



Case Study

## ***a2ia CheckReader* Improves Check Donation Processes for Think Ministry's Nonprofit-Focused CRM Application**

## Overview

Think Ministry Inc., growing more than 25% year over year, is a software development company that builds and designs flexible, scalable, data management solutions specifically for religious organizations who rely on strong centralized databases as well as donations often paid by check. By streamlining processes like data entry, reporting, and data extraction, these best-in-breed solutions allow worship communities to scale their data management tools to fit their specific needs, grow with the organizations that employ them, and to more effectively manage people, events, and donation processing.

Think Ministry's founders had a vision, which was to uniquely answer the business needs of these specific organizations by offering a seamless interface and unlimited customization. They had one goal in mind: to deliver the best possible technology solution to the market.

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## Challenge

Religious organizations rely on donations from their communities, often paid by check and typically collected weekly during worship services – amounting to hundreds or thousands of checks per week for many. Often times these organizations also face tough budgetary restraints that lead to heavily segmented workflows, leaving employees and volunteers with the burden of managing administrative tasks manually. However, before any type of automation solution can be implemented, it is imperative that a complete understanding of the challenges that these organizations face be understood, as they may be vastly different from those of large for-profit corporations. Then, a more complete evaluation and plan can be developed to integrate efficient solutions that streamline manual projects, control overhead costs, and speed critical operational processes.

Prior to *a2ia CheckReader's* integration into Think Ministry's web based application, users would scan checks at each location, but manually key the required data from the check. This type of fragmented, decentralized process was slow and error-prone. The ability to process donations depended on the specific application that was installed on each workstation, and varied based on location and organization. Although parts of the donation process were semi-automated, Think Ministry wanted to further streamline and transform operational processes for these organizations, especially those operating in multiple sites, to reduce manual tasks and to enable faster access to funds.

## Solution

MinistryPlatform, Think Ministry's nonprofit-focused CRM application, is scalable and easy to use, and looks to redefine data management software specifically for the church market.

Within the MinistryPlatform product suite is a tool called the Batch Manager. The Batch Manager Tool is designed to assist donation-accepting organizations focus on modernizing their workflows and to process donations more efficiently, from multiple locations, and from anywhere in the world. This tool streamlines donation processing efforts by offering a seamless user interface, allowing users to automate their access to more information and to see all details on one window rather than having to tab between different files or interfaces.

The tool also enables donations to be entered in batches, either manually or by use of a check scanner. Once a new batch is created, users can extract key data from check donations automatically, utilizing *a2ia CheckReader*. *a2ia CheckReader*, an SDK trusted globally to streamline payment processing workflows by providing real-time access to crucial payment information, enables users to expedite and authenticate payments by automatically reading key data from check images. Powered by artificial intelligence and machine learning engines, it locates and extracts the MICR codeline, including the routing number and bank account details, as well as other key fields such as the courtesy amount (CAR) and legal amount (LAR).

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*a2ia CheckReader* also provides critical details about the check's image quality, usability and negotiability at the point of presentment – before it ever reaches the centralized service or financial institution. By automating this process, administrative teams no longer have to hand-key critical information or process checks manually. Within the same screen, Batch Manager users can also assign and allocate donations to the appropriate donors, funds, and pledge campaigns as well as to save all information directly into their MinistryPlatform database. Users have the ability to further automate the deposit process by importing files from third-party donation processing systems and to export the donation and check image information to other formats including an x9.37 ICL file for deposit to the bank.

Once captured from the check, the Batch Manager Tool also enables donor information, such as name and address, to be captured from the check and to be populated directly into the MinistryPlatform CRM system -further streamlining data management efforts. This enables the religious organization to better manage donor information and to communicate more easily to its community and members.

## Results

Think Ministry's Batch Manager Tool with *a2ia CheckReader* delivers donation accepting organizations, such as churches, parachurch ministries, and nonprofit groups, a more automated functionality that streamlines check donation processing. By utilizing *a2ia CheckReader*, users can securely and quickly capture and extract key information, saving time and reducing costly administrative tasks. Automatically capturing freeform handwritten and machine-printed data from business and personal checks, the integrated solution assists users in minimizing their manual keying and in gaining faster access to donor data that can be utilized throughout the MinistryPlatform data management solution.

## About Think Ministry

Think Ministry, located in Cumming, GA, designs, builds and deploys MinistryPlatform, a revolutionary Church Management System built on a flexible data platform. This solution allows for unlimited customization and scalability and provides a single solution for membership, group involvement, check-scanning, contributions, event management, check-in, and public website integration – including online giving and online event registration. Visit [www.ThinkMinistry.com](http://www.ThinkMinistry.com) for more information about Think Ministry's donation processing software.