



API COMMUNICATIONS

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PROJECTION

AUDIO VISUAL CCTV SYSTEMS

THE CHURCH SOUND SYSTEM

An advice sheet from API Communications

SOUND

RELIABLE

INDUCTION COILS

BESPOKE SOLUTIONS



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‘Don’t get me started’

Says Andy Pidsley. M.D. of APi Communications

Well actually as a director of a South West company specialising in church sound, projection and other audio visual projects, I do have a few things to say on the matter.



In the course of our business we spend a lot of time listening to prospective clients expressing their desire for a system that just works and is easy for a non technical person to get to grips with.

Growing up with an Anglican vicar for a father I was involved in ‘doing the microphones’, from an early age – eleven as it happens. In those days it was just a case of putting three microphones out in the necessary holders, plugging them in and sitting in the ‘seat of power’ turning them on and off as required. Some thirty years plus later I am a member of a ‘new’ church expression and the

level of complexity has jumped to probably more than 100 controls presented to me on a Sunday and between five and nine musicians each with their own requirements to meet.

This personal history in my experience, pretty much covers the range of existing systems we encounter on our church visits, and those that new customers are looking for. In our experience a client expects a new sound installation to last for at least ten years without major attention. So choosing the right equipment to suit the style of worship and liturgy currently used, and looking at future vision is important.

Equally important is reliability, and with a vast array of choice in every product area from microphones to loudspeakers, getting it right can be difficult. This is where an experienced dealer is vital, this is not to say that buying the equipment online for example is wrong, but that there really is no substitute for experience with different pieces of equipment on past projects.



This should deliver a mix of products tried and tested in the church environment. In our experience we are always seeing new products and frequently spend a good deal of time trying to make them 'do what they say on the tin'.

Sometimes we have to accept that the manufacturer's claims are overoptimistic and we have to substitute another product to deliver what we have promised to our clients.

Without doubt, the most important and most ignored factor in any installation, is the end user or users. No matter the quality or complexity of the equipment and installation, everything hinges on whether the users know how to operate it properly, and those in front of the microphone also know what to do.



It is important then to look at your people, to find out who is interested (best), or available to be part of a small team operating the sound system during services.

Often there is someone who is much more knowledgeable than the rest of the team and has a greater understanding of what is required and how things work, (we call them Super Users, great to have around when things go wrong), however I would suggest that the system is designed around the average level of ability so that everyone is comfortable operating the system so if your super user moves to a different church you are not left floundering.



So it follows that training in the operation of any new equipment should be included, preferably with real users available to play or speak and simulate a real meeting.

We have come up with our four golden rules of sound system use which if followed will make a real difference to any live sound situation.

For more information please call us on 01392 677668 or visit us at www.churchsoundsystems.co