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EMA: A New Frontier in Communications

EMA stands for Enterprise Messaging Application, but to truly define it, you need to understand what it's capable of. Consider the following scenarios:

Scenario 1

A company is ravaged by a hurricane. Employees receive an automated message on their cell phones telling them what the situation is and where to report. They enter a unique code on their phone, and then receive specialized information regarding their own particular department.

Scenario 2

A local TV station creates an extra revenue channel by allowing viewers to subscribe to an automated messaging service that will alert them to severe weather conditions. Viewers can subscribe online, and weather notifications happen automatically with no employee even picking up the phone.


Scenario 3

A prospect walks into a car dealership. They provide some basic information, but they are unwilling to commit to a purchase at that time. Several weeks later, when the dealership runs its end of year clearance, the prospect receives an automated call detailing the offer. If they are interested in learning more, they press a key and are automatically connected to a sales person.

EMA Makes it Happen

The common theme with all of these examples is that they used EMA as the backbone of their solution. EMA is used extensively by communities whenever there is an impending storm or other natural disaster. Local governments send out automated phone calls to all residents warning them to evacuate or seek shelter. But EMA can also be a critical part of your own company's disaster recovery plan, and even a potential new revenue channel for your business.

If your corporate offices are ever damaged by some sort of calamity (flooding, fire, etc.), the disaster recovery administrator for your business simply logs onto a web site, and



selects a pre-recorded message that goes out to all employees to give them an update of the situation. Or, the administrator could dial into the system, and record a unique message to go out to specific employees with specific instructions.

This is just what the United Space Alliance has done since Hurricane Katrina. United Space Alliance (USA) has the very important task of tracking the Space Shuttle after each launch. When Katrina threatened both USA's Texas and Florida facilities, the organization recognized the need for emergency fail-safes. With EMA, United Space Alliance can now send an emergency message to all 4000 employees. Each employee has a wallet-sized card with instructions to call in and enter a unique ID number. This allows specific instructions to be targeted to specific employees, informing each team where to report, and what their assignment is.

And EMA can also be used to deliver valuable messages to a targeted market during a sales promotion. Industries from real estate to insurance can import their contact list into an EMA application to handle follow-up calls, announce new events, etc.

EMA: What you need to know

EMA is not a new technology, but there are some new developments that make this product a viable option, even for a small business. Several vendors now offer a hosted messaging solution that greatly reduces costs.

When searching for a hosted messaging application vendor there are two key things to keep in mind. One is the amount of calls that the vendor can support. The right vendor should be willing to guarantee at least 1000 outgoing calls per minute, and some are even working to double this number. The second component is that your vendor should have their technology housed in a secure location.

EMA really is a robust application. Just make sure you select a vendor with a solid product who can meet all of your specifications and guarantee the amount of call volume you are looking for.