

Lessons in Live Polling at Your Church

Last month we hosted a series of messages at Liquid where we featured “live polling” as a core part of the message. The “big idea” of the series was to use national interest in the upcoming election as a jump off point to talk about the Kingdom of God. Tim did an amazing job with the entire series. [[Click here to check out the series and see the live polling in action.](#)] [[Download this infographic of some of the things we learned from polling our people.](#)]

Live Polling gives your services an incredibly dynamic feel. Our people are used to interactive everything but when they come to our church services they are often seen as just “one way” monologues where people on a stage dispense information. **By using the cel phones that are in people’s pockets you are able to access what your people are thinking and create a fun dialogue with your people.** Here are some lessons we learned about live polling in church:

- **Choose Technology Wisely** - I spent a bunch of time over the summer looking at a number of different technology solutions for live polling because I didn’t want to have any problems once we actually got to the services. I would highly recommend [[Poll Everywhere](#)] because their service is robust and gives you tonnes of options for conducting your live polls.
- **Set Autoresponders** - When people submit their poll answer make sure the service sends back an acknowledgement text because as important as actually taking in people answers is ... having your people know that you got their answer is even more important! People want to know that their vote counted.
- **Do “Demo” Questions** - Every week we had our Campus Pastors walk our audiences through fun questions earlier in the service to show how the technology works. Each demo included the campus pastor asking everyone to take out their cel phone (wave them in the air!) and then actually explaining how the “short codes” work for the polling. We asked questions like “Which Pastor is most handsome?” and “Who is going to win the Super Bowl?”
- **Tell the Press About it** - Make sure to send out a press release to local and regional news outlets about the fact that you are attempting to garner your people’s feedback through polling. It’s counter to the broader culture’s perception of what “churches do” and therefore it’s a great news story! [[We had coverage from both local](#)] and [[regional news outlets about our use of this technology](#)]. [[Check out our press release.](#)]
- **Ask Questions with Wide Variety of Opinions** - Try to craft your questions in such a way that they don’t lend themselves to “binary” responses. Our participation was more dynamic and engaging when we had responses that became a horse race between 3-4 answers.
- **Practice the Technology** - This probably goes without saying ... but make sure you test the questions multiple times before you get to Sunday morning. Make sure you know exactly how you are going to display the response screen ... make sure the shortcodes work ... make sure everyone is well aware of what is happening. Spending extra time on the front end will make sure it’s a smooth experience for your people!

Live Polling could add a nice interactive piece to an up coming series at your church! How could you see using this technology in your ministry?

Read more from Rich [here](#).