

# Quick Guide...

## Audio / Visual (AV)

*Prepared by the Committee on Church Art and Architecture*

### Introduction

Many churches use high quality sound systems and visual display equipment as part of their regular worship.

This Quick Guide provides some practical advice on how to prepare for this step. CARTA can arrange for architecture, conservation and AV experts to visit your buildings, free of charge, to help you assess the options.

Questions for your worship leaders and congregations to consider:

- How might AV help or hinder your worship experience?
- When else might it be used?
- Do you have a team that is willing and able to operate a new system?
- How much will it cost?

The answers to these simple questions will help you decide what type of equipment is appropriate to your needs.

### Architectural Sensitivity

Any AV system needs to be specifically designed to meet your unique needs and comply with current Building (Scotland) Regulations (see <http://bit.ly/govbldgregs>). The AV system should not detract from the architectural character of your church and equipment and cabling can usually be installed discreetly, given careful planning and sensitivity. However, suitably aesthetic solutions can sometimes be difficult to find.

Consider any “future-proofing” –upgrades or components that may be added later– from the very start of the AV project. This may help create a better, longer-term budget for the project. Include any electrical work required within

the AV Plan –every new component will need its own power source– which may create extra costs to consider.

### Sound Systems

Very often, a simple “like-for-like” replacement is all that is required, using modern components. If you are replacing the components in a speech-only system –mixer, amplifier, loudspeakers, microphones– you may have to replace the entire system to comply with existing warranties. Churches with visual display systems tend to need a sound system with a greater dynamic range to accommodate film screenings and other multimedia audio. If you host music events that use sound or amplification systems, these should be considered in discussions with a potential Contractor.

Expectations of high-quality audio have risen dramatically, and with careful thought and forward planning this can be achieved in a more cost-effective manner.

### Visual Display Systems, Video Cameras & Controllers

We are here to help you choose the best option for your needs. The range of display options and costs vary enormously, depending on the type of building, congregation size, and most importantly, how it integrates into the existing building fabric with the lowest visual impact, while meeting your worship needs. Poorly designed installations can quickly distract the viewer away from their intended purpose.

Video cameras can relay events such as baptisms and celebrations. “Fixed” or “bullet” cameras project a static image, whereas “PTZ” (pan/tilt/zoom) cameras can change

the camera angle or image size. Depending on the number of cameras in the system, this can become quite a complex task.

You may simply choose a computer-based visual Hymnary, or at the other extreme, cameras, controllers, computer(s), DVDs, etc. The control of this can become complex and multi-skilled to produce something that is both professional and beneficial to worship. Consider how the system is to be controlled and operated and by whom. Our advice is to keep it as simple as it needs to be; your AV team should be fully trained (the installation company must provide this as part of the contract) and be big enough to allow for holiday cover, illness, etc.

There is no “one size fits all” solution, and each AV plan must be submitted to and agreed by CARTA before approval is given for the work to commence.

### **Web-streaming and Intellectual Copyright**

There is a lack of clarity around the use of copyright material in Churches. However, every original work is owned by someone and you should never assume that it can be freely copied, performed or used without copyright permission.

A worship service involves a number of components: live and/or recorded music, the liturgy, sermon, readings, dramas, etc. Each of these elements is covered by copyright, so before a service is made available over the internet, ensure that you have permission for distribution from each copyright owner. Permission must be also be given by all musicians, readers, prayers and preachers before you record or broadcast their performance.

The Church of Scotland’s guide to copyright can be found

here: <http://bit.ly/CofScopyright>

### **Induction Loops**

This is a legal requirement of the Equality Act 2010 and includes Churches, Church halls, and any other function room which is used by the general public. CARTA’s Quick Guide to Induction Loops can be found at <http://bit.ly/Inductionloops>

### **Your Contractual Obligations**

Your Kirk Session is responsible for ensuring that any company contracted to carry out any AV Scope of Works within your building is suitably qualified to do so. CARTA would urge you to obtain up-to-date copies of the following documents, all of which must be current at the time of your installation:

- Current Public Liability Insurance (PLI) Certificate and Employer’s Liability Insurance (ELI) Certificate if more than 1 person is involved in the Scope of Works
- Risk Assessments and Method statements for any risks involved in carrying out the work
- Current Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) if system design work is to be carried out
- Current Health & Safety Accreditation Certificate (CHAS, SSIP, etc.)
- Evidence of similar work carried out at other churches

To arrange a visit , complete an enquiry form found at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk/carta/about](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/carta/about) and email it to [gentrustees@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:gentrustees@churchofscotland.org.uk).

For advice, call 0131 225 5722 and ask to speak to someone in the CARTA office.

## **About the Authors**

John P Turner MInstSCE is the Church of Scotland AV advisor. He has been a member of the Institute of Sound and Communications Engineers since 1987 and is an accredited Hearing Loop Assessor. Judith Roebuck is the CARTA Development Worker.



The Church of Scotland  
Mission and Discipleship Council

121 George Street  
Edinburgh, EH2 4YN

T: 0131 225 5722  
E: [mandd@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:mandd@churchofscotland.org.uk)  
W: [www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk)  
[www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)



Scottish Charity Number SC011353