, I blinded them with the spotlight, shifting it around the crowd. After that I explained how the Jews killed the Light because it was too bright, and I shut it off to symbolize that. In the darkness I explained how Jesus, though, had a plan for his light to shine not just in one person any longer, but in all of us who follow in Jesus' light. In that moment, 10,000 Christmas lights hanging from the ceiling came on making a breathtaking example of how our light should look in the world. The gasps of awe in the room were proof the illustration was powerful, but the conversation afterward of how they understood our role in spreading that light

substantiated the illustration as biblical. Sure, they spoke of the shock of it, but more importantly, they spoke of the meaning of it, too. It worked because it was born from the text, not forced into it. Always start there.

Plan for Creativity


But this illustration leads me to another important principle in creatively teaching God's word. You need to plan for creativity. Creativity rarely happens without hard work. You need to give yourself time to think, time to reflect, and time to explore possibilities in creative teaching. I know in ministry that time is a precious commodity, but it will pay huge spiritual dividends as we tap into more senses for people to learn God's truth.

I would also recommend trying to staff around creativity when possible (paid or unpaid). The Christmas light illustration was only possible because of one staff person's incredible dedication of meticulously hanging every strand of Christmas lights while I worked on delivering the message. Creativity demands partnership, so gather people together who can help you think, who can help you build, and who can help you clean up the beautiful mess of creative communication.

The Art of Being Bold

Another core principle you need to develop in order to expand your platform of communicating God's word is the art of being bold. Fear is one of the greatest hindrances of creativity in communication. What if people don't get it? What if people think it's silly? What if my illustration doesn't work? By the way, I once had a major creative failure as we'd set up a Bible to fall from the ceiling with a parachute to illustrate where the Bible didn't come from. As I said my cue for the Bible to drop, I heard it shift and then stick right there in the ceiling. I looked up and there was my Bible, hanging 20 feet above me, and now I had nothing to preach from! I had to walk over and ask someone in the audience to lend me their Bible so I could preach. You might call that an epic fail.

Risk is a part of creativity, but without risk, there is no reward. You can reduce risk by doing the work of testing things out, doing dry run-throughs, and making changes along the way, but you must know that a chance of failure will always exist. That's what makes the art of teaching so dynamic and attention-grabbing. Live in the tension and take the risk. Once you've done that, you have another principle you still need to follow.



You must pray over every
teaching as if heaven
and hell were on the line

Evaluate, Evaluate, Evaluate

If you want to know how your communication effectiveness has changed through creativity, you must elicit feedback. Feedback is a tricky art because you have to find proper channels to get it. You'll always have two camps around you that don't provide helpful feedback. You'll have those who are always for you (My mom comes to mind...she's never heard me preach a bad sermon, and trust me, I've preached a sack of them). Their feedback will make you feel good, but it won't tell you what didn't work. You need a more critical eye than they'll give you. On the other hand, you'll have those people in your life that you can never please, and Jesus himself wouldn't be good enough for them. Their overly critical input will make you think you should hang up your hat and find a new career. Cast those inputs aside and search for people who can give you honest, critical, hard feedback in love. If you'll give trusted people permission to evaluate you, they will, and you'll be the better for it. Scarred a bit, yes, but better, too.

Critical evaluation proves effective only when you craft questions with high specificity. You need to ask pointed question to get clarity on your creativity's impact. Ask, "What did you remember about the illustration? Can you tell me the main idea I was trying to communicate? How was the impact of the delivery? Did my hair look OK?" Get specific, let them be honest, and learn from them.

Pray Over Every Teaching

The last core principle to communicate creatively without diminishing the message can easily be overlooked, but its value cannot be overstated. You must pray over every teaching as if heaven and hell were on the line. I have a prayer mentor who has taught me how to pray in a message. I try to spend a couple of hours praying over the subject I am going to be teaching, and if I have a unique creative element in the sermon, I spend extra

time praying over that. I pray over the truth that I want it to communicate. I pray over people's ability to hear it. I pray over every seat in the room, that God would touch them, not my illustration. And then I listen. I listen for God to prompt me to pray certain things over certain seats in the room, for God to emphasize certain aspects of the teaching, and for God tell me what is important in the message and what can be cut out.

There have been multiple times that I've changed a message during that time of prayer or canned an illustration because after praying over it, it didn't seem appropriate any more. I've adjusted how I was going to deliver it and parked on ideas longer than originally expected because of what I heard from God in the time of prayer. Submerge your teaching in focused prayer, and you'll scarce be able to screw it up.

So now I leave you with this thought. A world of both young and old, believer and unbeliever, hip and old school desperately need to hear the life-changing message of God's truth. The gospel has never been more applicable than it is today. The question is will they hear the message? I pray you'll do the hard work of tapping into their senses so that by all means, you might save some! ✚

Jason Paredes



Jason is just a slacker from Oak Cliff who is trying to be conformed day by day into the image of Jesus Christ. It has taken a lot of schooling (some of it was far too expensive), an intense amount of love from those around him, and a two year journey to Buenos Aires, Argentina to get him where he is today. He presently resides in Arlington, Texas with his beautiful wife. He has three incredible daughters who aren't allowed to date until they are 42 and a son who brings some much needed balance to the girl power in his house. He serves as the Teaching Pastor of Fielder Church and does everything the Senior Pastor tells him.

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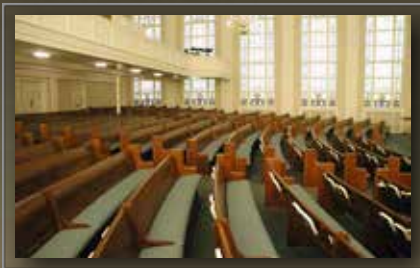
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"O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together!" Psalms 34:3

An Interview with Office Depot's Kelley Copeland

The CO+OP recently conducted an interview with Kelley Copeland of Office Depot's Business Solutions Division to provide clarification of and updated information on Office Depot's program to new and existing CO+OP Members. We hope that you find this information helpful. If you have further questions not answered in this article, please contact Kelley.copeland@officedepot.com or your Inside Sales Representative, Jeremy Cargil at Jeremy.cargil@officedepot.com.

Question: Is the Store Purchasing Card a credit card?

Answer: No. The Store Purchasing Card is not a credit card. This is simply a card that links to your Office Depot Business Account that gets you the specially discounted CO+OP price while shopping at our retail stores. Once the card is swiped, or the card number is entered, the CO+OP discounts will be applied and the prices for the items being purchased will change. You will then pay for the transaction with a credit card or use your account billing (if you have that set up on your account).

Question: If I forget my Store Purchasing Card, can I just give the cashier my phone number?

Answer: Unfortunately, no. Presenting the SPC card, or paying with a registered credit card, is the only way that you can receive your CO+OP pricing when shopping in Office Depot retail stores.

Question: What are my billing options at Office Depot?

Answer: Either Credit Card or Account Billing. You may pay by credit card or you may have account billing set up with 30-day terms. When purchasing online, you will select your payment type preference: credit card or account billing (if you have that option on your account). When purchasing in-store, be sure to use your Store Purchasing Card first, and then pay for the transaction as noted in the previous question.

Question: Can I use my church's credit card (Visa, Mastercard, etc.) to pay for my purchases?

Answer: Yes, you may pay for your online or in-store purchases using your church's credit card, as described in the previous two questions.

Question: Can I use my Rewards Card when I go to the Office Depot store?

Answer: If you have an Office Depot "Worklife Rewards" card, you cannot use the CO+OP discounts in conjunction with this program. Worklife Rewards is a loyalty program for the general public. You will find that the discounts and over-all savings with the CO+OP program are much more significant.

Question: What is the best way to get the maximum value from the CO+OP special pricing?

Answer: Maximum value will be achieved by recognizing the scope of options that we offer in every product category and also in our variety of ways to shop. Office Depot and CO+OP have worked together to create a core list of deeply discounted items to ensure that you receive great value on the supplies that are most used CO+OP members. Purchasing studies show that consolidating your purchases in one place saves money in many ways. Imagine the time it takes to "save a dime" as you search through multiple catalogs and websites. Many times, the person price-shopping is spending more money in their hourly wage than the money they are saving on that product. That defeats the purpose! The CO+OP has done their due-diligence to find the best program with the best value. Office Depot's program considers the combined amount of business that all of the office supply business totals for the CO+OP, which is over \$3 million. Another way to look at that is, your church may only spend \$25,000 in office supplies per year (or less), but your church is able to take advantage of a program that is based off the total combined business! Office Depot bids much more aggressively on that size business than what your church would do alone.

Office DEPOT®

Question: Where do I find the CO+OP pricing?

Answer: Each CO+OP Member account is issued a login and password for our secure website [<https://businessofficedepot.com>]. The special login and password allows you to see the CO+OP pricing when you shop online. The price you see online is what you will pay. No calculations needed! If you do not have a login ID, please contact your account manager.

Question: Why do I sometimes find the price lower on the Office Depot website than on the CO+OP Office Depot website?

Answer: Since we have store-fronts and the general public associates us with those brick and mortar locations, you will see that the retail website (www.officedepot.com) will give specials from time to time, just as we give specials to our delivery customers that the general public will never be able to use. If you want to take advantage of a retail special and it is offered in the store, you simply need to use your store purchasing card in our retail store to get that special. Using your SPC card in the store will allow you to get the best of both worlds. When you take advantage of a retail special, you are getting the lower price of the two programs in the store.

Question: Some of the printer cartridges my church uses are not on the core list. Can they be added?

Answer: Simply contact your account manager and we can discuss adding your toner on the special core list just for you!

Question: Could you explain how all of us buying together helps my church?

Answer: As stated above, the CO+OP has done their due-diligence for the CO+OP Members to find the best

program with the best value. Office Depot's program considers the combined amount of business that all of the office supply business totals for the CO+OP. While your church may only spend \$25,000 in office supplies per year (or less), your church is able to take advantage of our program because it is based off the total combined CO+OP business.

Question: What do I do if an item I am looking for is not on the website or in the catalog?

Answer: Simply call customer service. If the product is still manufactured, we can source it from a wholesaler and ship it to you, just like those products that we stock in our stores and warehouses.

Question: When I need to talk to a real person, who do I call?

Answer: For standard questions, call your dedicated customer service team at 1-888-777-4044. For specific CO+OP product questions, call Jeremy Cargil, your Inside Sales Representative, at 1-855-337-6811, ext. 12661.

Question: Is there someone I can contact at Office Depot that understands CO+OP pricing?

Answer: You can always contact me at Kelley.copeland@officedepot.com or your Inside Sales Representative, Jeremy Cargil, at Jeremy.cargil@officedepot.com.

Question: Can I take advantage of the local store special and still use my Office Depot card?

Answer: If you want to take advantage of a local store's retail special, you would simply use your store purchasing card in the retail store to get that special. When you take advantage of a retail special, you are getting the lower price of the two programs in the store.

Question: What services do you provide that are frequently used by churches?

Answer: Churches make a lot of photocopies and do a tremendous amount of printing. The CO+OP's Copy & Print prices are extremely competitive. We offer black and white copies for 2.5 cents each, color copies for 29 cents each, and finishing services for 35% off retail. You can use your Store Purchasing Card in the stores to get these great Copy & Print prices, in addition to ordering online. Just a few examples of Copy & Print services include custom printing (stamps, forms, bulletins, stationery, business envelopes, etc.), promotional product printing, and specialty printing (seasonal/holiday, folders and binders, memo pads, large format jobs, etc.). Patti Mallot has a great example of the savings we can offer:

"I used to pay about \$150.00 per binder for our Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse program and Office Depot's price came in at \$35.00. This is a tremendous savings. Their customer service was exceptional. You don't have to leave your office since it can be done electronically—saving time and money."

Question: What product categories do you carry that are frequently used by churches?

Answer: Products offered by Office Depot that churches need a lot of are basic office supplies, paper, ink and toner. In terms of Technology, Office Depot offers computers and tablets, office machines, data storage and media, and also a wide variety of printers, scanners, copiers and fax machines. We also offer cleaning and break room supplies. We have increased the products that we carry in this area tremendously over the last couple of years. Another product category that you may not realize we offer is furniture. We carry all the brands you know and trust at everyday low prices, so there is no need to look anywhere else. We stock a full range of desks and workstations, office chairs and seating, bookcases and filing cabinets.

Question: Does Office Depot sell and/or lease copiers and large multi-function printers?

Answer: Yes. Office Depot offers purchase and leasing options on copy machines. We have a team dedicated to helping with your needs for copy machine leasing.

Question: Since Office Depot sells office furniture, can I get help designing our new office space?

Answer: You can! We have an in-house group of furniture sales specialists. They can handle requests involving one chair for an individual up to specifying larger orders for offices, conference rooms, training rooms, reception areas, break and/or storage areas. Using CAD (computer aided design) files or room dimensions, our in-house group can provide basic design drawings. Since the design team cannot personally meet with a client, send a request to your assigned Office Depot account manager and he/she will work with the furniture team specialists on your request.

As our staff has increased, Office Depot helped us utilize our office space more efficiently. They have helped us with six different projects from concept to design to finished product, providing quality modular workspaces for many of our staff members. I can't imagine using any other vendor for our office furniture and modular design needs.

Sue Washburn, Human Resource Manager
Faithbridge Church
Spring, Texas

Contributors to this article:

Kelley Copeland – National Account Manager

Kelley's career with Office Depot spans 17 years and since January of 2012, she has devoted herself to making sure that things go smoothly for Church CO+OP members. After spending 13 years in management at Office Depot, she now enjoys working directly with the owners of the Group Purchasing Organizations that she manages. She feels she can have a direct impact on the value that GPO's provide their members.

Jeremy Cargil – Business Account Manager

Jeremy has been with Office Depot since the summer of 2012 and has been assigned to the CO+OP since day one. He enjoys working with his customers and providing a one-stop-shop solution for all their business office supply needs. Jeremy prides himself on always being accessible to his customers, having an understanding of their unique business needs, and providing products and solutions that fit those needs.

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Hazardous Communication Standard Changes

What it Means to You as a Church Facility Manager

by Terry Hall

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) first published the Hazardous Communication Standard (HCS) in 1983 as a means to provide information to employers and employees about chemicals and hazards in the work place. These regulations have often been referred to as “Right to Know Laws.” In March of 2012, OSHA published the first update to the HCS since 1994. The new rule became effective in May of 2012. The HCS is found in the 29 CFR 1910.1200 and now is aligned with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS).

OSHA’s reason for this change was two-fold; first to help make a safer work environment for employees handling hazardous chemicals in the workplace, and to give employers the opportunity to stay competitive in the global market place. GHS has been adopted in several European communities and so U.S. companies were following two different standards, one in the U.S. and one for sales abroad.

The new HCS rule became final in May of 2012, but is implemented in the following phases:

1. December 1, 2013: employers must train employees to the new standard.
2. June 1, 2015: manufacturers and distributors must begin selling chemicals that are classified to the new HCS standard.
3. December 1, 2015: end of sell-through period for products produced prior to June 1, 2015.
4. June 1, 2016: employers must have their Written Hazardous Communication Program rewritten to the new HCS.

Items #1 and #4 directly affect you as a Facility Manager and have consequences for non-compliance.

Does HCS change the products you are using? Does it change the hazards of those products? The answers to both of these questions are no. What it does do is provide a concise and universal way for this information to be presented to the employee. Through the use of specific hazard classification standards, pictograms and labeling, and safety data sheets, all the information on chemicals and mixtures have been standardized.

- Hazard classification has been changed to provide specific criteria for the classification of health and physical hazards of chemicals and mixtures. These specific criteria will help ensure that classification is consistent between one manufacturer and the next.
- Following the classification process, manufacturers and distributors will be required to provide the appropriate product label containing the correct signal word (OSHA will only recognize two signal words, Danger and Warning), pictogram (8 different health and physical hazard pictograms were adopted), hazard statement, and precautionary statements.
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) will now also be standardized. Appendix D of the 29 CFR 1910.1200 provides what each of the 16 sections will be, but further what each section must contain. While OSHA cannot regulate information in sections 12-15, those sections still must be listed in the SDS.

Why must employers train employees 18 months before the rule takes affect? OSHA’s reasoning behind this training requirement is simple: workplaces may begin seeing labels and SDS that comply with the new standard before the full compliance date of June 2015.



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What are the key elements on which an employer must train their employees? Employers need to make employees aware of the new label requirements and what they mean. Labels now have six required components:

1. Product identifier, product name, and code;
2. Supplier identifier, name, address and contact information;
3. Hazard statements, what is it about the product that makes it hazardous;
4. Precautionary statements, includes storage, conditions to avoid, and first aid;
5. Signal words, Danger and Warning (however, while these are the only two signal words OSHA recognizes under the new HCS, signal words such as caution, poison and others will still exist on EPA registered disinfectants and other pesticides. Other government agencies did not change their standards);
6. Pictograms.

Why did OSHA change MSDS to SDS and what other changes have been made? The name change just simplifies the naming of the document. The change to SDS from MSDS has caused more consternation than is warranted, simply put – **an MSDS is an SDS**. Over the next 18 months, employers will likely have a mix of MSDS and SDS in their SDS (MSDS) libraries.

What is the difference between MSDS and SDS? Under the HCS of 1994, the most common MSDS format is the 8-section OSHA MSDS, while some chemical manufacturers have employed the 16-part ANSI MSDS. The major difference between the MSDS of 1994 and the SDS of HCS 2012 is that the SDS has now not only required section headings, but required subheadings for each section. OSHA has mandated that all subheadings in a given section must be present and that the standardization of the SDS will make the use of hazardous chemicals in the workplace safer for employees.

On what and how should employers train employees on the new SDS? Employers should start by introducing the new 16-part SDS, going over each section and the information contained therein. Training should emphasize the sections of the SDS that deal with hazards, precautions, and protection of the employee. Section 2 of the SDS contains hazard information and signal words that match label information. While all SDS will be required to have all 16 sections listed and the subheadings as stated in Appendix D of the 29 CFR 1910.1200, sections 12-15 cannot be regulated by OSHA and may or may not contain any information.

Do employers have to keep both the old and new SDS? If the SDS is just an update for the existing formula, then the old MSDS may be discarded. However, if the hazardous chemicals are different, then the employer must maintain both MSDS for 30 years. 29 CFR 1910.1020 requires employee exposure records (which include SDS) to be kept for 30 years. In the letter of interpretation of Oct. 1, 1987, OSHA states that if the MSDS (SDS) is just an update for the same product and the formula has not changed, then the old MSDS (SDS) may be thrown away.

For Hillyard customers, the information contained in the new SDS or new label format has not changed, just our presentation of that information. Hillyard already provided its customers with all the hazard information required under the new standard, both on labels (the only thing missing on our current labels are pictograms, but everything else is already present), and on the MSDS we followed the OSHA 8-section MSDS format and put the information in there that provided customers with appropriate hazard information.

The change to the HCS will actually make it easier for employers to write their Hazardous Communication programs, to train their employees, and reduce the number of workplace accidents. All chemical and mixture labels and SDS now have to follow the same standard and OSHA has clarified those standards.



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Hillyard is preparing new labels and Safety Data Sheets for all their products and plans to begin rolling out new labels and SDS in the winter of 2014, well in advance of the June 1, 2015 deadline. Hillyard customers will receive the new SDS the next time they order a given product. Beginning on June 1, 2015, Hillyard customers can visit www.hillyard.com to download all new SDS at any time.

Hillyard can assist you with your training needs, through online or classroom training, or links to sites that will enable you to develop training specifically designed for your location. Your Hillyard Facility Consultant can assist your training needs.

While developing and implementing a Written Hazardous Communication Program is the responsibility of each employer, Hillyard stands ready to assist its customers in their compliance efforts. Contact your Hillyard Facility Consultant to discuss your program and how we can help. +

Terry Hall



Terry is the Director of Regulatory Affairs for Hillyard Industries. Terry has been with Hillyard for over 5 years and has worked in the institutional and industrial cleaning profession for the last 23 years. Terry has a background in chemistry and has been involved in all stages of the production of cleaning products, from development to manufacturing. In addition, he is an OSHA General Industry Outreach Trainer. His strong chemical background brings a unique perspective when dealing with the regulations covering today's ever-changing background in the regulatory world, covering regulations concerning the EPA, FDA, DOT and OSHA. He can be reached at thall@hillyard.com or 800-365-1555, ext. 8285.

Thank you, Terry and Marolyn Lampman, for 25 years of Commitment to the CO+OP!

From Patti Malott, Executive Director of the CO+OP:

When we interviewed Terry Lampman in June for our August issue of CO+OP magazine, little did anyone know how much Terry's life would drastically change in the months to follow. Soon after the issue was published, Terry announced that he and Marolyn (his precious wife and co-worker) were negotiating the sale of his Creative Coffee business to another company so he and Marolyn could retire.

We honored Terry and Marolyn at our Board of Director's meeting and Vendor luncheons in September, and presented them both with a gift and an abundance of well-wishes. They both will surely be missed by the CO+OP staff, other vendors, and their many, many customers.

Terry and Marolyn were what I call "Star Vendors." They owned their business and wanted it to grow, but their relationship with the CO+OP was far beyond the sell. Wherever they went, they told the CO+OP story and often helped churches and schools become members. Terry really got it when it came to partnering, in order for both organizations to benefit. If a church was a member of the CO+OP, he served them well. If they were not a member, he made them a member. Together, we grew!

Although we are sad to see Terry and Marolyn leave, we are grateful for the wonderful memories they have helped build throughout Houston and the surrounding areas. We are also grateful for the investment he made in taking the time to find the right company to take over the business they built over the past 25

years. First Choice Coffee Services was selected as the preferred buyer. Terry and Marolyn feel that it is easier to let something go when you have the right people carrying on the tradition that they held close to their hearts—serving God and people with good products and service.

Those of you who use Creative Coffee's products and service have probably already noticed the different name on the delivery truck, but the same delivery person. We also feel you will think well of their products and service. You can learn more about First Choice Coffee Services on the next page.

In the meantime, join me in thanking Terry and Marolyn for 25 years of building strong relationships with clients, providing good service, keeping you supplied with products, and saving you time and money.





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As a National vendor, in business for over 40 years, we are the largest coffee service on the West Coast and have begun a campaign to move nationwide. We also have four branches in Texas: Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Houston. Now CO+OP members in the Hill Country and DFW can enjoy the resource of a CO+OP coffee vendor, as the Houston members have for the past 25 years.

First Choice provides a full product line of break room supplies, coffees, teas, sodas and snacks. We stock over 100 coffee blends including gourmet Starbucks, Seattle's Best and our First Café private label. If you enjoy the convenience of single cup options, First Choice offers Starbucks I-cup, Virtu 90 series, Bunn Pod Brewer, Flavia and Keurig.

We also carry Water Logic water filtration units and state-of-the-art innovative coffee equipment. First Choice has gone green and offers a line of "green" biodegradable products in our efforts to decrease our carbon footprint.

First Choice has modeled this company differently than many others in the industry. We truly pride ourselves on excellent customer care. All equipment is cleaned and maintenance is performed on each delivery. You can be assured of hassle-free deliveries, where a trained professional takes inventory and rotates your kitchen inventory for you.

First Choice offers a customer service team to ensure 100% satisfaction. Each account is provided with trained, uniformed personnel to manage inventory and rotate product. They are familiar with all products and as well as servicing your account, they are a source to communicate new product offerings and offer a line of communication between our organization and yours. Our employees are not licensed, but we are bonded as a company. We also conduct background checks on all employees before hiring them.

We have been working with churches in the CO+OP since we acquired Creative Coffee from Terry and Marolyn Lampman on August 1, 2013. We look forward to the opportunity to continue the great coffee service the Houston area churches and non-profit organizations have had in the past. Just like Creative Coffee, First Choice offers competitive pricing to members of the CO+OP and its affiliates. One of our largest customers is Champion Forest Baptist Church in Houston.

First Choice office hours are Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm Central time. We guarantee service on all equipment within 24 hours of notice. If the need arises, emergency product delivery is available in between regularly scheduled deliveries. Just give us a call.

By registering on our website at www.firstchoiceservices.com, you are able to receive updates and information on our services via text message.

To find out more about our services or to speak with one of our knowledgeable sales representatives to schedule a meeting, please call the Houston office at 281-820-6300. In addition, we may be reached through our website at www.firstchoiceservices.com to schedule a demo. To reach us in Houston, our email is Houston@firstchoiceservices.com

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Kristen Jackson-Smith

Kristen is a Sales Representative available to take your calls or emails. Her direct contact information is:

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morepowertoyou

By Michael Bernstein

Did you know your church might be already saving 40% of your electricity bill ... but what about saving an additional \$150,000?

Shopping, shopping, shopping! We all do it! How many times are we looking for a great value during the day? The television, mailers, newspapers, radio, infomercials, and billboards are all fighting for our attention!

Do you spend time driving to more than one gas station to save two cents a gallon? Absolutely!

Do you spend time on the Internet to save sometimes hundreds of dollars on a plane ticket? You bet!

Do you spend time looking for values on the grocery store shelves? I know I do!

What about cars? Do you shop all kinds of cars until you drop from exhaustion in order to save \$1,000? That sounds familiar!

What do these cost-saving, time-consuming, shopping adventures save you? Ten percent, twenty percent? Maybe \$30 at the grocery store, \$150 on your travel plans, and \$1,500 on that car. We all realize savings, and it is truly important to our family budget.

On small expenditures, you shop it on your own. For larger, more complex expenditures, you probably seek a professional consultant. As the services become more complicated and require someone who is experienced in professional advice, you rely on a tax professional, insurance agent, or a lawyer.

Is it any different at your church or school? Probably not. Yet how many times when inquiring at a church, do we hear that the committee has a good-intentioned member looking for one of the largest and most complex purchases that a church may have – Electricity!

TES Energy Services, LP, was chosen to be the exclusive electricity consultant for the Church CO+OP five years ago, after a year of careful discussion and scrutiny. At that time (2008), there were about 50 churches under electricity contracts.

There are a lot of reasons why TES Energy was chosen to be the exclusive provider. Reasons such as best practices, size and scope of our clients, the ability to have providers implement our requests to change their terms and conditions to benefit churches. Regardless of the reasons, the results are what counts!

As we began taking on the challenge of talking to churches about their electricity needs, we began to discover that the churches were trying to do the best that they knew how, to work through the ever-changing, complex deregulated electricity market in Texas and finding the best value for their electricity contracts for their churches. They could shop it for their homes, so why not for their church?

Soon the new deregulated electricity market had evolved into a process of deciding among many different types of electricity products, all with rates that were fixed or floating, tied to markets that are constantly moving... just like the stock market or products in your investment portfolio.

Account	kWh	Before TES Rate	Current TES Rate	% Saved
First Baptist Mont Belvieu	177,942	\$0.09079	\$0.0558	39%
Foundry United Methodist	1,022,153	\$0.0888	\$0.0530	40.3%

As we approached churches, we found ourselves explaining what we do as a consulting company in the energy business. How we constantly shop and maintain relationships with 25-plus electricity providers and having them compete for your business, resulting in almost 4 billion kWh's of power that our company contracts. We demand low prices and excellent terms and conditions to meet your needs, as specified by the CO+OP.

- No hidden fees
- Only pay for the electricity that you use...no "Swing Limits"
- Extended time to make a payment before a late fee is charged
- No meter fees or customer charge by the Retail Electric Providers
- Flexibility of adding more locations to the contract

Now, five years later and thanks to the relationship with the Church CO+OP, we have almost 300 churches contracted for electricity.

What is your church doing to purchase electricity? In Texas, the retail electric providers will only price to one entity for each meter. Many of you have heard TES say this. This is not a sales gimmick to have you buy from us. Of course, we want you to, but what we truly want is the best savings for every church. After all, it is all donated money and some of you may already have a person or a broker who you already have assisting you.

For almost all of you, it would be an asset to your budget committee to obtain a no-cost review of your electric bills and contract terms. We perform these every day and a review such as this can be arranged through the CO+OP.

As they say, the Truth is in the Numbers. No, this is not a sermon...we are talking about electricity bills.

A couple of churches that have contracted with TES through the CO+OP agreed to share their savings. First Baptist Church of Mont Belvieu and The Foundry United Methodist Church in Houston.

They are showing a 40% savings from before they started with TES Energy Services to the present! These two CO+OP members are indicative of the ways that being a member of the CO+OP can save organizations money. I know that the true average of what organizations are saving is typically 30% of their energy bills.

Over the four years of history with TES, The Foundry United Methodist Church has realized a savings of nearly \$150,000 on their electricity bills!

Check out the testimonials from the above two CO+OP Members in this issue of CO+OP magazine.

Thanks to the great purchasing talent of John Blunt, Account Manager at TES Energy Services in Dallas, we have established a "Power Buying Pool" of churches. This group is now making up almost all of the churches that we have under contract, beginning in December of 2013, with a contracted group rate until December of 2016. The combined power of this group is now over 300,000,000 kWh! Do you think that is getting the attention of the Retail Electric Providers? We put the providers into a "bidding war" competing each year (with contracts starting every December) on the additional churches we have added into the group.

This means an additional expected savings because of our group rate of over \$17,000 more a year for The Foundry United Methodist Church over the next three years!

You really don't want to miss the opportunity to at least let us talk to you about the potential savings as a part of our group. We want to thank you for your wonderful friendships, and John and I look forward to continuing serving you for years to come. +

Michael Bernstein
TES Energy Services, LP
Phone: 832.516.8525

John Blunt
TES Energy Services, LP
Phone: 214.697.0567

Email: tespowerbuy@tesenergyservices.com



Michael Bernstein is the CO+OP Account Manager for TES Energy Services, LP (TES). Michael possesses detailed knowledge of the energy industry, along with expertise in sales and marketing, training and development, customer relations operations and non-profit management. He covers the Houston and South Texas areas. Contact Michael Bernstein at 832.516.8525.



John Blunt is the Energy Consultant with TES Energy Services, LP (TES). He brings highly developed relationships with the retail electric provider community, as well as significant experience with electricity offerings for churches nationwide. John has 10 years of experience in electricity procurement and is skilled at finding the lowest cost by offering the best strategy for each church or school. John is located in our Dallas office, covering the Dallas and North Texas areas. Contact John at (214) 697-0567.



morepower toyou



Dear Fellow Administrators,

With a physical plant of over 100,000 square feet, energy costs are a significant expense. As the Pastor of Administration at Foundry United Methodist Church, I am continually trying to find ways to cut costs. Any dollars saved can be used for ministry.

Over four years ago, TES Energy Services delivered a presentation that would reduce our energy costs by a measurable amount. I recommend the church use TES Energy Services for the fiscal year 2009. The savings promised by TES were realized in the very first year. Our energy costs have been reduced by over 40% on a kilowatt/hour basis when compared to the rate we were paying at the time we entered into our first contract with TES. Our savings over the last four years are almost \$150,000! Additional savings will be realized as Foundry becomes part of the TES Power Buying Pool Group Rate this December.

Of equal importance, the professionalism and customer service demonstrated by TES have been remarkable throughout each year. Changes in energy prices are communicated to us as they occur and recommendations are presented that regularly have a positive impact on the utility costs.

We have definitely enjoyed the confidence of having a professional energy consultant working for us. We believe your church, school or non-profit would benefit from doing business with TES.

In His Service,
Sharon Davis
Pastor of Administration
The Foundry



Dear Michael,

I am writing to thank TES Energy Services for our lowest costs of electrical energy over the past five years. A quick comparison of our kw/h costs from August of 2008 to August of 2013 shows over a 40% reduction. As treasurer this kind of reduction makes me very happy and allows our church to focus on ministry efforts.

Without TES we as one church, could never have negotiated these reduced rates. Since that first conversation with John Blunt in 2008 and through today with your work and that of the TES team members we enjoy our lowest electricity bills in over five years.

Thank you so much for helping us keep our electrical expenses as low as possible.

Sincerely,
Sharon Sexton
Treasurer
Mont Belvieu First Baptist Church



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✓ **Contract Terms to Fit Your Church or School Needs**

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Placing over 4 billion kWh, we have great buying power and very strong, positive relationships with over 20 qualified Texas Retail Electric Providers.

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TES Energy Services, LP brings the providers that are interested in your church or schools' specific needs into a "Hot Box" to push the price down.

Once your "Strike Price" has been negotiated, TES will present you with one or more contracts and strategies to choose from.

✓ **As Your Consultant**

As your consultant, we will represent you on any issues in the future with your contracted provider (billings, meters etc.).



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Mike, I wanted to tell you how pleased are we with the savings TES negotiated for us for our electric power rate.

While we are not a huge user of electricity, TES lowered our per kWh rate by 30% over our previous supplier. There's not too many operating expenses that have a 30% savings opportunity available. Over a year's time, these savings are significant for the business.

The change was very simple to implement. I highly recommend that anyone paying an electric bill take a look at what TES can do for them.

Ken Kippes

General Manager

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At Integrity Furniture, our mission is to honor God through relationships with our customers and suppliers by offering quality products at reasonable prices with superior customer service.

WHO WE ARE

We are a family-run business with offices in Dallas and Longview, TX, but we also sell nationwide through our website. We are a small company, but we can meet big needs. Our customers range from small schools and local congregations to mega-churches with well over 10,000 members. Each customer is equally important to us.



WHAT WE DO

Since 2000, our Texas-based business has helped churches and schools meet their furniture, equipment, and educational supply needs. Special care is taken to provide personal customer service ensuring each customer is completely satisfied. We represent over 200 suppliers allowing us to furnish nurseries, classrooms, reception areas, cafeterias, offices, worship centers, etc. We are equipped to work within our client's budgets to ensure they get the highest quality products and service possible. Our sales process also includes personal follow up to ensure proper delivery. Several delivery options are available to our Texas customers which include inside delivery and installation. Integrity Furniture will meet your needs.



WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS SAY

"Drew and his team were proactive in building our friendship, getting samples, confirming orders and delivering on time. Drew and Integrity Furniture owned our project as much as we did."

**Kyle Kaigler, Sr. Director of Family Ministry
Watermark Community Church, Dallas, Texas**

"Whether helping us to equip a new 54,000 square foot facility or ordering a few chairs for a classroom, we have found Drew and his staff to deliver excellent customer service and follow through..."

**Andy Reynolds, Minister of Administration
Mobberly Baptist Church, Longview, Texas**

“Our church has been doing business with Integrity Furniture for over 11 years. We have continued to be pleased and impressed with how this company lives up to its name. Integrity is the foundation of everything they do. Drew is always looking for ways to accommodate our needs and save us money in the process. He delivers on-time and is quick to ensure our utmost satisfaction.”

Brian Mills
McKinney Memorial Bible Church, Ft. Worth, Texas

“Our church recently bought furniture for a 20,000 square foot children’s ministry facility. We used the catalog to select color and style of our furniture, which looked fantastic. We were able to borrow samples which helped us make a great decision. The furniture was incredibly easy to move and assemble. We are very pleased with the product and service we received from Integrity Furniture.”


Paul DeHaven, Minister to Children
Northwest Bible Church, Dallas, Texas

“To get and keep business I ask vendors to know their product, know my needs, offer fair pricing matched with quality service after the sale. For more than six years Integrity Furniture has been my go-to vendor for furniture and equipment needs at Champion Forest Baptist Church. They have delivered—in spades.”

Lee Harn, Business Administrator
Champion Forest Baptist Church, Houston, Texas

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CO+OP: The original cooperative organization for churches, schools, camps, para-churches, and other non-profit ministries.

What CO+OP is: Our CO+OP is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization in business since 1988. We are Members and Vendors working together to provide significant savings on goods and services.

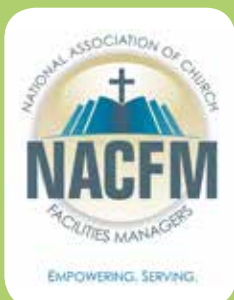
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- HVAC resources
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- coffee service
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- banking and lending
- CPA services
- personnel, finance, risk reduction and insurance
- janitorial and sanitation supplies and tools
- roofing and construction
- flooring/floor mats
- custom office stamps
- furniture and equipment
- janitorial service
- maintenance, repair parts and tools
- disaster recovery and carpet cleaning
- glass tinting
- IT services and equipment
- repair and replace A/V electronic devices
- construction management

Vendors with a national presence include:

- Blackmon Mooring
- Church Interiors
- National Signs
- Office Depot
- Mity-Lite
- American Institute for Servant Leadership
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