

Tarrant County College District

Location: Tarrant County, Texas
Number of Students: 46,000
Number of Employees: 4,000+

Tarrant County College District (TCCD) is a public community college in Tarrant County, Texas. The college consists of five main campuses as well as training centers, an offsite district multipurpose center, the Alliance Airport, and a corporate training facility.

We spoke with Kirk Driver, Director of the Department of Emergency & Risk Management at TCCD, to learn how Alertus has helped their campus improve safety and disseminate critical emergency information to nine locations.



Challenge

As TCCD's campus facilities and emergency management department grew, they realized that their outdated email alert system wouldn't cover enough ground to ensure alerts would be distributed across multiple campuses.

Solution

Driver learned about Alertus through its "Safe in Seconds" Initiative, which offers Alertus Desktop™ Notification at no cost to schools and nonprofit organizations. Desktop alerting is easy to use, fast to deploy, and offers flexible options for organizations that need to reach many people over a large area or multiple locations.

"What stood out to us once we began using Alertus Desktop was Alertus' customer support," said Driver. "At the time, we only had one person in our IT Department who was responsible for getting Alertus up and running, so naturally, we all had a lot of questions. Alertus customer support gave us a great deal of time, attention, and assistance, and treated us with care."

With Alertus, Driver found that it was easy to manage and distribute notifications and loved the fact that he could send targeted alerts to various campuses. With 43 different jurisdictions within the county, he could leverage Alertus devices at one campus and not impact the others.

Thanks to a positive initial experience, Tarrant County College decided to expand their mass notification system with Alertus. By 2014, they added 300 Alert Beacons® across the district, 5,000 Cisco phones for VoIP Phone integration, Digital Signage, Microsoft Teams Integration, and the Fire Alarm Control Panel Integration. They use the AlertAware® Mobile App to send push notifications to thousands of their students.

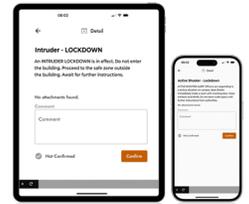
They also use Rave Mobile Safety to distribute warnings, but they leverage Alertus and Rave separately to categorize their notifications by those that affect the district and those that affect the campus. For incidents that affect the TCCD campus, they



Alertus Desktop™ Notification can deliver a facility-wide emergency notification with attention-grabbing full-screen overrides

use Alertus, while if something affects the operational status of one campus or if it is an immediate life safety situation, they activate both Alertus and Rave.

Alertus' Microsoft Teams integration also provides TCCD with a one-way push of information out to their campus community. Driver appreciates Alertus's ability to unify district and campus notifications within a single system.



Notification Coverage & Support

For the past 13 years, TCCD has enjoyed a great relationship with Alertus. They are required by the State of Texas to distribute mass notification emails in an emergency, but they are proud to further that requirement and cover a wider footprint with the Alertus System capabilities. "Going beyond our scope of mass notification requirements increases peace of mind in reaching students and visitors with critical information," said Driver.

He's found that working with Alertus has provided a way to gain a lot of coverage. "The ability to reach 17,000 computers across campuses and increase our capabilities has been a game changer," said Driver. He also noted that the system is easy to use and has been effortless for them while training new employees.

"Pricing has been great from the start as well as account management and customer service," said Driver.

System Testing

TCCD conducts frequent testing and semester drills on every campus, as well as operational testing, allowing them to determine how well everything performs. "Recently, we experienced a massive phone outage that interrupted our phone lines into our police dispatch center, so we leveraged Alertus to distribute alerts across campus with instructions on what to do, running the message every two hours until it was resolved," said Driver. They leverage Alertus about 50-75 times a year, and he is pleased with their current mass notification structure.

Driver simply just believes in the product. When other districts reach out to him, he is always willing to serve as a positive reference and invites other districts out when they are doing drills to see Alertus in action. He and his team show others how easy it is to activate and distribute alerts, and performance has always been great.



The wall-mounted Alertus Alert Beacon® sounds, flashes, and displays an alert message in the event of an emergency



Alertus' fire alarm interface can activate and distribute emergency alerts over multiple communication paths



Alertus' digital signage override software transforms digital signage devices into intelligent emergency alerting appliances



VoIP Phone Notification transforms office phones into an emergency communication system