

# The Church AVL Kickoff Kit:

## Checklists for Choosing Your Tech Partner

LIGHTING. VIDEO. AUDIO. RIGGING. ACOUSTICS. CURTAINS.  
NETWORKING. CONTROLS. INTEGRATED SECURITY.

# Welcome! Bring Your Church's Vision to Life

Thank you for downloading this guide from Illuminated Integration and turning the next page on your church's story with worship technology.

This guide is designed to kickstart your process with your core church team to evaluate and choose your AVL provider.

## How to Identify Credible AVL Companies for Your Church Project

The process for a new church AVL project can be completed by any number of AVL specialists. From small companies to large corporations, each AVL company may specialize in the integration of audio, video and lighting equipment into a range of spaces for a variety of applications.

With so many options available, it's understandable that you'd want to approach only credible companies. Illuminated Integration has gathered a few tips to help you find credible AVL companies that you may want to hire:

### —● View Their Portfolio

Any successful AVL company will be proud of their work and will want to put their efforts on display for potential clients to see. Viewing their previous work will give you your first glimpse into their capabilities and style.

Of course, their presentation isn't everything, but a credible AVL company won't hide their completed projects from potential customers.

### —● Read Their Testimonials

All companies will claim to be reliable and a cut above the rest, which is to be expected. However, their clients may have a different and more objective view of their products or services. Read their client testimonials on their own website and through third-party sites like forums or blogs.

Credible AVL companies will allow customers to post their feedback regardless of rating. If you begin to see a negative trend, perhaps they aren't credible.

### —● Gauge Their Interest in Your Project

Though you may not be able to determine this before your consultation, a reliable AVL company will be sincerely interested in helping bring your vision to life. They'll respect your budget and work with you to achieve maximum results that align with your financial status.

A credible company's goal won't be to overcharge or exploit your budget. They'll be sensitive to your limits and realistically match your budget with your expectations. As you begin to interview AVL companies, you'll get a sense of what the standard offerings and price ranges are for the type of project you're looking to complete. Almost immediately you'll be able to tell which are setting their prices too high and which may not measure up to your own expectations.

Trust the advice of others and look for a company that values transparency with their customers.

## How to Start the Process for a New Church AVL Process

Once you've selected an AVL company, the best way to ensure success is to first create a thorough plan that outlines all of the necessary steps you need to take to achieve your goal. The AVL company you choose is the most significant factor that contributes to this goal.

Now that you know how to identify a credible AVL company, it's time to begin the process of researching and reaching out to specific AVL services. Before you start creating a shortlist of companies you found, acknowledge your available resources first.

One of the best ways to gain honest feedback and valuable insight is to ask for advice from those who have used an AVL service before. Perhaps other churches or centers for worship have worked with an AVL company previously. There are many other buildings around your area that may also have implemented an AVL system into their facility.

Consider reaching out to public libraries, community centers, schools, entertainment venues or other areas where your community gathers together for live performances or multimedia events.

Once you've received feedback from those you trust, conduct your own research into these companies and investigate other options that may be available to you. After you feel comfortable with the amount of information you've gathered, it's time to make your list and begin the selection process.

### —● Choose Your Church Team

Before you reach out to various AVL companies, you should determine which individuals will also be on this implementation team. The men and women that make up this team should be directly involved in specific areas of your church. Those who manage the church's finances, those who manage and conduct the worship services and those who provide facility maintenance should all be in attendance. These representatives should be those that will either engage with the AVL system regularly or be responsible for the system after its integration.

Your goal should be to create a dedicated and manageable team that will see the church AVL process through from ideation to full implementation. Consistency in your team is key for a number of reasons that will influence the success of the process, especially in these initial stages.

Ideally, this team should be formed before the creation of your company call-list so that everyone can agree on which prospective services to contact. Getting these individuals involved during the planning stages also strengthens their investment in the project.

Aside from your core team, it is also wise to seek out advice from those who have a specialized knowledge of your plans or a specific need that should be fulfilled. For instance, you may ask your worship band leader to be a core member of the group.

This individual could take a moment to sit with the entire band and discuss their opinions. They may shed some light on the more minute details or challenges that your team needs to know before beginning the design process.

## —● Meet With the Companies

With your team in place, it's now time to start engaging the AVL companies on your shortlist. Scheduling consultations with these services should be done responsibly — you want to make sure that you're giving your team enough time to consider all options thoroughly but not too much time that would delay your project completion date or prevent the process from even beginning.

It's best to set a few concrete dates for your team to work with, giving the group a deadline to come to a decision.

Don't schedule company meetings back to back. Your worship area renovation is an investment that needs to endure for years to come which means you need to be sure you're choosing the company that's best suited to bring your vision to life. Try to create a plan that keeps your schedule consistent. For instance, if you're scheduling consultations with AVL companies on Tuesdays and Thursdays, build in time slots on Wednesdays and Fridays for the team to come together to have a follow-up discussion about the meeting.

## —● Keep the Playing Field Level

Each company has their own way of pitching their services and will want to demonstrate their abilities in a variety of methods. This is a benefit to you in many ways. The AVL process is inherently technical, and some individuals on your team may not have been exposed to these types of systems before.

Viewing demonstrations through a variety of mediums increases the opportunity for your entire team to fully comprehend and understand the subject matter. Also, many demonstrations will also show you exactly how these systems work.

However, these demonstrations could also give an unfair advantage to one consultant over another service. When the time comes to stage your interviews, you want to keep the playing field level for all companies involved. In one sense, demonstrations or lack thereof can distract you from your mission.

You need your AVL system to achieve your desired results. If you're distracted by Company 1's video presentation or feel that Company 2's lack of media aid leaves you unfulfilled, this could skew your judgment.

To best handle these situations, have a plan in place for what you will need to see or discuss before making your decision. For instance, you may want to see before and after pictures from previous projects they've completed.

No matter what you may request from these companies, make sure you offer all the same opportunity to demonstrate their expertise in the ways you need. This will allow you to make fair comparisons and eliminate some needless bias.

## —● Provide the Same Specs for Each Company

If there's one step in this process that relies on the consistency and decisiveness of your group, it's Step 4. Since Step 1, your group has built the foundation for this AVL project. You've collectively assessed the needs and limitations of your facility and have thoroughly evaluated your plans to determine the exact specifications this integration requires.

Though there is always a chance that you will need to make specific alterations to the original plan, the fundamentals shouldn't change. Your desired specs shouldn't change at this stage.

Consistent communication is a vital resource for any project. As you meet with each company, you need to make sure that your group is clearly communicating the same information during each consultation. A helpful way to do this would be to draft a specs sheet that outlines everything your project needs.

By providing each client with the same document, you make your expectations and needs clear. This also ensures that your team stays focused on the same goal when discussing AVL capabilities with each service.

Consider what would happen if you allowed your specs — which are essentially your needs — to be negotiated during the consultation process. Each company may specialize in one element of the AVL design. For instance, perhaps Company 1 has a lot of experience in lighting and rigging while Company 2 caters heavily to video production.

Although Company 2 delivers amazing video capabilities, their audio limitations may not meet your requirements. If you allow your specs to be adjusted, you're allowing the quality of your worship service to be compromised.

## —● Ask Each Company for the Same Requests

As you continue meeting with AVL companies and learn how to start a new worship area build, you'll notice that the consistency and clarity you've relied on in the previous steps continue to factor into your success.

You've made your needs clear and have created a level playing field for consultants to demonstrate their process for a new church AVL project. Having an established goal in focus is now enabling you to keep progressing towards your goal.

One of the last steps to take before you finally choose your AVL company is to make sure that you're asking each company for the same requests. There are many ways of how to start a church AVL project and each company may approach this process differently.

To minimize chances of confusion or misunderstanding between your team and the AVL design company, you want to continue your consistency and clarity by creating a list of requests you need from each company.

If you begin requesting different items from each company, you won't be able to truly compare them on an even scale. For example, if you ask for Company 1's quote to be broken down into line items, you should also ask Company 2 for the same.

If Company 2 offers warranties on their products, you'll want to discover which warranties Company 1 offers their clients.

## Identifying the AVL Company Best Suited to your Church AVL Needs

Though the interviewing process is one of the most informative and engaging parts of your initial church AVL process, Illuminated Integration understands that you may be torn between a few options. We consider this a positive challenge — you've got a clear plan in place and you've found many AVL services that can affordably help you achieve your vision.

Your next task is not to determine which of these companies is the best, but rather, which of these AVL specialists is best suited to meet your project needs.

Looking back at your team notes, you've now got to assess how well each service can meet your goals and your budget. In addition to these factors, we believe that there are a few other areas that you should consider to make the best decision possible. Consider the following points:



### —● Seamless Integration

No matter when you implement a new AVL system, technology will continue to evolve. Specific hardware and software applications may change over time, requiring your AVL system to adapt to technical specifications. You need an AVL company that provides you with the tools that can be easily upgraded or updated as the years pass.

They should also be able to integrate some of your old AVL equipment into the new design to save you money.

### —● Technical Support

Their installation may be perfect, but when you're confronted with an AVL issue in the future, you'll need a professional to guide you through the obstacle. AVL companies that don't offer ongoing tech support are leaving their clients without the resources they need to continue using their audio, video and lighting equipment successfully.

Your worship service is important to you — you need an AVL company that places your church's AVL system as a top priority.

## —● Return on Investment

Long-term technical service and support is just one value-added component an AVL company can provide. You'll want to choose a company that actively protects your investment by offering warranties or maintenance services that will keep your equipment in proper working order for years to come.

## —● Training Opportunities

Though some members of your worship services group may be well-versed in the operation of AVL equipment, it's wise to educate as many people as possible about this investment. A credible and reliable AVL company will want you to operate their equipment effortlessly. Many companies will provide your team with the training they need to use the tech safely and simply.

What does your ideal AVL system require? Do you want a generic set-up that gets the job done or do you want an original design that caters to the needs of your facility? Questions like these will help you determine which AVL company is best suited to achieve your goals. Your church is unique and the approach to your AVL integration must be just as distinct.

You need more than average — you need turnkey solutions that enhance your message. You need an AVL integration system from Illuminated Integration.

## Ready To Begin?

Let's Bring Your Vision to Life

Whether you're ready to build a new church system or modern an existing one, our team of expert consultants can help with comprehensive services. We provide turnkey solutions to launch your system and continuous support to keep your system like new.



Scan Here

Get in touch with us today to explore our services:

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