



University manages explosive event with equanimity



KEAN
UNIVERSITY
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Rapid, intelligent, two-way notification keeps university leaders in close communication with students, staff and visitors in times of crises.

Customer Profile:

Founded in 1855, Kean University has grown to become one of New Jersey's largest institutions of higher learning, occupying over 150 acres in Union and Hillside Townships.

Problem:

After witnessing tragic campus events across the nation, leaders at Kean wanted a reliable notification system for their school. In the event Kean was threatened, they needed to be able to notify students, staff and guests quickly.

Solution:

Using Intelligent Notification to alert students and staff of a bomb threat, the university was able to effectively lock down the campus as the situation developed and was resolved.

Benefit:

Kean University officials can now notify thousands of students and staff at once, guiding them to safety and providing life-saving direction.

Colleges have unique needs for mass notification

College campuses carry a singular burden of responsibility in protecting the lives of students and staff. Since students and teachers are on the move most of the academic day, effective communication must take place through every possible means, including phone, text, email or others. To be truly effective, there also must be a way for those affected to respond in a meaningful way.

The Problem: How to communicate with thousands when seconds count

After witnessing several tragic school events like the Columbine High School massacre and the shootings at Virginia Tech, the leaders at New Jersey's Kean University realized the importance of implementing an emergency notification system for their campus. Although hopeful that a disaster of such proportions would never take place at Kean, officials wanted to be able quickly alert students, faculty and staff to guide them to safety if the unthinkable were to happen. They chose Intelligent Notification as their notification solution, and when faced with a serious threat shortly thereafter, were glad they did.

On March 11, 2008, Kean University received a bomb threat; by employing Intelligent Notification, the staff was able to immediately

lock down the campus. A second threat was phoned in just 20 minutes later. Typically, about 4,000 students are on campus on any given evening, and when the threats occurred, contacting all those students, as well as staff, became an immediate priority. Without an emergency notification system in place, the process of notifying all students of a threat would have been inefficient and daunting.

The Solution: Intelligent Notification

Using Intelligent Notification technology, the university administrators were able to deliver a message to thousands of students and staff simultaneously. Audrey Kelly, a spokeswoman for the university stated, "Students were notified via text message, email and voice mail to evacuate all campus buildings. Those students who live on campus were told to return to their dorms. Commuting students were told to leave campus."

"It was a great comfort knowing that our emergency communications system was solid and a true success in aiding our efforts to keep people safe."

—Audrey Kelly,
spokeswoman,
Kean University

Real-time test showed immediate benefits

While the bomb threat turned out to be false, officials at Kean University realized that Intelligent Notification was critical to the success of their campus lockdown. Kelly added, "It was a great comfort knowing that our emergency communications system was solid and a true success in aiding our efforts to keep people safe."

How Kean University benefits from Intelligent Notification:

- **Thousands of students and staff can be reached at once** – Administrators can notify students and staff no matter where they are on a wide variety of communication devices.
- **Time is saved by quickly launching mass notifications** – Communications can be delivered to all students and staff, or just to one group, by simply logging into the Web interface, sending an email or making a phone call.
- **Overall communication is enhanced** – Hopefully the university will never suffer a real threat to student safety, but even so, the efficiency and timeliness of rapid, efficient communication can prove itself useful in other scenarios, such as weather threats or power outages.

The bottom line

Although the bomb scare was a false alarm, university officials now know that they can reach the people who most need to know when threats occur. They are also exploring other ways to use this valuable tool to notify students, parents and staff of significant events that may not be emergencies but are important nevertheless, enhancing overall communications across the campus.

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