



Emergency Management
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY



Emergency Notification System
December 8, 2013 Incident

Compiled: December 20th, 2013

Section I: Incident Summary

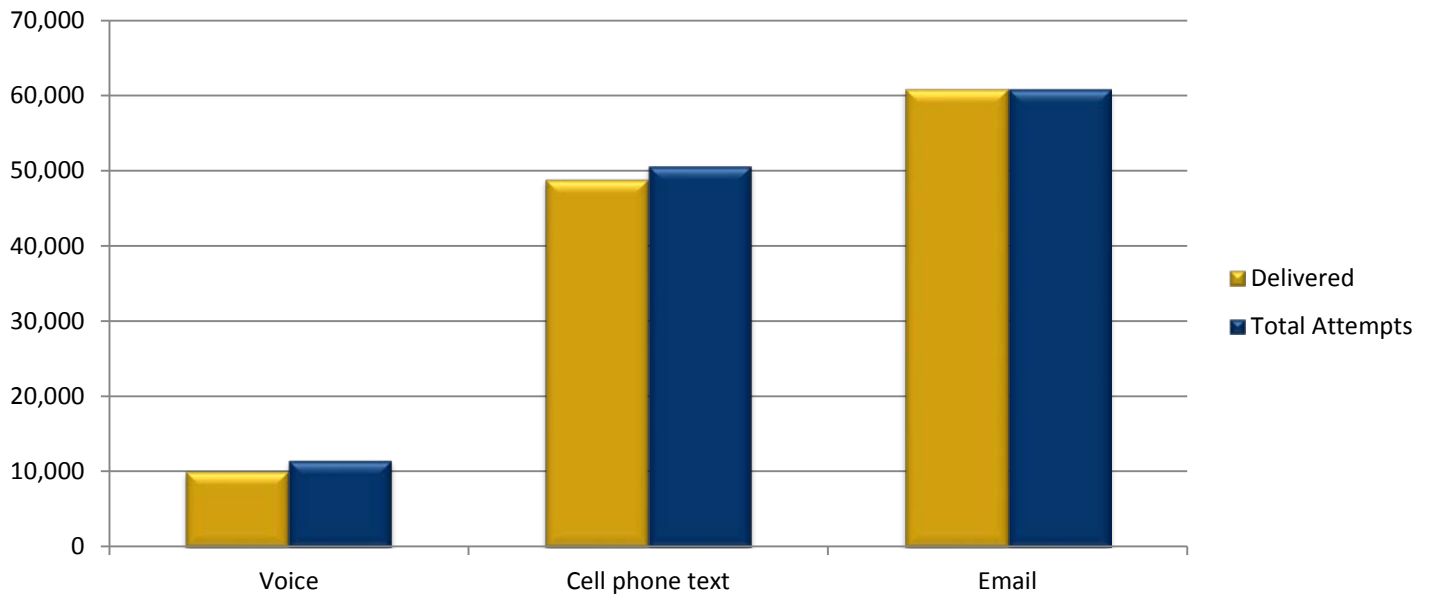
On December 8th, 2013, at approximately 11:00 am, Miami-Dade County Police (MDPD) responded to a shooting that occurred at a condominium in the area of SW 118th Avenue and SW 20th Street, just south west of the Modesto Maidique Campus. MDPD exchanged fire with a man who barricaded himself in his apartment. FIU Police initiated the FIU Alert emergency notification system at 12:24 pm utilizing all communication modalities: cell phone text messages and voice mails, email and social media. The message read as follows:

MDPD IS WORKING A BARRICADED SUBJECT IN THE AREA OF 118TH AVE AND S.W. 20TH STREET. MDPD IS ASKING TO AVOID THE AREA.

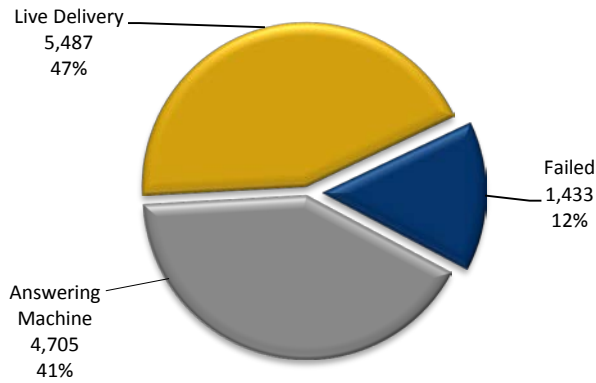
Miami-Dade Police subsequently entered the dwelling and FIU Police sent an all clear message to the University community at 5:18 pm.

Section II: FIU Alert™ Performance Evaluation Data

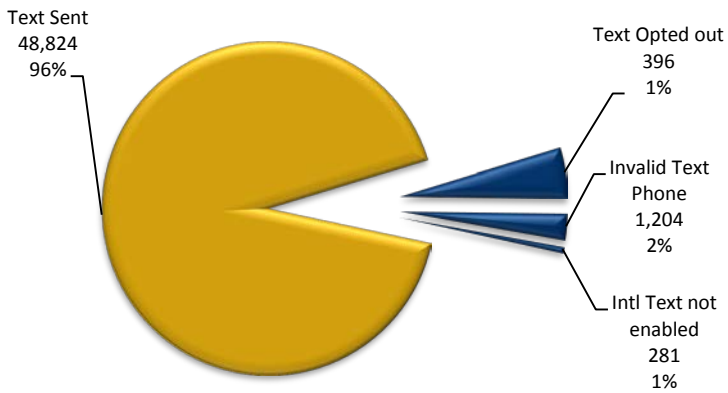
Blackboard Connect™ Device Deliveries



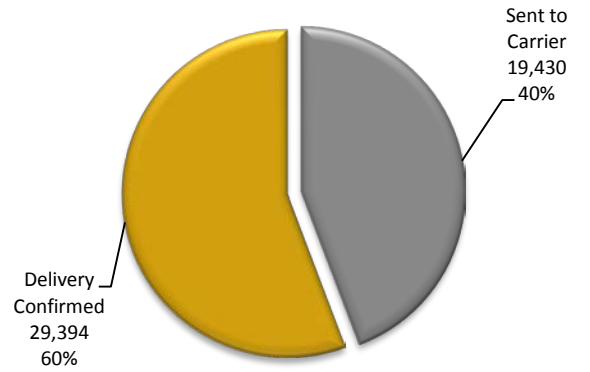
Voice Call Deliveries



Text Deliveries

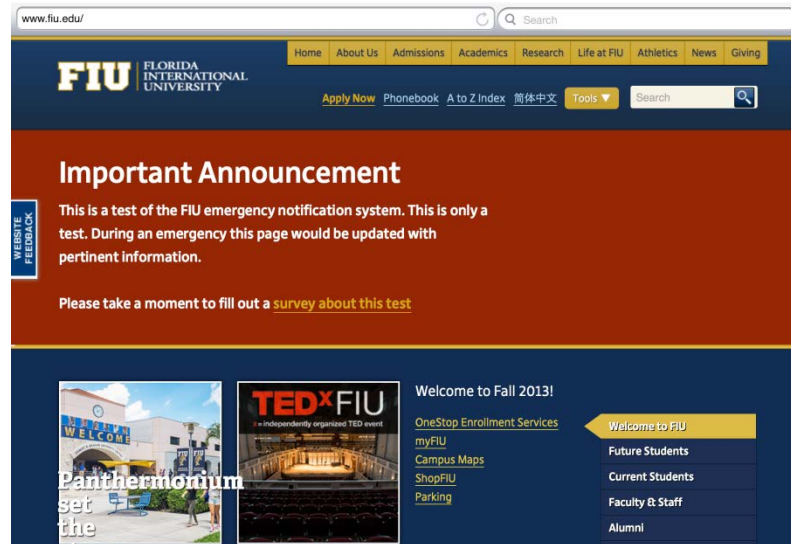


Text Deliveries Confirmation



Web & Outdoor Large Digital Displays

FIU Media Relations directs the main FIU webpage (www.fiu.edu) and the outdoor large digital display boards. Because these systems are manually operated, they are not used in the initial primary stage of rapid general notification. Instead, these may be used for follow up messages. External Relations did not receive any requests from FIU Police to send out any messages for this incident.



Social Media: Facebook® & Twitter® Deliveries

- Blackboard Connect™ successfully posted to the FIU Twitter® account.



MDPD IS WORKING A BARRICADED
SUBJECT IN THE AREA OF
118TH AVE. AND S.W. 20TH STREET.
MDPD IS ASKING TO AVOID THE AREA.

← Reply ↻ Retweet ★ Favorite ⋮ More

14
RETWEETS



9:24 AM - 8 Dec 13

- Blackboard Connect™ successfully posted to the FIU Facebook® account.



Section III: Issues & Solutions

140 character limitation on Cell phone text messaging

During an after-action meeting of the incident, the FIU Police department expressed an interest in modifying the user interface to limit text messages to cellphones to 140 characters, the same limit on Twitter. After inquiring with the vendor, we learned that this limit is not customizable but they may consider implementing it in their next version of their product.

Duplicate email and text alerts

Users received four (4) copies of the same email for the initial alert that was sent. FIU Police sent the initial alert twice because they needed to alert both the Modesto Maidique Campus and the Engineering Campus. When the second alert was sent, most methods of communication were selected unintentionally, including email. The 2 emails turned into 4 because the system was in a transition period where the method of email delivery was being changed, as such, 2 methods were active and therefore duplication was created. The method of delivery was being changed to increase efficiency of delivery. The issue with the duplication due to the transition period is no longer an issue as it has been resolved.

Section IV: Summary

- Despite the issues identified in the previous section, it is important to note that the system delivered alerts in a timely fashion.
- Police communication operators initiated the alerts expeditiously.
- The ad hoc message was effective in communicating the proper message.
- Some of the minor errors by staff issuing the alerts highlight the importance of good quality periodic training.
- The usage of the FIU Alert emergency notification system during this actual incident provided data for solutions that were implemented after some issues were discovered during the testing that was done of the system at the beginning of the fall semester. These were:
 - A significant delay of email delivery was reduced from up to 4 hours to a few minutes.
 - A credentialing issue where Blackboard Connect™ could not login and post to Facebook was corrected.
 - Prior to the first test of the system, 2,461 subscribers had opted out from the service after receiving a welcome message from the system. These users were opted back in and the welcome message has been disabled to reduce the number of users opting out, thereby increasing the user list observed in this last use of the system.