Send Word Now
EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS

Multi-modal Communications Platform Keeps Affected Users Informed During IT Crises

case study

How a Major Academic Medical Center uses Send Word Now to Manage Campus-Wide Crises at a Moment's Notice

At a world-class academic institution and health care center, administrators strive to transform medicine and health care through innovative scientific research, rapid translation of breakthrough discoveries, educating future clinical and scientific leaders, advocating and practicing evidence-based medicine to improve community health, and leading efforts to eliminate health inequalities. The IT division of the patient revenue office is responsible for communicating with managers and employees whenever there is a network outage, server disruption, or other large scale IT emergency. Read on to find out how the IT department relies on Send Word Now's quick, easy, and multi-modal communications platform to manage these communications needs.

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The Issue

On the morning of April 13, 2010, principal IT offices at the medical center began to receive calls from end users, who stated that their computers seemed to have been attacked by a virus due to initiation of a countdown on the monitor before eventually logging the user off. As a pattern became clear, the administrators at the IT desk realized that this was not an isolated event— a campus-wide event was threatening computer operations for the entire medical center. The team needed a way to communicate with affected users—all in a matter of hours, if not minutes. The team needed a fast, simple, and effective communications solution. And that solution was Send Word Now.

"From the moment I first saw a demo of Send Word Now, I knew that we had to have this solution on our campus,"

Security Manager

The Solution

Within minutes of recognizing the severity of the crisis, a security manager used Send Word Now to notify key university leadership that the IT division was aware of the problem and that they would keep them apprised of the situation and solution. By keeping employees informed, the team cut down tremendously on phone calls into the center.

Although the problem was identified quickly the IT team needed to manually apply a fix to every PC that was infected.

"They knew that we were on top of the issue, and they knew what the current status of our response was, so they didn't have to call into the IT desk," she explained, "and that allowed us to focus on coordinating with tech support on the solution."

The Send Word Now Difference

The security manager explained that the crisis resolution would have been much more difficult without the support of Send Word Now's alerting platform. "It was a challenging situation, but it would have been much more challenging without Send Word Now. I would have had to make over 2,000 phone calls in order to let people know what was going on." She continued, "With Send Word Now, the information was there, we hit a button, and the messages were sent at once." She also noted staff members reacted very positively to the Send Word Now system.

Crisis Management at a Moment's Notice

The IT department at the medical center also uses Send Word Now regularly to send alerts to university entities throughout the region. During emergencies, such as IT disruptions and server outages, alerts are sent to over 300 managers and directors who, in turn, get the message out to thousands of employees in those clinics and hospitals. Noted one user of Send Word Now, "If we encounter a critical situation, we can notify a mass of people within seconds."

The medical center has taken advantage of many Send Word Now features, most notably the Scenarios feature. Using this feature, security managers have created many pre-defined alerts in order to respond almost instantly to routine problems with the network and accounts payable. Additionally, the IT team finds Send Word Now's Alert Tracer® feature to be invaluable.

Explained one employee, "I love the Alert Tracer reports that tell me who received what alert and when they received it. I can be assured that everybody has been contacted, and I have the proof they've received it."

Why Send Word Now

"The ease of using this product was key to us, and Send Word Now offered so many more features than its competitors," exclaimed the security manager. "While other products seemed time consuming, complicated, and cumbersome, it took almost no time for us to get Send Word Now set up and ready to use." She also noted that Send Word Now's customer support team has been incredibly helpful, especially when she was unable to send an alert from her own desktop. She explained, "I called the Send Word Now call center to send a message, and it went like clockwork. Calling the customer support number to send an alert was just as fast as doing it myself!"