

A Cost Justification Guide for

Rave Higher Education Solutions



INTRODUCTION

Your role as CIO has changed drastically over the years. It's no longer about managing the IT infrastructure and ensuring that it fits into your college or university's academics, business operations, student life and other functions. Now you're tasked with finding new ways to support the technology needs of your campus community, as you're developing strategies to detect, respond and prevent IT security threats. As the competition increases for students to attend your college or university, you're now supporting new initiatives designed to attract and retain new students who contribute directly to your institution's bottom line.

Though CIOs like you now have more pull to discuss and shape institutional IT decisions, you are very likely dealing with limited IT budgets and resources, forcing you to increase efficiencies and “do more with less.” You need to ensure the IT infrastructure is ready for the everyday demands and that includes your institution's mass notification system.

Just like the CIO role, mass notification systems have evolved. The Clery Act, first enacted in 1990, mandated that higher education institutions report crimes to their communities in a timely manner. It was later updated in 2010, requiring colleges and universities to include emergency response and evacuation procedures in their public annual security reports. These systems help meet this requirement to communicate with the campus at large. Today, mass notification systems are tying into more systems, being used by more departments, sending more types of communications, and being used more often.

Just because your mass notification solution does more, doesn't mean the team that supports it has to do more, too. A mass notification system that offers automated data management provides more time for you and your IT department to work on other projects, and increases your budget by serving other departments to make your current IT infrastructure more efficient. Plus, a system that includes a mobile app extension would bolster more usage by your campus community and help your campus safety department learn about and respond to incidents faster.

The following are some of the ways Rave's mass notification platform can help you scale your mass notification solution while scaling back support and resources needed to run it.



SAVE TIME AND RESOURCES

Automated Database Management: Database management is one of your most challenging aspects of collecting information from students, faculty, staff and others. It takes you and your IT staff hours to collect, enter and maintain this data, especially if you have to make changes manually. The Rave mass notification platform allows you to automatically sync with your current database of record to upload your contacts, as well as performs ongoing freshness checks so only the current members of your campus community will receive alerts at the right time.

Scalable Role-Based Access Control: Having either too many or too few people responsible to send out alerts during emergencies is challenging. Someone may freeze in the moment or there is so much is going on, the right alert isn't sent out to the right members of the community. It can cause confusion with your campus community and potential issues with the press. The Rave platform allows you to scale to have unlimited administrators, lists or messages. You can also set administrators with role-based access control, so they can send specific messages to targeted groups to avoid any confusion within your campus community. And by having more departments using the Rave mass notification platform, it will drive more buy-in and the budget responsibility will be spread across other departments.

Train Your Staff in No Time: Training can be very time-consuming for your IT staff, as well as campus faculty, staff and others. In some cases, it can take up to an entire day to train on a new system, taking away campus personnel from classes and projects. Administrators can be trained on the Rave platform in under two hours, while users with fewer access permissions can be educated in a matter of minutes.

“ I’ve had the opportunity to decide to continue to use Rave. The things we look for are ease of use in order to create alert templates, the ability to fire off alerts in a timely fashion in drills and critical situations, and easily integrating and managing user data uploaded to the system. You can create groups, making it very efficient and easy to quickly alert large groups of people. The price is right. We get good value for our money. ”

KEN BROWN
CIO, WHITWORTH UNIVERSITY,
A RAVE CUSTOMER FOR 10 YEARS

Greater Student Engagement: Getting users to register for accounts is difficult, especially if there are too many steps to sign up. Various studies show cart abandonment ranges from 55 percent to 80 percent, resulting in people not completing the registration process. Providing single sign-on to the Rave platform will encourage students, faculty and others to register and receive campus alerts. Plus, they won’t have to remember additional usernames and passwords and need to contact you and your IT department if they forget.

Reach Temporary Visitors: It can be challenging to ensure that temporary visitors, such as parents, contractors and sports fans, learn about emergency incidents, as well as nonemergency activities. The Rave mass notification system offers a SMS Opt-In feature that allows temporary visitors to receive alerts by texting a keyword or short code without being added to the database of record. You can set up alerts for a specific timeframe and when the event or period of time expires, these temporary visitors would no longer receive notifications.



ALERT IN ANY TYPE OF SITUATION

Send From Any Internet-Connected Device: The [FBI](#) says it only takes minutes for an active shooter event to evolve. People have [13 minutes](#) to seek shelter before a tornado strikes. This is precious time for your campus community to find safety. The Rave platform allows you and other administrators to send messages anytime from any Internet-connected device, so you can send out alerts in the office, in the field or at the side of the road.

Send an Alert in Three Clicks: The Clery Act mandates colleges and universities establish and implement timely emergency responses and mass notifications. Notifications need to be issued as soon as pertinent information is available, and information about crimes, such as the nature and the time and date when they occur, must be disclosed within two days. Plus, the Department of Education can fine colleges and universities up to \$55,907 per violation. It's imperative to get the message out to your campus community as quickly as possible and use as many methods as necessary. You can send messages in three clicks simultaneously through text, email, voice, social media, digital signage, sirens, desktop alerts and more.

“ I’ve never had an outage with Rave and there are so many ways to send out an alert. It’s cloud-hosted off of us, so we don’t have to worry about it. With Rave, we have no issue with a local outage and we don’t have to worry about an alert going out. A 30-second delay is a lifetime. There’s a level of urgency. It takes five seconds to shut the door in the event of an active threat, and 10 seconds to barricade it. You can’t have a delay alerting. ”

RICHARD CRIM
CIO, LORD FAIRFAX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Save Time with Unlimited Templates: In some cases, your college or university are in regions where there are typical weather events, such as blizzards or heavy rain. You can prepare for other issues, such as power outages and phishing attacks, ahead of time. When incidents occur, there’s a lot going on as administrators and others are collecting information and managing the event. It’s important to get the right message out to your campus community. Through the Rave mass notification platform, you can create preset templates, including date, location and the type of emergency, and in the message formats you want to send out. It will help your administrators and you save time and resources when a situation arises.

Get Everyone on the Link with One-Click Conference Bridge: When a serious incident occurs, it’s imperative that your leaders and other decision-makers convene quickly. Sometimes it’s difficult and time-consuming for staff to organize dial-ins and comb through call lists. The Rave platform provides a one-click conference bridge that allows your college or university’s leaders to get on the phone quickly to discuss the situation and execute actions.



HELP KEEP YOUR CAMPUS SAFE

Reach Students with Push Notifications: Your student population, Generation Z, are digital natives and are [three times](#) more likely to open a chat message through a push notification, rather than check email. Their attention span is [eight seconds](#), 33 percent less than Millennials at 12 seconds. Generation Z think mobile first and the Rave platform's mobile app extension would enable students to receive messages faster, while empowering them to become involved in the safety of their campus. These notifications can be as detailed as an email, as well as be accessed as a voice recording. And even if messaging data is down or maxed out, your community will still receive push notifications over Wi-Fi.

Extend a Virtual Safety Net: Many studies show parents and their children select a college or an university based on if it's a safe environment and a good fit. Of all the students who started class in the fall of 2016, [61.6 percent](#) came back in the fall of 2017. The mobile app extension includes a virtual escort so students can program a Safety Timer to set a time and destination when they leave a location. The app confirms when they arrive safely. Students can select roommates, friends and campus safety officials as "guardians" to receive status and location updates during these sessions.

Confidential Tip Texting to Increase Safety: Students often struggle reporting incidents of hazing, sexual assault and sexual misconduct. For example, [one in five female students](#) will experience a sexual assault, yet only 28 percent of these incidents are reported. The mobile app extension provides anonymous tip reporting, so students can discreetly and confidentially report crimes or suspicious activities through their smartphones. The two-texting messaging feature helps students report an incident without fear of reprisal and help out their communities. Your campus safety officers can focus on preventative actions, rather than on reactive ones.

“ We’ve been in a situation on campus where the blue light emergency phones are starting to break down and they’re very expensive to replace. Most of the students don’t want to run to a phone if something’s going on. Why should they put themselves in harm’s way while they’re standing at a blue light phone? We were looking for something whereby the students can communicate directly with our police headquarters and relay information. We selected Rave because of the Guardian app, which has the ability to text and they can call directly to our university police headquarters. ”

PAMELA FUESHKO
CIO, WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

Customizable Emergency Call Buttons: Many studies say the average response time for police to respond to 9-1-1 calls is about 11 minutes, while it takes about eight minutes for emergency medical services personnel to respond. The mobile app extension allows your campus community to communicate directly with your campus safety department through an emergency call button, so they can respond faster to incidents either on or off campus. If it’s unsafe to speak, students can send a text message directly to campus safety officers with a click of a button, informing them of their emergency location.

Avoid Alert Fatigue with Geo-Target Alerts: Alert fatigue is a big challenge for colleges and universities like yours that worry about sending too many messages and risking students opting out or ignoring emergency notifications. An emergency or an impending danger may only impact a certain area or population, so you don’t want to contact your entire campus community. For example, a localized flood may only affect a certain area, so you can identify specific users and send them a targeted notification. Through geo-targeting, you can send information to certain users based on their distinct locations. These targeted messages help prevent alert fatigue and ensures your campus community pays attention to your alerts.

Accessible Student Portal: It can take hours of your time, as well as your team, to make changes to your campus community’s contact information. Rather than visiting a website, calling an administrator or making an IT request, members of your campus community can easily update their profile information, such as phone numbers, email addresses and emergency contacts, directly on the app.

CONCLUSION

Colleges and universities like yours are seeking new ways to educate students as they compete to retain their attendance. Your responsibility is keeping your institution's IT infrastructure operating 24/7, especially in the event of a campus emergency. So you are trying to find ways to increase efficiencies with your college's current IT infrastructure, and that includes what's in place for your mass notification system. The Rave mass notification platform will help you save time and resources through automated data management, while you and your administrators can effectively and quickly send unlimited multimodal alerts simultaneously to your entire campus community. The platform's mobile app extension allows your students to directly contact your campus safety department about incidents, empowering students to assist with keeping your campus safe and informing their parents that your campus is secure.

We can meet your organization's unique needs and challenges with our wide range of higher education solutions.

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