CallFire
Cloud voice, SMS and IVR Solutions

Southern Wesleyan University: Emergency Notifications in a Campus Environment

SMS Texting Offers New and Effective Solutions for Growing Problem - Emergency Notifications

In 2008, an addition to the Clery Act required universities to send notifications to their students and staff in the event of an emergency. Southern Wesleyan University (SWU) approached CallFire to meet these requirements as university administrators were concerned about the time and cost to contact and maintain an updated list. They were also worried about having enough staff to quickly reach out to the entire student body in an emergency.

The best solution to instantly reach so many is SMS Text Messaging. However, federal guidelines required all recipients to "opt-in" or give consent before receiving a message. Joe Brockinton, VP of Student Life, contacted CallFire and explained these concerns. CallFire's software provided Joe's staff with a simple technology that enabled instant communication to the student body.

Joe already had his lists of numbers, but he was worried about the process of getting his students to "opt-in" or give consent to receive a message. After consulting with CallFire, Joe used student body and chapel meetings as well as brochures and emails to explain the simple process of sending a text message with a keyword, which in this case was "SWUAlert," to a designated number or shortcode (ex. 555444).

Joe was also worried about maintaining an updated list since students graduated or staff would leave. From his discussion with CallFire, Joe explained the "opt-out" option in all of his communications that he had already sent out. If a student of staff member no longer needed an update, they simply would text a keyword like "Cancel" to 555444, and that's it. Students and staff actually felt more comfortable about receiving an SMS text alert because it was an option that they could cancel with ease.

SOUTHERN WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

CASE STUDY QUICK FACTS

CLIENT
Southern Wesleyan University

CHALLENGE
Creating an Effective Emergency Notification System

SOLUTION
Implement an opt-in and opt-in campus procedure and use SMS to contact

RESULTS
Have a streamlined and effective procedure to reach students with nearly 100% reception rate

WHY CALLFIRE?
Extremely user friendly, cost-effective and efficient

CALLFIRE'S CLIENTS

Allstate. You're in good hands.

FedEx

THE HOME DEPOT

CallFire

CONTACT US   **1 (877) 897 - 3473**
Mon - Fri 6 am - 6 pm PDT   **sales@callfire.com**

Setting up CallFire is simple. All that Joe needed was a phone and an Internet connection. In the event of an emergency, someone can log in and upload the list and contact thousands instantly. Joe simply types in the notification and schedules how he would like the SMS to be sent. This process takes a few minutes, and thousands can be notified with the click of a mouse. Joe has used CallFire to give his students emergency notices about tornado watches and warnings.

On February 24, 2012, Joe was able to send a notification to his student body that read, "SWU ALERT: There is a tornado watch in Pickens Co. until 4 p.m. today. A watch means conditions are favorable for tornado development. Please stay alert." Joe can even see that all of these messages got sent in 2 minutes when he logs into CallFire.

The results are visible for Joe anytime. He was able to notice and tell us that, "Anytime I send out a notice, we have a little bump in the number of subscribers." Joe feels reassured by the results that using CallFire solves his problems of dealing with guidelines, having an updated list of numbers, and keeping his students safe.

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