

# Partnering Technology and LINKS

North Florida District NMI President Susan Day likes to use technology. She once used Skype\* in a district NMI convention to talk with the district's LINKS missionaries. She describes the event and provides some tips for those who are unfamiliar with the technology. Susan wrote it with a district in mind; her comments have been adapted for the local church.

The Skype broadcast was run through our sound booth at the church. One of the really neat things is that you can pray for/with the missionaries (especially your LINKS) and hear their feedback, as well as giving them a chance to give "live" greetings to your church.

As to the technical side of things, one major issue was setting the time accurately in both time zones so that the broadcast would fit into your schedule and assure that the missionaries were available on their end. You don't really want the missionary to have to wait up until 3 a.m.! You should be flexible with your time, giving a timeframe during which both parties could talk. It helps to have a missionary that is tech savvy and responds to e-mails and phone calls quickly so you can rely on the person knowing how to follow through on his/her end. The missionary should also have Skype and preferably have a Web camera. (You can make a phone call via Skype, but seeing **and** hearing the person via computer is more effective.)

A broadcast such as this would also be a **prime** way to involve some younger people. They can very easily pick up the "tech" side of it. They could even network through NYI to help the church do the Skype adventure in a mission emphasis during the church year. (This activity would help your church fulfill the multimedia mission education requirement for Mission Priority One.)

I rely very heavily on technology. When Daniel and Carol Ketchum were our LINKS missionaries (before Skype), we called them in Italy and talked with them. I use video clips, numerous PowerPoint presentations, and music during "lag time." Nina Gunter once told me that whenever you have someone at the podium, you should always have something on the screen for the people to see.

I hope that this helps. It does take forethought to use the Skype. We contacted the missionaries well in advance (perhaps two months) and set everything up. Then we did a test run during the week prior to the event.

Of course, you should always have a Plan B because on things do not always go according to schedule and the "unexpected" does come up!

Susan Day  
North Florida District NMI President



\* Skype is a free software that allows people to have free video conversations, if both parties have the software installed. To access Skype, you need a computer, an internet connection (broadband is best), and a webcam to make video calls. To download the software, go to [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com).