

Catholic Archdio

*Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide*

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF VISUAL  
DISPLAY SYSTEMS IN LITURGICAL  
CELEBRATIONS

DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSION 2016

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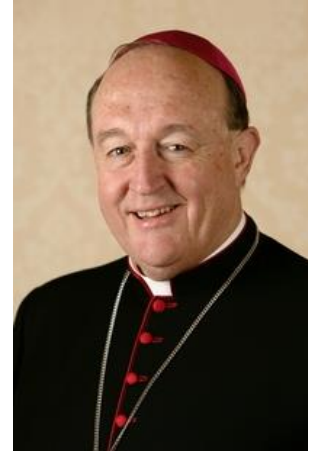
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#### **Acknowledgements**

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Some adaptations have been made by the Diocesan Liturgical Commission of the Adelaide Archdiocese.



Dear Friends in Christ,

I am very pleased to endorse the following guidelines for the use of visual display systems in liturgical celebrations in the Archdiocese of Adelaide.

These guidelines have a twofold purpose. They indicate how visual technology can help to promote “full and active participation by all the people” (Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy 14) and they also serve to highlight possible pitfalls to avoid given the relative newness of the use of data projectors in liturgical celebrations.

What is projected on a screen during the liturgy is secondary to what takes place in word and symbol. Visual display systems can certainly enhance the participation of the faithful, however, they can also inhibit it if there is an over-reliance on technological resources. This document gives very helpful guidelines for knowing when to best use such equipment and for that reason I wholeheartedly recommend that those involved in the preparation of parish liturgies, especially the Sunday Eucharist, study this excellent resource and use the checklist in Appendix II as a helpful guide for when best to use visual display systems within the Mass.

Finally I wish to thank all those who work so faithfully in the preparation and celebration of the liturgy in our parishes and schools and feel sure that this document will be a valuable resource in their efforts to promote the fullest possible participation in liturgical worship.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Philip Wilson DD JCL

Archbishop of Adelaide.

## GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF VISUAL DISPLAY SYSTEMS

### INTRODUCTION

New technologies are developing at an ever-increasing rate. In addition, existing technologies are being constantly redeveloped and their features endlessly improving. In order to encourage the participation of assemblies in liturgical celebrations, many parishes in Australia have turned to these new technologies to provide a solution.

The vast majority of churches in our Diocese were built well before visual display systems were developed. Successfully accommodating a visual display system in a building that has not been designed with such systems in mind can be a challenge.

Additionally, while visual display systems and presentation software can be used effectively to support and encourage participation in liturgical celebrations, they have been conceived and developed with other purposes in mind. They have to be used carefully and with a clear understanding of their liturgical uses.

It is in response to these concerns that these guidelines have been developed.

We encourage every parish and school to ensure that everyone who is involved in the preparation and operation of presentations for liturgical celebrations, is familiar with these guidelines.

In addition, the Office for Worship and the Diocesan Liturgical Commission are available to provide advice, support and formation to parish and school communities in using visual display systems effectively in liturgical celebrations.

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

*Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people (1 Pet. 2:9; cf. 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.*

*In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.<sup>1</sup>*

*To promote active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures, and bodily attitudes. And at the proper times all should observe a reverent silence.<sup>2</sup>*

To encourage the active participation of the liturgical assembly, parishes typically provide some form of participation aid. Such an aid usually includes the words (and music) of the songs and acclamations that are

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<sup>1</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium (hereafter SC)*, 14.

<sup>2</sup> SC, 30

to be sung, as well as texts that the assembly may have difficulty recalling from memory. While these aids have traditionally been provided in print form, many parishes are now using digital visual display systems for this purpose.

A key difference between print aids (hymnals, hymn sheets, booklets, etc.) and visual display systems is that print aids are optional by nature, whereas visual display systems are impositional. While the user of a print aid can choose to close it or put it to one side if not needed, the nature of visual displays is such they are extremely difficult to ignore even if superfluous to one's needs. The 'one size fits all' nature of visual display must be carefully considered and managed to avoid imposing pictures and words on the assembly that may distract from the liturgical action and so inhibit their prayer. Silence is an important part of liturgical prayer, and in this technological age, this involves both audio and visual silence.

Visual display systems such as data projectors were originally conceived and developed for use in work environments. It is important, therefore, that in a liturgical context, they are used only when necessary, and in a way that respects the unique nature of liturgical celebrations. To achieve this, visual display systems need to be a secondary, not a primary focus in a liturgical space. This is the opposite of how they are often perceived in other environments. For example, the living rooms of most homes are arranged around the placement of the television, so that it is the focus of attention. In the church building, our focus must remain on the mysteries that are celebrated, with the visual display system serving to support our worship when required.

## **1. INSTALLING A VISUAL DISPLAY SYSTEM IN A CHURCH**

At present, the two most common forms of visual display used in churches are data projection (where a computer's visual output is projected onto a screen or surface) and LCD or plasma screens (where a computer's visual output is displayed on a television or similar). Given the cost of such systems, and the effect they can have on the liturgical celebration and its participants, careful preparation must be made for their installation.

Whenever possible, the use of a single screen to which the attention of the entire assembly is directed is preferred, as this will foster the unity of those gathered to worship. Placement of visual display screens should be as close as possible to the assembly's sight of the sanctuary without dominating so that the potential for distraction is minimised. Professional technical advice should be sought to determine the best possible solution for each church, taking into account liturgical and architectural considerations.

Parishes wishing to install a new visual display system in an existing church should consult, and seek approval from the Diocesan Liturgical Commission (DLC), so that liturgical advice and support can be provided. If a visual display system is to be included in a new church building, its installation should be considered in the design phase, and details included in the plans submitted to the Bishop for approval.

*(See Appendix 1, Part One for practical considerations regarding installation of a visual display system.)*

## **2. PREPARING PRESENTATIONS FOR LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS**

Only what is necessary to support the assembly's participation in the liturgical celebration should be included in what is prepared. The psalm response and lyrics of songs the assembly will sing should always be included, along with the melody line if needed. While other texts, such as prayers and responses by the assembly, may be included if not well known, the preference is for the assembly to pray and respond from memory.

To support those members of the assembly who have difficulty remembering the texts of these prayers, it is better to provide them with access to print copies, such as pew cards. The text of readings, and of prayers led by the priest, deacon or lay minister, should not be displayed.

An image may be displayed before or after the liturgical celebration as a means of focusing the assembly and encouraging personal reflection and prayer. Such images should be related to the particular season, feast day, or celebration.

Slideshows of images are to be avoided during liturgical celebrations.

More extensive use of images is possible in celebrations with children (such as those celebrated in primary schools), keeping in mind that their purpose is to support the focus, reflection and prayer of the children, and that such images cannot be a substitute for the liturgical symbols or elements in the church, regardless of who is participating in the celebration.

When deciding what should be included in a presentation for use at a liturgical celebration, the priest leading the celebration should be consulted. Parish priests and school chaplains may wish to provide additional instructions, detailing how these guidelines are to be applied in light of local needs and circumstances.

Presentations prepared for liturgical celebrations should always be clear, simple and professional, reflecting the dignity and sacred nature of the liturgy. The text should be large and clear enough to be read easily from all parts of the worship space. Animations and slide transition effects are to be avoided. Copyright legislation is to be respected at all times when displaying song words, music notation and images.

*(See Appendix 1, Part Two for practical considerations regarding preparation of visual presentations)*

### **3. OPERATING VISUAL DISPLAY SYSTEMS IN LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS**

The setup of the computer and display screen should take place in plenty of time before the celebration begins. Besides respecting the right of those who come early to pray before the liturgy begins, it will allow time to attend calmly to any unexpected technical issues that may arise.

Operating a presentation during the liturgy should be efficient and discreet. Timing is crucial. It is important that slides are displayed so that the assembly can sing and respond confidently when they are supposed to. When a song or prayer has to be presented over multiple slides, the flow of the song or prayer needs to be maintained.

Once the liturgy has begun, the visual display system should be used only when needed. At all other times, the screen should remain blank and static, so that the attention of the assembly remains focused on the liturgical action. Consideration should be given to being able to mute the output of the display screen if an unforeseen technical adjustment needs to be made on the computer during the celebration.

*(See Appendix 1, Part Three for practical considerations regarding the operation of visual systems.)*



## **APPENDIX I:**

### **PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN USING VISUAL DISPLAY SYSTEMS**

#### **PART ONE: INSTALLING A VISUAL DISPLAY SYSTEM IN A CHURCH**

##### **LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- Whenever possible, the use of a single screen to which the attention of the entire assembly is directed is preferred, as this will foster the unity of those gathered to worship
- Placement of visual display screens should be as close as possible to the assembly's sight of the sanctuary without dominating, so that the potential for distraction is minimised.

##### **TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- As each church building is different, the installation of a visual display system must be carefully planned to ensure the system works effectively within the church space
  - This will have implications for the most suitable type of system, the number of screens required, etc
  - The amount of ambient natural light in the church during the day, and artificial lighting at night has implications for the type of system installed, its configuration and technical specifications
- Screen sizes should be chosen to achieve the best possible balance between ease of visibility, and screens that do not visually dominate the liturgical space
  - When a data projector is used, consideration should be given to a screen that can be retracted (electronically or manually) when the system is not in use
  - In some churches, it may be possible to project directly onto an existing wall
- If more than one screen is required as part of the visual display system, the screens should be connected to a synchronised system that is controlled from a central point
  - Additional screens should be used only when required
- Consideration should be given to how the display equipment will be accessed once installed for maintenance purposes (eg repairing or replacing faulty or obsolete equipment, cleaning filters, replacing projector lamps)
- A dedicated computer and appropriate software should be acquired for the purpose of presentations during Mass
- A dedicated space will need to be provided within the church for the connection and operation of the computer, preferably where the operator can both see the sanctuary clearly and communicate with music ministers
- Consideration should be given to integrating the sound output of the computer into the church's sound reinforcement system, particularly for those occasions when video footage is used (e.g. a pastoral message from the Bishop)
- When planning for the installation of a visual display system, advice should be sought from suitably qualified technicians to ensure an effective and professional installation that takes these guidelines into careful consideration.

## PART TWO: PREPARING PRESENTATIONS FOR LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

### LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Those who prepare presentations for liturgical celebrations need to have an understanding of the liturgy, the order of the ritual elements within a celebration, and of the potential for a presentation to affect the full, conscious and active participation of those who take part
- When deciding what is to be included in the presentation, it must be remembered that the primary purpose is to aid the participation of the assembly when necessary.

### SONGS

- The lyrics, preferably with melody line, of songs and the psalm response should be included
  - Even when people have not been trained to read music, they can easily learn to recognise the movement of melody line, and thus participate in the song with greater confidence.

### PRAYER TEXTS

- A specific prayer or response of the people may be shown if there is a concern that it is not well known to the assembly
  - This may be the case with texts only used once a year, such as parts of the Easter Triduum, or responses relating to sacraments and rites that are only celebrated during Mass on rare occasions
  - This also may be of particular importance at liturgical celebrations in school communities
  - Such inclusions should be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the particular prayer concerned, and the assembly that will participate in that particular celebration
- Care should be taken in any circumstance, however, that people are encouraged to sing or recite known prayer texts from memory. The text of the Lord's Prayer, for example, is known well enough not to be displayed at school and parish celebrations.
  - As people become increasingly familiar with the new translations of prayer texts, these texts should be removed from presentations to prevent undue reliance on the visual display system.
  - An exemption to this may apply for multicultural and ecumenical liturgies and liturgies for the deaf.
- If a booklet is being prepared for the celebration (e.g. funerals and weddings), such texts should be included there instead of in the visual presentation.
- A number of liturgical prayers are led by a minister alone (e.g. the Collect, intercessions in the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful)). The assembly's role is to listen and to add their own silent prayer to the prayers led by the priest, deacon or lay ministers, rather than 'reading along' on a screen.
- Liturgies rely on sight and sound. There is also a place for silence and for absence of images to make the words we *do* hear and what we *do* see, mean more.

### READINGS

*That word constantly proclaimed in the liturgy is always, then, a living, active word through the power of the Holy Spirit. It expresses the Father's love that never fails in its effectiveness toward us.*<sup>3</sup>

- As the scriptures are to be proclaimed in all liturgical settings, symbolising that "God speaks to his people", the actual readings should never be displayed.<sup>4</sup> Again, the role of the assembly is to *listen*.

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<sup>3</sup> International Committee on English in the Liturgy (translation), *Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass*, #4



## IMAGES

- During a liturgical celebration, the focus of the assembly should always be on the action taking place rather than on static, artificial representations.
- A single image displayed as people enter or leave the church may help to add a focus.
  - A 'slideshow' of images from a person's life may be possible at a funeral Vigil if appropriately and reverently prepared in consultation with the priest, but is not appropriate at the funeral liturgy itself. Again, on such occasions, a single image may be displayed before or after the celebration.
  - As "all things set apart for use in divine worship should be truly worthy, becoming, and beautiful," artistic images must be carefully considered for their artistic merit.<sup>5</sup>
- More extensive use of images may be possible in liturgical celebrations in primary schools, while ensuring that participation in the liturgical action is still encouraged above all else and the central symbols are not compromised.

*In addition to these visual elements that belong to the celebration itself and to the place of celebration, it is appropriate to introduce other related elements that will permit children to perceive visually the wonderful works that God performed in creation and redemption and thus support their prayer. The liturgy should never appear as something dry and merely intellectual.*

*For the same reason, the use of pictures prepared by the children themselves may be useful, for example, as illustrations of a homily, as visual expressions of the intentions of the general intercessions, or as inspirations to reflection.<sup>6</sup>*

## NOTICES

- If parish notices are to be displayed, they should be brief, and only displayed when such notices are being announced
  - Alternatively, a notice may be displayed before or after the celebration

## TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Parishes and schools will need to select and train people to prepare the presentation files required for liturgical celebrations
- Professional-looking presentations that are consistent in their design and appearance will minimise distraction, and better reflect the dignity and importance of the liturgical celebration
- The slide size should be correctly selected to suit the proportions of the visual display screens, otherwise the presentation will appear distorted when displayed
  - With most data projectors, the image is projected at a 4:3 ratio
  - With most LCD and plasma screens, the image is displayed at a 16:9 or 16:10 ('widescreen') ratio
  - This is adjusted within the software settings
- Text displayed on the screen must be large and clear enough to be read comfortably from the furthest distance away
  - A single clear, simple font that is easy to read should be used consistently throughout the presentation

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<sup>4</sup> SC, 33

<sup>5</sup> SC, 122

<sup>6</sup> *Congregation for Divine Worship, Directory for Masses with Children, 35-36*

- Text should be presented in typical sentence case. Text presented in ALL CAPS is more difficult to read, as the brain uses its knowledge of the shape of words to help with reading
- The colour of text and slide backgrounds is also an important consideration
- Contrast is important, and care must be taken to ensure that slides can be read in different light conditions within the church
- The best results are usually achieved with dark (e.g. black, dark blue) text on a light (e.g. white) background or vice versa. Like fonts, the colour scheme should remain consistent throughout.
- When presenting text such as song lyrics, care must be given to the texts being presented in phrases, making it easier for the assembly to follow. For example:

**The Lord is My Shepherd**

**The Lord is my shepherd  
and I want to follow,  
wherever he leads me,  
wherever he goes.**

Adapted from Psalm 23, Words and Music Brian Boniwell (1978) Australia Agents LicenSing Online. All rights reserved. Used with permission, licence number 12345

- Not arranging the texts into phrases makes it difficult to follow, especially from a distance. Using phrasing helps the assembly and aids participation.
  - Care must also be taken when the length of a prayer or song verse or refrain requires it to be split across two or more slides, as poorly-timed slide changeovers can disrupt the flow of the prayer
  - Animations and transitions between slides can prove distracting during liturgical celebrations and should be omitted
  - Images must be professionally presented and of sufficient resolution to be clearly seen throughout the church
  - Between each included element (e.g. song, prayer text), a plain, black slide should be inserted, so that the screen is blank when not in use. Alternatively, it may be possible to use a colour or image that allows the screen to blend inconspicuously into the surrounding wall or space
- Catholic parish and school communities have both a moral and legal obligation to observe copyright legislation
  - Copyright requirements must always be observed when including hymn texts and melody lines that are not in the public domain. With many copyright licenses for visual displays, hymn texts and melody line are permitted. License conditions generally expect each hymn to have displayed with it:
    - The title
    - The name of the composer (and lyricist if different to the composer)
    - The publisher
    - The words “Used with permission”, name of licensing agency, and parish licence number.

For example:

**Christ, Be Our Light**

**Longing for light, we wait in darkness.**

**Longing for truth, we turn to you.**

**Make us your own, your holy people,**

**Light for the world to see.**

*Words and Music by Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP Publications.*

*Australia Agents LicenSing Online. All rights reserved. Used with permission, licence number 12345 .*

- Consideration must also be given to the fact that copyright exists on the vast majority of images that are found on the internet; any images in presentations must be purchased, belong in the public domain or be used with permission.

### **PART THREE: OPERATING VISUAL DISPLAY SYSTEMS IN LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS**

#### **LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- Text and images should only be displayed when they are needed. The screen should be blank at all other times
- Computer operators need to fulfil their role in a quiet and discreet manner which prevents the the assembly being distracted
- Computer operators are also part of the liturgical assembly, and should actively participate in the celebration
- As with music ministers, consideration will need to be given to how Holy Communion will be offered to computer operators, who will not be able to leave their place during the Communion song.

#### **TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- Parishioners should be properly prepared for operating the computer during liturgical celebrations. In particular, they should possess the following skills:
  - An understanding of the Order of Mass (i.e. what happens and when),
  - The ability to manage the visual display system as required (e.g. muting displays when adjustments need to be made)
  - The ability to operate the system accurately and efficiently, minimising any distractions
  - Basic computer troubleshooting
- Computer operators should be provided with a thorough outline of what has been included in the presentation. This can usually be done by printing the slides of the presentation, or a 'notes' page
- The computer software used must be configured to maximise control and ease of use for the operator
  - If the software provides a 'Presenter View' setting, this should be used when running slides
- Computer operators need to be aware of timing the display of slides effectively
  - The natural tendency of the brain is to read ahead, so a new slide has to be displayed shortly before the assembly is expected to read or sing the first words displayed on it
- Once a data projector is shut down, its fan will continue to operate for some time afterwards to cool the projector down
  - This is important to ensure the long life of the projector lamp
  - Power to the data projector should not be interrupted before this cool-down process has been completed.

## APPENDIX II

### A GUIDE TO USING VISUAL DISPLAY SYSTEMS WITHIN THE ORDER OF MASS

The following is a guide and is not to be interpreted as prescriptive.

When making use of visuals, parishes and communities need to take into account the make-up of the congregations, keeping in mind:

- the aged who cannot always read the small print in Missals or on cards
- people who are returning to Sunday Mass after a long absence and are unfamiliar with the new translations
- children whose world is very visual, and use of appropriate images helps hold their attention and facilitate their understanding
- those whose first language is not English and for whom retention of longer responses and prayers (i.e. the Gloria and Creed) is difficult
- where significant numbers of a particular language group are present and translation of readings into their own language can facilitate their participation.

#### ORDER OF MASS

#### FOCUS

#### VISUAL DISPLAY

Before Mass

Personal preparation,  
gathering of the assembly

A single image may be used as a focus  
A slide may be used to provide  
information or a welcoming message

#### THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance

Procession

The text of the entrance song is  
displayed, with Melody line if possible

Greeting

Priest

Blank

Penitential Act

Priest

Blank  
The people's parts of the Penitential  
Act may be displayed if the assembly is not  
familiar with them

Kyrie eleison

Cantor or priest

Blank  
The text and melody line may be  
displayed if the Kyrie is sung to an  
unfamiliar tune

Gloria in excelsis

Cantor, choir or priest

Blank  
The text and melody line may be displayed  
if the assembly is not familiar with them; if  
the music for the Gloria is arranged into  
verses with a refrain, then the refrain may  
be displayed to support the assembly

Collect

Priest

Blank

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading	Reader	Blank
Responsorial Psalm	Cantor or reader	The text of the response is displayed, with melody line if possible
Second Reading	Reader	Blank
Gospel Acclamation	Procession to ambo	The text and melody line of the people's parts may be displayed if they are not familiar with them
Gospel	Deacon or priest	Blank
Homily	Priest or deacon	Blank In Masses with children and a few adults, some images may be used to support their understanding of the homily if considered helpful
Profession of Faith	Assembly	Blank The text and melody line may be displayed if the assembly is not familiar with them
Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful)	Deacon or reader	Blank In Masses with children and a few adults, some images may be used to support their understanding of the intentions if this is considered helpful English translations may be displayed if prayers are read in other languages

## THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Gifts	Procession, priest	If a song is to be sung by the assembly, the text is displayed with melody line if possible
Prayer Over the Offerings	Priest	Blank
Eucharistic Prayer	Priest	Blank

Holy, Holy, Memorial Acclamation Great Amen	Assembly	The text and melody line of these may be displayed if they are unfamiliar to the assembly, but only while they are sung
Lord's Prayer	Assembly	Blank
Sign of Peace	Deacon, Priest, Assembly	Blank
Breaking of the Bread & Lamb of God	Priest	Blank The text and melody line of the Lamb of God may be displayed if it is unfamiliar to the assembly
Communion	Procession, Assembly	The text of the Communion song is displayed, with melody line if possible. If there is a song after Communion, the text is displayed, with melody line if possible. In Masses with children and a few adults, an image may be used as a focus for reflection if this is considered helpful.
Prayer After Communion	Priest	Blank
<u>THE CONCLUDING RITES</u>		
Announcements (if necessary)	Priest, reader	Blank A few key points may be displayed during the announcements
Final Greeting	Priest	Blank
Blessing	Priest	Blank
Dismissal	Deacon, Priest	Blank
Recessional Song	Assembly	If there is a recessional song the text is displayed, with melody line if possible
After Mass		A single image may be used as a focus A slide may be used to provide information or a thought-provoking message related to the Gospel of the day as people depart.

## APPENDIX III: TYPES OF A/V EQUIPMENT FOR INSTALLATION IN A CHURCH

The technology used in churches will vary. The type of AV technology chosen for a particular church will depend on the church environment. That includes the size and shape of the church and the lines of sight so that all the congregation are able to clearly see the altar at the same time as the “screen” from anywhere within the church.

The type of display chosen – Data Projector or TV screens - needs to enhance the liturgy rather than to detract from it.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- The size and shape of the church;
- Lines of sight so that screens can be from anywhere within the church;
- Budget.

### CHOICE

- Data Projector or TV Screens

#### **A: Data Projector**

##### **Pros**

Flexibility regarding location  
Excellent in small churches  
Cheaper Installation

##### **Cons**

Unsuitable for church with high or pitched ceilings  
Regular servicing required  
- Cleaning  
- Changing lamps  
- Cost  
Overheating possible  
Cost of screens

#### **B: TV Screens**

##### **Pros**

Little or no maintenance required.  
  
Cost of TV screens has decreased substantially

##### **Cons**

Larger churches may require 2 Screens  
Extra cost.  
Reflection of bright light or sunlight - but can be reduced with filters.  
Less data per screen

## DISTRIBUTION OF VISUAL SIGNAL

The industry standard for Data Projector or TV Screen is HDMI Output.

- This is mainly technical, but consideration must be given to the data feed, as older systems will have VGA or SVideo outputs. Newer laptop computers do not have these outputs, but HDMI. Purchase of an incorrect computer may be an expensive mistake.

## CONNECTIVITY

- Safer option is to seek professional advice.

## CONCLUSION

Systems can be and should be designed to suit individual church needs and budgets. It is important to seek advice from a reputable systems installer prior to embarking upon the purchase of a system.

