

Getting Your Services Online

There are two main ways you can broadcast your services online: **livestreaming** and **posting a recording**.

- **Livestreaming** is sharing a worship service or other event **in real-time** via a streaming service instead of uploading and sharing a pre-recorded and edited video. While you can incorporate pre-recorded elements into a livestream, the service itself presented live.
- **Posting a recording** involves recording and editing a video and then uploading it to a social media page (Facebook), video sharing site (Vimeo, YouTube), or broadcasting platform (Church Online Platform).

You will need some kind of **camera** to capture video and a **microphone** to capture audio for both recording and streaming. Beyond that, the other equipment you need (both hardware and software) and how you use the equipment will vary according to what you are trying to accomplish.

- **For recording**, you will need some way to edit the recording(s) into a finished video. There are apps and software available for phones, tablets, and computers. Once you've finished the video, you can upload it to various destinations and share your content.
- **For streaming**, you will need to decide on a streaming provider, for which there are free and paid services available. You will also need hardware or software to get your livestream video from your camera to the streaming provider.

Using a Mobile Device

You can record and livestream relatively simply using equipment that you may already have. Perhaps the easiest way is by using a smartphone that you already have (iPhone or Android). You can record and edit on your mobile device and upload to various destinations. Or you can stream directly from your mobile device to Facebook, for example. Some helpful tips for using mobile devices:

- If possible, use a tripod to help stabilize your phone and keep it level.
- Make sure that you have adequate lighting.
- Consider purchasing a microphone that connects to your phone. If this is not an option, make sure the phone is close enough for the phone's built-in microphone to pick you up.

Find more helpful tips on using your mobile device: [How to Shoot Mobile Video](#).

Using Video Equipment

Moving up in terms of features and flexibility, you can record or stream using a camera (or multiple cameras) and a microphone (or multiple microphones).

- **Camera** - A **DSLR camera** is a versatile tool that works well for recording and streaming and allows you to take still pictures. In contrast, a dedicated **video camera** is designed specifically for video (either recording or streaming).
- **Microphone(s)** – quality audio is vital for your recording or livestream. Three different types of microphones to consider:
 - **Lavalier microphones** are worn by speakers and vocalists. They usually consist of a small microphone connected to a transmitter and a receiver that connects to a camera or soundboard.
 - **Shotgun microphones** are mounted on and connected directly to cameras. They are named “shotgun” microphones because of their long, narrow shape, like a shotgun barrel.
 - **Wired microphones** are used for stationary participants, like vocalists or readers. Depending on the camera you are using, you may connect a wired microphone directly to the camera, or you may have to utilize a separate soundboard.

For streaming specifically, there are a few more pieces of equipment to think about:

- **HDMI Capture/Encoding/Streaming Device** – use this to capture video from the camera(s) and get it out to a streaming service or into a computer. It can be a piece of software or a dedicated piece of hardware.
- **Switcher** – a switcher allows you to utilize multiple cameras and switches between them (hence the name) as you stream.
- **Software** – software lets you add elements to your livestream (for example, song lyrics, scripture verses, or words for prayers and responsive readings), utilize multiple sources (like pre-recorded videos), and more.

Depending on the hardware you choose, you can combine some of these functions. One popular device, the [Blackmagic ATEM Mini](#), serves as a switcher, encoder, and streaming device.

Other Considerations

- **Computer** – as mentioned above, a computer can be utilized in various ways for both livestreaming and editing/producing video. Some considerations for selecting a computer or upgrading a current one:
 - **RAM** - the amount of computer memory, or RAM, has a significant impact on streaming and video work. 8 GB (gigabytes) of RAM should be a minimum; 12 or 16 GB would be better.

- **Ports** – as computers evolve, so do the ways that we interface with them. If you are considering purchasing a new computer, pay attention to what kind of ports you have available for video (HDMI, DisplayPort), networking (Ethernet), and general connection (USB-C, USB). You may need to purchase additional connectors or adapters, depending on your specific needs.
- **Screen size** – while the final destination may be the internet via a streaming service or video upload, screen size makes a difference in how you work. Make sure that you can see what you are doing and find the controls that you need.
- **Internet** – Whether you are streaming or uploading, internet speeds make a difference. While the impact of slow internet is more evident when streaming, slower internet speeds also affect your workflow if you record and upload video files.
- **Licensing** – unless all of the musical and video content that you share in your worship services or other events is public domain, you will need to acquire the proper licensing to be legally covered. If you offer multiple worship styles and a wide variety of music, you may have to consider maintaining multiple licenses. If you already have a license for song lyrics, you will need to think about a streaming license to broadcast your worship services with copyrighted material properly. Some companies to consider:
 - [CCLI \(Christian Copyright Licensing International\)](#)
 - [OneLicense](#)
 - [CCS \(Christian Copyright Solutions\)](#)

If you have questions or need more information about the topics discussed in this document, please [contact Jay Locklear, Church Communications Consultant](#).