

WESHARE *vs.* PAYPAL





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When it comes to choosing the best online giving platform for your church, there is a vast array of choices out there. From ones that specialize in specific faith giving, to nonprofits, to businesses — the choices are endless. When faced with so many selections, churches should focus on what they really need in a giving platform. Read on for all the details of what to consider when making the jump to online giving.

BIGGER IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER

Working with multi-billion dollar companies such as PayPal is something to consider when weighing your options. Not only will your church be just one of millions of accounts they work with around the world, but they also don't have the added knowledge of working primarily for faith-based organizations. Though relatively small in comparison, the WeShare team is extremely knowledgeable and has passion for churches and non-profits. It's not a job - it's a mission.

The value in these companies is that they are constantly researching the latest in church technology and best practices. They do the work

that churches don't have the time or the manpower to do, because they believe that vibrant churches matter. Those that take advantage of these organizations can then concentrate on what they do best — sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

HIDDEN FEES, EXTRA LABOR

As a faith community, we are tasked with being good stewards with the money that is so generously given to us. So at first glance, it might seem as though platforms like PayPal would be the best choices, as they are easy to sign up for, recognizable to the general public, and simple to use. However, drilling down into the nitty-gritty details, there are more hidden fees and extra labor

associated with these types of platforms than meets the eye.

At first glance, PayPal appears to be relatively inexpensive. You spend mere minutes creating an account, have your bulletin editor add the link to your website and weekly communication, and then wait for the money to start coming in on a regular basis. Except, it doesn't. Wait — what went wrong?

The fact of the matter is, you can't set up a whole new way of giving and expect it to take off without a little prompting. You need marketing materials and consistent messaging on the importance of giving online and the easy steps on how to do it. You need a support team to handle any technical problems and to guide you in marketing best practices, so you can instead concentrate on evangelizing your faith community.

REMIND PEOPLE, AND THEN REMIND THEM AGAIN

Are you familiar with the “Rule of 7”? It's a marketing principle stating that prospects need to come across an offer at least seven times before they really notice it and begin to take action. In “church speak,” this means that your members need to hear about the importance of giving

numerous times, not just see it on a flyer in the main gathering space. Make it a priority to preach about tithing once per month, and send out email and postal communications on a semi-regular basis (think once every three months), reminding them that their donation makes a huge difference when it comes to maintaining the strength of your church.

Now, as part of your faith leadership team, you'll be hard-pressed to find the time and the resources possible to make this happen on a consistent basis. That is why using a platform such as WeShare is the perfect solution for churches looking to get the messaging out about online giving. With WeShare, not only do you get an easy-to-use platform, but also a whole marketing team at your disposal to get the message out through unique campaigns.

Last year, the WeShare team tested a pilot program for their customers to increase their online donors and maximize giving. The procedure was simple: churches were invited to send their list of member contacts to their designated Engagement Manager. Then the WeShare team created an engaging email and print campaign geared towards their members, reminding them of the ease and benefits of online giving. The results? Impressive, as thousands of





participating churches increased their online donor base.

ELIMINATE ROADBLOCKS & INCREASE DONATIONS

By now, most churches have discovered it isn't that their members are reluctant to tithe, but rather it has to do with them remembering to do it on a consistent basis. Think about it — how many times have we attended a different church, but didn't have a chance to drop off our offering at our regular place of worship? Or remembered to bring the offering envelope to service, but forgot the checkbook? By giving them the option of setting up recurring payments on a weekly or monthly basis, you eliminate many roadblocks and are able to receive their gifts no matter where your members may be.

One of the best reasons to encourage online giving is the recurring payments option. This allows people to set up an amount that works for them and have it go through at a specific date they deem fit. Not all platforms can support that kind of option or allow it on an easy basis. With PayPal, for example, the steps to do that are extensive and complicated. It's meant to be taken care of by a website developer, not the church secretary or volunteer, as is usually the case. If you don't have

a general knowledge of HTML, your options will be limited.

BRANDING IS KEY

Lastly, while PayPal and other giving platforms are relatively easy to use, it is nearly impossible to brand the service with your church's look and feel. So while your theme is the same — online giving is fast, easy, and safe — your members are hearing the message from a vast array of differently designed pieces, which naturally causes confusion. Using PayPal, you're stuck with their branding, and not a lot of room for customizing your mission message.

All the marketing materials you use should be as customized and cohesive with your church as possible — and that includes your giving platform. Finding a vendor that not only allows these changes to take place, but also does the work for you, is key to getting it done in a timely manner.

WeShare is our easy-to-use online giving program, designed to help you exceed your church financial goals. Learn more by visiting www.WeShareGiving.com or call 877.316.0260.