

YOUR EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLAYBOOK

A comprehensive guide to using mass notification
software to alert those in need

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In an emergency situation, minutes can be the difference between life and death.

Or the difference between a minor incident and a disruption that could cripple your business or institution.

Are you confident that the right people in your organization can be connected with the right information efficiently and effectively?

If not, you need emergency flow communication to help automate the most important of messages.

Emergency communication systems are gradually becoming commonplace in most communities across North America and Europe. With the advent of mobile technology and an ever more connected public, constituents have come to expect rapid notification of emergencies or crises in their area. While more and more communities are adopting emergency notification and incident management solutions, it is critical to note that there is a lot of preparation work and planning that goes into it.

At the end of the day, your message is the most important detail. But the software used to deliver the message as efficiently and with as wide a reach as possible ends up being the unsung hero.

Are you prepared? Is your emergency plan in place?

Learn all about:

- What goes into implementing an emergency communication strategy.
- The technology behind mass notification software.
- How key industries use it to alert and inform their audience.

To assist you, we have put together an emergency flow communication playbook to showcase each of the mentioned points and also how automation software makes it very easy to create, manage and deliver a wide range of alerts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. What is Emergency Communication Software

- 5. Challenges
- 6. Reasons to use it

2. Collecting and Managing the Data

- 8. Best practices

3. Creating a Plan

- 11. Determine the situations
- 13. Different types of messages

4. How Will Your Message be Initiated (Deployment)

- 15. Who is deploying these messages

5. Different Channels of Communication Available

- 17. Email
- 17. SMS
- 17. Social
- 18. Voice

6. Industry Examples

- 19. Military
- 19. Hospitals
- 20. Government
- 20. Citizens
- 21. School Campus

7. Conclusion



1. WHAT IS EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SOFTWARE

Whether mobilizing first responders, informing residents of evacuation procedures or notifying employees of a crisis situation, emergency communication software allows you to send alerts and potentially life-saving instructions to unlimited communication devices simultaneously and from a single web page.

Reach tens, hundreds or hundreds of thousands of people instantaneously using an emergency flow communication platform.

But, before you can start creating an emergency communication message or campaign, you will need to have technology in place to make it easy to deliver it. A mass notification system is one of the fastest and most effective ways to communicate with all individuals and groups you need to reach. This includes your organization, the town you oversee or an institution like a school or hospital. Having the right software in place is extremely important because if you don't respond to an emergency fast enough, things can get out of hand and safety becomes compromised.

By having software in place to properly reach your audience (for whatever emergency), it will keep them informed and help them get out of danger before it is too late. Information is power and in a crisis situation, timely information can be the difference between life and death.

Effective communication during emergencies is essential. Mass notification systems typically use existing data and voice networks to deliver pre-recorded messages that alert parents, students, faculty and employees of emergencies and provide them with instructions, such as evacuating a building or going to pre-assigned rooms that serve as shelters.

A comprehensive mass notification system also will allow administrators and security personnel to immediately contact every parent, faculty member, staff member and student through phone calls, text messages (also known as short message services, or SMS), instant messages, emails and other alerts on the following devices:

- Internet Protocol-based phones
- Traditional analog and digital phones
- Desktop and notebook computers
- Mobile phones
- Fax machines and pagers

In addition to crime alerts, mass notification systems can warn people of severe weather, such as tornados or hurricanes; class cancellations because of a power failure, a gas line or water main break, or other utility problems; and biological and radiological accidents, or other hazardous spills.

They can be used to notify parents, faculty and administrators of accidents that delay bus service to and from school, or on the status of a missing child or children. The systems also make ideal tools for providing updates on all these situations.

While emergency communication software and mass notification systems are generally geared towards large-scale emergencies, they can also be used as a communication tool for non-emergency situations that can improve employee productivity and simplify everyday tasks. They work as an electronic call tree for situations such as school closings, delays, early dismissals, and cancellations of sporting events and other extracurricular activities.

These systems can also replace out of date analog intercom systems and public address systems still in use at many organizations.

It is time to move with the technology available and have the power to reach every single person in your particular audience at a moments notice.

Challenges to Effective Emergency Communications

Effective communication is one of the most important factors in any emergency. But at the same time, it can be confusing and overwhelming to know how to properly do it right.

After all, an emergency notification has to reach the right people quickly, efficiently and at a moments notice. You need to get people's attention and include all of the information they need to know to get to safety or at the very least, suggestions on what to do.

When an emergency hits, panic will set in and without the right information delivered, people will start to act on their own, without taking everything into consideration.

The difficult part of delivering this type of communication is that simply put, emergencies are not predictable. You need to account for every possibility. You can't run on schedule. You can't take a moment to make sense of what is going on. You need to be ready for the unexpected. That is where marketing automation software can help you get prepared and have a sense of readiness.

It is also difficult to communicate effectively without knowing how to convey the right level of urgency, what information needs to be included, how to get this to the right people and how to optimize your success rate for reaching these people. That is a lot to think about, not to mention you have to send this communication as quickly as possible

By developing a detailed plan and combining automation software with that plan, you will be ready to launch an effective emergency communication campaign at the click of a button.

You will be able to have peace of mind that when an emergency strikes, you will be prepared no matter how chaotic the situation.

Effective communication is a must for any organization. But the ability to ensure communications run smoothly when every second counts and peoples' lives are on the line is something else entirely.



Why Use Emergency Communication Software

More than ever, government organizations, educational institutions, and other large enterprises need the ability to reach people quickly in case of an emergency. Whether you need to send emergency notifications to 100 people, 10,000 people, or a major city, it is vital to have a field-proven emergency alert system to meet your mass notification needs.

A robust communications plan should be in place in order to effectively respond to any type of situation or crisis. Because of the fear caused by disease outbreaks, establishing recurring communications early on is an effective method to educate and reassure people that actions are being taken to address possible situations.

Establishing pre-existing communications is also an effective method of expediting communications. This way, when a crisis occurs, there are already prepared scripts that exist with instructions or information for people. With a mass notification system, these scripts can be used to easily update everyone on the situation, no matter where they are.

Time To Move Forward

Older emergency notification systems were created with very few channels with which communications could be broadcast on. Most systems were limited to a single phone number or pager number, with basic character-limited text messaging. With these limitations within the system, administrators are losing their ability to communicate critical information to recipients.

Modern mass communication systems, on the other hand, take advantage of the fact that people communicate on multiple devices, some of which they have on their person at all times. The most advanced systems offer a multitude of available channels to which recipients can opt-in their information. Mobile phone, SMS text, push notification, land-line, email, pager, social media, fax and more are all legitimate ways to connect with individuals and should be enabled in a mass communication tool.

Additionally, mass communication platforms are designed to operate for individuals who might not all communicate in the same way. The most advanced systems allow recipients who opt-in their information to designate which channels should be used in which situations, ensuring those broadcasting information have the best possible chances of getting that message to them as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Two-Way Communication

You should be keeping in contact with your audience at all times, even if it is to have the most updated contact information on file. If the day comes when an emergency hits, you want to reach the most people in the fastest way possible. Having the correct information on file will ensure the messages sent using automation, will reach the intended targets.

It is hard to quantify the success of emergency communication because you can't place a value on saving lives. On a smaller scale however, it can certainly influence ROI thanks to reminding staff members of meetings and keeping your staff all on the same page when out of the ordinary situations arise.



2. COLLECTING AND MANAGEMENT OF DATA

If you sound an alarm and nobody knows about it, how can it be effective in a crisis situation? It can't and will have little or no success. You need to have a database full of up to date information for anyone you plan on contacting when the time comes. That includes basic contact information, what channels they can be reached on and ways on making sure those same people understand that an alert system is in place.

It is critical for those in healthcare, large corporations, airports, utility providers, educational institutions and city managers to have all their key customers, employees, neighbors, support partners and first responders listed in their notification system with accurate contact data.

Given the complexity of enterprise infrastructures, data and processes, providing each person in the process with context aware, real-time information can be complicated. An emergency communication platform must be able to quickly integrate into any infrastructure, collect data, transform that data into understandable and actionable information, then deliver it to each person based on their assignment or requests. Companies need the ability to present relevant information as well as interact with and interrogate systems or applications from any location in the world, and from any device.

Spread The Word

Getting the word out about your alert system is vital in order to get the most up to date data and from the most people possible.

You must realize that keeping a contact list accurate will have to be a continuous activity. With the mobility of today's population, job changes, school attendance, new email accounts, and cell phone number changes, the contact information will have to be frequently updated.

By using different ways of polling for this information, automated software will easily be able to collect, manage and keep data updated in real-time.

By getting as many people to opt-in to your service, you are ensuring that you are reaching the widest audience possible when crisis strikes.

Different Ways to Collect Data

Corporations, government agencies or organizations that already have their employees in a contact database should look into automated updates to maintain current and valid information. One way to do this is with an Automated Programming Interface (API) that connects the corporate database with your emergency communication system. This interface can be programmed to automatically handle a new member, change a member's contact detail, or delete a contact no longer with the corporation or site. This keeps your critical data in sync and provides the most recent data for notifications. It also removes the need for constant and time consuming manual updates.

Other automated forms of data collection can include using an opt-in page with email newsletters, social media sites like Twitter and Facebook and mobile marketing using shortcodes.

Links to your opt-in form can also be advertised in print, on radio or TV and well-placed billboards.

You can also do local targeting to build out your database by collecting data at religious centers, large clubs and retail outlets like grocery stores. You just need to visit places where the most people will see your information.

Tie your data collection into current emergencies. People take notice when others are in danger. During a snowstorm, have your information visible at grocery stores, hardware stores, gas stations and anywhere else people would go to get supplies for a storm.

A simple message stating to go to your opt-in page to sign up and get alerts the next time there is a storm will work.

Remember, grass roots and word-of-mouth campaigns can bolster opt-in rates significantly.

Whether it is members of the local police force informing the citizens they interact with, or other government employees mentioning the program at every public event.

Increasing awareness is key to driving opt-ins.

Best Practices

With the speed of news from social networks and the wide range of consequences resulting from the inability to control how news is spread, inaccurate or not, it is critical to employ best practices to ensure successful communications and avoid damage to your organization's reputation.

So, you have taken care of how people are finding your opt-in data collection. Now you have to make sure the process is as easy as it can be. You need to ensure your opt-in page or landing page is well designed. Your opt-in page should be simple and not too crowded or cluttered. It should help the visitors go through the process easily and successfully. It should also make recommendations on how to make selections that would allow you to efficiently contact each individual in the case of an emergency.

Remember who your audience is for each stage of the process. For example a native language speaker may be able to handle a level of complexity that could create a barrier for a non-native language visitor.

Design the page for the ease of the visitor, not the writer or website designer. Be sure that the visitor is told how the data will be used and by whom. What kinds of messages will they receive and what can they optionally elect to receive?

Also, like all types of mass communication, make sure that you offer an opt-in page that you can customize to help with the visitors' opt-in process. This process is included with most emergency communication providers.

Value Your Audience's Data

People are growing increasingly more protective of their privacy. With email spam, unsolicited phone calls, junk mail and more, individuals are growing less likely to part with their personal contact information.

Thankfully, when it comes to things that matter, such as emergencies, it is generally easier to get essential contact information if the right messages are communicated consistently.

Keep in mind that once an individual signs up through opt-in, you have set an expectation that the information that they have provided will be used.

Through a variety of methods, driving recipients and potential recipients to opt-in and provide rich, varied contact data is essential. Whether using print, TV, online or community events and other innovative awareness campaigns, maintaining contact data is a continuous process that is critical to the successful operation of an incident management or emergency notification strategy.

Utilizing best practices will help ensure that when an incident takes place, the administrators will be able to utilize the system to its full potential to protect people's lives and the community's most important assets.



3. CREATING A PLAN

Determine the Situations For Emergency Communication

There are a million potential threats and situations that you have to think of when it comes to emergency communication for your particular audience. Whether it is internal or external, determining each situation before developing a message or delivery strategy is key. Each will have a different tone, importance and mode of communication. You would not calmly send out a friendly message stating there is a fire in the building.

The format and tone of your message should fit each situation to get the best results and outcome. Different types of messages are used for emergency and non-emergency situations, so you need to separate the two in your messaging.

First, create categories for each situation. From here you can construct your communication plan.

If your situation falls under the emergency category, your window to get the message out has no margin of error. It must be short, brief and easily understood. Anything that can be pre-recorded ahead of time is ideal. Voice broadcasting is a great way to deliver canned voice messages that update and instruct people on what to do next.

Whether it is for weather, fire, evacuations or other alerts, voice broadcasting is a must for mass notification.

Create and store messages for each scenario you and your team can think of. The more prepared you are, the better at the time of crisis.

If your emergency communication software allows you to store several messages, you should take advantage of this.

The same concept will work for SMS, email and social media. Take the same messages you did for voice and create templates for each medium.

Then, when one of the situations occurs, you can simply deploy your communication with the click of a button.

Some mass notification platforms will let you go even deeper with personalization options. This information can include date, time, location and more to make sure the content is up to date and going to the right group of people.

Anatomy of an Emergency Message

For a voice message, label your message with an audio tone that identifies your message as an emergency. This also would mark the beginning of the message.

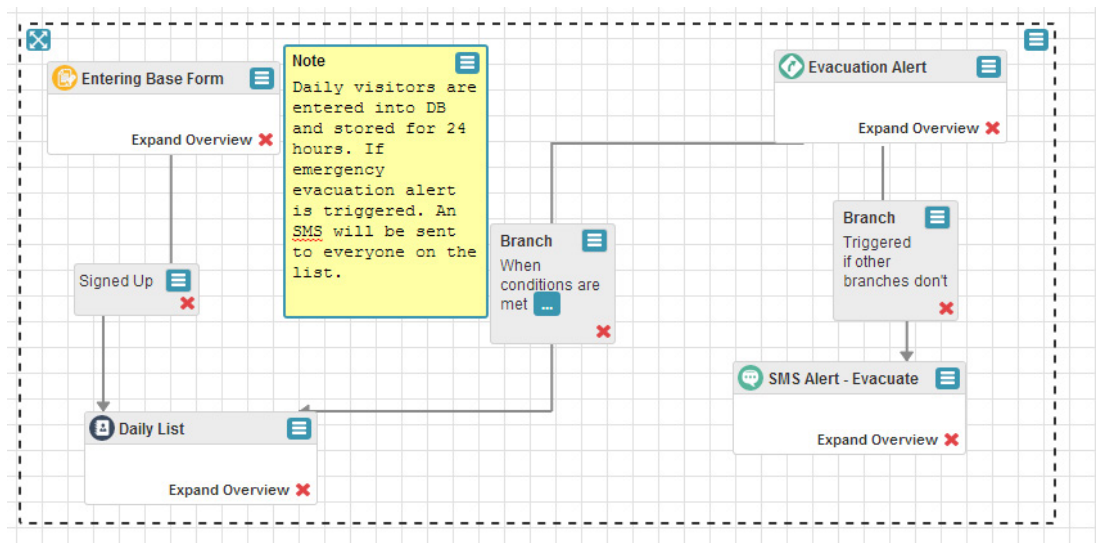
For voice or written communication, indicate who is speaking, or more importantly, what agency or service is sending the message. This could be a government agency, a weather service or a school. Be sure to include who is issuing the alert.

Be clear who the message is intended for. Your message may reach further than the intended audience, so make sure to identify who the message is for so those people pay attention and understand it is for them.

Make it clear what recipients should do upon receiving your message. Keep instructions clear and concise. Don't leave anything to interpretation. An example would be to take shelter in a basement (not simply take shelter). You need to make it clear who should stay where they are and what action or non-action should be followed through on.

Another key part of the message needs to be why a person should do what you are saying.

Clearly say what the emergency is so people can fully understand the risks and why they need to act quickly. With mobile devices so prevalent, messages can now be read and people can be on the move right away. No need for a computer or landline phone.



On top of listing everything mentioned, try your best to repeat it all again. This is most helpful with a voice message. People may miss what you say the first time due to panic or what is happening around them. A text or email, people can reread to fully understand.

For voice messages close your message with an audio tone just like the beginning. This identifies the end of your emergency alert.

Different Types of Messages

Before using automation to deliver your emergency communications, you need to next choose the types of messages that will be used.

With situations planned out, you need to match each with the proper message that best fits.

There are four types of messages that you can mix into your planning.

1. Pre-recorded or pre-written. These messages are created ahead of time and allow a user to convey a message quickly and effectively, even if a person is under stress or in danger.

These type of messages are recommended for emergency preparedness and can often be triggered by one button or a panic trigger. Remember, you won't have time to craft a message when everything is happening, so plan ahead as much as possible.

2. Dynamic or messages that change. These include messages with up-to-date information that are specific to the situation. Information such as date, time, location or weather updates.

Dynamic messages are most prevalently used with pre-recorded or pre-written messages to further customize existing information. The ideal situation for these messages are follow up messages once an emergency situation is in progress.

It is like a general template that is ready for you to plug in specific details, once you better understand what is going on. This is perfect for email and social media messages in order to have a consistent communication plan.

3. Ad hoc or a message specifically for a situation. Ad hoc messages are done on the spot for the situation that has occurred. This includes recording a voice message to blast out, or typing up a quick email to send out. These messages fall under the category of having time to perfect the message. You can edit, re-record and fine tune the message because you have the time to do it. They are best for general announcements once an emergency is in progress.

4. Live or as it is happening. Live is what it says, in the moment. A live message goes out as is as the user is saying or typing it. This type of message does not fall under what would be done with marketing automation, but it is important to understand none the less. Live messaging is intended for immediate announcements.

A mass notification system needs to be flexible. It covers any disaster and instructs people about what to do. To get an emergency message to almost everyone at the same time, it is a coordination of many individual communication systems.

Having the right message type in place will go a long way to having the most impact with your emergency alerts. For each step in a crisis, distinguish which type you have and create and deliver it in the appropriate way.

Like a fire alarm system, which we are all familiar with, a mass notification system gets people's attention. However, unlike a fire alarm system, which only notifies the people of a fire inside a single building, a mass notification system reaches people in a community or set of buildings, both inside and out.



4. HOW WILL YOUR MESSAGE BE INITIATED

A mass notification system is about more than just technology. Institutions must create detailed emergency preparedness plans.

High-level administrators, facilities managers and security staff must meet to discuss every possible scenario and how the entire team should respond.

In the process, the team should create a database of pre-written emergency notification messages, so leaders can quickly send notifications when situations arise.

Emergency notification systems need to be carefully engineered to provide a high level of survivability. That means thinking about emergency power, redundant network connectivity and the use of multiple communications channels.

When it comes to delivery channels, it is important to structure your emergency messages in a way that if one is unavailable, the next channel will be deployed.

If the phone lines are down, emails and text messages are used and so on.

An effective mass notification system will allow you to initiate a message from a variety of media, such as the computer on your desk or a mobile device. By using emergency communication software, you will be able to access a web-based administrator console at all times which is a must when trying to predict an emergency.

This way someone can have instant access to the created messages at any time. It would simply be about signing in and deploying the message on the chosen channels of communication.

Choosing software that can be accessed quickly and from a variety of locations is a must when putting together any emergency communication process.

Who is Deploying the Messages

It is also important to establish who is allowed to trigger or send the communications. This will ensure your messaging comes from a qualified and trusted person. This means setting up your system with different levels of access. Subaccounts can be created for those creating messages, those analyzing campaigns and of course the person who presses the button.

There is no need to have several passwords handy for Twitter, Facebook or other outside software as they will all be linked within one account. In a time of crisis there is no time to be searching for this kind of information.

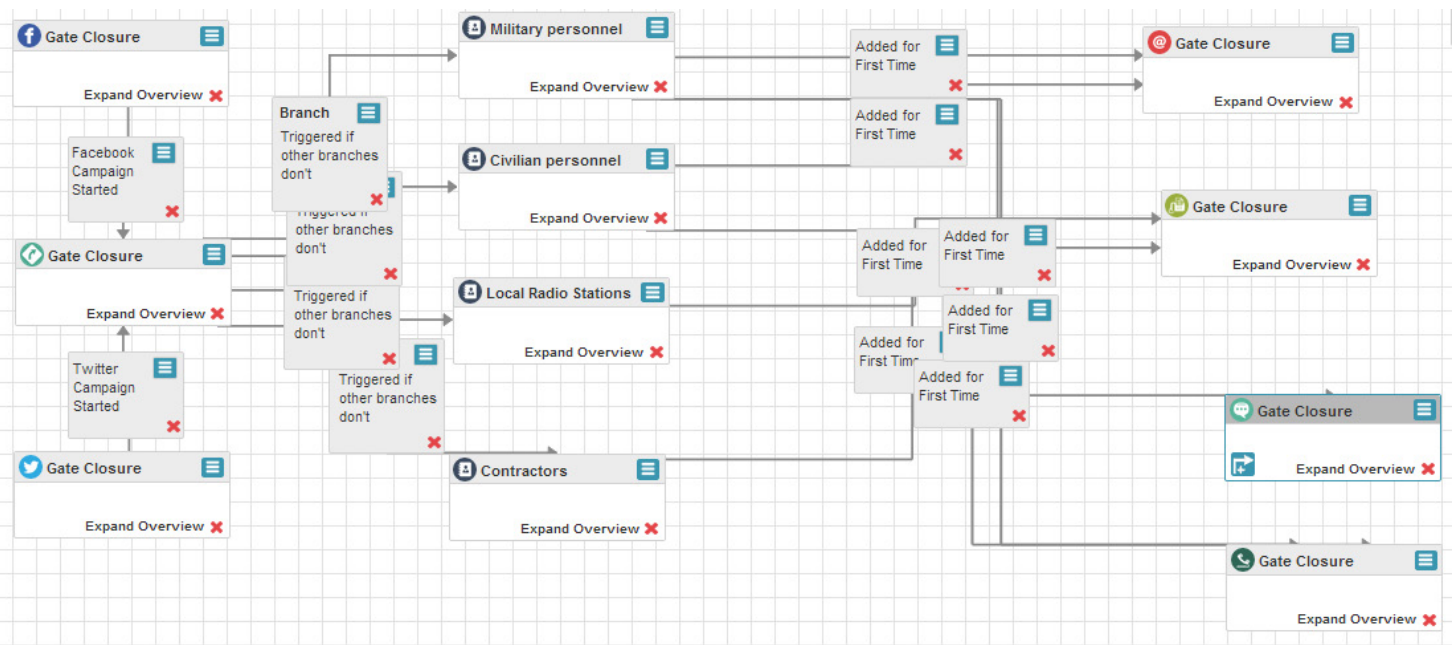
Who is Receiving the Messages

There will be cases where you will only want to reach certain parts of your audience depending on the crisis. You need to think about who will be receiving the message. This not only helps the creation process, but also who will deploy it and on what channel of communication.

Do you want to broadcast it to an entire building or just certain floors? Will you need to alert first responders or other outside help from a neighboring town?

Make sure you have a clear idea of who will receive your message from the start. This is where creating sub lists of larger contact lists will come in handy. Break down each group so you can better target those people. This can be useful for everyday messaging and emergencies.

When creating more targeted groups, be sure to create those that include every endpoint in your organization or audience. If you are focusing on a large campus for example, consider creating additional groups based on geographical location or where the buildings are.





5. DIFFERENT CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

In today's society it is hard to grab people's attention. What used to work, does not work as well. That is why you want to use software that utilizes as many communication devices as possible. The population is using more ways to stay in touch than ever before, so if you are sending your message on every possible channel, your potential for success will be much greater.

Channels such as email, voicemail, text messages, fax and social media are the main communication options used to get the message out on.

Currently in most schools, a typical fire alarm system's has messages sent through the loudspeaker so that everyone can hear the announcement. But what if that would be hindering the situation?

In some cases, if there's an intruder in the building, a loudspeaker shouldn't be used because it would alert the intruder of how people need to escape the building. In this scenario a mass notification system would only alert the occupants via text message, email, or even a tweet on how to get to safety.

For every different situation, there is an ideal mode of communication to match.

As the need to better communicate emergency messages increases more facilities will adopt mass notification systems as a part of their facility's life safety plan.

Here are the four main channels of communication for your emergency response messaging.

Email

Email has a wide variety of potential uses, and it is a great way to send information, links and images. You can send out email alerts to update people about a crisis in process and what to do. Then you can send follow up email as the incident plays out.

Include links to more information, send images of the scene, or make it as simple as, replying to say you are okay. Email blasts are a great way to alert a large amount of people all at once. Email is also ideal because you can have the message prepared ahead of time. All you need to do is send it to your list.

Email is an effective way of engaging with your audience on a more personalized level. Based on a user's interaction, email opens and responses you can send them emails that are directly relevant to their own needs and interests.

Easily create messages in minutes to keep area residents up to date on the developing emergency situation. Management of a crisis is an ongoing process and follow up information is just as key as the initial alert. Once you learn of any news, keep your audience updated and calm.

This could include links to news stories, important contact information or even the option to reply directly to you. An emergency notification system remains essential after the initial crisis cools down as well. The spread of information is key in any emergency situation.

SMS

SMS is an easy and quick way to interact with your audience in a time of emergency. SMS allows you to create quick and informative mobile messages and send them to your audience in minutes. This could be to warn people about an emergency or to send out shirt updates during the process. SMS messages are convenient and personal since can merge in your customers' names, company names or other details to help personalize the messages.

SMS is one of the fastest growing ways to reach out to your audience. Most text messages are read within seconds of being sent, because most people carry their mobile phones everywhere, so SMS is a highly effective and personal way to send emergency alerts. SMS messages are best kept short and sweet, which makes them the perfect format to send emergency communication messages.

Social Media

Twitter and Facebook should not be ignored when it comes to emergency communication.

The vast amount of information available through social media outlets provides an enormous opportunity to greatly increase situational intelligence. Unfortunately, there is a lot of noise on social media and advanced capabilities are needed to filter through the volume of data in order to extract the desired information.

Many organizations, while having a mass notification plan in place, do not have a social media plan for crises. This is a big mistake as you are missing out on a powerful resource that more and more is used for real-time updates.

Organizations that adopt emergency communication software systems that allow them to develop social media plans for both inbound and outbound communications will be on the rise going forward.

Mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets not only increase the efficiency at which individuals can receive messages, but greatly increase their capacity to share and send valuable information as well.

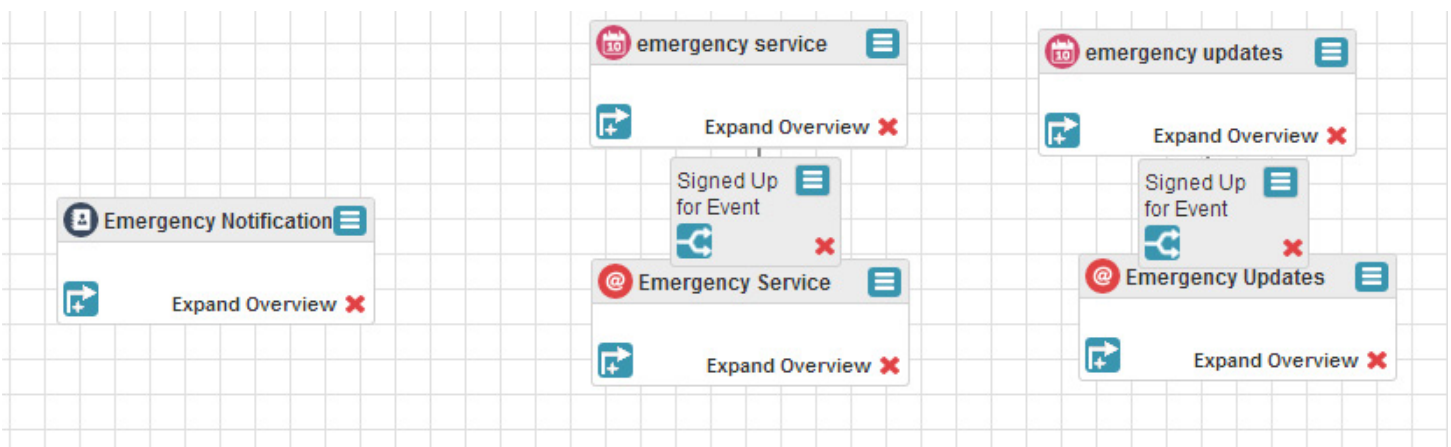
Whether it is through public forums such as social networks, or through a dedicated member application, individuals seemed compelled to share the details of their daily experiences. In the case of an emergency, their experiences could provide valuable insight and situational intelligence for those managing the response to that incident.

Voice

Voice broadcasting is a great way to reach out in an emergency situation because you can pre-record voice messages. You can upload your own voice recording or use text-to-speech technology which includes a wide variety of languages. If the call is not answered, you can choose to leave a personalized message to provide more information or what to do next.

You can use a voice message tool to send updates to everyone letting them know that it is okay to go back in a building or that the fire has been put out. You can also use automated voice calls to provide details about what to do when there is a snow day at the office. No matter how big or small the concern, a well crafted voice message will convey the point perfectly.

Keeping your audience up to date is vital in an emergency situation. Why not make it simpler with an automated emergency alert system using voice messages.





6. INDUSTRY EXAMPLES

Military

An effective mass notification system can introduce superior efficiency to unit activations, emergency notifications or standard issuing of information.

Applications:

- **Unit recalls** – Contact thousands of unit members at once in minutes.
- **Verification of unit readiness** – Rehearse alert procedures and have a full understanding of potential to execute a plan.
- **Notifying key leaders** – Notify only the people that need to be informed based on rank.
- **Schedule updates** – When training schedules change, notify those involved in minutes.
- **Family support groups** – Deliver announcements, newsletters, unit updates and other need-to-know information.
- **Weather advisories** – Let members know of base closings, operation changes and security updates due to weather.

Hospitals

From routine staff announcements to mass disaster callbacks, quickly and efficiently deliver messages to tens, hundreds, or thousands of recipients. An individual, group, or entire organization can be contacted in seconds as the system cycles through multiple voice and text devices until all messages are delivered.

Applications:

- **Effortless data management** – Import and maintain updated employee contact information with automatic data uploads from payroll software.
- **Launch notifications when other systems fail** – When a disaster hits, emergency communication software is cloud based and can be accessed from anywhere.
- **Active teams fast** – Notify trauma, HAZMAT, surgery and other emergency teams all at once.
- **Respond to disasters** – Launch a cluster of notifications tailored to each team for one disaster. Each would have unique notifications and different channels.

Government

Rapidly and reliably disseminate critical information and instructions to agencies, mobilize city workers, keep officials abreast of developments, and relay emergency instructions to residents and businesses.

Applications:

- **Accountability** – Generate personnel rosters in real-time and account for all staff in a crisis situation.
- **Continuity plan activations** – Notify all agencies, headquarters and other organizations about the crisis at hand. This can include first responders and those on site.
- **Redeployment** – Easily inform personnel that things have returned to normal and operations are up and running again.
- **Reconstitution** – Notify decision makers and heads of each group that the facilities in question need repairs and what the timelines are for that.

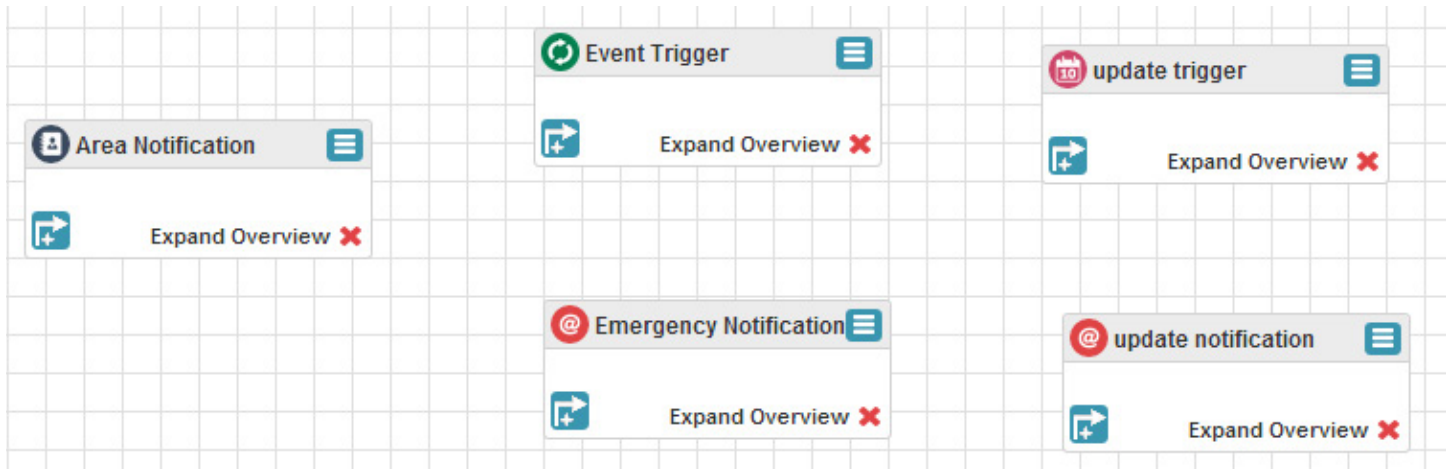
Citizens

Use mass notification software to contact thousands of citizens with life-saving information quickly and efficiently on forms of communication, including home phones, mobile phones, email, text messaging, instant messaging, and pagers.

Applications:

- **Mass reach** - Reach thousands of citizens immediately with life saving information.
- **Target regions** – Send geographically targeted notifications to businesses and residents of specific regions, cities, towns etc.
- **Weather warnings** – Warn citizens of severe weather conditions based on information provided by weather alerting systems.

- **Alert first responders** – Alert groups of local employees and first responders with list-based notifications.

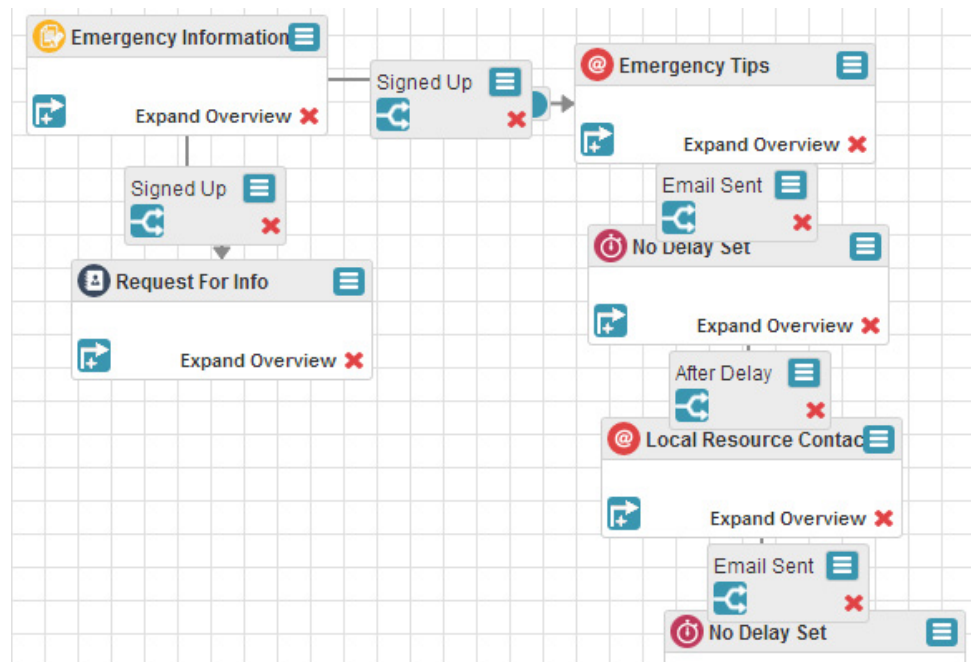


School Campus

Using emergency communication software for campus alerts enables you to communicate with your entire campus community in minutes via all contact methods, including those most popular with students, such as text messaging, cell phones, smartphones, email, instant messaging, and social media.

Applications:

- **Campus briefings** – Coordinate briefings with campus security and university officials using prepared communication messaging.
- **Campus safety alerts** – Rapidly notify students, faculty, and staff of incidents on campus and in the surrounding areas, such as severe weather, fires, power outages, gas leaks, chemical spills, vandalism, theft, and acts of violence.
- **Campus evacuations** – Manage evacuations, provide shelter-in-place guidance, and issue status updates and re-entry instructions. Include maps and other important documentation as attachments to the message.
- **Class cancellations** – Alert students, faculty, and staff of facility closures and class cancellations and resumption. This could be due to weather, work stoppages or larger scale disasters.





7. CONCLUSION

By having emergency notification software in place to properly reach your audience (for whatever emergency), you will keep them informed and help them get out of danger before it is too late. Information is power and in a crisis situation, timely information can be the difference between life and death.

In today's society it's hard to grab people's attention so you need a system that utilizes certain communication devices such as email, voicemail, text messages, social media and any other means to alert those who need it.

As the need to better communicate emergency messages increases more facilities and organizations will adopt mass notification systems as a part of their life safety plan.

Simply put, effective communication during emergencies is essential. Mass notification systems have typically used existing data and voice networks to deliver pre-recorded messages that alert parents, students, faculty and employees of emergencies and provide them with instructions, such as evacuating a building or going to pre-assigned rooms that serve as shelters.

With cloud-based automation software, so much more can be done to increase safety and the delivery of critical information.

In the event of an emergency, sending mass notification to students, staff, and the public can be a complex task. Is your organization prepared for such an event? Having a robust network and a single, integrated system in place to manage these communication channels is just as important as having effective policy, protocols, and public safety officials ready to react and execute on a plan.

ABOUT SIMPLYCAST

SimplyCast.com is a leading provider of interactive and multi-channel communication software for organizations worldwide. The company's 360 Customer Flow Communication Platform is a feature-rich solution combining marketing automation, inbound marketing and interactive communication. With customers in over 175 countries, including many of the most recognized brand names around the globe in retail, non-profit and hospitality industries, SimplyCast provides organizations the ability to effectively reach customers on their preferred mode of communication.



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