

Oxfordshire County Council Switches to Free Emergency Texts



The Customer:

Oxfordshire is famous for its University and the Mini. The County Council is responsible for £0.5 billion of public money and employs a staff of 20,000 to deliver a full range of services to businesses and 615,000 residents located across the county.

The Challenge and Solution:

Oxfordshire County Council wanted to update their emergency text messaging system, which they had been using since 2003.

John Kelly, County Emergency Planning Officer at Oxfordshire County Council said,

“We reviewed the use of our existing system and decided to improve resilience by introducing Text Message Server. We believe it is vital that we can give warning to the public and alert our staff through text messaging. The advantage of the Avanquest solution is that it is free to the public. The small cost of our existing system per year to the public hindered take up.”

Over the last decade, ‘texting’ has become the social messaging medium of choice. However, SMS is now also being seen as indispensable for more business-like purposes; Staff and customers can be kept up-to-date with immediate verified delivery, back-end processes can give out automated notifications and vast amounts of money can be saved by putting in place a simple communications channel that integrates with existing systems.

Text Message Server works with almost every business application, ‘straight from the box’, with the additional API (Application Programming Interface) covering any required 3rd-party software



integration. SMS messages can be sent and received on the desktop and/or the software can be used to work with alerting and other automated systems

The Benefits:

Residents can sign up via the Council’s website to receive text messages warning them about incidents such as major traffic disruptions, details of evacuation centres or even terrorist incidents.

The ability to send one message to many recipients saves time in an emergency situation.

