

Processing creative requests within the church can feel like navigating a minefield. This collaborative process involves limited resources, conflicting agendas and a subjective subject matter. Below are a couple of steps to help ensure your artists are empowered to help the church accomplish its vision.

- Partners Not Clients - Move away from calling those you serve clients and towards calling them partners. Clients communicates a cold relationship based on professionalism. In this relationship model the artist is a resource to accomplish a task. Partner communicates a collaborative relationship based on teamwork. In this model the artist feels honored and looks to honor.
- Communicate Decision Making Principles - Information vacuums get filled with negative assumptions. So communicate the guidelines behind your decisions and people will feel treated fairly. When nobody understands why a request didn't get greenlit suspicions can arise.
  - The three principles behind video production at Liquid Church are: large target audience, wide distribution and deep value.
- Determine & Communicate Resource Allocation - When the leadership determines and communicates how resources are going to be allocated across departments it brings clarity and avoids competition. If this vital step is skipped it will foster competition across departments. Then the loudest department, not the most beneficial department, will receive the resources.
- When You Add You Have To Subtract - If your church decides to add an area of focus for an upcoming year (discipleship, evangelism, clowns, etc.) then you need to subtract a focus from last year. If you don't, every department naturally feels they should receive the same treatment from the past, which will overload your creative teams. The pie chart has only so many slices. If you add one you need to subtract one.
- This Quarter Or Never - If you don't have time for a creative request in the next 3 months then you won't have time for it in the following 3 months either. If higher priorities superseded a request now, they will trump it later as well. The partner would rather hear this harsh reality than the false promise of "we'll get to it later".
- Right Size The Request - Depending on workload you may have to scale down or even decline the request. Whenever you have to say no, look for another way to say yes. Instead of producing a video, create a podcast or design a graphic.
- Consider Scaling Up - We need to consider when to scale down a request and when to scale it up. When interacting with a partner avoid the temptation of consistently reducing the request. Work to add value to the partner, department and organization by considering when to elaborate ideas.
- Always Explain Rejection - Rejection stings. It stings worse when we don't know why we're being rejected. When you have to reject or deny a request, make sure to explain why. When a partner understands the factors behind your decision, they will be able to better accept it.

Ultimately, remember that you are on a team. It's not you against the constant onslaught of requests. It's you and your team trying to communicate effectively to your group of people seeking after God. We're in this together, and the friction is worth it.