



Freedom Church Philadelphia, like many church plants, started as a bible study in a home and grew into a Sunday morning church service. Having a background in the entertainment industry before going into full-time ministry, Pastor David Estes knows what it takes to achieve excellent music in a corporate worship setting and knows this is not always possible for a church plant that's just getting started. "I've been a part of a number of great churches with full teams of professional musicians, but no one starts there. In 2006, I began looking for a way to run tracks to support what we did have on stage, but no one was really offering more than split tracks, until I stumbled across Interactive Worship Live (IWL). I knew this type of service should exist but I couldn't find it! I had been searching the Web every couple weeks for this until I found IWL, thinking surely someone offers multi-track versions of songs to help worship teams like us who are without musicians."

**SUPPLEMENTING LIVE
MUSIC AT FREEDOM
CHURCH PHILADELPHIA
BY PHILLIP EDWARDS**

“I KNEW THAT HAVING A FULL SOUND WILL HELP OUR CONGREGATION ENTER INTO WORSHIP, AND IT CERTAINLY HAS HELPED US DRAW A NUMBER OF TALENTED SINGERS AND MUSICIANS.”



Pastor David Estes and Mrs. Estes

An advertisement for PowerChurch Plus software. It features a laptop with the software logo on the screen. The background is a dark blue gradient. The text is white and light blue. The logo 'POWERCHURCH PLUS' is prominently displayed at the top and bottom of the ad. The text describes the software's history and features.

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Interactive Worship Live began offering multi-track versions of praise and worship songs, in a music software called Ableton Live, for teams that need to add in parts for missing musicians or solo parts to teach musicians in rehearsal. The original masters are available for download, which means everything off the record can be accessed for live use except the lead vocal. Lincoln Brewster fans can solo his guitar parts, or add them in live around their live musicians to fill out their live sound. Horns, strings, organ and other instruments less common to teams can now be added from the record and all parts can be soloed for teaching purposes.

The worship team at Freedom Church Philly has now grown into 6 singers, bass guitar and acoustic guitar with Pastor David running tracks from his laptop while playing keys from the stage. Since they have no drummer yet, they use the drums from the multi-track masters they download from InteractiveWorshipLive.com, along with horns, electric guitars and organ. “Our drummer is so consistent and always in perfect time” says Pastor Estes with a smile. “Seriously though, I knew that having a full sound will help our congregation enter into worship, and it certainly has helped us draw a number of talented singers and musicians. Though every spot is not filled, we’ve had professional musicians join our team and I know our commitment to excellence has played a part.”

Pastor David runs the multi-track masters in flexible music software called “Ableton Live” through his MacBook Pro that sits on top of his keyboard with a midi device called an UC-33e attached. The UC-33e from M-Audio connects to his laptop via USB and gives him the ability to assign and control individual volumes in the session on the fly, as well as markers that trigger the start of the songs. Pastor David will typically build a four-song set during the week and then bring it to the team on Sunday morning. “The ability to solo parts for our singers for rehearsal is a huge time saver. We’re really blessed to have some great singers, but everyone can benefit from hearing their part soloed for them.”



David explains. “Our bass player can pull off the difficult stuff so we just mute the bass in the tracks. As other musicians come we’ll use their individual track to teach their parts and then just add them to the team and mute them in the tracks. But no matter who can’t make it on a given Sunday, we always have a consistent full sound and our congregation loves it!”

Freedom Church Philly is currently a church of approximately 100 people on Sunday mornings and they meet in a movie theater and set up each week. Portability is of course at a premium in these situations and this is another benefit of using Ableton Live and multi-track masters. “Getting good drum sounds can be very difficult and space is limited in a theater so this set-up works so well for us currently. By adding the tracks around our live musicians, we still have a live look-and-feel but we sound bigger than we are—and with high energy songs, this is so important. Some songs just don’t sound right without a full band.”

Overall, the ability to supplement their live praise band with downloaded tracts has revolutionized the corporate worship at Freedom Church Philly. “We went from one guitar and one keyboard, to the sound of a full band; from the energy of a few people in the congregation singing quietly, to a room full of people singing with all their hearts. The consistent quality of the songs offered, plus the ease of adapting the arrangements to suit our needs, makes IWL the ideal companion to any church desiring to worship God together with a sound that matches the very best of the mega-church bands.” Pastor David exhorted. He recommends supplementing live music to any church or pastor “who wants their corporate worship times to sound and feel big, energetic and powerful.” ❖

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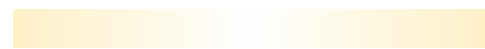
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