



## Drexel University learns how rapid communication can safeguard students and staff



### Customer Profile:

Drexel University, founded in 1891, is a private university located in Philadelphia, PA. Drexel has several campuses in Philadelphia and a graduate studies center in Sacramento, CA. The school is home to nearly 23,000 students plus more than 5,000 faculty and staff.

### Problem:

In the wake of the 2007 shooting at Virginia Tech, Drexel sought a mass notification solution to quickly communicate with its community in case of emergency to ensure public safety.

### Solution:

By implementing Intelligent Notification, the University's Department of Public Safety can reach tens of thousands of people in minutes by email, SMS and voicemail.

### Benefit:

Drexel students, parents, faculty and staff have peace of mind knowing that they can be notified of any urgent situation in minutes.

Drexel University's Department of Public Safety uses Intelligent Notification to alert the University community during emergencies and help its responders quickly manage incidents.

### A hard lesson learned

In the wake of the April 2007 shooting on the Virginia Tech campus that left 32 people dead and 25 injured, universities and colleges reexamined their emergency planning and response plans to improve communication and keep their communities safe. Schools realized it was necessary to implement rapid mass notification systems that could reliably reach their entire community on multiple devices to guide people out of harm's way before incidents escalated.

### The Problem: Alerting thousands of people immediately

After the Virginia Tech incident, Drexel's Department of Public Safety implemented an in-house communication system that could notify the community by email and SMS. The system was a temporary measure, however, as it did not have the required speed, reliability and redundancy to ensure that all people would be reached within a certain timeframe without fail. Along with those concerns, Drexel did not want to carry the burden of housing and maintaining a notification system. The Department conducted an extensive search to find a robust solution that would meet its needs.

### The Solution: Intelligent Notification

After conducting an exhaustive evaluation process in cooperation with the Drexel community, the University chose the MIR3<sup>SM</sup> Intelligent Notification platform.

Drexel was able to implement the emergency notification system quickly because MIR3 had expertise in working with schools. According to Dominic Ceccanecchio, senior associate VP of public safety, "MIR3 provided a lot of experience with the systems they installed at other universities. They brought to the table solutions to challenges other universities had faced, shortening our own learning curve." MIR3 also provided the redundancy Drexel required, with data replicated among multiple data centers, removing the risk of a single point of failure.

Equally important to Drexel was the MIR3 infrastructure, which allocates a minimum number of telephony ports to each client, preserving high bandwidth when multiple clients use the system simultaneously.

This was critical because two other universities in Philadelphia—University of Pennsylvania and Temple University—also use the MIR3 system. A regional incident could result in all three universities using Intelligent Notification at the same time to contact their communities. MIR3 demonstrated that in such a scenario, Intelligent Notification could handle the load and continue to

*“MIR3 brought to the table solutions to challenges other universities had faced, shortening our own learning curve.”*

—Dominic Ceccanecchio,  
senior associate VP  
of public safety,  
Drexel University

deliver messages quickly. This method is superior to the more common approach of sharing all available ports equally among clients, forcing clients in the same vicinity to compete for port access, resulting in a slow system and delayed delivery for all clients.

In tests and in real life usage, Drexel has used Intelligent Notification to deliver notifications by email, SMS and voice mail to as many as 28,000 university constituents in minutes, providing the confidence that in the event of any incident, everyone will be notified quickly.

#### Intelligent Notification helps Drexel keep it's community safe with:

- **Multiple redundancy** – MIR3 houses client data in multiple, redundant data centers to ensure continuity of service. Data centers meet the highest standards for data security and privacy.
- **Telephony port priority** – Drexel required a system that could handle the load of multiple universities using it at the same time. The MIR3 model gives Drexel confidence that its notifications will be delivered quickly regardless of how many clients are using the system concurrently.
- **Instant conference calls** – Call Bridge allows a notification to be sent to members of the University's crisis management team with the option to press a key on their phone keypads to instantly join a conference call. There's no separate phone number to call or login key to remember. Now the team can instantly convene at any time, from wherever they are, to rapidly respond to emerging crises. Drexel uses Call Bridge to instantly gather team members not only from its multiple Philadelphia campuses but its Sacramento, California campus too.
- **Tailored messaging** – Drexel is able to label notifications to appear as coming from different departments with different levels of alert. Emergency notifications come from “DrexelAlert.” Other notifications might be labeled as a “health advisory” or a non-urgent public service advisory. This helps recipients respond with appropriate urgency to different types of notifications.

#### The bottom line

With the implementation of the Intelligent Notification, Drexel has added a powerful tool to its public safety system, allowing the University to communicate rapidly with its entire community and with its own crisis management team in times of emergency. Knowing that there is a mechanism for reliable communication in any type of emergency has significantly increased the feeling of safety and security for parents, students, faculty and staff.

For more customer success stories, visit us at: [www.MIR3.com](http://www.MIR3.com)

U.S. SALES +1 (888) 960 MIR3 (6473) U.K. SALES +44 (0) 20 3178 2398

© 2012 MIR3, Inc. All Rights Reserved. MIR3 is a service mark of MIR3, Inc. All other marks are property of their respective owners. 04182012

