

# Purchasing IT related Services – not for Volunteers!

*Does your parish use Facebook, or Twitter? Do you host your website through a service provider such as WordPress or Weebly? Do you use mass emailing solutions such as iContact or Constant Contact to connect with your parishioners and volunteers?*

These services can help with the parish mission and make the parish office run more effectively. It is important that the parish retains the actual ownership of these services with the appropriate level of administrative oversight.

## Be Aware:

It is very easy to subscribe to these various services and many parish volunteers, with the best of intentions, can do so on behalf of a parish. This then abdicates the ownership away from the parish and to the volunteer. The **negative impacts** of this can range from an inconvenience to a significant cost of time and money. For example, a parish may lose its website name, known as the domain name, when a volunteer leaves a parish or perhaps passes away. In these cases the parish will have no recourse because they are not the owner, the volunteer is. In at least one such case an expired name was purchased by a non-employee who then held the parish **hostage** to buying it back.

Similarly, the parish office should own and administrator any social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Flocknote. Application permissions enable volunteers to publish content. The parish should maintain ultimate control of what content is being shared in the name of the parish.

## Simple Steps:

- Volunteers should not purchase IT related services with their own credit card. This should be left to the Office Manager to do using the parish credit card.
- Confirm that your parish website name, such as stmarys.org, is owned by the parish and not by a volunteer.
- Ensure ownership of social media websites that represent your parish.
- Be judicious in what access you give volunteers to your parish business systems.



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