Fresno Pacific University Invests in Multi-Purpose Emergency Communications and Notification Protection

Fresno Pacific University is a rapidly growing four-year university located in southeast Fresno, in California's Central Valley. Like most university campuses, Fresno Pacific has an open, welcoming campus environment with hundreds of students and university employees on campus at any given time.

The university's Department of Campus Safety, headed by Chief Gary Mejia, operates 24/7 to help ensure the safety of its students, staff, and visitors. One of the department's vital responsibilities is emergency preparedness. To maximize the department's ability to respond rapidly and effectively in a crisis, Mejia and his staff knew they needed much faster, more comprehensive communications capabilities.

Safety and Mejia and his team turned to Metis Secure. Metis Secure develops advanced emergency communications and notification systems that help safety, security, and emergency personnel broadcast emergency instructions and receive critical information much more quickly. This means everyone can act much more rapidly and effectively in the face of sudden threats from extreme weather events and natural disasters to violent attacks.

Fresno Pacific's Metis Secure system vital emergency communications needs:

- It enables Campus Safety and other designated personnel to almost instantly broadcast alerts and instructions to every Help Station on campus, as well as to any other communications device connected to the Metis Secure system. This helps ensure that students, staff, and visitors know about the crisis at hand, and what actions they need to take to protect themselves.
- It provides a way for students, staff, and visitors to speak to Campus Safety personnel with the press of a button on any Help Station. The caller's location is transmitted automatically, so safety personnel can respond immediately if needed.

A Flexible, Phased Approach

The system centers on the Metis Secure Command Center control and integration software, which enables designated university personnel to instantly send actionable alerts and respond to help calls from any computer or mobile device. The software connects to strategically placed indoor and outdoor Emergency Help Stations, which broadcast voice and on-screen text instructions, along with sirens and flashing lights for urgency. Each Help Station also has a built-in help button that lets people in need immediately speak with Campus Safety to report important information or call for help.

In addition, the system integrates with Fresno Pacific's email/text provider, Blackboard Connect. That means Campus Safety personnel can send alerts simultaneously through Help Stations and to Blackboard's email and text databases—saving precious time in an emergency. The system operates on Fresno Pacific's IP network—no phone lines required. In addition, the Help Stations automatically form a built-in, back-up wireless mesh network for redundancy. The university's security integration partner, Industrial Electronics, retrofitted the outdoor Help Stations to Fresno Pacific's existing "blue light" towers using Metis Secure-provided brackets, saving the university significant funds. The system is connected to amplifiers and speakers in each tower, extending the distance over which alerts carry outdoors.

"The Metis Secure system arms our customer with advanced emergency communications capabilities," said Mike Moineau, Design Engineer/Branch Manager, Industrial Electronics Systems. "And, it was simple and straightforward to set up! Metis Secure configured the system at their facility and sent it to us ready for installation."

Conclusion

Chief Gary Mejia says of the system, "The system is so easy to use! Now, we can hit 'send' on an alert and literally within five seconds it's broadcasting far and wide. In a crisis, we'll be able to immediately tell our students and staff just what they need to do."

Because the ultra-flexible Metis Secure system is designed to easily grow over time, Fresno Pacific was able to install an initial system, with planned expansions in future budget cycles. And unlike other emergency communications systems, Metis Secure's platform can connect to almost any third-party IP system or device—including access control, video management systems, and a wide variety of building management devices—so it meets current challenges and flexes to meet future needs.

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