Center for the Study of Information and Religion

2014 Conference on Information and Religion
Paper / Poster Proposal

All proposals must be submitted on this form and emailed as an attachment to csir@kent.edu. Incomplete forms will not be considered.

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<td>Preferred Format (Select one)</td>
<td>[ Yes ] Paper  [ ] Poster</td>
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Note: The selection committee will determine most appropriate format based on information provided in proposal and conference schedule.

Note: The “Primary Author” will be main contact for this proposal and will be responsible for sharing information with additional authors. Please use the spaces at the end of this form to indicate additional authors, if appropriate.

Please tell us how you heard about this conference; check as many as apply:

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## Proposal

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<th>Title of Presentation</th>
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<td>Moving Beyond the mundane in ICT: Application and Utilization in Techno-spiritual communication</td>
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### Presentation Summary (approx. 100 words)

[Note: this summary may be used in the conference program and other materials if your presentation is selected for the conference.]

Despite the influence of traditional cultural values and the composite character of information technologies, the global embrace of internet technologies in the contemporary context has reconfigured the fabric of every society, its culture and spirituality. But scholarly investigation into the intentional use of these technologies for religious purposes has regrettably been modest and disproportionate. This study is an attempt to respond to the thesis that adaptation to ICT use in religion has significant ministerial advantages but limited by gender, income, and educational gaps. Building upon qualitative methodology, the paper examines how technology is appropriated to support religious activities and practices.

### Research Problem and Research Methods (approx. 250 words)

Despite the influence of traditional cultural values and the composite character of information technologies, the global embrace of internet technologies in the contemporary context has reconfigured the fabric of society, its culture and spirituality as salvific and emancipatory. But scholarly investigation into the intentional use of these technologies for religious purposes has regrettably been modest and disproportionate. It has been argued that religious groups from all traditions have today begun to explore the possibilities of having a presence in virtual reality. This argument’s corollary is that, given the shift in the social context of religious activities and the endless possibilities of interactivity and connectivity of ICT in shaping development and globalization, influencing orientation of social change and improving human life conditions, adaptation to these new tools in religious marketplace for ministry and spiritual activities in the 21st century is no longer luxury but revolutionary for religious growth and dissemination. This study is however an attempt to respond to these theses. Drawing upon extensive contemporary research, and supported with qualitative methodology, the paper examines how technology is appropriated to support religious activities and practices. The methodology will include ethnographic interview, focused group discussion and participant observation. This exploratory study tries to argue on the theoretical mindset that the space in which religious life happens can be expanded technologically for the good of mankind.

### Anticipated Results and Significance to Research at the Intersection of Religion and Information (approx. 250 words)

The use of Internet technologies has today taken “congregational life” beyond the mundane and the physical limits of the weekend assembly. With an insight provided into the understanding of the independent layers of ICT utilization and application for religious activities, a criterion on what should constitute appropriate approach toward ICT usage is thus supplied. The findings of this study however have a significant implication for cumulative research on the subject of techno-spiritual communication.
### Statement of Author’s Credentials (approx. 100 words)

[Explain why the primary author is qualified to address this subject.]

Dr. Essien is a Lecturer with University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria. He teaches Comparative Religious and Christian Ethics in the Department of Religious and Cultural Studies of the University. Dr Essien is an ethicist by specialization. His area of research include: Political Ethics, Development and Governance ethics, Ethics of political system, and Peace ethics. He is a member of professional bodies such as American Academy of Religion, Society of Christian Ethics, African Association for the Study of Religion, Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions. Dr. Essien has published books, book chapters, and many journal articles in peer reviewed journals.

### Statement of Intent

By submitting this proposal, I indicate my intention to deliver my presentation at the 2014 Conference on Information and Religion if selected. (Primary author should sign and date below.)

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<th>Signature</th>
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<tr>
<td>Essien D. Essien Ph.D</td>
<td>19th November, 2013</td>
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**Please provide information on additional authors/presenters in the boxes below.**

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**Co-Author #2**

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