



Case Study: Emergency Management University of Massachusetts

University uses voice messaging to make immediate contact with EMTs tasked with providing 24-hour medical services

Organization Overview

A student-run emergency medical service provider, University of Massachusetts Lowell EMS has responded to thousands of calls ranging from minor cuts and bruises to life-threatening situations including drug overdoses, respiratory and cardiac emergencies, attempted suicides, and physical assaults. Staffed by approximately 25 EMTs, UMass Lowell EMS provides 24-hour emergency medical services to the students, faculty and staff of the university as well as the surrounding community.

Problem

During a medical emergency, time is one of the most critical factors that can determine a person's well-being. In order to quickly respond to a life-threatening situation, UMass Lowell EMS needed a way to efficiently communicate with each of its 25 EMTs. "Since each of our EMTs is also a full or part-time student, we needed a way to instantly contact each of them no matter where they are," said Mathew Ricci, director of operations at UMass Lowell EMS. "During a large scale emergency situation, you can't take the time to dial 25 phone numbers and provide instructions to 25 people."

Solution

To quickly alert UMass Lowell EMTs, Ricci began to utilize Call-Em-All's voice messaging platform – allowing him to make just one phone call which goes out to every one of his emergency responders. In a matter of minutes, Ricci can send a mass voice message that is received by all 25 EMTs alerting them about the emergency situation, requesting their assistance and providing instructions on where they should report.

For example, in December 2009, Ricci used Call-Em-All to alert UMass Lowell EMTs of an emergency situation that developed as a result of an ice storm that swept New England, leaving 1.25 million homes and businesses without power, forcing schools to close and toppling ice-laden trees and power lines onto slippery roads. "Massachusetts declared a state of emergency and was in dire need of EMTs that could assist shelters that were giving aid to families, the elderly and the homeless," said Ricci. "We used Call-Em-All to send a message to all of our EMTs with instructions on where to report. As a result, we were able to help staff the city shelters in minutes during a time when the area's resources were so strained that it would have been impossible to address everyone's medical needs."

Solution

In addition to instantly alerting its EMTs of an emergency, Call-Em-All enables UMass Lowell EMS to easily track who is receiving each message. For example, during a physical assault incident in a nearby community, Ricci used the Call-Em-All platform to monitor which of his EMTs were answering the calls and which messages were being sent to voicemail. UMass Lowell EMS reserves Call-Em-All for emergency circumstances only. And since Call-Em-All offers a pay-as-you-go plan, UMass Lowell EMS does not pay regular subscription or maintenance fees. "Even though we have almost all of the same capabilities as a regional EMS service provider, we don't have a very large budget," said Ricci. "Call-Em-All is one of the most affordable and effective tools that we use for responding to emergency situations."

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— Mathew Ricci,
Emergency Medical Services
UMASS Lowell

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