

Church Production Magazine

MAY/JUNE 2006

Magazine

Fellowship Church, Grapevine, Texas

Advances continue at one of America's most innovative churches

Spotlight on Spotlights

A/V System Design Evaluation

A "Panel" Discussion on Display Technology

Disc Labelers and Printers

CPM REVIEWS:

\$4.95



DATAVIDEO
SE-800 Video Mixer/Switcher



PREONUS
Firepod Audio Interface



SHARP
PN-455 LCD Monitor



STRONG
Radiance Followspot

Moving from Presentational to Interactive

Using cellular technology to create an interactive experience

By *Cathy Hutchison*

In a culture that is increasingly trading presentation for connection, churches are looking for ways to break down the barriers between the congregation and the platform to create a more interactive experience.

An unexpected tool for reaching this goal is using a combination of products by Orlando, Florida-based Pangolin: interactive Messaging Unlimited (IMU), a program that handles the receiving and processing of incoming text messages and Video Messaging Unlimited (VMU), a software package that allows text (SMS) and picture (MMS) messages to be displayed directly to video screens. One of the most appealing parts of the technology is that it is accessible. More than five out of every six Americans over the age of nine have cell phones.

How It Works

A Windows-based computer is connected to a cellular modem with a unique cell phone number. Any text or picture message that comes into the IMU system is queued for display. A system operator can determine when and whether messages are shown, their order of appearance, and their duration on screen. Filters can be applied, automatically or manually, to allow protection for what is displayed.

Utilizing the texting (or SMS) technology embedded in most cell phones, Pangolin's IMU package makes it possible for audiences or guests at events to communicate or interact with a speaker, panelists, or the entire group. TV broadcasters and cable systems can create an environment where viewers converse — in text — with other viewers.

What makes IMU unique is that the messages can be displayed on any type of public display, including projection, broadcast, cable and web streams.



Text messaging to video screens can be used to add interactivity to a large group meeting (such as the business meeting shown here). Used in the church, the pastor could use this technology to accept questions from the congregation on his sermon topic.

Why Would I Use It?

Rex Miller, in his book *The Millennium Matrix* probably offers the most compelling reason in explaining that we are moving from a broadcast culture to a digital one. Just as people had to learn to read when we moved from an oral to

a print society, people who grew up in a broadcast culture need to become literate in the tools of the digital world. Miller's book talks about the significance of interactive experience for people raised on digital technology. IMU provides an opportunity for the church to tap into that interactive experience.



CLIENT: Apostolic Church, Auburn Hills, Michigan

INTEGRATOR: Ann Arbor Audio

PROJECT: Audio system for fan-shaped, 45,000 square-foot sanctuary with a 30-foot raked floor and 180° seating.

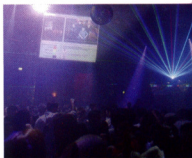
CHALLENGE: To provide smooth, consistent coverage for a highly dynamic multipurpose worship facility.

SOLUTION: Left, center and right hangs of Martin Audio W8LM line array enclosures providing even coverage throughout the sanctuary.

RESULT: "A high impact system with clear speech intelligibility and a smooth response."
— John Malek, President, Ann Arbor Audio



For more, visit martin-audio.com, email: infona@martin-audio.com or call: 519.747.5853



Not surprisingly, youth make great use of text messaging to video, which could be used to augment youth group events.

"The technology could be used to create a more collaborative experience." Miller offers. "People in the congregation can have input on the content. It also allows people to ask questions they might not stand up and ask."

In the secular world, IMU is currently used to "warm up" audiences prior to concerts. Miller suggests that a similar dynamic might be appropriate for Sunday mornings. "Most churches have some sort of pre-service video presentation ... mostly advertising [scrolling announcements], but if you go to see the Blue Man Group show and are sitting in the waiting area, you will find tubes where you can listen to backstage preparation. This prepares them for what is next. Churches often don't take advantage of their pre-service opportunity to create expectation."

In addition to receiving text and picture messages, IMU can also send them. Bulk text messages can be sent such as "Youth services start one hour earlier" or "Read Psalm 23 in preparation for Sunday's service."

Recently, the pastor of Windsor Crossing Community Church in Chesterfield, Missouri prepared three sermons, then polled his congregation — via paper ballots — on which one they were most



W8LM LINE ARRAY ENCLOSURE

interested in hearing (he wound up preaching on a different topic for each of the three services). At Rock of Roseville in Roseville, California, a system hard-wired into the seats allows congregations to give feedback during sermons. For churches who have built this "give and take" into their culture, the new polling/voting

capability of IMU is, in general, a much more affordable option than a hard-wired system, and a bit more elegant than a "show-of-hands".

It has also been suggested that IMU systems can be incorporated into church services as a means to connect with

hearing- or speech-impaired members of congregations. At points where congregational participation is desired, members can text directly to the screen and engage in conversation.

What You Need

The computer used for IMU will need dual-monitor capability and the computer's output routed to the display device's input. Many digital projectors and digital TVs can directly input from the computer's monitor signal via the VGA input intended for computer signals. This can be done with an external monitor cable, to connect between the computer monitor output and the display device input. One important specification is the resolution of the display device. The higher the resolution, the more detail you can get on the screen.

How much does it cost?

There are two different versions of Pangolin's IMU system which come with a cellular modem, IMU and VMU software. The IMU Basic, designed for use with video projection, runs \$995. The IMU Pro, which has special features for professional high volume applications such as broadcast and cable TV chat channels is \$2,395. Both versions come with a portable wireless modem, USB cable and software.

Cathy Hutchison is a freelance writer whose interests include the impact of technology on the worship experience. She can be reached at chutchison@acousticdimensions.com.

QUICK-LINK
Find the QUICK LINK # and reference, CHURCH PRODUCTION MAGAZINE

COMPANY: Pangolin
PRODUCTS: Text messaging display technology
QUICK-LINK: (407) 299-2888
URL: www.pangolin.com

— END —

Not too big. Not too small. Just right.

Complete and affordable lighting control solutions for restaurants, churches, banquet rooms, and other venues of similar size



Programmable SMART Master Station with LCD display

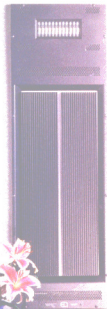
- DMX control over any type of lighting & intelligent projectors, blinds, sensors, etc.
- User friendly set-up and operation
- Multiple control stations & remotes of various types available
- Custom faceplates & nomenclature available
- 8 room capacity with 13 presets per room
- 250 dimmers x 100 zones, 9 DMX patches, 20 time clock events

Electronics Diversified, Inc.

Lighting the way since 1967

800.547.2690 Fax 503.629.9877
www.edionline.com

MVP Dimmer Pak



- Non-dim for dimming
- No derating in all power (100% full duty cycle)
- Exceptional noise suppression
- Quiet convection cooling
- In-wall or surface mounting
- Visit our web site or call for complete specs