Be Prepared: Build Your Dream Gear List Before You Need It

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Building a dream gear list starts with this reality:

"Most people don't plan to fail, they just fail to plan" ~ John L. Beckley

One day a guitarist at my church, someone that I had only met a few weeks prior, showed up to my office and said he had something for [the] church. I went to his car and behold… a beautiful 88-key Mark 1 Rhodes Electric Piano! I asked him how he knew this was a dream of mine for the church stage. He told me he overheard me talking about it with someone else, he saw it in a store and bought it for us. Mind: blown!

A couple of years later an older gentleman who was new to the church asked me about the needs of the church in the area of sound and worship gear. I stuttered. I knew we needed things, but at the moment, I couldn't think of anything. We had been getting away with what we had for so long it was hard to think on the spot. This guy ended up buying some high-end items for the church in other areas like children's ministry and hospitality. From that moment on, I decided I was going to be ready for the next philanthropist conversation.

I suggest every ministry tech leader, at every size, have an ongoing list of technical gear that they need, want and dream of. Is there something that if the church had, could better disciple people, increase the effectiveness of its mission, bring joy to the heart of everyone who sees it?

4 How-tos for building a dream list:

A dream list can be built in Excel or Google Sheets. This makes it shareable, plus expandable and scalable. Print a physical copy: keep a three-ring binder in your office or green room with printed up pictures and prices of things the church could use to accomplish its goals.

Add both crazy expensive and moderately priced items on the list.

Know WHY you want what you want. Avoid personal preference and lean toward what serves the vision of the church.

Periodically share this updated list with church leaders and your team. Let them know what the future looks like.

Here's what my personal dream list looks like (starting with crazy to more reasonable):

$15,000 Upgraded Danley Soundlab Subwoofers
$4500 Neve 1073 Preamp for the church studio for tracking high-end vocals
$3,000 New iMac for Front of House for Video Editing
$500 Extra Fender Jazz House Bass Guitar for the stage
$300 Extra Stage Tuners for all instrumentalists
$100 New Headphones for Soundboard

We all know the idea of planning for a rainy day, but what about planning for a better one? Most local churches are non-profit organizations, which means people can and will make donations to help fund their mission. Local laws dictate whether or not these funds can be dedicated to specific uses, but in most situations, an earmarked donation can and will go to said request (check with your church leadership). Having practical lists like this will give some teeth and action to a churches vision, what are you waiting for? It’s time to make your dream gear list.