

Don't Wait for a Tragedy

Solving the 911 Challenge

The Challenge

When we dial 9-1-1, we expect that emergency personnel will be able to find us and send help without delay. This assumption is correct for traditional telephony in our homes, but what if an emergency call was placed from a VoIP phone that had been moved from its assigned location? How do emergency personnel know where the emergency is really taking place?

Enhanced 911 (E911) was developed to provide caller location information in the event that the caller is unable to provide that information to the emergency operator. For companies who have not deployed an E911 solution, the information supplied to call centers defaults to the front door address and phone number. VoIP phones create further complications since they are easily moved. Documenting VoIP phone moves and keeping their locations updated with emergency services is time consuming and often results in inaccurate information. For companies with several floors, buildings, or even campuses, a 911 call may not be routed to the correct call center, and even if it is, emergency responders have no way of knowing in what room or building the emergency is taking place if E911 has not been deployed.

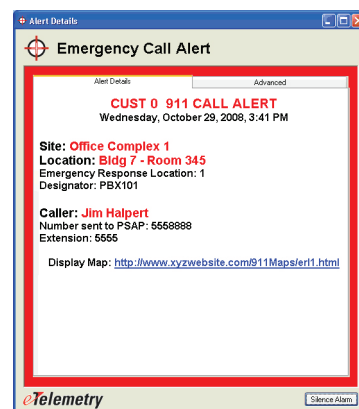
The consequences of improper location information were realized in the tragic death of a 39 year-old man in Gaithersburg, MD. Unfortunately, the man was unable to communicate his location and the address displayed at the emergency call center was that of an adjacent building. When EMS arrived, they could not find the caller and thought the call was an error. A cleaning person found his body 10 hours later.

To prevent this sort of tragedy, many states have passed E911 regulations requiring companies to implement some form of location discovery technology. Even if your state has not yet passed E911 legislation, it is still a company's responsibility to maintain a safe work environment—this duty is not met if its employees cannot get the help they need in an emergency.

The Solution

In order to provide a safe work environment and limit liability, companies are advised to deploy an E911 solution that provides location discovery technology and On-Site Notification (OSN). Location discovery is an essential part of E911, especially for VoIP networks. Location discovery technology monitors VoIP phone assets on the network and updates the call server database as soon as a phone moves. This technology ensures that accurate caller information, including the caller's building and room number, is reported to the 911 call center.

OSN alerts can be transmitted via screen pop to a desktop, email, or SMS to multiple members of internal personnel. The caller's name, location, and even a floorplan of the premises can be provided in OSN alerts. This functionality can be leveraged to alert local first responders (front desk, security or facilities personnel) to an emergency so that they can quickly provide assistance where necessary. Deploying location discovery coupled with OSN technology on your telephony network will not only limit liability and improve E911 compliance, it will also help to save lives.



On-Site Notification can automatically alert internal personnel when an emergency call is placed.

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