



Huge hurricane rips a hole in petroleum company emergency plan



Customer Profile:

A Fortune 500 petroleum company, like so many others, found its business unprepared when faced with a category-five hurricane threatening the Gulf of Mexico.

Problem:

The company wanted a way to quickly notify workers at various locations throughout the region and also call leaders together for a conference call to plan for contingencies.

Solution:

The company can now rapidly reach all workers on multiple devices, no matter where they are, and direct them as needed, and can arrange instant conference calls that can be joined with the touch of a button.

Benefit:

Critical time is no longer wasted with manual call tree duties during possible evacuation and relocation efforts, productivity is preserved and people are protected.

When a major hurricane made landfall, this large petroleum company discovered the hard way that their legacy system of emergency notification was no longer up to the task.

Areas of violent weather need reliable mass notification

Hurricane Rita was the fourth most intense Atlantic hurricane ever recorded and one of the most powerful ever observed in the Gulf of Mexico. Rita caused \$11.3 billion in damage in and around the Gulf Coast in September 2005, leaving residents homeless and businesses devastated. Virtually every emergency action plan for every home, company and institution were sorely tested, and many were shown to be insufficient to adequately warn and instruct the populace.

The Problem: How to alert and instruct staff in times of disaster

Like many organizations located on the Gulf Coast, this Fortune 500 petroleum company had an emergency action plan in place to alert all parties in case of hurricane or other disruption. The system was a classic call cascade, needing human interaction all along the way to deliver messages. The system seemed adequate until, in 2005, Hurricane Rita prompted the activation of the system to warn staff of impending danger and to instruct them to work from contingency sites or their homes. Unfortunately, the emergency call-cascade suffered branch-point failures due to human factors, leaving some employees without notice or direction, putting them at risk and greatly impacting productivity.

The Solution: Intelligent Notification

The executives at the petroleum company were dismayed with the failure of their emergency plan and agreed that this was a risk they could not afford to take again. In reviewing the options, they quickly decided to replace the old manual call-cascade with Intelligent Notification. They were up and running quickly and, through field testing, verified that 100% of notifications were delivered with 90% confirmed responses from 1,100 telecommuters and contingency site workers. Because of the success of the program, additional rollouts are planned, with a total of 1,700 employees to be trained and prepared for future emergency situations.



Hurricane Rita was not only the strongest hurricane of 2005, but also the most intense tropical cyclone ever recorded in the Gulf of Mexico where there is also a heavy concentration of oil refineries.

With Intelligent Notification, this large petroleum company can:

- **Quickly launch mass notifications** – Authorized personnel at the petroleum company can launch a communication by simply logging onto the Web interface, sending an email or making a phone call to launch a notification—using existing message templates or easily creating new ones in seconds.
- **Initiate instant conference calls** – If the unforeseen does occur, Intelligent Notification makes it easy for company leaders to join a conference call by simply pressing a key on their phones to share information, make urgent decisions and further instruct their teams.
- **Track and report all alerts** – The leaders at the petroleum company especially appreciate the closed-loop communication with detailed reporting of who received alerts, when, and with what responses. This feedback loop is useful for continuous process improvement for the company.

The bottom line

Valuable time is saved with the shift from the manual call tree to an automated notification solution. Executives at the company can rest assured that all employees will be contacted in case of emergency and all will have the ability to respond to instructions. Productivity is preserved and lives are protected.

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