

Patrick's SJA Music Blog:

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The Place of the Digital Organ and Technology in today's Worship Environment

As some have noted, the Vatican recently installed an Allen at St. Peter's Basilica (temporarily, as research is conducted into the possibility a new pipe organ). An article entitled [*Digital organs are the future - it's time to end the schism*](#) addresses the charged conversation surrounding the increasing use of digital organ technology in churches, from the standpoint of both industry and artistic integrity and viability. Some feel "if it doesn't have pipes, it is not an organ." Others choose to embrace the trend for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that it is easily "ten times" more expensive to purchase and maintain a fine instrument today than it was in the heyday of music ministry 60 or more years ago.

The Organ is traditionally the backbone of the Church's worship. While the ideal for the organist is indeed the pipe organ, this is not always feasible. Where, then, do we legitimately consider means by which technology is capable of providing congregations and highly skilled organists access to the "pride of place" which the organ and its inimitable properties justly occupy?