

What is Emergency Notification?

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According to **ACUTA** IP Summit Survey was taken weeks before the tragedy at Virginia Tech- "College Users Distrust Vendors' VoIP Claims."



It's no wonder. But that is another story or topic of debate- whichever you prefer.

ACUTA successfully identified a key need among all colleges and universities that **"the most beneficial applications that could evolve from IP communications deployment are unified messaging and emergency notification."**

UM however defined is still pretty much "build it and they may buy it" and yes, it does offer potential benefits but the devil is getting it all in place and working and at the cost stated.

With reflection on the events at Virginia Tech, I asked ACUTA *"how do you think UM and Emergency Notification will play in any requirements for any University seeking any VoIP solutions? Im thinking selfishly of my 11 year old daughter and when she gets to college- will she be safer, will something be in place to enhance communications to and from campus security, to the classroom and possibly to the student?"*

ACUTA: This survey was conducted several weeks before the tragic events at Virginia Tech, but the results show that emergency notification was on the minds of college and university communications technology managers even at that time. A total of 83% of respondents reported that emergency notification would be either a great potential benefit or some potential benefit of IP communications. While the survey did not ask them to describe the reasons for their opinions, the IP communications can provide the opportunity for both high-capacity, fast and simultaneous e-mail broadcasts, text messaging, and telephone message broadcast in the event of an emergency. In addition, some campuses control electronic signage via their IP networks, as well as security cameras, public computer kiosks, IP television systems, building access, HVAC, and other critical systems. All of these applications would be beneficial in the event of an emergency.

My second question is *can you define Emergency Notification?*

ACUTA: There is no single accepted definition of emergency notification that we know of, but most campuses would define it as a system and procedures that would notify the campus community of an emergency through multiple means such as e-mail, instant messaging, telephone calls, audible announcements, media announcements, signage, and other methods.

Publicly, my third question is *"how can the industry answer the call to the very specific need of emergency notification?"*

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ACUTA's Core Purpose: To support higher education communications technology professionals in contributing to the achievement of the strategic mission of their institutions.

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