

A Gold Standard

The creation of compatible digital formats could hasten the Bible's global reach

Business leader Mart Green hopes the cooperative project of translating the Bible into digital formats unveiled by American Bible Society, Wycliffe and Biblica (see) will develop a "gold standard" for digitizing the Scriptures that will speed up the spread of God's Word worldwide.

The founder and CEO of the Mardel chain of Christian stores envisions the digital library created by Every Nation Every Tribe serving as a resource for other ministries that produce audio, video and specialty Bible-related projects.

Developing digital translations could mean that someday a person from, for example, a remote part of South America who moves to the U.S. could order a copy in his native language via the Internet, Green says.

"Someday the mobile version ought to have the audio, text and video ... in one spot," he says. "So someday all 6,000-plus languages will have it. At a large level, it's partnering to provide God's Word in a format that people can use and engage with for transformation."

Green points to the YouVersion developed in his hometown, Oklahoma City, by as the model for interactive Scripture usage. The innovative multisite church developed the free iPhone app soon after Apple introduced its smart phone.

The app now includes more than 40 translations in 22 languages, is available on multiple platforms and has been downloaded by more than 10 million people.

YouVersion allows users to post interpretations of and comments about verses and videos, and includes daily reading

plans. Users can even allow others to see whether they have been completing their readings.

“They hoped to get 60,000 the first year and they got 60,000 the first month,” Green says. “They’ve been drinking from a fire hydrant ever since.”