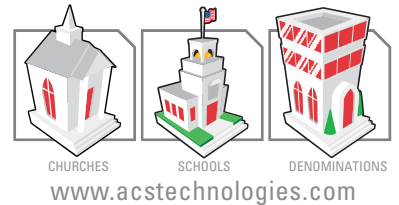


Success Story

Solutions for



Making Connections Count



Westlake Village, California

Looking for a place to belong, seeking that connection in a church to call home, a place where we can fit in and grow spiritually in our walk with God—these are all things people look for in their church. Sometimes that can be an overwhelming task to achieve especially when some churches have services with one to two thousand people in attendance. This challenge is being met at Calvary Community Church (CCC) in Westlake Village, California and is now effectively proving to be home to the nearly 5,000 people that it welcomes through its doors each Sunday.

Small Groups

Identifying and connecting with those attendees is an integral part of a five-step process that CCC launched to become a “purpose-driven” church and ensure that people do not get lost in the shuffle characteristic of some mega churches. Another way that CCC chose to meet the challenge of extreme growth was to launch over 100 new small groups through their 40 days of purpose campaign.

Small groups would enable members to connect on a more intimate level and allow them to feel plugged in to the church and bond with a group of people that would pray for them, study God’s word with them and provide fellowship to one another. To effectively manage these groups and provide the church staff and group leaders with the tools that they needed to manage this emerging need, it was evident that a more effective way to manage and communicate with the community was necessary.

Initially, when someone expressed an interest in a small group or class, the information was entered into a spreadsheet. But the spreadsheet quickly became out of date since information wasn’t automatically updated or connected to the central database. It was clear that changes needed to be made.

Task Force Formed

As CCC began to develop a plan to accommodate these changes, they knew that they needed a software management solution designed to work hand in hand with their specific needs. Although CCC had been using ACS as their church management software for both people and financial management needs, they still viewed ACS as a desktop-only solution. It wasn’t until they developed a technology task force aimed at determining what vendor could provide them with the best solution that they realized that they didn’t need to look further than their own backyard for their answer. With Access ACS, a Web-based component to ACS, Web access was a reality and gave them access to their existing database.

Selection Process

CCC’s Director of IT and task force member, Arthur Press, explained, “We definitely did our homework during this six-month process. We performed a company overview for each vendor, researched their history and products, and made a list of pros and cons. We narrowed our search down to three options – then we even visited other churches using the products and had some sales people give us their presentations.”



(Left to right)
Sam Gallucci – President CRM Associates
and key member of CCC’s technology task force
Marge Anderson – CCC’s Executive Director of Ministries
Arthur Press – CCC’s Director of IT

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Another member of the task force was Sam Gallucci, former PeopleSoft executive, with over 22 years of customer service, sales, marketing, product development, training, and management experience in delivering complex software solutions to a diverse customer base. Gallucci developed a church-adapted version of a CRM model designed to ensure that people wouldn’t fall through the cracks. In essence, the model

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has created a specific plan for handling interests in various programs. Any one who expresses an interest is contacted and kept track of, ensuring that they will be called and included.

Web Based Technology

“When we saw that ACS already had the passion for Web-based technology and that the new direction of our church would be met by a company that understood our needs and was committed to meeting them, our decision was made,” Gallucci reported. Press added, “Understanding the specific needs of our large church is what differentiated ACS from other competitors.”

Done Deal

When it was all said and done, the choice was clear. Access ACS was the solution they had set out to find. Gallucci noted, “Why ACS? Access ACS is a great product, and it keeps getting better. The team wants our input and is responsive to our needs. The company’s commitment to full Web-based applications is also clear. ACS Technologies has the install base, a track record of sustained market presence, and they understand the market so that they can survive in it. Our passion and the direction of our church were met by a company that shared them.”

Ongoing Support and Training

CCC has just completed the second step of their four part training process to implement Access ACS and equip the community to participate in small groups using Web-based tools. An ACS trainer has been on site providing training to administrative staff, area directors, and coaches making sure that they all understand the myriad of opportunities this tool can unlock. This has worked well largely because ACS understands what it takes to make small groups successful.

Working first hand on the training process, Press remarked, “We have had a wonderful experience working with the team at ACS. We don’t know what we would have done without their expertise. There are a lot of things that need to be done for a small group to be a success and ACS has been instrumental in boiling it down to what is needed so that our staff can understand exactly what the product will do and specifically how it will meet a particular need.”

Utilizing the Web is the primary means that the volunteer laity will access to follow-up and enroll interested individuals. Oversight of this process will be handled by Ministry

Team Coordinators (MTC’s) while church executives provide oversight, management, and coaching to the volunteers and are the leaders in both the strategy and the architecture of sustainable and scalable solutions. Press noted, “With Access ACS, we now have a tool that can give management control and then roll that control over to the small groups and their leaders who can then manage themselves.”

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Sam Gallucci

Rex Minor, Pastor of Adult Ministries at CCC said, “We’ve researched many of the Small Groups applications on the market and have designed Access ACS Small Groups as the solution to meet our church’s needs. With careful steps taken, many months of planning, detailed reviews and strategies put into place, we are implementing a roll out of the program in the fall. This will enable us to assist us with growing our current small groups, which number 200, to a much larger area of ministry for our growing church.”

With a CRM philosophy in place, implementation services at their fingertips and a product designed to deliver, Calvary Community Church is making the connection process meaningful and effective. The possibilities are endless and have the potential to make even a ten thousand member church feel just like home!

Web Site: www.calvarycc.org

ACS Products and Services Used

PeopleSuite: Access ACS, Checkpoint, People, Attendance, Connections, Reservations, Special Mailings

Financial Suite: Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Fixed Assets, General Ledger, Purchase Orders

Growth: Ministry Scheduler, Volunteer Manager, Church Growth Tools, Church Report, Report Designer

Other Products & Services: Network/Multiuser, LiveStor, Cass It Mail Modules

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