

*Center for Church*  
COMMUNICATION



2014 Annual Report

# A Letter From The **Executive Director**

Dear Friends,

It's been 10 years since our ground-breaking blog Church Marketing Sucks hit the web. While we haven't perfected church marketing in that time, there's been real progress.

We celebrated that 10-year anniversary this past summer and reflected on how far things have come. Across the board, there seemed to be agreement that while church marketing still needs help—sometimes desperate help—we've come a long way.

**In 2004, the conversation was about justifying marketing.** People legitimately asked if churches should even be doing marketing.

**In 2014, the conversation was about how to do marketing.** People wanted practical help.

I'm proud to say the Center for Church Communication (CFCC) has helped move that conversation and offered resources, help and direction to local churches eager to share the greatest story ever told. 2014 was another year of rolling out practical resources, including events, books, a podcast and even free social media graphics.

Thank you for the opportunity to help local churches. Church communicators, whether they're paid staff or volunteers, do incredible work and we're privileged to serve them.

Thank you to our board members, our team members and all the volunteers who do the hard work of helping churches tell better stories.

Thank you to our fans, our followers, our cheerleaders—everyone who bought a book, attended an event or shared a link—as well as our advertisers and sponsors. We have a modest budget, but that money is vital to our continued work.

Church communication keeps on getting better and we're grateful to be a part of that. We're ready to see what God will do in the next 10 years.

Thank you,  
Chuck Scoggins  
Executive Director

# What We Do

The Center for Church Communication (CFCC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works to help churches communicate better.

We're a firebrand of communicators, sparking churches to communicate the gospel clearly, effectively and without compromise.

We're advocates for church communicators.

We're fans of local churches.

We're fellow strugglers.

We provide smart coaching and mentoring through blogs, social media, publishing, events and more.

We promote relationships, resources, ideas and models for communication that will change how people see Christians and the church.

**We want to see more people saying, "That's what church should be!"**

*This site [Church Marketing Sucks] has helped me know that I'm not alone, I'm not crazy and I'm not just a critical person who thinks my church is doing things wrong. It's given me data to back up my proposals and inspiration when I wasn't sure what to try.*

*-Tonja Conway*



# Our History

The Center for Church Communication started as an idea to help churches communicate better.

The initial roots go back to the late 1990s when Brad Abare started a marketing agency that worked with a handful of churches and ministries. It quickly became clear that ministry pricing didn't equal financial sustainability, so Brad continued to help churches on the side while growing his company as a separate entity outside of the "church market."

Several years later, in 2004, Abare tried again to launch a stand-alone company that would work exclusively with churches. During a planning meeting for the launch of CFCC, the idea for Church Marketing Sucks was also born. Together, the Center for Church Communication and Church Marketing Sucks would both serve churches by drawing attention to effective communication and offering resources for accomplishing the task.

It didn't take long for CFCC to abandon its original commercial model, and instead come alongside and be the overarching organization for Church Marketing Sucks, the Church Marketing Lab and other projects being hatched. CFCC would be the nonprofit hub for multiple communication support streams, and continue to foster and facilitate a community of church communicators around the world.

2004 - First Church Marketing Sucks blog post goes live in July

2005 - CFCC incorporates as a nonprofit

2006 - Church Marketing Lab launches

2009 - Establish board of directors and executive director position

2011 - Publishing efforts begin with *Outspoken: Conversations on Church Communication*

2013 - First Certification Lab is held in Nashville, Tenn.

2014 - Church Marketing Podcast goes on the air

## Our Values

- Reflecting Jesus
  - Clear communication
  - Continued learning
  - Generosity in spirit and resource
  - Praising, supporting and equipping others
  - Collaborating with integrity and transparency
  - Humility in expressing our unique personalities
  - Disagreeing well
  - Not stealing from others
  - Owning mistakes and resolving problems
  - Building friends for life, not friends for leverage
- 

# Our Projects



## **Certification Lab**

An intensive, two-day workshop to equip church communicators and help them get better. In 2014, successful events were held in Atlanta and Southern California.

## **Church Marketing Lab**

Feedback can make all the difference, which is why we started a group to share and critique church marketing materials. Images are posted for response and an active discussion board handles questions, all powered by the community and moderated by volunteers.

## **Church Marketing Podcast**

Launched in 2014 and hosted by Dave Shrein, the podcast comes out a couple times a month and includes conversation on church communication.

## **Church Marketing Sucks**

CFCC's most popular and visible service to churches, the blog features helpful ideas, practical resources, inspiration and a strong voice championing church communication. 2014 saw the wider church communication community join with us in celebrating our 10-year anniversary.

## **Creative Missions**

Designed as a missions trip for creatives, Creative Missions gives church communicators the opportunity to use their skills to help local churches communicate better. Thirty creatives traveled to Baltimore to help churches in 2014.

## **Events Calendar**

A public calendar listing all sorts of church communications and marketing related events. Find an event near you.

## **Job Board**

We're connecting churches and creative professionals with a job board that hosts industry job openings and freelance opportunities.

## **Local Meetups**

We encourage local get togethers by connecting independent groups with communicators eager for community. It's a chance to share ideas, encouragement and horror stories.

## **Publishing**

Since 2011, CFCC has published books and ebooks, including *Outspoken*, *Dangerous*, and *Church Communication Heroes*. In 2014, the *Getting Started* series and *Unwelcome* by Jonathan Malm were added to the lineup.



## Our **Projects** (continued)

### **Social Media**

Church Marketing Sucks has an active social media presence on Twitter and Facebook. CFCC news, blog posts and unique content are shared, and we're also interacting and connecting with our community.

### **Street Team**

Launched in 2014, our street team is our eyes and ears on the ground. They keep us connected to the community and help us spread the word about new initiatives. It's become a great way to recruit volunteers eager to do more.

*Ten years ago today, Church Marketing Sucks debuted. I can't calculate how much that site and the people behind it and around it have meant to me.*

**-Scott McClellan**

*I am ever-so-grateful for Church Marketing Sucks. I have learned a lot from the content you have put out, and I can't wait to gain wisdom from the amazing church communication community. It can be a lonely place sometimes.*

**-Joelle Anderson**

# Board Members

**Brad Abare** is the founder of the Center for Church Communication. He consults with companies and organizations, helping them figure out why in the world they exist, why anyone should care and what to do about it. He and his wife, Jamaica, live in Los Angeles with their daughter, Miró.

**Mark MacDonald** is the senior church brand strategist for Be-KnownforSomething, an agency that helps churches and people intentionally become known for something that will create relevance in their community. For nearly 30 years, Mark has served as designer, creative director and strategist in one of Eastern Canada's largest agencies and at PinPoint Creative in North Carolina. He and his wife of 24 years have a son in seminary and a son studying live sound engineering. He's overseeing the development of CFCC's national Certification Lab.

**David Uribe** serves as the creative director of Awaken Movement, a nonprofit organization which creates resources that inspire, educate and equip local churches to put action to their faith. Before moving to the UK, he served as the director of arts and communications for three years at Christ Fellowship Miami, a multi-site church of 8,000 with seven locations throughout Miami, Fla. David served as the CFCC chairman from 2012-2014, overseeing the launch of the Certification Lab, multiple books and the Church Marketing Podcast. David is married to Genie, a talented musician and worship leader. They have a passion for sharing the gospel through the arts in their community of East London.

# Team Members

**Adam Legg** is a creative leader, social media nerd and digital junkie, who is convinced that you and your story matter! He is the creative arts and communications pastor at ChangePoint church in Anchorage, Alaska. Adam is part of the team who handles social media for Church Marketing Sucks and CFCC.

**Laura Bennett** began 2014 as the leader of the Church Marketing Lab. In July, she stepped down to focus on a new position on the communications team at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Laura is a Creative Missions alum and a member of The Summit Church, a multi-site church based in Durham, N.C.

**Robert Carnes** is the marketing and communications manager at Make-A-Wish Georgia. Previously, he worked in communications at two United Methodist churches in Metro Atlanta. He also helps out as the assistant editor of Church Marketing Sucks. In his free time, Robert is an avid reader, trivia buff and sports fan.

**Neal F. Fischer** is the director of communications for the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In his work for the church, he has done direct marketing, social media, public relations, strategy, and both print and online communication (so he's done it all). He has also helped to moderate the #ChSocM (Church Social Media) tweetchats on Tuesday evenings, and this year he joined our social media team.

**Kevin D. Hendricks** is a freelance writer, editor and web geek. He's our editorial director, overseeing content, ebooks and more. His communications company, Monkey Outta Nowhere, works with nonprofits, ministries and companies that care. Kevin has been blogging since 1998, once spent a summer as a yo-yoing street performer on the streets of Chicago and likes to read a lot. Kevin and his wife, Abby, live in St. Paul, Minn., with their two kids and three dogs.

**Chuck Scoggins** is the executive director for CFCC. When he's not working for CFCC, he runs a design and app development company and is the author/editor of several books. He's also a blogger, consultant, graphic designer and video producer who is passionate about leveraging technology to help people. You can follow him on his blog, [ChuckScoggins.com](http://ChuckScoggins.com).

**Katie Strandlund** loves helping other people win. At CFCC she serves in an administrative/project management role with the Church Marketing Sucks team and the CFCC board. By day you can find her running her company, Dirty Work, helping artists, writers, entrepreneurs and experience designers bridge the gap between ideation and implementation. She blogs occasionally at [CautiousCreative.com](http://CautiousCreative.com) where curiosity finds courage.

**Dave Shrein** is the author of The Communicator's List, a free publication for church communicators. You can connect with Dave on his blog, [daveshrein.com](http://daveshrein.com), where he writes about leadership and communications or follow him on Twitter. Dave also hosts our Church Marketing Podcast.



# 2014 Highlights

## January

We launch a new street team to help us better connect with our community.

## February

We survey the community about a new podcast and the first preview episodes of the Church Marketing Podcast roll out in March.

## March

Our three-part series of ebooks, *Getting Started in Church Communication*, is published.

## March

Chuck Scoggins is hired as our new executive director.

## April

Our email newsletter switches from monthly to weekly and is redesigned to focus on less content.

## May

Creative Missions travels to Baltimore.

## June

Church communicators come to West Ridge Church in Atlanta for the second Certification Lab.

## July

The 10-year anniversary of Church Marketing Sucks.

## September

Most of our team gathers in Nashville for a planning session to chart where CFCC is going in the future.

## October

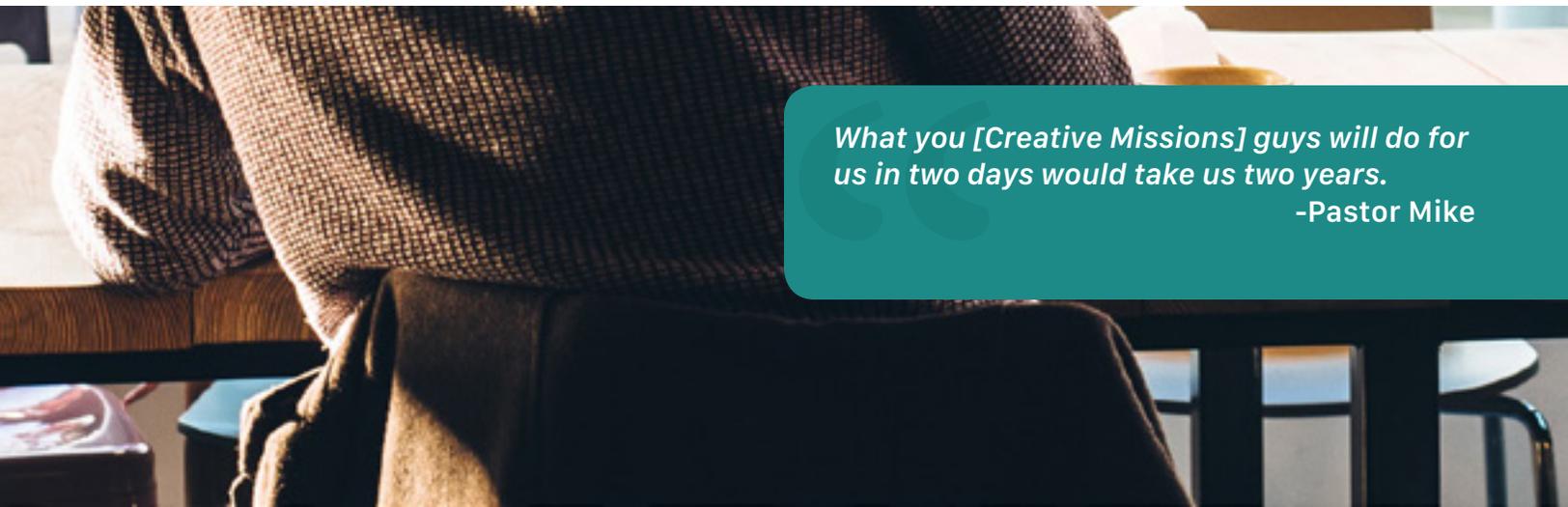
The Certification Lab goes west for our third event, held at Saddleback Church in Southern California.

## October

*Unwelcome: 50 Ways Churches Drive Away First-Time Visitors* by Jonathan Malm is published in print and digital formats.

## December

CFCC projects are reorganized, with some shifting to Church Marketing Sucks in anticipation of future changes.



*What you [Creative Missions] guys will do for us in two days would take us two years.*

**-Pastor Mike**

# Project Highlights

## **Top 10 Church Marketing Sucks posts** (by traffic)

[Your Church is More Than a Worship Service: Finding Other On Ramps](#)

by Kelley Hartnett

[8 Ways Your Church Website Can Welcome First-Time Visitors Before They Arrive](#)

by Kevin D. Hendricks

[Meet Our Church: Recognizing Volunteers on Facebook](#)

by Tim Briggs

[17 Church Bulletin Examples](#)

by Kevin D. Hendricks

[Thanksgiving Graphic: Saying Thank You On Social](#)

by Kevin D. Hendricks

[How to Overcome Dysfunctional Church Communication](#)

by Karen Shay-Kubiak

[25 Last-Minute Christmas Ideas](#)

by Robert Carnes

[Design Basics: Taking Church Typography Beyond Comic Sans](#)

by Laura Bennett

[How to Promote Your Church VBS](#)

by Laura Bennett

[Christmas Graphic: Free Download to Share](#)

by Kevin D. Hendricks

*Got a little dusty in the room when I saw website/videos the Creative Missions team made this week. Baltimore has been so blessed this week.*

-Dan Hyun

*I use a lot of Church Marketing Sucks info and references to back me up. Thanks for giving me this resource and keep them coming!*

-Rebecca Llenos

*Church Marketing Sucks is a refreshing breath of air in addressing the needs of congregations like ours.*

-Frank Sayford

# Project Highlights (continued)

## Top 5 Church Marketing Podcasts

(by download)

[The Big Idea Episode](#)

[The Communication Volunteer Episode](#)

[The Church Website Episode](#)

[The Media Essential Episode](#)

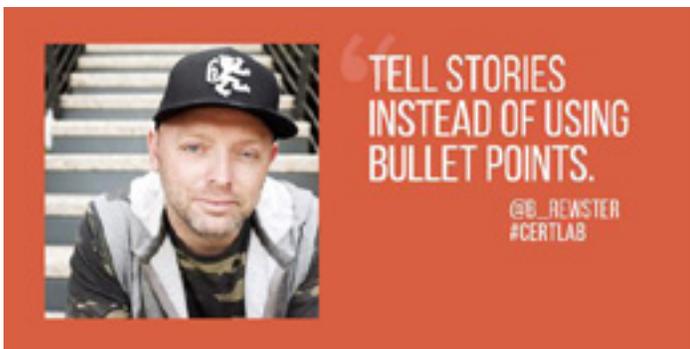
[The Social Media Episode](#)

## Top 10 Certification Lab Tweets

(by most RTs/favs)

No amount of bulletin blurbs or stage announcements will make people want to attend an event that's not remarkable @kelleyhartnett #certlab  
<https://twitter.com/dustinkeele/status/476342559913295873>

Tell stories. #CertLab



<https://twitter.com/cmsucks/status/521698726394347520>

"60% of all churches in America have under 99 members." - @markmac1023 #CertLab

<https://twitter.com/FerlyTangonan/status/521684112869183488>

*Thanks for 10 years of fueling transformation!*

*-Susan Kleinwechter*

*[Certification Lab is] one of the most worthwhile things I've ever done for myself and my ministry.*

*-Julie Snyder*

*If you work at a church and don't follow @cmsucks, check it out immediately. Always amazing, useful content.*

*-@DeniseDanielB*

# Project Highlights (continued)

## Top 10 Certification Lab Tweets (continued) (by most RTs/favs)

In order to be irreplaceable, one must be different. Copy paradigms & processes; innovate flavor @markmac1023 #certlab

<https://twitter.com/dustinkeele/status/475985481701031936>

"When we do more, we become less remarkable and more busy. Everything just becomes noise."

-@kelleyhartnett #CertLab

<https://twitter.com/chuckscoggins/status/522061590539948033>

Rest & your best. #CertLab @GerryTrue



<https://twitter.com/cmsucks/status/521725476134346752>

Your church's twitter feed may be the only encouraging thing people see all day. @philbowdle #certlab



<https://twitter.com/sketchism/status/476082218654511104>



# Project Highlights (continued)

## Top 10 Certification Lab Tweets (continued) (by most RTs/favs)

How would you like your graphic design? Choose two. @philbowdle #certlab



<https://twitter.com/JennyRain/status/476028930496135168>

This is @dustinkeele getting posted & pelted with paper balls, per @kelleyhartnett's order. #certlab #certsketch



<https://twitter.com/sketchism/status/476015178539343872>

*Love the practical advice this podcast provides from communicators who care deeply about communicating well and who are willing to share what they are learning!*

-Gerr

*Our pastor of 32 years has recently retired... This is a perfect time for a communications and branding strategy package. I've been using the 10th anniversary posts as my starting points in producing the first draft and will soon present it to church leadership.*

-Frank Chyz

# Project Highlights (continued)

## Top 10 Certification Lab Tweets (continued) (by most RTs/favs)

#certLab selfie before my session. These people are awesome.



[https://twitter.com/B\\_REWSTER/status/475998852936630273](https://twitter.com/B_REWSTER/status/475998852936630273)

## Top 10 Creative Missions Tweets (by most RTs/favs)

"If a pastor doesn't smell like sheep, they're not a pastor." - Michael Crawford, Freedom Church  
#creativemissions

<https://twitter.com/N8Friedrichsen/status/468051276346195969>

There is nothing like doing what you feel like God created you to do. #CreativeMissions

<https://twitter.com/innovatoryphoto/status/469581778601377792>

# Project Highlights (continued)

## Top 10 Creative Missions Tweets

(by most RTs/favs)

"You've answered prayer with pixels." - @Tally-Wilgis #CreativeMissions

<https://twitter.com/EmilyCarlton/status/469511262934556672>

Amazing team from all over came to Baltimore this week to serve The Village w/ creative gifts #CreativeMissions

<https://twitter.com/villagedanhyun/status/468480395600998400>

In the terminal at the conclusion of another #creativemissions trip, I'm just in awe of how God is moving in Baltimore. Watch this city.

<https://twitter.com/ericmurrell/status/469871683650588672>

I love clicking #CreativeMissions. Each time I pray for and celebrate what God is doing among my friends and co-laborers.

<https://twitter.com/TallyWilgis/status/469195320258093056>

All the teams working hard..designing, editing, revamping #creativemissions



<https://twitter.com/mcsingleton/status/468550023722987521>

*Thankful for all the great resources from Church Marketing Sucks. We used the Thanksgiving graphic on our social networks today. Thanks guys!*

*-Tim Gaskins*

# Project Highlights (continued)

## Top 10 Creative Missions Tweets (continued) (by most RTs/favs)

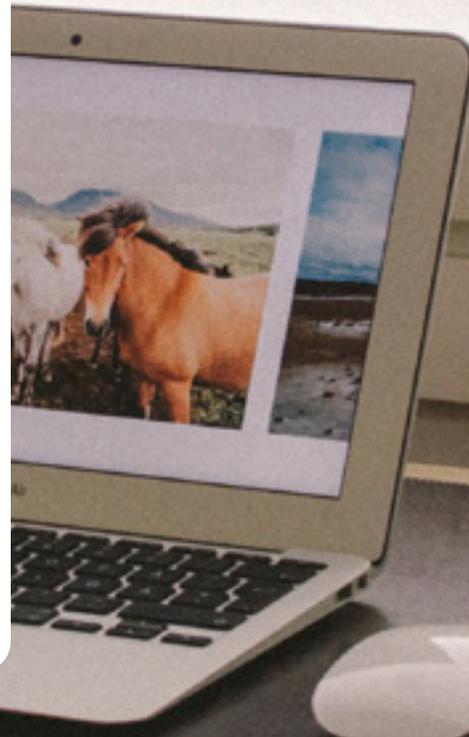
"You are going to be amplifiers of the gospel to Baltimore." @bradobrien #creativemissions



<https://twitter.com/EvanCourtney/status/467829270803677184>

At Heathrow for flight to Baltimore! Currently fighting with blow-up neck pillow... may have landed before it's sorted! #CreativeMissions  
<https://twitter.com/sassyburt/status/467298395481067520>

2 days until #creativemissions! What?! Praying today for my fellow missionaries. Praying for unity and Spirit-led creativity/productivity.  
<https://twitter.com/laurabennett113/status/466938187286605824>



# How To Get Involved

We routinely get emails that sound the same. They go something like this:

"What you guys do is so important and what you provide is so valuable, how can I be involved?"

We love hearing this question (and the motivation behind it). We have a lot going on and can always use the help. Committed people is how we made it to 10 years, and it will get us through the next 10.

Here are a few ways you can join the movement to help churches communicate better:

## **Street Team**

Be our eyes and ears on the ground and help spread the word.

## **Church Marketing Lab**

Offer feedback and answer questions for fellow communicators.

## **Guest Blogging**

Write content for Church Marketing Sucks.

## **Join the Conversation**

Post comments and reply to social media posts.

## **Volunteer**

Step up on a regular basis and join our team.

## **Give Money**

We don't ask for money often, but this work does cost money and we welcome the support. You can make a tax-deductible donation or consider a sponsorship opportunity.

## ***Let's Share the Greatest Story Ever Told***

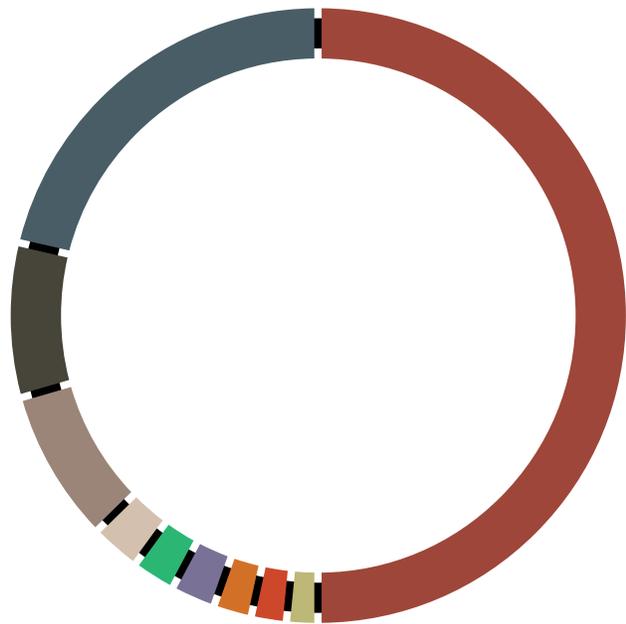
We love serving you, and we love helping you serve one another. As you can see, there are lots of places where you can join forces with us and help churches better communicate the most important story ever told.

[Click here to join the team!](#)

# Financials

## Income

Ad Network.....	\$17,086.00
Affiliate Earnings .....	\$357.00
Amazon Referrals.....	\$826.00
Contributions.....	\$10,000.00
Events .....	\$41,530.00
Product Sales.....	\$10,390.00
Services .....	\$1,500.00
Speaking.....	\$95.00
Writing .....	\$600.00
Bank Interest.....	\$62.00
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$82,446.00</b>



## Expenses

Cost of Goods.....	\$39,192.00
Appreciation .....	\$1,267.00
Bank Charges.....	\$1,478.00
Contract Labor .....	\$31,350.00
Dues & Subscriptions.....	\$2,816.00
Office Supplies.....	\$466.00
Postage.....	\$50.00
Professional Fees.....	\$200.00
Supplies .....	\$203.00
Telephone .....	\$369.00
Travel & Entertainment .....	\$2,573.00
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$79,964.00</b>

