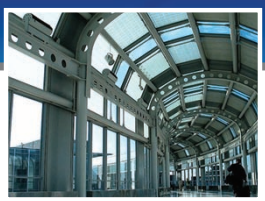
HipLink XS



Chicago O'Hare International Airport Usage Study

Problem:

Chicago's O'Hare International Airport consistently remains one of the busiest air terminals in the world. Accommodating more than 69 million passengers and over 928,000 flights annually, having direct communication and interoperability among the various departments, organizations, federal agencies, and emergency services throughout the airport is paramount to ensure the safety and security of the traveling public. However, being able to notify, assemble, and deploy the proper responders to emergency situations in the most efficient and effective manner possible presents several challenges.

Currently, the O'Hare International Airport Communications Center utilizes a paging program that requires them to support 500 dedicated terminals with 500 modems for sending pages to the appropriate responders. Each terminal requires an agent or operator intervention to be able to generate and send a page or wireless message. Following-up, escalating, and re-sending pages is extremely time consuming, making notifications for emergencies and non-emergencies tedious, costing valuable time and resources. Notifying the appropriate responders, agencies, and personnel can take several hours depending on the event.

The Communications Center would like to centralize all wireless communications under a more modern platform to streamline and automate much of their paging and wireless messaging needs. The Center would like to reduce the number of dedicated TAP lines to reduce some of the delay and costs associated with sending large volumes of pages. They would also like the ability to structure, or categorize, their responders according to various departments, agencies, or other factors. Having the ability to run a redundant, or back-up, configuration would provide additional load balancing and fail-over capabilities should there be a problem with their primary messaging server. Finally, utilizing a web based Graphical User Interface will help expedite system deployment, as no client software is required to be installed on any send terminal.

Solution:

After carefully evaluating several solutions including a custom in-house solution, the airport Communications Center decided to implement HipLinkXS Application Messaging into their notification center. The intuitive user interface and powerful administration of HipLinkXS ensured a smooth implementation and short learning curve for the center. Also, the modular design and scalability of HipLinkXS allows additional features and capacity to be added as needed.

Results:

HipLinkXS is an integral part of the O'Hare Communications Center. By utilizing a combination of Internet and analog wireless protocols, HipLinkXS provides a more robust messaging solution than their previous paging system. The Center can now use the speed and reliability of the Internet to send messages and pages, drastically reducing their paging and messaging costs. In addition, custom escalation and receiver groups have also been defined within HipLinkXS, enabling the Communications Center to automate many of the messaging functions that were previously performed via manual intervention. This has helped improve notification and deployment of emergency responders within O'Hare Airport from several hours to, depending on the situation, only several minutes.

Paging and wireless messaging are critical components for any response team, more so for airports where timely responses to situations are the difference between life and death. Having a reliable communication platform is paramount for the success of any airport response team. HipLinkXS brings reliable messaging to the O'Hare Communications Center carrier failover and architecture. Failover occurs when a message is sent over a defined protocol, but the message for whatever reason fails to be delivered over the carrier network. The message is then re-sent using a specified back-up protocol.

Chicago O'Hare International Airport Case Study

Finally, the robust Departments feature of HipLinkXS allows the Communications Center to group receivers logically according to location, agency, responsibility, severity or emergency, or any defining characteristic. The Departments feature also allows for distributed administration across all defined groups, so each group can assign an administrator to maintain user and device information, status, and more. This not only ensures the proper responders get notified of events, it also helps reduce complexity by streamlining administrative functions to keep receiver information current and accurate.

The O'Hare Communications Center has defined various Departments within HipLinkXS to provide effective communication to responders according to the type of event. For example, in the event that an airplane overshoots a runway, Fire, Ambulance, FAA, TSA, air frame manufactures, runway maintenance, and various other groups need to be notified and assembled in the timeliest fashion.

Departments allows Center dispatchers the ability to notify all necessary personnel from a single terminal by simply clicking on the Department name, typing a message and clicking send. This helps expedite sending messages and notifications to various internal and external agencies and groups, as they are all housed within the HipLinkXS notification server. Now, when events occur and teams of personnel need to be notified, the O'Hare Communications Center relies on HipLinkXS to send targeted messages to the right people in the fastest, most logical method possible.

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