

A GRANT PROPOSAL

ON

**IMPLEMENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN
INFORMATION COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AND DIGITAL MEDIA
RESOURCE CENTER FOR THE UGANDA
ORTHODOX CHURCH.**

**SUBMITTED BY;
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Executive summary

This grant proposal has been designed in response to the recent emergence and relevant integration of Information Communication Technology (ICT) with the on-going activities and programs of the Orthodox Church in Uganda, and has as its overarching goal the task of identifying and obtaining funding for the resources needed to establish a program for harmonizing the creation, distribution and accessibility of Orthodox media content with the perennial task of sharing the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Ugandan context.

The Uganda Orthodox Church Information Communication Technology and Digital Media department is headed by Mr. Ssendendo James and was established with the blessings of His Eminence Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga in the year 2016 with the general purpose of creating a centralized and coordinated information resource center for the Orthodox Church in Uganda. The Ugandan Orthodox Church, prior to the establishment of this department, had no substantial media or internet presence, and its faithful had little or no access to the religious resources available therein from other nations.

The main purpose of this proposal, then, is to acquire funding for a variety of resources necessary to improve and enhance both the visibility and functionality of the Department of Information Communication Technology and the associated media platforms of the Orthodox Church in Uganda that it currently manages, as well as to acquire funding for those resources necessary to create a new and technologically mediated evangelical outreach to Ugandan society, in a manner that is economically sustainable, that will positively affect and enrich the lives of the members of the Ugandan Church, while supporting the overall educational and religious goals of the Orthodox Church in Uganda.

Goal of the project

To strengthen and promote the utilization of information communication technology and the integration of digital media in creation, distribution, and sharing of Orthodox content, for the purpose of spreading the Gospel of our Lord and the Orthodox Faith in Uganda.

Objectives of the Project

- To establish a credible central point of reference for Orthodoxy in Uganda and the Orthodox in neighboring countries.
- To establish a center for innovation and skills empowerment to the Ugandan youth which will demonstrate the vitality of the digital era.
- To improve the quality of the digital media content created and published on the existing platforms of the Church.
- To establish a permanent information resource center with diverse capabilities relevant to producing and circulating digital media content.

- To establish a central educational point of contact for the Orthodox faithful in Uganda concerning the wise integration of technology into our daily Orthodox way of life.
- To lay a foundation for the creation and establishment of Orthodox Church communication Stations in Radio and Television.

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Background

The Orthodox Church in Uganda has a venerable history, dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. The Ugandan Orthodox Church was founded as the result of an almost legendary indigenous Ugandan missiological effort to bring Orthodoxy to Uganda and establish it, a task in which these early Ugandan pioneers were eventually assisted by missionary assistance from without. As a consequence, the Ugandan Orthodox Church can legitimately claim to be an authentically African institution, something recognized by the colonial authorities who persecuted it during the War of Liberation. In spite of the advantages of this tremendous historical legacy - one concerning which many Ugandans remain unaware - a significant number of Ugandan Orthodox Christians have failed to remain established in and grow fruit worthy of such strong ancestral roots due to their ignorance, both of the Orthodox faith, and of their own history within it, a situation often exacerbated by a dearth of trained priests and catechists. With the emergence of widespread media technology and the communicative capacities and resources of the internet, the Church in Uganda is presented with a fresh new opportunity to counteract that ignorance, and to renew and enhance its presence within Ugandan society by making use of these additional media opportunities to meet the social, economic, and spiritual needs of its own Orthodox laity, and the people in Uganda more generally.

Needs Assessment

As Uganda is a majoritarian Christian society, various religious denominations have for years integrated technology and media into their evangelism. In addition to creating a public awareness of the various projects and other relevant programs initiated by their own churches, these efforts have also made Ugandans in general, including Orthodox Christians, aware of the potential of such media efforts, such that an audience for them already exists. Indeed, in the two years since the Orthodox Church began to make use of some of these same technologies for its own more dogmatically faithful purposes, the faithful have responded positively, making widespread use of the Church's media platforms and associated resources. It stands to reason, then, that if additional effort and support were invested in the project, additional benefits would be reaped – not only by Orthodox Christians in Uganda, but also the Orthodox faithful in neighboring African countries. Perhaps, this media enhanced sharing of Orthodox ideas and experiences in Uganda may eventually serve as a source of information and encouragement to the Orthodox faithful not just in Africa – but around the world.

Over view of existing Media Platforms

The Orthodox Church in Uganda has already embraced various existing social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube and a corporate website platform in the execution of the mission work of our Lord and Saviour. These platforms have captured the attention of many Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians due to regular updates. Below is a brief overview of these, with pictorial impressions and statistical data concerning their operation.

1. Website (www.ugandaorthodoxchurch.co.ug)

Implemented on 2016-04-07, this corporate web-portal was set up with the purpose of creating a centralized and verified source of information concerning the Orthodox Mission in Uganda. A number of articles are periodically published and certain of these have captured the attention of many people both locally and internationally. With over **90,000 Views/Hits** and **28,000 active followers**, this tool has proved to be a reliable asset in the execution of the work of our Lord in Uganda.

Website Home Page Image and Statistics



Quick Stats		
Online Users:	0	
	Visitors	Visits
Today:	69	195
Yesterday:	150	516
Last 7 Days (Week):	929	3,984
Last 30 Days (Month):	4,406	18,807
Last 365 Days (Year):	31,550	94,201
Total:	31,550	94,201

2. Facebook (www.facebook.com/UOChurch)

Facebook is undeniably the leading social media platform globally and given that it has such a huge participant base of **2.32 billion** monthly active users, and given that it is a free use platform, the Orthodox Church chose to adopt from the outset. The Ugandan Orthodox Church page has garnered **2700 followers** since its inception in 2016, and this has had a huge impact in promoting Orthodoxy in Uganda, both locally and internationally.

Facebook Timeline Image and Traffic Statistics



3. Twitter (www.twitter.com/Orthodox_ug)

As Twitter is a professional social media platform embraced by nearly all verified governmental, non-governmental (NGO), academic, and religious institutions and organizations, commanding a total of over **326 Million** monthly active users, it was important to take advantage of its existence. The Church twitter handle has a growing following of **240 followers**, and should continue to be beneficial providing that relevant religious content is regularly posted #Twitted.

Twitter Account Home page



4. Instagram (www.instagram.com/orthodox_ug)

This platform was embraced due to its unique ability and initial intended functionality of being a point of sharing photographic experiences as well as short video clips of the daily / periodical involvements of the Church as it carries out its mission of spreading the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. With over **1 billion** monthly active users, the Instagram handle of the Church has **256 followers** (since 2018) and counting.



5. YouTube (Uganda Orthodox Church)

With statistics of over 1.8 billion users, over 5 billion videos watched daily and other incredible statistical data, possessing a YouTube channel so as to make good use of such figures is one of the possibilities envisioned in boosting the spreading of the word of our Lord, creating everlasting memories of the Orthodox Faith in Uganda as well as publish different videos and documentaries about Orthodoxy in the African perspective.



Requirements description.

- Redesign the existing Archdiocese web platform to a well-organized and populated platform which will fully reflect all parishes, institutions, programs and future projected engagements.

The Orthodox Church in the recent times has initiated a number of departments envisioned to streamline the management of activities, projects, institutions for proper service delivery and growth of the mission of our Lord. Such advancements require representation through our media platforms as well as integrating extra functionalities like *online donations* which will help raise support to further develop our institutions.

- Carry out general data collection on all existing Orthodox communities / Parishes in the country which data will then be published on media platforms. Data will range from history to existing structures, among others.
- Set up an Information Communication Technology (ICT) resource center which will be the media base and center of research and innovation for Orthodox Christianity in Uganda. This is projected to have high quality computing devices that will be used in designing and producing multimedia content relevant in proclaiming the gospel of our Lord. This will also equip the Youth that will interact with the computing devices with self-sustaining skills in the ICT field.

It will be through this resource center that online broadcasting platforms such as *Web-Radio* and *Web-Television* can have a foundation, as we later incorporate a radio communication station with equipment necessary to carry on communication via radio waves and Television signals respectively.

- Equip the innovation center with high quality printing devices will enable printing of Orthodox content which can be used country wide in evangelism. This may include printing of Icons in digital format. It should be considered that the Orthodox faith is well known for preserving the originality of Christianity and this is greatly attributed to the literature and Byzantine art depicted in all Orthodox Churches internationally. Printing such content for access the native Christians can have a salutary and practical impact on the growth of their faith.

- Carry out periodical educative multimedia programs to different Church groups namely, Children Ministries, Youth, Mothers Union, and Clergy through screen projections of various Orthodox documentaries, life-skills documentaries, and all relevant developmental media.
- Establish google map pins for all existing Orthodox Church centers in the country so as to make them accessible from any point of the world. This will help in providing verified statistical data concerning the Orthodox Church in Uganda.

Project Sustainability

Upon completion of the activities identified and implantations of the anticipated objectives, the Uganda Orthodox Church will be directly responsible for the activities of the ICT and Digital Media Department by supervising, monitoring, and providing experiential advise that will be vital into the continuous functionality of the entire department. Responsibilities will be assigned to various individuals as recommended by the Metropolis office, and these individuals will be required to provide periodic reports on the state and general functionality of the implemented resource center.

Financial implications that will arise after implementation of the project such as internet fees, motivational fees to supporting staff, and repairs and maintenance of the equipment acquired will directly be generated from the Metropolis office. Additional funds will be generated from the services provided by the resource center, professional support rendered to different Church institutions, as well as donations from Orthodox faithful and institutions.

Budget

NO	ITEM	DESCRIPTION	UNIT COST	AMOUNT (USD)
1.	Redesigning the Archdiocese website.	<p>This will involve carrying out a detailed step by step procedure that will result into implementation of a standard web-platform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Discover (Information gathering) ✓ Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review / Create a SEO Strategy • Create the Website Sitemap • Content Review & Development ✓ Website Design ✓ Website Development ✓ Launch 	N/A	1,400
2.	Digital video and Photography camera	Canon EOS D Mark IV (WIFI Enabled)	N/A	3,500
3.	Camera Stand		N/A	140
4.	Small Mini Lavalier Lapel / Camera Mic		N/A	45
5.	Mobile Internet Router	4G LTE Router	N/A	240
6.	Backup Storage Device (External HDD)	Toshiba 2 Tb External HDD	N/A	195
7.	Travel and Administrative expenses (These will involve travelling to different Orthodox Centers in the country to carry out data collection)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 Diocese in 40 districts (85 parishes) • 3 Technical People to do data collection • Approximately 3 Months' time period 	<p>(70 USD x 3 People) x 40 districts. Facilitation</p> <p>300 USD @District (40) Transport.</p>	<p>8,400</p> <p>12,000</p>
			TOTAL	25,920

ICT AND DIGITAL MEDIA RESOURCE CENTER REQUIREMENTS				
8.	3 desktop Computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dell Vostro 3668-2 Intel 7th Generation Core i5-7400 4 GB RAM, 1TB HDD Intel® HD Graphics 630 	770	2,310
9.	1 Laptop Computers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upto 3.5GHz Intel Core i5 7th Gen processor 8GB DDR3 RAM 1TB 5400rpm Serial ATA hard drive 15.6-inch screen, AMD Radeon TM R7 M445 Graphics with GDDR5 Graphics Memory 2GB Graphics 	N/A	835
10.	Projector	Dell P318 S	N/A	560
11.	Projector Screen	Tripod Projector (240 x 240 cm)	N/A	225
12.	Digital printer	Xerox Work center 7220 Color Multifunction Laser Printer	N/A	7,300
13.	Networking and Cabling	Includes connecting printers and computers on a network through a router, purchase of cables, RG 45 etc.	N/A	1000
14.	Furniture	1 Oval office table		560
		1 office cabinet		255
		4 office chairs	210	840
		1 small office Admin table		250
TOTAL				14,135
GRAND TOTAL				40,055 (USD)

Submission

The successful implementation of this project will have a significant positive long-term impact on the Orthodox Mission in Uganda and pave the way for future development, continuity, and realization of our purpose as per the will of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. On that note, therefore, the Orthodox Church in Uganda appreciates any efforts and Support rendered towards the success of this project.

This project will establish the foundation for the future creation of a permanent Orthodox Media Group comprising of a **RADIO Station, a TELEVISION Station, and periodical Journal Publications.**

*“May the Grace of Our Lord and Saviour be manifested in his Work
for the salvation of mankind”*

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