



Public Service Credit Union (PSCU)

PSCU is the nation's leading credit union service organization (CUSO) and provides credit, debit, prepaid and bill payment, and mobile payments solutions and supporting services to over 800 Member-Owner credit unions. The company leverages the cooperative model to better serve credit unions and their members through scale, buying power, partnerships with payments industry leaders and access to best-in-class payments processing platforms. The combination of leadership in payments and a commitment to ongoing investment in technology and talent makes PSCU a strong partnering option to process, service and grow credit unions' card programs.

Challenges

Communicating with clients and employees is critical during a business continuity or life safety event. While PSCU already had an employee hotline, phone trees and emergency email in place, the company was looking for a platform that could leverage multiple communication paths simultaneously while also allowing for sophisticated reporting.

Solutions

Everbridge provides PSCU with a flexible, easy-to-use solution that can be quickly scaled depending on incident and event type. PSCU utilizes the system to keep employees safe and informed during weather related incidents, as well as routine events such as fire drills.



Q&A with James Green

Business Continuity Program Manager at PSCU

Can you tell us a little more about PSCU?

We were formed nearly 40 years ago as a cooperative to serve credit unions and help them grow. Today we provide payment processing services and call center support for over 18 million accounts that include credit, debit, prepaid, bill pay and mobile banking. We operate 24/7/365 call centers in several states to handle requests for information and service from our credit unions' members. Technology is a key enabler for the services we provide to our credit unions and members – they count on us to be available whenever they need help. Our technology infrastructure – from our telecommunications and call center service applications and tools, to the support we provide for member-facing, self-service applications – is a critical component of our service delivery model. We exist to serve the needs of the 800 credit unions that collectively own the PSCU cooperative.

As a business continuity program manager at PSCU, explain why you felt you needed to upgrade to the Everbridge critical communications platform?

I started with PSCU in 2013 and when I first got here our IT Department was already using the Everbridge Aware platform. I had worked with Everbridge previously at another employer and I recommended to PSCU that we migrate to the new platform. I saw the value in expanding communications to include all employees as we have main offices spread across the country in Tampa, Detroit and Phoenix and over 1800 workers.



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James Green
PSCU

What steps did you take to ensure a smooth implementation process?

We took a couple of key strategic steps that enabled us to have a successful implementation. First, we purchased the API and connected our HR platform to the Everbridge system. We wanted to make sure that our employee information was pushed automatically so we decided to go live only when there was an automatic feed in place.

I've seen companies run into major issues because they deploy systems that are not fully tested or they fail on the technology side. Taking the right precautions was key for us.

Next we made sure we had a thorough and widespread communication strategy across all levels of our company. We met first with our executive team and then later our senior leadership team to let them know that we had purchased this system, what we were using it for, and that we were going live with it. Then we sent out communications to all employees through multiple channels. We used signs, our video display monitors in all of our buildings and direct email to promote the system. We outlined specifically what the system was, why we were using it, and that they could be expecting alerts.

Finally, we created message templates for each location and loaded them into the system. We tried to think ahead and created a template for any type of weather event or incident that would require some type of immediate action. We had templates for tornado watch, tornado warning, fire, evacuation, etc. To ensure the same look and feel that our employees are accustomed to in our other messaging, we made sure to build our logo and branding into these messages as well. This was another important aspect of implementation – employees were previously getting messages via phone and text, but now the emails look similar to what they had seen in the past.

Are there any specific critical communication use cases you'd like to highlight?

We first used the system on a large scale for a fire drill in our Phoenix location. We have just over 500 employees there and we used Everbridge to notify everyone via text and email. We sent an initial notification instructing employees to evacuate and later on, an "all clear" message letting them know it was safe to return to the building. We had a huge positive response from our employees about that. They loved the multiple communication methods and how fast we sent the message out. They just thought it was clean, crisp and fast.

Everbridge was also useful in August when Tropical Storm Erika in the Atlantic was heading towards the US. In anticipation of the storm, we let everyone know, "Hey, we're open for business as usual. If that changes, you will get a communication via Everbridge, text, phone, and email." I think all of our employees liked that, and myself as a professional, I appreciated not getting 40, 50 inquiries a day asking the status of the facility. Thankfully PSCU was not impacted in any way from that storm.



What's next for PSCU and Everbridge?

We have decided to move forward with the purchase of Threat View and SMART Weather. We see Threat View as a huge value add for us in terms of having a variety of alert types in our arsenal. Regarding weather-related alerts, we've been averaging about five or six minutes for notifications to reach our stakeholders because of the amount of time between the National Weather Service issuing a warning and when our employees receive that information. With SMART Weather, certain weather events will trigger an all-employee communication immediately, cutting delivery time down to sixty seconds or less. In life safety, this is a huge time savings.

Anything else you'd like to share about Everbridge?

The main thing I want to emphasize is how easy the system is to use. A lot of software platforms have a very high learning curve and there's extensive lead time before people can truly use the system effectively. With Everbridge, within an hour or two, someone can master the system. That greatly helped our adoption and when I took this new platform to our network operation center folks, within a half hour they got it. It's a very easy system to use. Especially in the event of an emergency, if you're sending out emergency-related communications, you have enough on your mind already without having to deal with using a complicated communications system.