



Allianz Global Investors Maintains Steady Communications With Employees During Nearby Oil Leak

Background

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 MessageOne AlertFind 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.

Situation

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, Conn. office, a neighboring office 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.

Solution

The Allianz Emergency Management Committee, comprised of senior leaders from the Stamford location, was first assembled using AlertFind 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 AlertFind 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 6:00 am 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) number calls. The management team forwarded the (800) calls to the alternate office, but needed to ensure the staff could be there to manage the phones. According to Allianz Vice President Frank Garofalo, "With uncertainty about the office reopening and being safe for employees to occupy, we didn't want to take any chances of not having our main (800) phone number staffed that day. With AlertFind, 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 AlertFind, 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 AlertFind to notify our 190 staffers and let them know the office was closed for the day, but that 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 AlertFind 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 – any time, 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 AlertFind 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.”

“We chose AlertFind because of the ease-of-use and deployment, and also the impressive caliber of their service and technical support team,” said Garofalo. “We also found the synchronization with our PeopleSoft system to be a huge plus for ensuring easy and regular updates to employee data. Finally, AlertFind is probably one of the best values an IT director can find today – a fraction of what we would have expected to pay to cover 1,600 employees nationwide.”

AlertFind Ready for Action and Embedded IT

“After only testing AlertFind a few times, the oil leak allowed us to give it a thorough real-world test and it passed with flying colors,” said Garofalo. “We are currently using AlertFind on a regular basis as an embedded tool in our IT incident management to notify impacted employees of IT issues in a timely manner.”

About Allianz

Allianz Global Investors provides access to the specialized equity and fixed-income expertise of our affiliated institutional investment firms. Together, these firms manage more than \$635 billion (as of 6/30/06) and have a client list that includes more than half of the 100 largest corporations in America. Allianz Global Investors is a member of the Allianz Group (NYSE: AZ), a global financial services leader with a 112-year corporate history and a presence in more than 70 countries.

About Dell MessageOne

Millions of people around the world depend on Dell MessageOne on-demand services for business continuity, archiving and disaster recovery. More than one thousand CIOs at global companies including Allianz Global Investors, Siemens and the American Red Cross Lee County Florida, trust Dell MessageOne to prevent downtime, protect communications and data, and streamline compliance and discovery. Dell MessageOne is a wholly owned subsidiary of Dell Inc.

Contact Dell MessageOne

Call 888.367.0777 (512.652.4500) or visit www.messageone.com to request additional information or to schedule a meeting.

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