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Case Study

School: Anne Arundel Community College (AACC)

Location: Anne Arundel, MD

Campus Size: 56,000

Student Body Makeup:
100% commuter campus

Challenge: quickly communicate public safety information to highly transient students & staff

Solution: e2Campus Text Service

Results: AACC quickly and effectively communicates public safety and renewed the service for three years.



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CHALLENGE:

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) had a web site and the email addresses and phone numbers of students and staff. However, those lines of communication didn't work well when students and staff were in route to campus or were already in the classrooms. Phones weren't reliable during Sept. 11th, so a phone dialer was not an option. The school needed to quickly and effectively communicate emergency information with students and staff. And, the solution had to be affordable so they could use discretionary funds, since nothing was budgeted for major new purchases.

Matt McManness, VP Resource Learning, quickly acknowledged that, like many other colleges, "we were behind the times regarding emergency notification capabilities."

For example, "We had a power outage just before setting up e2Campus. We essentially had to verbally notify everyone in the building and people approaching the building that it was closed. Now with e2Campus, I recently sent an alert about a school closing from my BlackBerry while traveling in Florida. The campus community was notified of the closing in minutes. That's effective."

SOLUTION:

AACC purchased the e2Campus Text Service using discretionary funds. e2Campus was implemented and used immediately. The school sent an initial email campaign to the entire campus community that informed them of the new free public safety alerts. Students, faculty and staff opted-in for alerts via AACC's intranet web site called "MyAACC".

RESULTS:

Mr. McManness did not have to postpone the purchase of the service until next year, because the price of e2Campus was small enough that he could use discretionary funding. AACC is now able to send out emergency alerts to the entire subscribed community and reach them regardless of their proximity. They use e2Campus to send instant alerts related to homeland security, severe weather alerts, school closings, and Clery Act related crimes (rape, violent crime, etc.).

"We installed e2Campus late in '04 and know that we have taken a huge stride forward in our notification capability. No longer do we have to hope that an email or phone call gets through. In today's world, the vast majority of our faculty, staff and students carry cell phones with SMS (Short Message Service). In fact, students, who represent our largest population segment by far, are the largest users of text messaging. So to be able to instantly send text messages over the e2Campus notification system means that we are able to reach almost everyone regardless as to where they may be – on, off or in route to our campus" stated Maury Chaput, Exec. Dir. of Facilities and Capital Development.

He continued, "Given my responsibilities, my primary purpose in participating in selecting e2Campus is because it enables us to immediately disseminate messages dealing with Public Safety and emergencies – it enhances our whole communications capability. Messages dealing with weather, fire, on campus crime and other crises have to get out quickly. e2Campus does exactly that and without regard to where the recipient may be located at the moment the advisory is sent. I will be setting up sub-groups so I have the option of messaging the entire campus community or a select group. There are times when either I may not want everyone to immediately know of an issue. In this instance, I may prefer to only let my sub-group of emergency responders know first. With weather issues, using another sub-group will allow me to instantly notify crews involved with providing safe, clean parking areas, sidewalks etc. – and e2Campus will allow me to do this in one instant message vs. calling every individual separately."

AACC continues to use e2Campus as an integral component of their Public Safety program to alert the over 56,000 members of their community.