



Introduction

Imagine you've just attended General Assembly in South Africa. You're saying your farewells to the young leaders and staff who are leaving. You've been blessed by the fellowship, interaction, discussions and resource sharing over this dynamic gathering of 750 participants from around the world.



But then you remember the 40,000+ staff and volunteers who weren't here, who didn't get the benefit of this experience and who will have to wait at least 6 years before it comes around again. About this time, several young leaders from Africa and South America—from countries considered by many to be "poor" and without very good infrastructure—come up to you and give you business cards with their e-mail addresses.

It hits you. What if there was a way YFC staff and volunteers from around the world could interact with each other, share best practices, and help each other without having to fly to another country—using the Internet? What if we had a

“YFC World” where YFC staff and volunteers from around the world could safely and securely access resources, read and discuss important topics to youth ministry with others within our family, and chat/interact with other YFC workers in “real time” when they wanted to? Might this enable and empower us so that more young people would hear and understand the gospel?

Aim

What YFC World aims to do is establish an online meeting place that will be user friendly, frequently accessed and helpful to our 47,725 staff and volunteers in YFC.

The goals of this online meeting place include:

- **Facilitating collaboration** – through fostering communication and interaction of staff and volunteers worldwide, we aim to see more staff and volunteers working together with other YFC areas, and YFCI HQ; additionally, we aim to share & introduce technologies, software, and web-based tools that can assist us in meeting the needs of our ministry targets more effectively.
- **Resource sharing** – develop, implement, and support a repository of resources and “best practice” ideas for YFC nations and worldwide YFC family; include stories and examples of how YFC missions are utilizing the resources.
- **Communication** – to develop a tool or tools that will maximize interaction and communication between staff and constituents within our ministry areas and around world; implement IT solutions to facilitate mentoring and coaching over the Internet; provide a web-based communication system for facilitating meetings with staff/volunteers from diverse geographic locations; assist YFC Nations to communicate better with their constituents in the English language as requested.

•**Support** – provide a web-based forum that will promote interaction between YFC Nations; users will be encouraged and supported through the sharing of prayer requests and resources and increased teamwork, as well as through friendships that develop in the process



Proposal

The YFC World proposal comes from research of other missions' use of internet technology as well as a preliminary internal analysis of the needs of our mission and tools which could help serve those needs.

It is not exclusively a website, but includes a centralized, web-based intranet at which a variety of features will be accessible. It is recognized that some of these features may already be available through existing national YFC websites and or YFCI. The intention of YFC World is to centralize where all this information is found for our staff and volunteers—not to reinvent the wheel, but to get all the wheels on the same vehicle.

Potential features may include, but are not limited to:

- **Organizational documents:** For example, policy documents on everything from sexual abuse to risk management to our statement of faith. While some of these may be universal, others may be provided as templates which individual missions could download and adapt to suit their own country's

requirements.

- **IRC/Chat room(s):** These could provide staff and volunteers an opportunity to meet online and send live messages to one another.



Potentially, separate ministry chat rooms could also be set up. For example, perhaps a number of staff and volunteers who specialize in counseling could take “shifts” hanging out in a chat room marketed to young people who need advice, counsel, etc.

- **Job Listings/Mission Opportunities:** Development of an online recruitment tool to connect prospective staff and volunteers with needs in the field could be very useful in growing our mission efforts. 5 In addition to job listings, a “bulletin board” of short-term or long-term mission opportunities could list needs for individuals and teams, as well as listing individuals or teams with specific skills who are ready to work in certain geographic areas.
- **Forums:** A place to post messages on specific subjects, either soliciting feedback or providing it, on issues that matter to our staff and volunteers.







Forum

Logged in as **scott** [Logout](#) [Members](#) [Profile](#)
Last Visit: September 18, 2009 0 0

[Home](#) ▶ [Forums](#) ▶ [YFC Staff & Volunteers](#)

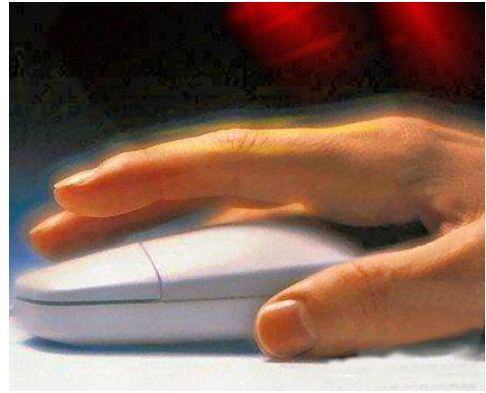
YFC Staff & Volunteers
a place for staff and volunteers to interact [Add a New Topic](#)

Page: **1** New Posts since your last visit Topics you have posted in

Topics	Started	Last Post	Posts	Views	
 Sharing documents, photos, etc.	September 18, 2009-1:14 pm by scott ↗	September 18, 2009-1:14 pm by scott ↗	1	6	
 Corrections to Nation/Program Information on our website	September 18, 2009-1:09 pm by scott ↗	September 18, 2009-1:09 pm by scott ↗	1	3	
 YFC World	September 18, 2009-1:02 pm by scott ↗	September 18, 2009-1:02 pm by scott ↗	1	3	

- **Database:** A secure (e.g. password protected) online listing of staff and volunteers which could be searched/filtered by name, country, role, ministry type, gender, etc.
- **Articles of interest:** Reading resources on various subjects useful to our mission. These could include anything from fundraising or recruitment strategies, to team building to youth ministry practices.

- **Links:** Internet addresses for other online resources, ministry websites, etc. As an overwhelming amount of info could exist under this heading, posted links could be required to fit under a list of relevant youth ministry categories, submitted by field workers and perhaps filtered by a few designated YFC veterans who are experts in their fields.

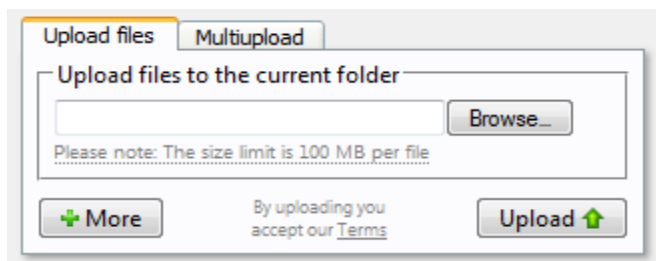


- **Online Giving:** A tool customized to meet the giving needs of our area missions, accessible, user-friendly and compatible with banking applications of those in our region.
- **News:** A place for any of us to post news items relevant to our missions. Could include anything from local civil unrest or persecution to natural disaster follow-up to features of YFC missions in their local news media.
- **Ministries List:** A list of all the existing ministries within our areas, including a description of each. Making it searchable could help with networking. For example, if someone is starting a new juvenile justice ministry, they could search the ministries list to find where such ministries are already active and contact the relevant person for assistance.
- **Prayer Requests:** User managed prayer requests posted on YFC World. Can be customized so item shows only until specified expiration date, only specifically designated people/countries/regions will see, etc. Noting how prayer requests are answered alongside this feature could also be very encouraging.

- **Calendar of Events:** An online calendar tool for regions to customize for their staff and volunteers. Potentially filtered/color-coded by event type, country, etc.
- **Blogs:** A tool to help staff and volunteers correspond with their support teams and one another, including templates designed for their ministry area and personality. Option to make blog public or private, accessible to designated people, all YFC World members, or anyone.
- **How we can help you:** Headquarters resources on how our international staff team can help field staff, including presentation resources, recruitment resources, insurance, etc.
- **Ministry highlight stories:** The best of what God is doing in our various missions perhaps copied and pasted from ministry newsletters for others in our areas to see and be encouraged.



- **Resource Repository:** Best practices from the field, training resources, tools for ministry: a place for members to “take an idea, leave an idea.” Members looking for resources on a specific subject could post these needs for others to follow up and reply if the desired resource is not currently listed.



- **Polls:** A tool for soliciting input/opinions
- **Media resources:** A library of everything from event flyer/brochure templates to video clips to audio training downloads, easily searchable by category, keyword, etc.

Key Advantages/Benefits

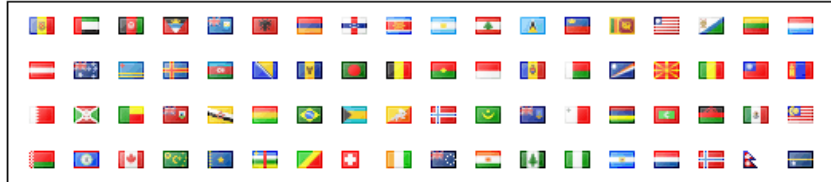
The key advantages of a centralized online meeting place are many. As we're all on the same team, it makes sense that we would come together in whatever ways we can. We have resources and ideas to share. We have encouragement to give. And while it may be easier to focus on our own ministries in our own countries, it is also true that we are more effective when we're working together, helping and praying for one another. We are better together.

Just a few of the potential benefits of YFC World are listed below:

- **Greater unity:** by interacting with one another in this way, friendships grow, teamwork happens, and we enjoy the fellowship that comes with working, sharing and praying together.
- **Increased effectiveness:** by learning from others, we become more effective in our respective ministries.
- **Increased participation:** Unlike a conventional website where the content might be provided by just a few people, YFC World creates an interactive intranet in which everyone can contribute.
- **Attraction:** Where prospective staff and volunteers learn of the ways that we're making an effort to support one another and interact globally, they may be more likely to consider joining our mission.
- **Encouragement:** As so many of our staff and volunteers are working in places where they are one of very few people in their area, the encouragement that comes with a connection to others who are "in the same boat" becomes invaluable.
- **Improved communication:** Centralizing the information and resources available to our staff and volunteers makes it more accessible, and less likely for people to feel out of the loop, disconnected or uninformed.
- **Increased prayer cover:** By sharing our prayer requests with one another using YFC World, we instantly tap into the prayer support of dozens, if not hundreds of fellow believers.

Potential Difficulties

Perceived obstacles with the YFC World concept described above include:



1. **Language differences:**

Thankfully,

there are easy-to-use translation tools available to translate the English language intranet into the visitor's own language with the touch of a button. Where necessary/possible, the YFC World administrator may work with a translator from specific countries where there is still difficulty.

2. **Security:** Balancing the security of the intranet with the freedom of members to post items which may benefit other members can be tricky. Use of the sensitive features would be limited by login and password, and all posted content would be logged with an IP address and username. Where necessary, the YFC World administrator would have special access to delete, tidy, or reorganize posted content.



3. **Slow Internet Access:** Due to limited and sometimes very slow internet access in many places throughout the world, we will need to address how to make this site "all it can be" while still being very light and useable for those with painfully slow connections.

4. **Stagnation:** What often happens with web-based tools is that they are frequently used at the start, and then usage trails to a point where the content becomes stagnant and members stop accessing the site. YFC World would aim to setup a notifications feature, where members can choose to be notified by e-mail when certain items are updated. For example, a member could opt to receive an e-mail every time someone posts a prayer request, while also choosing to only receive an e-mail for forum postings that are replies to their own questions. Additionally, the

YFC World administrator would be responsible for keeping YFC World fresh, with new, relevant content, and would utilize the members' database to regularly inform members of new features, postings and other items of interest to encourage their regular use of the site. Additionally, members would be encouraged to make YFC World their personal home page so they see it whenever they login to the internet, and would have the ability to customize their own YFC World homepage to include their favorite links, etc.

Action Steps (Updated)

Newly appointed YFC Asia Pacific IT Services Manager Scott Rosene is already hard at work to learn and implement the web-based technologies necessary to activate YFC World as described above. Scott is also working closely with Scott Cougill, YFC Asia Pacific Director, to ensure that content is accurate, relevant, and appropriate for use in this context.

Following is a current list of action steps, along with a proposed timeline to make YFC World a reality.

- ✓ Consulted with key contacts for acquisition of (additional) ideas, code, software, etc. — especially Greg Tichbon, Incedo; Stephen Brandon, Operation Mobilisation; Irene Lin, Randy Beaverson, YFC. (February 2009)
- ✓ Presented rough draft YFC World Project proposal to YFCI Leadership Team (early March 2009)
- ✓ Scott Rosene met with Scott Cougill to collaborate on YFC World Project proposal (March 25-April 1, 2009)
- ✓ Revised YFC World Project proposal, published with more specific details based on research, field input, etc. (June 17, 2009)
- ☐ Seek additional input from the field as to which tools would be useful, and whether there are other needs not currently addressed in this proposal that could be incorporated into YFC World. (through December 2009)

- ✓ Pacific Aspire Survey, Fiji (June 2009)
 - ✓ C. Asia Aspire (August 2009)
 - ___ Online Survey to be distributed to all YFC staff and volunteers (October-November 2009)
 - Networking & consulting with IT experts re: ideal systems, needs, costs (October-December 2009)
 - Proposed test of Liferay system (December 2009)
 - Complete assessment of required costs for presentation to YFCI Leadership Team (January 2010)
 - Fundraising (January-??? 2010)
 - Begin creation of YFC World (April 2010)
 - Rough draft of YFC World online for selected members to test/review (June 2010)
 - YFC World online for general use (July 2010)
-

Summary

We need each other. With the exception of occasional regional or (inter)national gatherings, some of our YFC workers have very little interaction with others who are doing what they do, or who have been where they are. We have encouragement to give to one another, resources to share with one another, and connections to make with one another that could significantly increase our effectiveness, grow our fellowship, and prolong our longevity in our respective missions.

No doubt the distance between us is an obstacle. However, the incredible advances in user-friendly, web-based technologies can facilitate networking, resource sharing and personal interaction in ways not even thought possible a decade ago.

By creating a centralized location for people in the YFC family to make use of these technologies, we can minimize the lack of connectedness some of our staff and volunteers have with the wider mission family of YFC International and provide a place where greater collaboration helps us accomplish our mission.