

Worship Planning + Web 2.0

Discovering Online Resources for Planning and Creating Worship Services

Introduction: What is “Web 2.0”?

Web 2.0 is a term describing the trend in the use of World Wide Web technology and web design that aims to enhance creativity, information sharing, and, most notably, collaboration among users. These concepts have led to the development and evolution of web-based communities and hosted services, such as social-networking sites, wikis, blogs, and folksonomies. The term became notable after the first O'Reilly Media Web 2.0 conference in 2004. (*wikipedia.org*)

Background:

As a worship leader, how do we get information? How do we share and network with other worship leaders, musicians, and writers? Where do we search for new music, new ideas, and creative concepts? And how has this changed over the last 25 years?

With the birth of the Internet and the “World Wide Web”, we have access to so many resources that can help us in planning. A critical part of planning is staying informed. This has become easier with online social networking.

Tools for Discussion:

List Servers: [old school, but still reliable]

List Servers host email-based discussions where your email is sent to a specific list address. Everyone sees the message, and can either respond to the entire list, or privately to the sender.

- Praise.Net Worship List (<http://www.praise.net>)
- WorshipTalk (defunct) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com>)
- Yahoo and Google Groups (<http://groups.yahoo.com>, <http://www.google.com/groups>)

Forums and Online Communities for Worship Leaders

- SongDIScovery Community (<http://www.songdiscovery.com>)

SongDIScovery (part of Worship Leader Magazine) has an emphasis on networking as songwriters and worship leaders. With a “profile-based” platform similar to MySpace, you can create your own

National Worship Leader Conference, July 21-25 2008

Instructor: Fred McKinnon, St. Simons Community Church, GA

Blog: www.fredmckinnon.com Email: fred@fredmckinnon.com Twitter:

<http://www.twitter.com/fmckinnon>

Worship Planning + Web 2.0

Discovering Online Resources for Planning and Creating Worship Services

profile featuring your music, add “friends”, and post “bulletins”. SongDISCOVERY also recently added forums for further conversations and dialog.

- TheWorshipCommunity.Com
(<http://www.theworshipcommunity.com>)

TheWorshipCommunity.Com launched as a forums community for worship leaders, band members, singers, artists, and technology workers. The majority of members are involved in leadership (either as full-time, part-time, or volunteer) in their respective ministries. With the launch of v2 in July 2008, TheWorshipCommunity.Com also added articles, reviews, and commentary with open discussion in a blog-ezine format.

Social Networking:

Most everyone knows about “social networking” these days. MySpace.Com made it famous, and WL’s “SongDISCOVERY” community’s launch modeled this format to a certain degree, although clearly specializing in worship leaders and songwriters. Social networking is a great tool for interacting with other worship leaders, pastors, and leaders. You can use Social Networking sites to create your own “groups”, such as local or regional worship leader gatherings, etc. They are also a great way to find original worship music and bands.

Some popular Social Networking sites include:

- MySpace (<http://www.myspace.com>)
- FaceBook (<http://www.facebook.com>)
- ShoutLife (<http://www.shoutlife.com>)
- Virb (<http://www.virb.com>)
- SongDISCOVERY Community (<http://www.songdiscovery.com>)

Social Bookmarking:

Social Bookmarking sites are tools where other users share and rate the content they’ve found interesting in your areas of interest. For example, I can subscribe to someone’s bookmarks and see the content they’ve discovered with keyword tags such as “praise and worship”.

National Worship Leader Conference, July 21-25 2008

Instructor: Fred McKinnon, St. Simons Community Church, GA

Blog: www.fredmckinnon.com Email: fred@fredmckinnon.com Twitter:

<http://www.twitter.com/fmckinnon>

Worship Planning + Web 2.0

Discovering Online Resources for Planning and Creating Worship Services

Popular Social Bookmarking Sites include:

- StumbleUpon (<http://www.stumbleupon.com>)
- DIGG (<http://www.digg.com>)
- Del.icio.us (<http://www.del.icio.us.com>)

Blogging:

Blogging is a huge part of the modern, emerging “online” culture. Several years ago while on a mission trip to Africa, a Pastor friend of mine asked me why I didn’t blog ... and I had to confess I didn’t know what a blog was. Upon my return, I decided to start blogging and have never turned back. My personal blog can be found at <http://www.fredmckinnon.com> and I’d love to see you check in, leave a comment, and join the daily conversation.

Blogging with the emphasis in worship leading can be rewarding because you are able to share your experiences with others while gleaning wisdom and information from other worship leaders who are bloggers. It also builds community, synergy, and a common place to share ideas. It’s always a good idea to remember that even if it’s your personal blog, if you continually blog about your relationship to your church, and your role there ... you are representing that church, and should do so with respect.

When blogging, I love to discuss:

- Worship Confessional Videos
- Text Set List Reports
- Leadership Insights and Pitfalls
- Song Arrangement Ideas
- Resource Reviews

MicroBlogging:

Twitter is both friend and beast. It can be an incredible networking asset, and idea-getter, and a massive time-waster. It can be a source of companionship; it can be a self-ego explosion. With any engagement in social networking, it’s always best to check our motives, ego, and selfish ambitions at the door.

National Worship Leader Conference, July 21-25 2008

Instructor: Fred McKinnon, St. Simons Community Church, GA

Blog: www.fredmckinnon.com Email: fred@fredmckinnon.com Twitter:

<http://www.twitter.com/fmckinnon>

Worship Planning + Web 2.0

Discovering Online Resources for Planning and Creating Worship Services

Cool Twitter Stories:

Chris (www.chrisfromcanada.com) asking Vicky Beeching (www.vickybeeching.com) about her song My needing song ideas for services and getting responses during planning meetings.

<http://www.twitter.com/fmckinnon> (my twitter feed)

Video Networking:

There are vast amounts of videos regarding worship services and planning. Just recently, everyone was passing around the “Cardboard Testimonies” video and that simple, creative concept is popping up in churches everywhere. There are plenty of videos to songs and quality instructional content as well.

Some popular video sites:

- YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>)
- Google Video (<http://www.google.com/video>)
- GodTube (<http://www.godtube.com>)
- Mogulus for Streaming (<http://www.mogulus.com>)
- CCLI-TV (<http://www.ccli.com>)

Photo and Media Collaboration:

Not all of our services are centered on music. Artists can gain valuable insight from sharing their technical and artistic elements as well.

Example: one of our Technical Directors who is primarily in charge of graphics frequently posts his sermon graphics, series graphics, and bulletin art on his Flickr Account. Our other Technical Director often shares his video elements on his blog, YouTube, or other sharing sites.

Examples:

- www.chrismoncus.com (links to flickr photos, design elements)
- www.travispauling.com (media/video elements)
- www.flickr.com/groups/cfcc (church marketing lab on Flickr)

National Worship Leader Conference, July 21-25 2008

Instructor: Fred McKinnon, St. Simons Community Church, GA

Blog: www.fredmckinnon.com Email: fred@fredmckinnon.com Twitter:

<http://www.twitter.com/fmckinnon>

Worship Planning + Web 2.0

Discovering Online Resources for Planning and Creating Worship Services

Service Planning:

Over the last couple of years, multiple vendors have released products and services to aid in the producing, structuring, scheduling, and planning of worship services. In my personal experience, this has become a huge value and has literally saved us at least one staff position in our larger church.

- PlanningCenterOnline (<http://www.planningcenteronline.com>)
- Worship Kitchen (<http://www.worshipkitchen.com>)
- 1Chrisitan.Net (<http://www.1christian.net>)

What Matters Most:

With all of the tools at our disposal, nothing beats tapping into the greatest creative resource that we have as Christians. That resource is God's Holy Spirit, resident within each and every one of us.

It's tempting to run to all the bells and whistles. It's tempting to subscribe to all the communities, all the blogs, and jump on the bandwagon and do what everyone else is doing. We risk becoming cookie-cutter ministries, doing nothing but copying everyone else.

All of the tools are great inventions and can be incredible assets. They can also be liabilities. They can distract us. They can take our attention away from God's Presence. If we spend all of our time online reading, writing, commenting, twittering, and watching videos, we could easily miss that "still small voice" on the inside giving us the best creative direction of the year.

YouVersion.Com (<http://www.youversion.com>)

YouVersion.Com is an incredible 2.0-based version of the Bible online, with community discussions, bookmarks, videos, and commentary.

In summary, make every effort to not neglect the most powerful planning resource we have, being prayer, God's Word, and personal worship and devotion. No blog, no social networking site, no creative concept, no relationship, no video, no idea exchange can ever take the place of a Divine impartation of Holy Spirit wisdom, direction, and inspiration.

National Worship Leader Conference, July 21-25 2008

Instructor: Fred McKinnon, St. Simons Community Church, GA

Blog: www.fredmckinnon.com Email: fred@fredmckinnon.com Twitter:

<http://www.twitter.com/fmckinnon>