



**More and more organizations are turning to web-based “software as a service” to attain the most advanced systems without the capital cost. Utility-based pricing offers a return on investment from the very first use.**

## The challenge

The Association of University Chief Security Officers and the Higher Education Funding Council for England have rightly drawn attention to the need for universities to have plans in place to deal with emergencies. As their guide, ‘Planning for and Managing Emergencies’, makes clear, incidents come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. In recent years, floods, fires, contagious diseases and shootings have all affected higher education institutions (HEIs) either in the UK or elsewhere, attracting a great deal of media attention.

Less visible were the countless ‘mini-emergencies’ that impacted those living and working on campuses, day in, day out. Break-ins, protest marches, burst pipes, power failures, staff sickness and a host of other problems have all caused difficulties in the past and no doubt will continue to do so.

Based as it is on the experience of a wide range of private and public institutions in handling past emergencies and the best practice that has resulted, the AUCSO / HEFCE guide makes the job of writing or revising an emergency plan for an HEI much easier. But, as it points out, the success of any plan depends on effective communication when the time comes to put it into effect. Therein lies an enormous challenge: time after time, poor communication has caused problems for those dealing with major incidents.

**“Communication methods and their management are a critical part of your planning process”**

AUCSO and HEFCE, 2008

## Effective communications

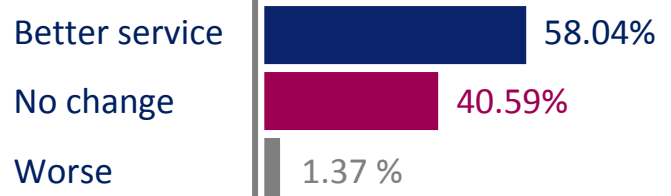
When disasters strike, HEIs must communicate quickly and effectively with staff, students, neighbouring communities and anyone else who could be affected. Thousands of people may need to be warned about the situation that has developed and be kept up to date as events unfold. Some will need to take action to protect themselves or their property. Others must simply be kept out of harm’s way.

Traditionally, the task has been fraught with difficulty. Now, there’s a solution that makes good use of the technologies people use to communicate every day. We call it HTK Campus Direct, and it’s as valuable for business-as-usual communications as it is when emergencies strike. You can use it to keep staff and students informed about events of interest, changes to lecture venues and schedules, and all the other things that happen on and around a busy campus.

## Designed for today

HTK Campus Direct is one of a family of services we’ve developed to meet the needs of different organisations.

In a recent survey by one of our Direct customers, over 99% of respondents said they valued the service as useful, and 58% said it gave them a better opinion of the organisation.



A tailored solution, it provides the multiple communication channels needed to keep communities informed about events. When necessary, it can also be used to warn them about emergency situations, explaining clearly what people should do to protect themselves and their property.

HTK Campus Direct is designed for the multi-channel world we live in today. The product of many years of industry-leading expertise and experience, it uses a combination of phone calls, text messages, emails and postings to web sites to supplement or replace radio broadcasts, newsletters and other traditional ways of getting messages out to large – and often widely distributed – audiences.

Information can be broadcast to everyone in the community or targeted groups of individuals based on their geographical location, affiliation with departments or halls of residence, or using other details captured when they subscribe.

HTK Campus Direct also includes inbound response channels, such as mobile text messaging and interactive voice response (IVR) using speech recognition, to automate routine enquiries that would otherwise distract staff from more important tasks. Incoming calls are dealt with much more quickly and handling costs are significantly reduced.

## Expertise

Our expert consultants will help you integrate HTK Campus Direct into your standard procedures and emergency plans, working with you to create clear and concise template messages for you to use in different situations, with clear guidance on what and what-not to do.

Optionally, a managed bureau service can be provided to facilitate outbound communication during and after an incident, including expert moderation and publishing of the information broadcast, and liaison with other organisations such as the Police and national media.

This expertise has been gained through unique insight and experience dealing with UK emergency planning and major incident handling, including operation of the National Police Portal and its use during the 7/7 London bombings.

## Secure and reliable

HTK Campus Direct runs in HTK's professionally-managed and highly-secure automated communications centre, capable of handling thousands of simultaneous telephone calls alongside high volumes of both incoming and outgoing text messages and emails.

The centre is managed in accordance with ISO27001 and is supported around the clock, 365 days a year. All HTK staff have National Security Clearance to NPPV level.

## Easy to use

HTK Campus Direct is easy to use. It's offered as a fully-managed hosted service, so there's no need for expensive up-front investments in hardware or software and all the service features can be managed via a simple web based user interface. Regulations require you to get people's permission before sending them warnings and other information by phone, text message or email, so the first step will be to set up a web page where they can opt-in.

Designed to integrate with your existing online services, the web page will also ask people to provide whatever details you need to correctly target your communications – their address, whether they want to receive messages by phone, text or email, and so on. Users are given a password so they can change these details as often as they wish.

Detailed records are kept throughout to help you demonstrate compliance with relevant laws, regulations and procedures. Audit trails are kept both of all system usage and activity, including every message sent or received.

## Tried and tested

HTK Campus Direct is a tried and tested solution, proven to be effective in a range of different situations.

HTK Police Direct™ – a parallel service tailored to the needs of Britain's police service – is the official National Policing solution for public warning and informing.

Suffolk Constabulary uses the service to offer advice in crime reduction and keep people in touch with problems affecting their community – major accidents, vandalism, burglaries, bogus callers and so on. In a recent survey, 58% said it had positively improved their opinion of the police.

In the configuration of a shared service working across departments, agencies and organisations, offering on-demand utilisation and best-value pricing, communication can be truly joined-up and delivered in a quality way – whatever the situation.