

Quick Guide...

360 Degree Photography

Prepared by the Committee on Church Art and Architecture

360 Degree Photography provides congregations with an opportunity to showcase the building they have for worship and community use via their website or any social media channels. As the technology becomes less expensive, more and more congregations will be able to find very affordable ways to make use of the technology.

During the course of 2017, CARTA and the Mission and Discipleship Council visited over 30 buildings to create some examples of how the photography might be used. The guidance below will help congregations plan and deliver their own images.

What can you do with this?

There are a number of ways that the technology might be used:

- Help people see what it is like inside the building, in the hope they will attend in person
- Create a virtual prayer experience with recorded audio prayers or music
- Educate people on the building and its history
- Educate people on the architectural features and their theological significance
- Use the building as a way to explain what happens in Christian worship – specifically your own service of worship
- Use the technology to promote any refurbishments or changes made to your building
- Create a page for promoting your building as a venue for hire
- Create a slideshow of different images taken from the

same spot that demonstrate different seating arrangements or space layouts

- Capture some key moments or events when the building is looking particularly attractive

Things to remember

Tidy up!

They say the 'camera never lies'. This is especially true of 360 degree photography, which will take in everything. Don't stint on taking time to straighten chairs, move the clutter that is hidden in the gallery, remove the display of tattered leaflets, get the notice board tidied up, neaten cables etc. Prepare the place as you would for special occasion or guests - you never know who might click on your page!

Consider the places you wish to stand for each sphere

If by moving a few inches to the left you can get the fire extinguisher and emergency exit signs out of shot, then why not? Also, taking them from places where people don't normally stand can provide a more engaging experience - for example, from the pulpit.

Images taken from areas that have no disabled access - such as bell towers or galleries can provide a new perspective of the building for people unable to climb stairs or ladders.

Choose the time based on light

Do you have a particularly excellent moment when sunlight hits a certain window? Or is your lighting installation good at highlighting architectural features or creating an ambient atmosphere? Experiment with different times and lighting and see what feels most helpful for what you are trying to achieve.

Try also to get all the images taken within an hour or so. Lighting will affect each image, so taking them all within a short space of time will create a consistent feel across each image.

Create a soundtrack

Combining audio and images can be fairly straightforward these days and turning a 360 degree photograph into a video with a soundtrack will allow you to add an audio tour, welcome, or prayer (or all three) to your visuals. If you are using music, try to find something that was composed around the same era that the church was built or that conveys something of the vision of the congregation. If possible, record your own music in the venue - this adds to the immersion and sense of being in the place.

Audio prayers can be a great way to let people feel a different connection to the space - these work best if you choose/write prayers appropriate to the spot the image is taken from - for example, if just inside the doorway, choose a psalm or prayer that talks about approaching God; if taken in front of the cross, perhaps something celebrating Christ's death and resurrection; if standing by the pulpit, give thanks for God's word; if beside a memorial window, you might reflect on the Light of God, or a biblical text that the window may be depicting.

Using people

If you are using a video, having people moving around is fine. However, including them in a 360 photograph gives a certain static feel and might not be the best option. If you are very keen however, it is vital that everyone knows they are being photographed and has consented. The Church of Scotland Law Department and CARTA have prepared guidance notes for the live streaming of worship and many of the principles

About the Author

The Committee on Church Art and Architecture is an advisory body to the General Trustees regarding alterations to the interior of sanctuaries.

for safeguarding and consent are valid here. Contact the Law Department for details.

Time lapse

Taking a series of images every few minutes will allow you to create a short time lapse video to demonstrate changing light or the space being rearranged.

These are just some ideas of what we can do with this photography and how it can be achieved.

Examples

You can see some examples of CARTA 360 degree photography on the Church of Scotland website:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/art_and_architecture/resources/carta_360

Contact us

If you would like to discuss any of this further, please contact the Mission and Discipleship Council at mandd@churchofscotland.org.uk, with CARTA 360 photography in the subject title.



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