

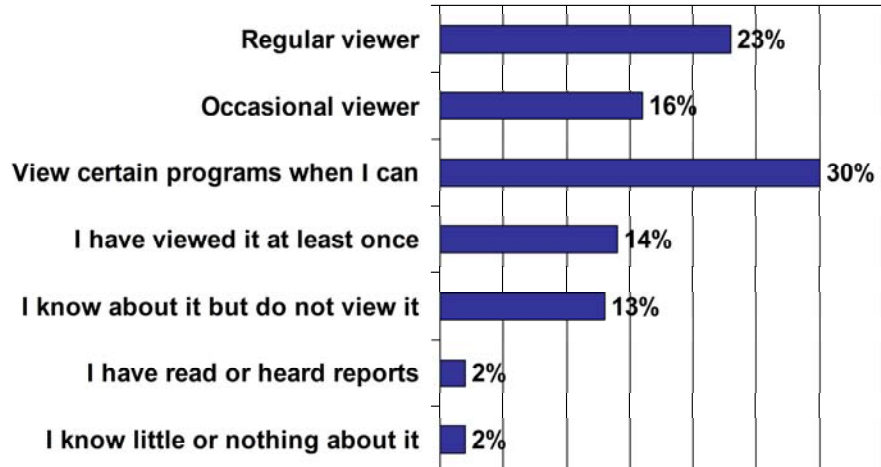
# Hope Channel Church Leader Survey

Center for Creative Ministry  
June 2014

## Source of Data

- An Email request was sent to the officers of the union conferences and union missions, and the members of the General Conference executive committee with a link to an online questionnaire. A total of 304 responded (over 50 percent). The standard allowance for sampling error in a survey of this size is seven percentage points, plus or minus.

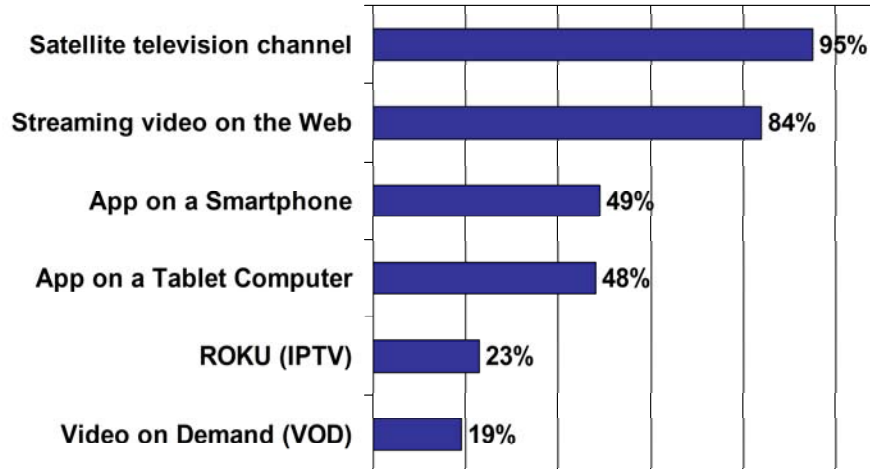
## Awareness of Hope Channel



Only a very few church administrators say that they know little or nothing about the Hope Channel. More than four out of five have viewed Hope Channel programming at least once. Nearly a third watch certain programs when they can, while nearly one in four are regular viewers.

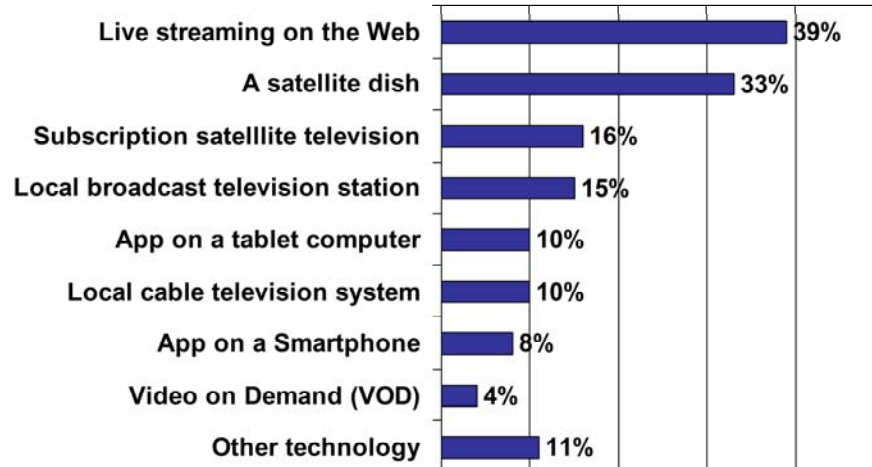
Another quarter of church administrators are largely disconnected from the content delivered by the Hope Channel; they are not regular viewers and get their knowledge about Hope Channel entirely from reports and perhaps having viewed some programming on one or two occasions, maybe a video sample shown at a meeting.

## Awareness of Technology Used to Distribute Hope Channel



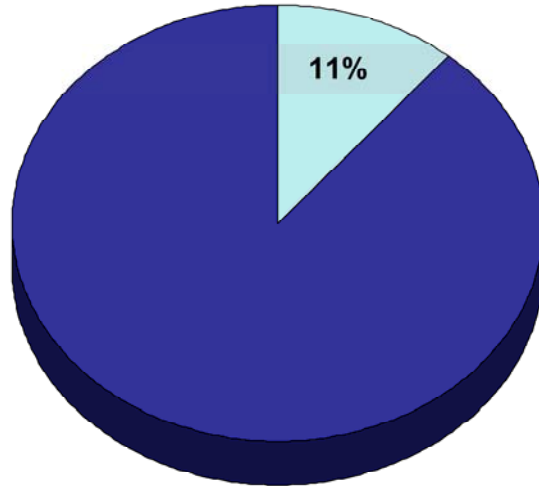
Almost all church administrators think of the Hope Channel primarily as a satellite television channel and five out six also know that it is available on the Internet as streaming video. Nearly half know that there are Hope Channel apps available for Smartphones and tablet computers. About one in five know that ROKU and Video on Demand (VOD) are also being used to deliver the Hope Channel in some areas. These data probably reflect the level of technology education among church administrators, although it may also be related to the fact that there are places in the world where some of the newer technologies are not available.

## Preferences for Viewing Hope Channel



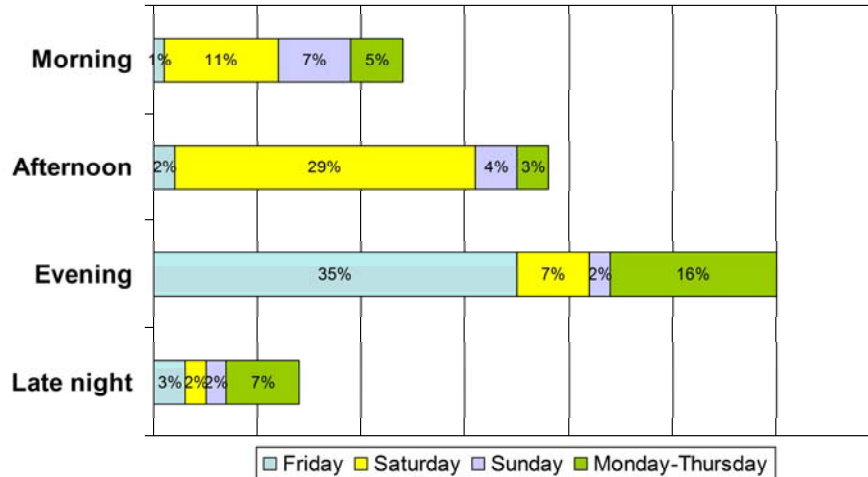
The vast majority of church administrators prefer to view the Hope Channel through a satellite signal or on the Internet. One in six would like to access the Hope Channel through a local broadcasting station. Smaller numbers expressed a preference for other technologies although the total number interested in other modes could be around 40 percent.

## Have Viewed the Hope Channel through Video on Demand



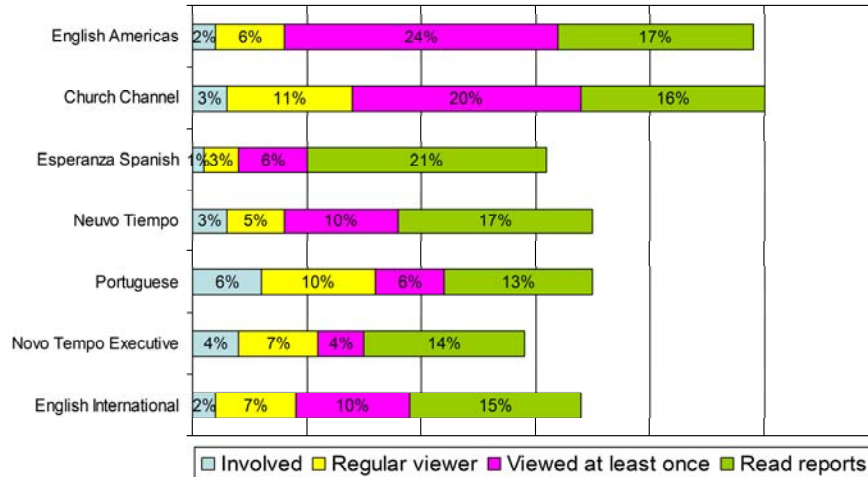
More than one in ten church administrators report that they have had occasion to find Hope Channel programming in the Video on Demand library in a cable television system. Video on Demand requires that the Hope Channel or some agency working on its behalf upload videos to a cable television system, locally or via national and international subscription satellite services. Some of these arrangements may involve modest service charges to the Hope Channel.

## Days & Times When Hope Channel is Viewed



Watch television in the evening has become an almost global pattern in today's society, so it should not be surprising that Adventist church administrators are more likely to view Hope Channel programming in the evening than at any other time. Sabbath, including both Friday night and Sabbath afternoon, is clearly the time when church administrators most often view Hope Channel programming. Relatively small percentages of church administrators report viewing on other days and times. This may simply reflect the long hours that leaders typically work and the fact that Sabbath is about the only time when they can enjoy viewing Hope Channel material.

## Awareness of Hope Channel Services - 1

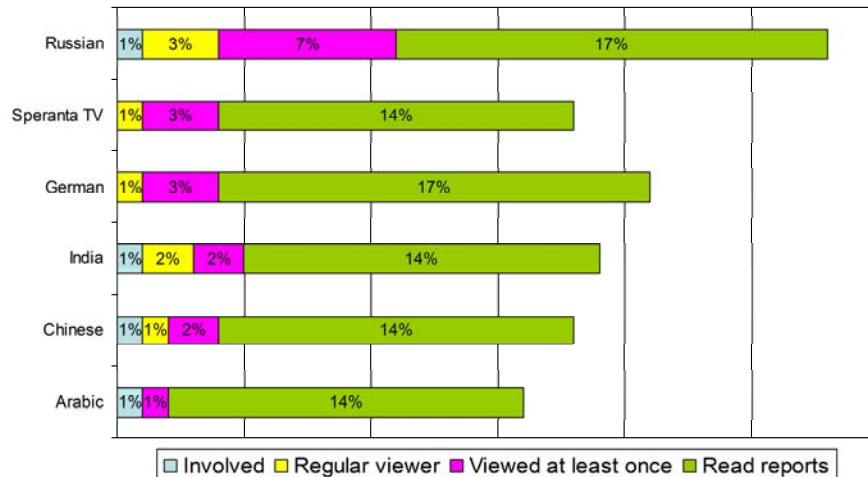


Half or more of church administrators expressed little or no awareness of each of the Hope Channel programming services. The graphic above displays only half the data. The lower half of the data is presented on the next page.

Between one and six percent of administrators report direct involvement with each service. Another three to 11 percent report that they are regular viewers, while four to 24 percent are more occasional viewers, having seen the particular programming service at least once. A large share (14 to 21 percent) are only informed by reports in documents or presentations at meetings.

It is interesting that the programming service that has the highest level of awareness by church administrators is the Church Channel. Is this an indicator that church leadership is preoccupied with internal communication and less aware of from media designed to reach out to the general public?

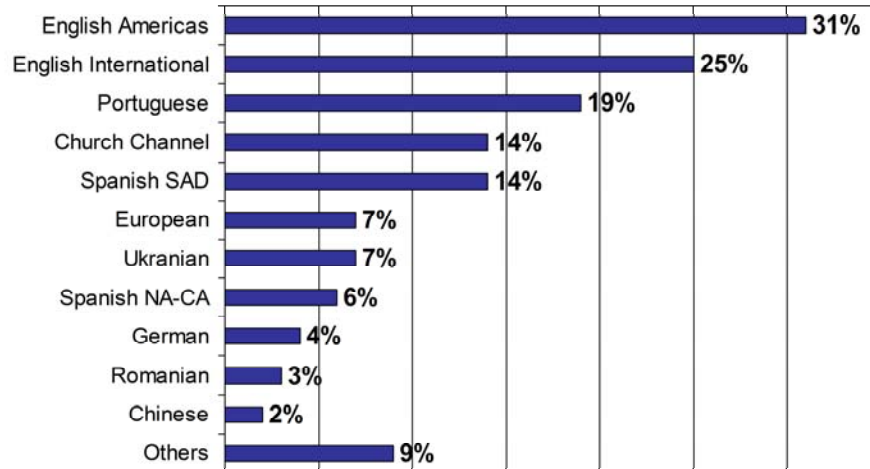
## Awareness of Hope Channel Services - 2



The same pattern is evident in the Hope Channel programming services displayed above which have significantly smaller numbers of church administrators involved with them. The respondents in each case are largely aware of the Hope Channel programming service through written and oral reports rather than actual viewing of the programs. Only three percent or fewer of church administrators are regular viewers of these programming services.

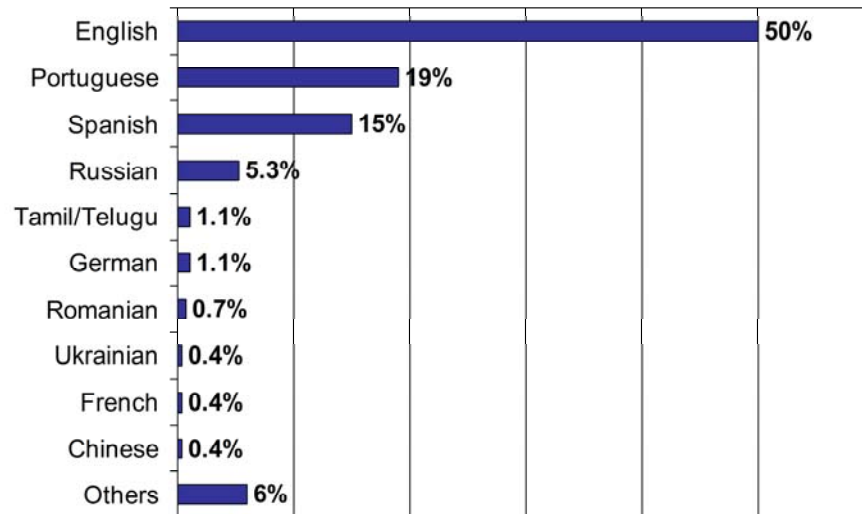


## Have Visited These Web Sites



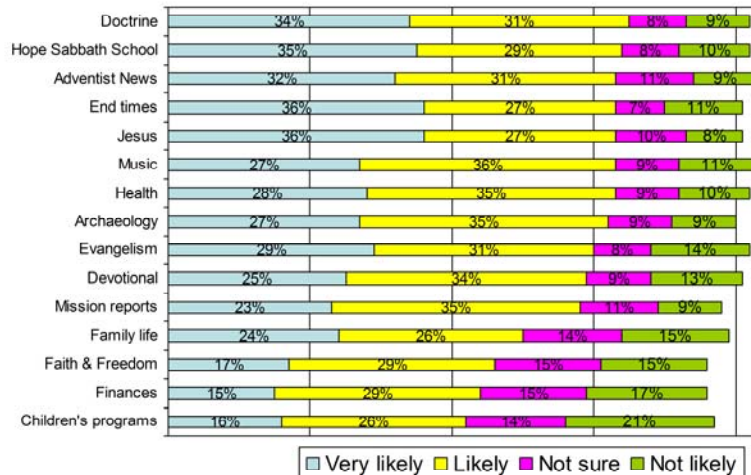
The majority of church administrators have looked at a Hope Channel web site that functions in English. A total of 85 percent indicate having looked at a web site in another language, although there is clearly some duplication in these numbers—respondents who indicated more than one language. Comparison of the data displayed above with the data on the next page shows less dominance for the English language among the web sites viewed than in the languages in which church leaders prefer to view the Hope Channel.

## Languages Used by Church Leaders in Viewing Hope Channel



Half of the respondents in this survey personally view Hope Channel programming in the English language. Another quarter view programming in Portuguese or Spanish. Very few view the programming in other languages. This is further evidence of how the perspective that church administrators have on the programming produced by the Hope Channel is shaped by the material in English.

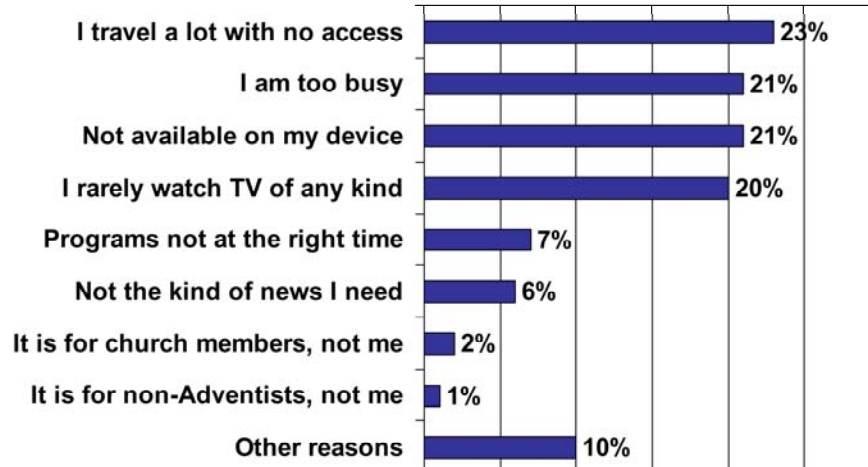
## How likely are you to view each type of programming on the Hope Channel?



Unlikely and Very Unlikely  
responses have been combined.

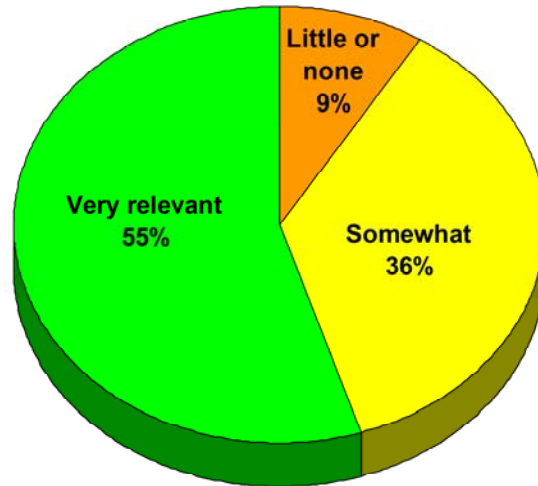
It should not be a surprise that the type of programming that church administrators are least likely to view is programs for children simply because they are not children and in many cases do not have young children living in their homes. The types of programming that church administrators are most likely to view on the Hope Channel are those with an “insider” quality—programs focusing on theology and Adventist activities. The respondents indicate that they are less likely to view the type of programming designed to reach out to nonbelievers—programs about personal finances, human rights and family life. These data lead to the question of how much church administrators view Hope Channel for their own, personal reasons or to monitor and understand how the enterprise is connecting with and cultivating the viewers outside the Adventist Church.

## If you do not watch Hope Channel regularly in any language, why?



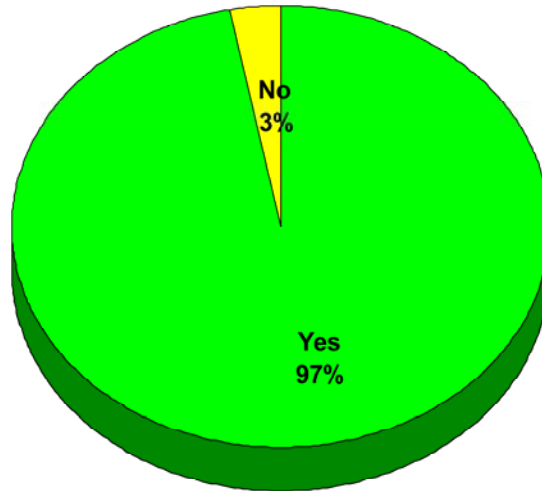
Church administrators who do not view the Hope Channel regularly are primarily prevented from doing so by lack of an easy connection or lack of time. Only a few seem to be disinterested because of the content of the programming. These data may indicate the need to provide an app specifically for church administrators that take them to a portal web site where they can get a quick briefing on current Hope Channel programming and then link to any of the various programming services (languages) or specific programs. If someone from Hope Channel administration were to tape a daily 3-minute briefing for church administrators, that could be a powerful tool for solidifying both the understanding and support of church leaders.

## Relevance of Hope Channel Programming



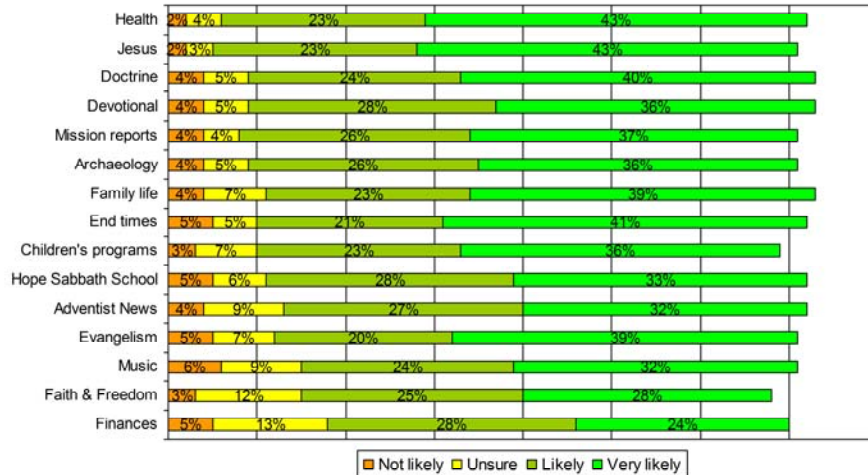
The majority of church administrators see most Hope Channel programming as very relevant. Less than one in ten feel that it has little or no relevance. It should be noted that more than one in five of the respondents skipped this question. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the question did not specify "relevant to what or whom." Should we assume that those who did answer this question were answering it in terms of was the programming relevant to their personal interests or needs? Or, relevant to the needs and cultural context of a particular audience group?

## Would you recommend the Hope Channel to others?



An overwhelming 97 percent of church administrators would recommend the Hope Channel to other people. A follow up question asked what kind of people they would recommend Hope Channel to. The largest number (58 percent) said non-Adventist friends and relatives. Almost as many (57 percent) mentioned Adventist relatives. Half (51 percent) mentioned Adventist friends. A little more than a third (37 percent) included young adults specifically. Seven percent mentioned a number of other categories.

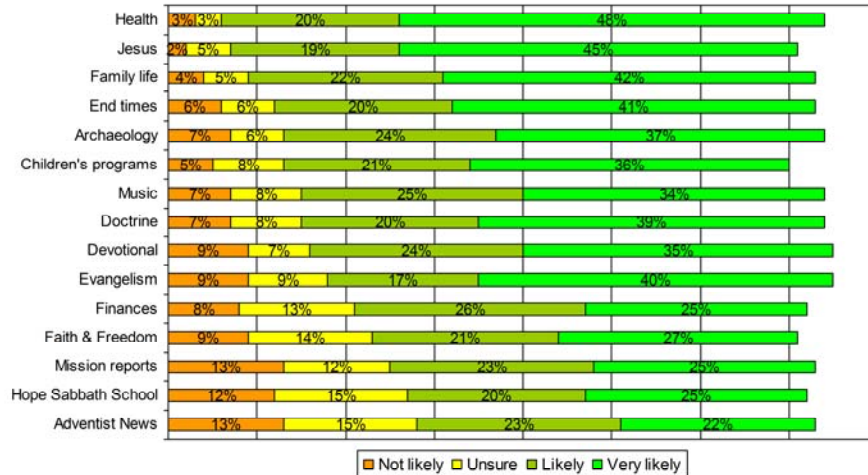
## How Likely to Recommend Programming to Adventists



Consistently only two to six percent of the church administrators in this survey indicated that it was not likely that they would recommend specific types of programming to Adventist Church members. This kind of consistency in answers often is associated with respondents who ran down the list of items and gave the same response to each. They could be related to concerns or negative assessments of programming or simply an error in understanding the meaning of the response options. The spread is wider in terms of those who indicated that were “not sure” if they would recommend various kinds of programming: three to 13 percent. And the spread is even wider for the positive responses: 24 to 43 percent indicated “very likely.”

Strong majorities of church administrators indicated that they are likely to recommend each type of programming to Adventist Church members. This is further evidence of the strong positive attitude and continued support of the Hope Channel among Adventist Church leaders.

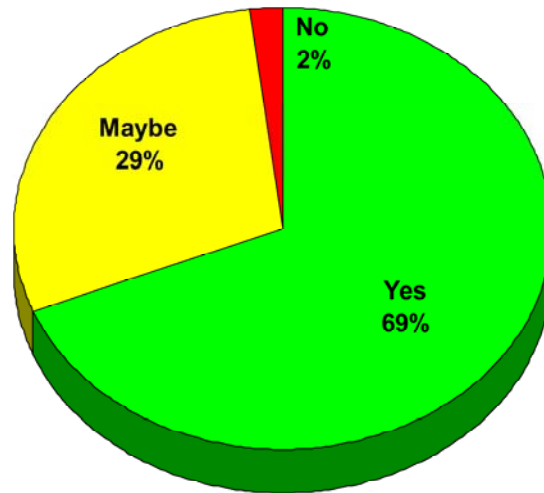
## How Likely to Recommend Programming to non-Adventists



The various types of Hope Channel programming are ranked here as those most likely to be recommended by church administrators to non-Adventist friends, relatives and acquaintances. Those at the top have the largest net percentage of support—the “very likely” percent plus the “likely” percent minus the “not likely” percent. Those at the bottom have the least net percentage of support as appropriate for non-members. Most of the types of programming at the bottom of the graph are more “in-house” content, while those at the top of the graph are clearly more oriented toward a wider audience, and some cases a more secular audience. Perhaps the most perplexing cases displayed above are the programming on finances and “faith and freedom.” Programming on how to manage personal finances ought to appeal to a wide audience and even secular viewers. Perhaps the assumption of church administrators respond to this survey is that this topic would be presented from a stewardship perspective. Again, reporting on religious liberty issues should also have wide appeal, but church administrators may assume that only issues related to the Adventist Church are included in this programming.

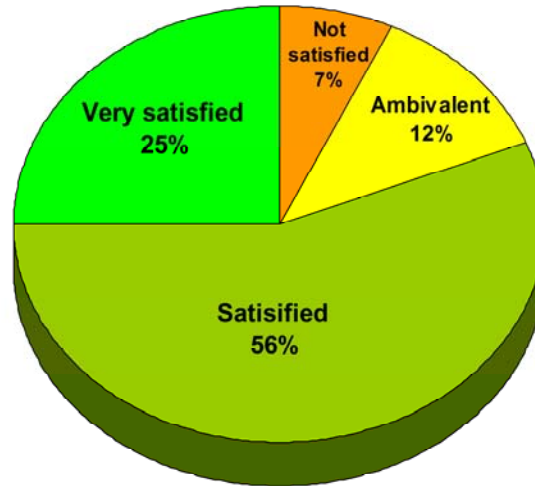


## Does the Hope Channel Give a Positive Impression of the Church?



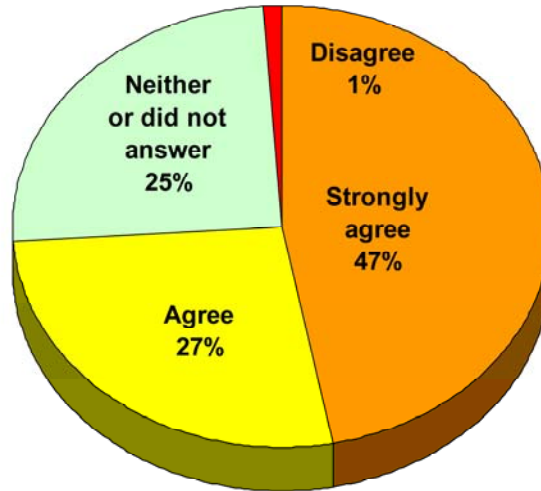
Church administrators were asked, "Overall, do you believe Hope Channel is creating a positive impression of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the minds of the public?" More than two-thirds selected one of the two most positive responses, labeled simply "Yes" in the graphic above. Nearly a third selected one of the more cautious responses that indicate some doubt about the achievement of this goal. Less than two percent of the respondents selected the most negative response, indicating that they disagree entirely with this statement. These data are further evidence of the strong support that the Hope Channel has among Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders.

## Overall Satisfaction with Hope Channel Programming



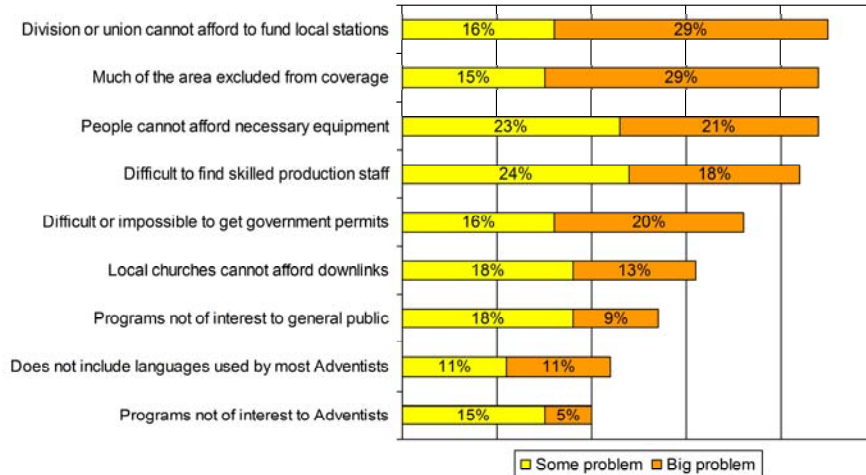
Four out of five church administrators express satisfaction with the Hope Channel programming they have seen. About one in five express ambivalence or dissatisfaction with programming. Overall, these data indicate a high degree of support among church administrators for the current operations of the Hope Channel. An additional set of respondents (about 21 percent of the total sample) skipped this question, presumably because they have not seen any Hope Channel programming and did not feel they could answer this question. They are left out of the data displayed above for that reason. There is no basis to think that they have negative feelings about Hope Channel programming.

## Hope Channel Helps the Adventist Church Accomplish Its Mission



Three out of four church administrators agree that “Hope Channel helps the Adventist Church to accomplish its mission,” and two-thirds of these choose the “strongly agree option,” nearly half of the sample. Less than one percent disagreed with the statement. Of the one in four who indicated that they “neither agree or disagree” or did not answer this question, those who did not answer are by far the largest share. None response to such a direct and uncomplicated question probably does indicate some ambivalence, but it also includes people who may have felt that they do not know enough about the Hope Channel to evaluate it or did not see this question or simply ran out of time and skipped a number of questions toward the end of the questionnaire. Normal practice in survey reports is to ignore the non-responses in calculating the percentages unless the non-response is large enough to be significant or (in this case) has logical significance no matter the relative number involved. It is likely that this represent the portion of church administrators who feel that the lack sufficient information to evaluate the Hope Channel instead of a negative response.

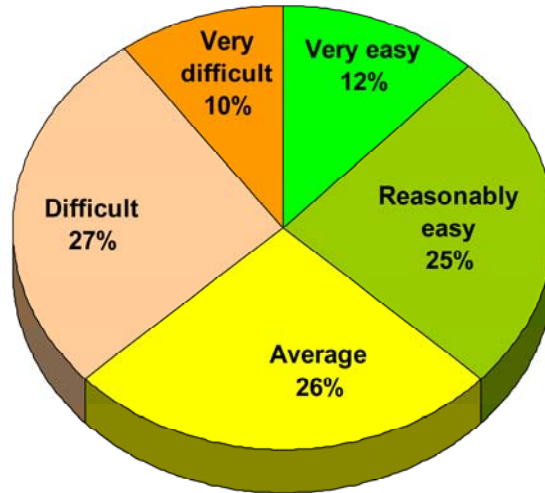
## Problems Faced by Hope Channel In Your Territory



Nearly half of church administrators (45 percent, including both those who indicated it was some problem and those who indicated it was a big problem) report that the division or union cannot afford to fund local television stations to distribute the Hope Channel in their area. Almost as many (a combined 44 percent) report that much of their region is not currently covered by the Hope Channel and that people cannot afford the equipment and/or subscription necessary to receive the Hope Channel in their homes. A total of 42 percent report that it is difficult to find staff with the specialized skills necessary for program production in their territory or key languages. About a third of the administrators report problems with getting government permits for the Hope Channel to operate in their territory or that local churches cannot afford the cost of a downlink so that the Church Channel can be accessed. More than a quarter (combined 27 percent) indicate that Hope Channel programming available in their territory is generally not of interest to the non-Adventist general public. About one in five church administrators indicate that the problems with Hope Channel in their territory have to do with the fact that programming is not available in the language used by church members or the programming is not of interest to church members.

The data displayed above indicate that the major problems facing the Hope Channel are related to extending coverage into more territory and finding affordable means of distributing the programming. Finding or training production specialists is a problem in the view of almost as many administrators.

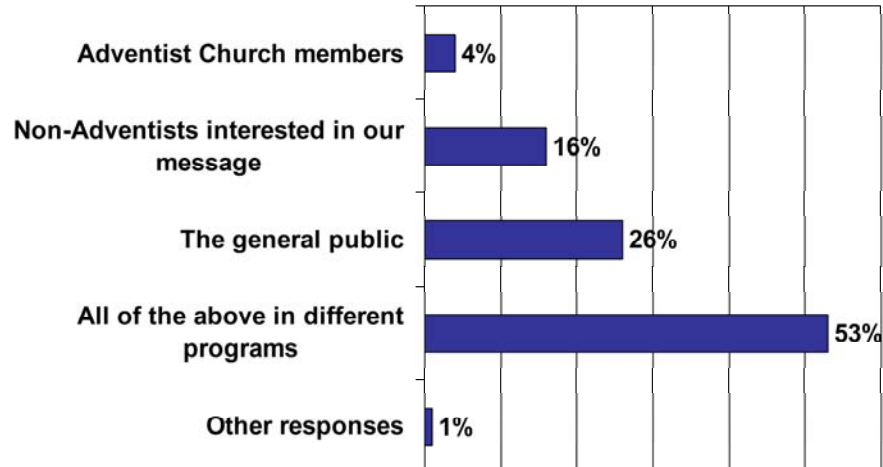
## How Easy to Watch the Hope Channel in Your Area



More than a third of church administrators (36 percent) expressed the opinion that it is easy for both church members and the general public to watch the Hope Channel in their area of the world, while almost an equal number (37 percent) said they think it is difficult where they are. About one in four fall in the middle and indicated that ease of access was “average” in their area. Another 19 percent of the total respondents skipped this question. These seem to include respondents who did not know how to answer the question or come from parts of the world where the Hope Channel is not currently operational.

These data suggest that there are three strategic sectors for Hope Channel development: (1) Areas where people can easily tune in the Hope Channel and the major focus could be promotion and audience acquisition. (2) Areas where people cannot easily access the Hope Channel and the major focus might be overcoming barriers to distribution. (3) Areas not clearly in either of the first two sectors where more work may be needed to understand the situation.

## What audience should Hope Channel primarily target?



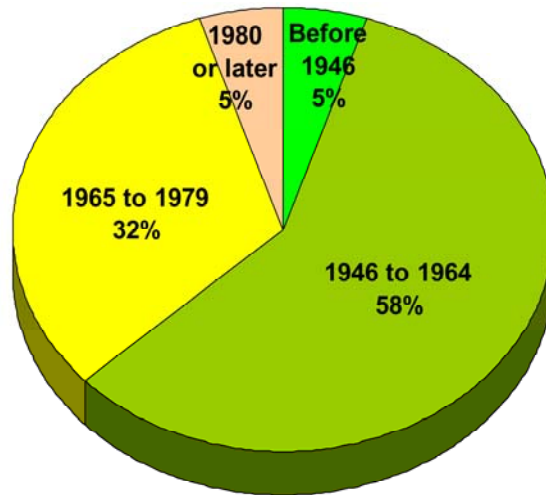
The majority of church administrators want Hope Channel to target multiple audiences through a variety of programming. One in four are most interested in reaching the general, secular audience. One in six would rather see Hope Channel focus on potential converts; non-member interested in the Adventist message. Very few want Hope Channel to be primarily an in-house communication channel for Seventh-day Adventists. It appears that the mandate for program development is quite clear in these data.

## What kind of programming should be increased or decreased?



There are three types of programming where church administrators clearly see a need for increased production: health, life and teachings of Jesus and evangelism. In these three areas the percentage of respondents asking for increased programming exceeds both the percentage wanting a decrease and the percentage who think it should stay as it is. In all the other cases the percentage asking for increased programming is exceeded by the combination of the other two responses, indicating that the status quo satisfies the majority of church administrators. In three cases, the response are very close: children's programming, end times, and doctrine. Of these six areas, four seem to be related to a wish for more proclamation of the gospel and two (health and children's programming) seem to be related to areas that need more attention in terms of reaching the general public or secular audience. These data clearly suggest priorities for program development.

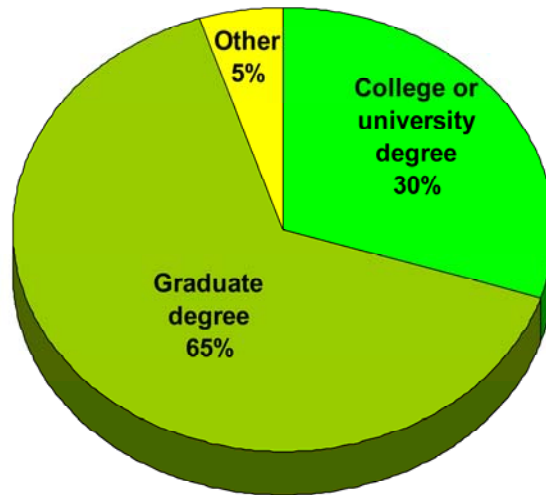
## Age of Respondents



The majority of the church administrators who participated in this survey are middle-aged, 50 to 68 years of age in 2014. A third are from the following generation, 35 to 49 years of age in 2014. Only small numbers are young adults or seniors, reflecting the realities of when denominational employees typically begin to enter administrative roles and when they typically retire. It should be kept in mind when thinking about the information in this report that it largely reflects a middle-aged perspective, although a generation that has lived with television throughout their lives.

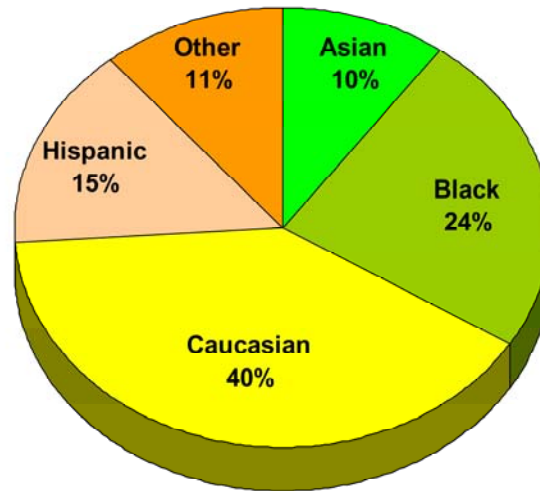


## Education of Respondents



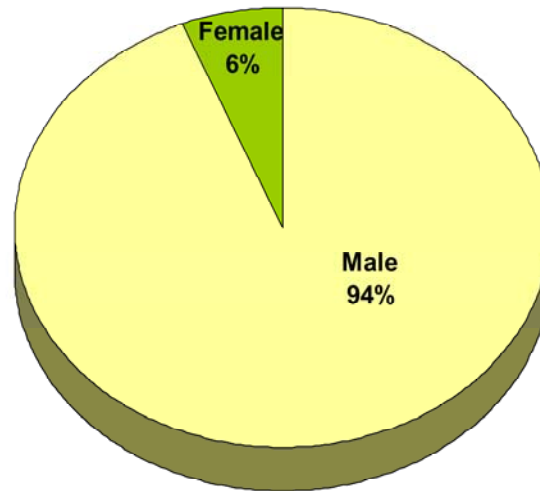
Two thirds of the church administrators who responded to this survey have completed a graduate degree. Another 30 percent have only an undergraduate college or university degree. Considering the policies regarding the education of Seventh-day Adventist clergy in various parts of the world, this is what would be expected. It does mean that the church administrators who supplied the views reported here are generally much better educated than the typical viewer both among church members and the general public.

## Ethnicity of Respondents



The church administrators who responded to this survey were asked to self-identify their ethnicity using standard categories from demographic research in North America. There is some evidence that at least a few of the respondents may have found the categories unfamiliar and this may have skewed the responses. There is a greater percentage of Caucasians in the data displayed above that might generally be expected in a global survey of union conference/union mission officers.

## Gender of Respondents



Fully 94 percent of the church administrators who responded to this survey are men. The data displayed above simply reflects the reality that very few women hold positions of administrative leadership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In reviewing the data, it should be kept in mind that this reflects an overwhelmingly male perspective.

- The research team that produced this study included Paul Richardson (project manager), Petr Cincala (primary investigator) and Monte Sahlin (analyst).
- Center for Creative Ministry
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