XOP Networks™ Group Alert and Conference Server™

for K-12 Campuses

Each day school officials are presented with situations that would benefit from a smart and efficient communication system designed to assist with information distribution and updates to parents, faculty and on occasion, emergency organizations.

While general notices and daily updates may have a less-urgent timeline, in an emergency situation, valuable minutes lost trying to locate printed lists of numbers and the actual time and personnel support needed to place calls can be critical. But emergencies do not happen every day. Consideration should be taken to plan and create a system which is two-fold--one that conveys information quickly efficiently for day-to-day messaging needs and one that provides powerful features to address crisis situations.

The Group Alert and Conference Server (GACS)™ from XOP Networks™ is such a system. From handling typical day-to-day information updates (i.e. class and weather related changes) to emergency group notifications and emergency event conferencing--the GACS is ready to answer the call eliminating old fashion calling trees.

With the XOP Group Alert and Conference Server, one call into the system can trigger simultaneous distribution of multiple types of messages -- voice, text and email--to thousands of individual recipient.

Synchronizing with the school database via LDAP allows parents and teachers to enter directory information and updates the contact database. No external databases outside of the school are maintained.

Alert and Inform
• Teacher/Parent updates. Preload the phone numbers and email addresses of all parents. Type or record a message and send out along with attachments such as homework and other informational flyers
• School administrators can contact teachers with updates and instructions to meet at a specific time and place
• School districts and individual campuses can inform all parents with details of school closings or delays
• Districts can partition a system to allow use by multiple schools

Communicate and Confer
• Send text messages and emails instantaneously while also sending pre-recorded or real time composed voice messages
• Give detailed instructions to multiple people with one phone call
• Find me capability continues to locate an individual and attempt to deliver the message to multiple numbers

Organize and Direct
With Firebar Conferencing administrators, safety organizations and police can have internal conference sessions during emergencies. For everyday use dial in numbers can be given to parents for 'one to many' discussions with teachers.

In Emergency Situations;
• In the event of a situation administrators can alert and bring into a conference call all necessary decisions makers from internal and external emergency responder groups including fire, EMS and police
• Notify parents via email, text and recorded voice messages
• District officials can alert and bring into a conference all principals, safety officials and others key responders
• Additional outside contacts can be stored in the address book and contacted connected at any time. Link local emergency personnel such as fire, EMS and police with a quick mouse click. Have additional contact information for local hospital, hazardous material and state or federal organizations

For Day to Day Use;
• Administrators and principles can send text or voice message updates and reminders to staff. Teachers can update their class lists with text, email or voice messages with instructions or assignments
• Schedule or create on the fly conference calls with board members, administrators and teachers
• Update parents with information on PTA meetings, school events or last minute changes
• Allow student and parent groups to utilize the system during off hours and weekends with no per use fees

The XOP Advantage

• In house solution - Save on monthly recurring charges and external security concerns
• Lower CAPEX - Group alerting and emergency conferencing in the same platform
• Lower OPEX - Use of VoIP minimizes monthly recurring network charges
• Return On Investment - When not handling emergencies, use for day to day conferencing and non-emergency information distribution
• Accurate Message Delivery - Synchronize with user database to define granularity of message delivery
• Multi-modal - Deliver messages in multiple formats for maximum coverage

Defined Group Alerts

ID	Total	Done	Not Done	Subject	Type	Status	Edit	Delete
19	1	0	1	School closing early	Dialin	PIN=06929; Not triggered yet	Edit	☐
20	1	0	1	School opening late	Dialin	PIN=67263; Not triggered yet	Edit	☐
21	1	0	1	Immediate Student Pickup	Dialin	PIN=43431; Not triggered yet	Edit	☐
22	1	0	1	Parent/Teacher Reminder	Dialin	PIN=57758; Not triggered yet	Edit	☐
23	1	0	1	Monthly PTA Meeting	Dialin	PIN=22593; Not triggered yet	Edit	☐
24	1	0	1	State Test Notification	Dialin	PIN=62649; Not triggered yet	Edit	☐

Messaging Features

Multiple Group Creation: For recurring messages to key groups, pre-load the group names and individual numbers into the system for quick message creation and delivery. Have additional emergency contacts in your address book so no time is lost during a situation.

Multi-modal Message Delivery: The system can deliver voice based notifications via PSTN to landline and cellular phones and through VoIP over the internet. Send text messages via short message service(SMS), email, pagers, instant message(IM) and computer screen pop. Voice and text messages can be sent separately or simultaneously. Enter text information and have the system deliver a voice message via 'text to speech' or record and send a voice message.

Single Phone Call Initiation: Approved administrators can dial into the system and based on the calling number (ANI) and/or the dialed number (DNIS) and message activation pin, initiate a message. This very quick method is secure by the ANI/DNIS/PIN match.

Instantaneous Message Creation: Since it is not possible to predefine messages for every kind of emergency situation, the system allows instantaneous creation of the alert message, at the time the alert is to be sent. The IVR system will prompt the user to record the notification message as part of the triggering process. This allows maximum flexibility in conveying accurate details.

Ease of Recording Messages: A user can record a voice message by dialing into the system and then respond to a few IVR commands. This message is then communicated to the selected individuals or groups. Record and store several different types of messages in advance from standard messages such as a reminder for a monthly meeting to a pre-set emergency message such as a fire drill. Messages can be created and sent in real time to pre-existing groups for special situations when more specific information needs to be communicated.

Caller ID Insertion: Specify a caller ID number to be sent along with the outgoing voice message. This distinguishes emergency calls from non-emergency calls. By storing this number in a mobile phone address book, the name "Emergency Call" can be displayed when an emergency message is being received.

Text to Speech Based Message Creation: A web-based user interface can be accessed from anywhere via the internet making it easier to administer messaging sessions. Messages can be created via 'text to speech' conversion technology.

Message Preview: Links to the recorded messages are displayed in the user's account area on the system. With a click of their mouse, the user can listen to and if needed re-record the message. A great way to set up weekly or monthly reminder messages as well as basic group alert messages.

Built in 'Find-me' Capability: The system will attempt to deliver voice messages to a user's listed contact numbers in succession. This assures that the intended party receives a message without clogging the network with unnecessary repetitive phone calls.

Recurring Calls: For messages that need to be sent out periodically, the system provides the flexibility of setting up messaging sessions on an hourly, daily, weekly or monthly schedule. This can be a great time saver when sending out a meeting reminder to multiple people.

Message Delivery with Feedback (voting): The system allows provisioning of feedback based upon DTMF digit inputs. A message recipient can indicate his/her preference by pressing DTMF digits. For example, after hearing the announcement, the recipient may be asked to press '1' if he/she will attend a meeting, or '2' if not. The system automatically tallies all the digits and summarizes the results and posts them in the user's account.

Multiple Message Delivery Modes

On the Fly Message Delivery: Create call-out groups in advance using the web based user interface. When needed simply call into the system, provide the activation pin, record a message and then press # to initiate message delivery. The system will instantaneously start delivering the recorded message to all members of the group.

Pre-recorded Message Delivery: Record and store multiple messages ahead of time. When needed, call into the system, provide the activation pin, and then press # to initiate message delivery. The system will instantaneously start delivering the pre-recorded message to all members of the group.

Email Triggered Voice Message Delivery: A user or a computer can send an email to the system with specifics of the message that needs to be delivered. The system will parse the email for information, convert text to speech and then will deliver the selected message to the members of the desired group.

Scheduled Message Delivery: After recording one or more messages, a user can schedule the delivery of messages during a preferred time window. Additional filters are available that control the message delivery.

Answering Machine Detection: Using sophisticated algorithms to detect answering machines, the system can be configured to either leave a message for the recipient or move to the next number in sequence.

System Features

Flexible Database: Multiple ways for entering contact information into large databases is provided. Information can be entered manually or by downloading files in CSV or other popular database formats.

Synchronization with External Databases Using LDAP: The system's LDAP client allows periodic synchronization with external databases such as Microsoft® Active Directory that support LDAP servers. This allows automatic updates to various call-out groups configured on the system.

Voice Quality: The system uses state-of-the-art hardware with extensive Digital Signal Processing based algorithms that result in crystal clear audio quality.

Scalable Number of Ports: The system can be equipped from one T1/E1 (24/30 ports) to 10 T1s (240/300 ports) in one industrial grade chassis. For higher densities ATCA and Compact PCI based chassis options are available.

User Interface Customization: The template driven user interface can be customized (logo, colors, etc.) to an organization's brand.

Real Time Status Reporting: View messaging sessions in real time. See the status of each call as it is being made and the overall status of the entire messaging session. The system provides a graphical view of the percentage of call completions, calls answered by answering machines and undelivered attempts.

Real Time Call Session Management: Web-based controls for managing call sessions in real time are provided in an easy to use control panel. With a few mouse clicks a user can at any point stop and then re-start a call session.

Call Activity Report: Call activity reports are automatically created capturing all call processing events associated with the messaging session as the calls are dialed out. The report is then posted in the user's account for future reference.

High Availability Architecture: The system can be deployed in geographically separated locations in a 1:1 hot standby configuration. Automatic database replication between locations, along with disk-mirrored hard drives in RAID-1 configuration ensures maximum uptime.

Automatic Health and Usage reports: The system will send automatic reports to the system administrator on a periodic basis. The reports provide valuable data about the overall health of the system and system usage in the period specified.

Backup and Restore: Backup of all critical configuration data including user information, database, scheduling information, recorded messages is done automatically. The backup can be performed at predetermined times or on demand.

Remote Management Access: A separate management interface is available that can be accessed over the Internet for routine performance checks on the system.

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