ASSET MANAGEMENT IS A PEOPLE BUSINESS

Allianz Global Investors maintains steady communications with employees during a nearby oil leak with Dell Crisis Management & Alerting Services.

Allianz Global Investors, a member of the Allianz Group and a financial services leader, was well prepared with a disaster recovery and business continuity plan for any unexpected emergency. However, as with any plan, the company couldn’t anticipate every possible scenario and didn’t expect a call reporting a nearby oil leak.

With a disaster plan in place, and a new emergency notification system tested and ready to activate, the Allianz management team was able to smoothly oversee the safety, business operations, and administration of 190 employees who were impacted by the oil leak, which spanned three work days and required a mandated office evacuation. The Dell Crisis Management & Alerting system provided a fast, easy, and reliable service that allowed the Allianz team to set up on-the-fly emergency management team conference calls, to send out regular disaster update messages to all staff, and to reassign employees to another office for critical business functions.

CUSTOMER PROFILE
COUNTRY: New York, NY (USA)
INDUSTRY: Banking/Finance
WEB ADDRESS: www.allianzinvestors.com

CHALLENGE
Provide a quick, reliable way to notify employees during an emergency or crisis. Previously, Allianz relied on manual call-trees for employee notification which was a slow, time-consuming and not always accurate process.

SOLUTION
Implement Dell Crisis Management & Alerting Services, which can interactively contact large numbers of employees and customers during crisis situations to provide direction, ascertain status and provide tools to manage through the crisis.

BENEFITS
GET IT FASTER
• Reach anyone, virtually anywhere during a crisis
• Near-zero maintenance
• Predictable monthly costs

RUN IT BETTER
• Contact thousands in minutes
• Distribute and collect critical information in real time
• Enable collaboration with web-based tools

GROW IT SMARTER
• Easily scalable to meet growing needs
• Help ensure safety of employees and business continuity
“WE CHOSE THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND ALERTING SERVICES (FKA, ALERTFIND) BECAUSE OF THE EASE-OF-USE AND DEPLOYMENT, AND ALSO THE IMPRESSIVE CALIBER OF THEIR SERVICE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAM.”

Frank Garofalo, Vice President, Allianz Global Investors

NEARBY OIL LEAK CAUSES BUSINESSES TO EVACUATE

The unlikely chain of events all started late afternoon on a busy Monday. As billions of dollars in investments were being managed by employees in the Stamford, Connecticut office, a neighboring office in was experiencing a serious oil leak as 30,000 gallons of home heating oil spilled from a burst pipe. Within minutes, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the city of Stamford ordered an emergency evacuation from nearby business and office locations. The staff at Allianz were quickly ushered out of the office and sent home for the day. With little information to go on and amidst some chaos, employees went home not knowing what, or when they would be able to report back to work.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION IS CRITICAL

The Allianz Emergency Management Committee, comprised of senior leaders from the Stamford location, was first assembled using Dell Crisis Management & Alerting to send an emergency notification and organize a conference call early that same evening. The committee discussed the business and safety issues of the oil leak, while also planning for the possibility that the office would not be cleared for occupancy for at least a day or two.

Later that evening, the committee composed a message and sent the emergency notification using Dell Crisis Management & Alerting to the 190 employees affiliated with the Stamford office. Employees were asked to check their email or voicemail the next morning for further updates, but were asked not to report to the office until given instructions to do so.

CALL CENTER RELOCATED

At 6:00am Tuesday morning, with no firm timeline of when they could reopen the office, the committee determined that the Call Center staff should be temporarily reassigned to the New York office to handle the organization’s (800) phone number staffed that day. With Crisis Management and Alerting services we were able to quickly notify the key employees and to ensure they received notice early that morning to report to the New York office. Thanks to Crisis Management and Alerting services, the employees received the message and were on duty in the New York office with no disruption to our clients.”

Office Closure Continues as Staff Receive Updates

The early morning decision to relocate the call center proved to be a good one, as the city and the DEP would not allow workers back into the building that day due to the risk of unhealthy air quality. According to Garofalo, “the officials told us they expected to give us clearance by the next day, so we again used Crisis Management and Alerting services to notify our 190 staffers and let them know the office was closed for the day, and we expected a delayed opening the following day. The employees were again advised to check email and voicemail for more updates.”

“We were very pleased to be able to send out a final message stating that the office was officially cleared and reopened at 8:55 am on Wednesday,” explained Garofalo. “Using Crisis Management and Alerting services made the entire process easy and our management team felt secure in the knowledge that our employees were well informed throughout the emergency. It was valuable to have so many options of how to best reach each employee – anytime, anywhere, via any device – with an important confirmation function so that we would know the information had actually been received and read.”

OLD CALL TREES GIVE WAY TO AUTOMATION

Prior to deploying Crisis Management and Alerting services at Allianz, the procedure for emergencies was to rely on each department to notify their own employees using call trees. “This manual notification method was slow, time consuming and not always accurate,” said Garofalo. “Often the department heads would have to call human resources to ask for phone numbers, and there were few, if any, alternative methods to reach people. Meanwhile, senior employees were tied up making phone calls when they could have been used in more critical functions.”

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