

An Invaluable Safety Layer

How Three
Higher Education
Institutions Notify Temporary
Visitors on Campus

Staying connected with your campus community during an emergency is vital so you can protect them and keep them safe. That goes for all of your community members — including temporary visitors — who aren't on your campus all the time or work for your college or university. These visitors may include parents, camp counselors, conference attendees, speakers, contractors and others.

How are you ensuring these visitors know when an emergency happens on campus? How are you keeping them informed and updated about events as they occur?

SMS Opt-In, an add-on feature to the Rave Alert™ mass notification system, provides an easy way for colleges and universities to send notifications to temporary visitors on their campuses. Parents, contractors, conference attendees and others can temporarily opt in to Rave Alert by texting a keyword to a short code. You'll be able to send them messages, updates and other information when an event occurs.

Messages sent to these temporary visitors can automatically expire on a specific date, or after a certain amount of time. As a result, these temporary visitors aren't added to your database of record, so your IT department won't need to dedicate resources to continually add or remove them.

So, are you looking for a new way to notify your temporary visitors about events, incidents or emergencies while they're on your campus? The following use cases show how Rave Alert's SMS Opt-In feature can help higher education institutions keep these visitors safe and informed while they are on campus.

USE CASE

Rancho Santiago Community College District Provides an Inclusive Safety Net to Visitors

In the fall of 2017, the Canyon 2 Fire broke out in the Anaheim Hills area of Anaheim. The fast-moving brush fire started near a major highway that morning and within hours burned 2,000 acres. All told, 9,217 acres burned in the region over eight days.

The fire burned right to the edges of Rancho Santiago Community College District's Santiago Canyon College campus, jumping the campus and entering the nearby community. As the fire evolved, the local fire and police departments were stretched thin dealing with the local entities that burned. The Rancho Santiago Community College's Security and Public Safety Department handled its own evacuation and street control around campus.

"Myself and my lieutenant weren't in the office. We had brush burning and we had to do an evacuation; it was really bad," said Antoinette "Toni" Bland, then chief of district safety and security at Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD). "When we decided to evacuate, and we had to send out a notification, we just used our cell phones to send an alert while we're putting out a small brush fire near the edge of campus. This is why I'm such a fan of Rave.

We just used our cell phone and sent messages out in rapid succession. We evacuated our campus in a short period of time because we had Rave Alert."

RSCCD is based in California's Orange County and consists of two community colleges, Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College. The district office and other facilities include education centers, a fire training center and the Orange County Sheriff's Regional Training Academy. The district switched to the Rave Alert mass notification system for its ease of use, effectiveness and reliability, as well as the option to send alerts through mobile.

"I wanted it to be easy to use, but I also wanted it to reach the intended recipients," said Bland, who's since retired. "We have a large district and it's spread over different cities. We have two main campuses and seven centers, including a middle college with teenagers, and five child development centers, as well as centers for veterans. I wanted all those individuals to be reached and I wanted it done in a timely manner."

As the fire started, four messages were sent out to the Santiago Canyon College community over text and email the first day alone. The initial alert announced the campus was closing and evacuating, with subsequent messages



USE CASE

Rancho Santiago Community College

announcing which roads were closed so the remaining students and staff knew how to leave. The Santa Ana College community also received an alert to evacuate when smoke built up on campus. Messages continued the following days announcing both campuses were closed and later reopened.

“We were able to mobilize so quickly that people weren’t panicked because they knew what was happening and we got our campus evacuated,” Bland said. “It was easy-peasy. That’s what I wanted. During an emergency you have enough to worry about; you also don’t want to worry about emergency notifications.”

After the Canyon 2 Fire, an after-action report was issued and one area that needed to be addressed was including contractors, parents of children in the child development center, and others in alerts about emergencies. For example, contractors weren’t initially alerted to the evacuation plan when the fire first started.

As a result, RSCCD implemented Rave Alert’s SMS Opt-In feature, allowing parents, construction workers, vendors, attendees at special events, the Santa Ana police department, Santa Ana Unified School District police and others to opt in to the

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“You don’t have to do a lot of work to include the opt-in folks. That’s the beauty of Rave. During an emergency, there’s a little bit of chaos going on and little bit of stress, you don’t want to have to think too hard because you have competing interests in your mind.”

TONI BLAND

CHIEF OF DISTRICT SAFETY AND SECURITY
RANCHO SANTIAGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Rave mass notification system temporarily by texting a keyword to a short code. When an event occurs, they’ll receive messages and information even though they aren’t entered into a database. SMS Opt-In can automatically expire on a specific date or after a certain amount of time has passed.

“Whenever we send out an alert, we just check the box,” Bland said. “You don’t have to do a lot of work to include the opt-in folks. That’s the beauty of Rave. During an emergency, there’s a little bit of chaos going on and little bit of stress, you don’t want to have to think too hard because you have competing interests in your mind.”

“Rave Alert helps keep people safe,” she added. “We’re one of the largest districts in California and for us to have a way to send information quickly and easily to all of our 40,000 stakeholders is something that’s invaluable.”

USE CASE

William Paterson University Expands Safety Net for Its Temporary Visitors

When William Paterson University of New Jersey made the switch to the Rave mass notification system, it was about protecting everyone on campus. And that includes continuing education students, camp counselors, bookstore staff, dining service personnel, conference attendees and other temporary visitors.

Nestled in Wayne, New Jersey, William Paterson's 370-acre wooded campus is adjacent to 1,200 acres of wetlands and woodlands, only three miles from the Paterson Great Falls, and just 20 miles from New York City. The public university has more than 10,000 students, over 400 full-time faculty members and upwards of 1,100 administrative staff.

One of the features that prompted Fueshko to switch to the Rave mass notification system was the ability to send alerts to temporary visitors through the SMS Opt-In feature. When adverse events arose on campus, university administrators would send out alerts to the campus community, but not everyone received these messages.



"We now have the ability to opt in our outsourced employees through SMS text, so our bookstore, dining services and outsourced staff receive our notifications, plus our school's continuing education program students," said Pamela Fueshko, CIO. "Before, they could never receive the messaging."

Like many university campuses, William Paterson is busy hosting technology conferences, music and theatre performances and lecture series, as well as youth summer camps.

One of the features that prompted Fueshko to switch to the Rave mass notification system was the ability to **send alerts to temporary visitors** through the **SMS Opt-In feature**.

"I can set up the opt-in when they're on campus so they're able to receive the alerts," she said. "During the summer, we run a huge summer youth program and all those employees are temporary, so having the opt-in feature for them to receive those messages was important."

USE CASE

William Paterson University

In the early summer months, black bears occasionally enter the university campus. Fueshko set up the SMS Opt-In feature for the university's summer visitors to receive black bear alerts and other messages while they're on campus.

"So, when you have grammar school students that are attending camp here, we need to be able to get the message out to stay away from this area," she said. About 90% of camp counselors entered into SMS Opt-In. "That was very helpful last summer; we had two bear alerts so the camp counselors knew what was going on."

The university also sends alerts, such as severe weather notifications, to its bookstore and dining services staff, who have chosen to be part of the SMS Opt-In program.



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PAMELA FUESHKO
CIO
WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

"Most of them said 'Thank you' when they started to receive alerts from us," she said. "Of course, they still have to pay attention to the companies they work for, but at least it gives them information about the conditions of the campus. Particularly for dining services, they still have to come here and provide meals to our resident students. But at least when we're saying we're closing or having a delayed opening, it gives them the ability to adjust their travel times and they know the conditions on campus."

USE CASE

University of Central Florida Amplifies Safety Measures with SMS Opt-In

Game day at Spectrum Stadium is packed every weekend with students and fans flocking to the Orlando campus of the University of Central Florida (UCF).

UCF is located east of downtown Orlando, where it spans 1,415 acres and includes approximately 220 buildings. The university has more than 68,000 students and upwards of 13,000 faculty and staff members. UCF is the largest university in Florida by enrollment and one of the largest universities in the nation.

Spectrum Stadium holds about 45,000 fans and is home to the UCF Knights, which plays in the American Athletic Conference and made its ESPN “College GameDay” debut in 2018. The Knights have won back-to-back conference titles, making its tenth appearance in the postseason.

For the Knight Nation, the nickname for the Knights fans, the pregame tailgating starts hours before kickoff and occurs in various parking lots and reserved areas. Fans can join the March to Victory, which is led by a horse-riding knight who rides into the stadium with the marching band before kickoff. The march starts in the tailgating areas and proceeds into the stadium, walking past the fans outside.

Come game time, the Spectrum Stadium becomes “The Bounce House” because the stands shake when thousands of fans jump in unison.

With all of this game time revelry, keeping fans safe is a top priority for UCF. As part of its security, UCF implemented a clear bag policy for game day. The policy limits the size and type of bags fans can bring into Spectrum Stadium. It also encourages fans to report suspicious activity to the UCF Police Department.



“When the UCF community is in harm’s way, that’s when we use Rave Alert.”

JOE THALHEIMER
WARNING AND COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

In addition to the security on the ground, the Rave Alert mass notification system provides more protection for the UCF campus.

“When the UCF community is in harm’s way, that’s when we use Rave Alert,” said Joe Thalheimer, UCF’s warning and communications coordinator. Notifications are issued when they’re related to Clery Act guidelines and potential life safety situations,

USE CASE

University of Central Florida

such as alerting the campus community to avoid specific areas due to police activity. Rave Alert email and text notifications are sent to students, faculty, employees and other non-UCF entities working on campus, such as food service vendors, construction personnel and contractors operating on long-term projects. Approximately 78,000 users are part of the system.

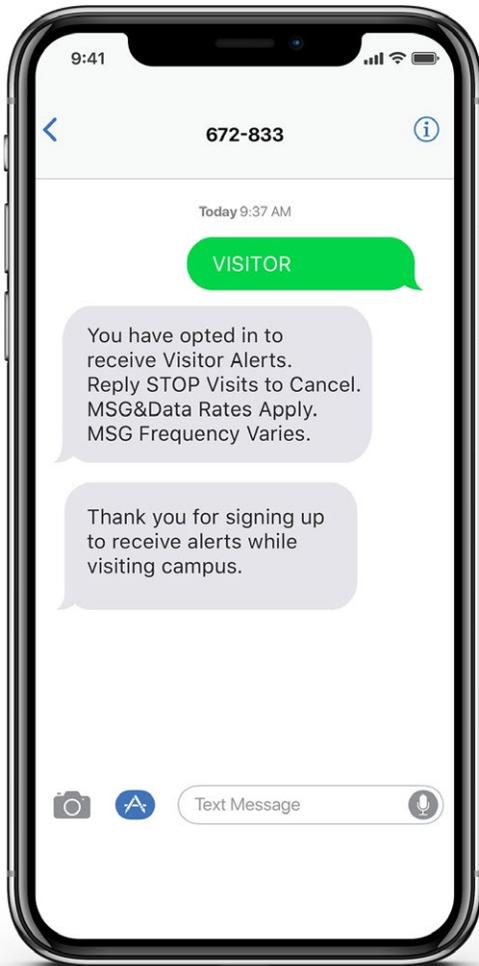
Along with its **80-member police department**, UCF employs off-duty law enforcement from five agencies for home football games. Approximately **150–200 police officers** provide safety and security on game days.

The university also uses Rave Alert's SMS Opt-In feature with law enforcement and fire rescue personnel during special events. Along with its 80-member police department, UCF employs off-duty law enforcement from five agencies for home football games. Approximately 150–200 police officers provide safety and

security on game days. The feature allows these first responders to opt in to Rave Alert temporarily by texting a keyword to a short code. As these first responders safeguard events, they receive text messages and information about particular situations. UCF sets the opt-in lists to expire by a specific date so first responders from outside agencies don't receive notifications after the event is over.

"We have an SMS Opt-In group, so the first responders that are working that particular game text to enroll," Thalheimer said. "We can send out messages to those first responders and target them specifically on game days. If we have a missing person, we can use Rave's SMS Opt-In to ping all those first responders, give them the description and all the information they need to know."

"We use SMS Opt-In for public safety and law enforcement, and it provides another layer of protection for us," he added.



Discover How SMS Opt-In Can Help Protect Your Temporary Campus Visitors

Safeguarding everyone on your campus, including temporary visitors, is imperative when an emergency occurs at your college or university. Having a way to maximize your crisis communication strategy and safety plans for your entire campus community will help them be prepared and stay safe while they're on your campus.

Rave Alert's SMS Opt-In feature can help you improve your critical communication coverage during an emergency, as well as highlight your commitment to safety and preparedness to your campus community. It provides an easy way for parents, contractors, camp counselors and others to be notified about adverse events by texting a keyword to a short code, without adding them to your database of record.

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