

Keeping it Simple—Managing Business Continuity Challenges with Varolii Profiles™

Technology firm maintains rapid employee communication capabilities for over 21,000 employees worldwide in 135 offices



With over 21,000 employees on six continents, many of them highly mobile, the leading consulting firm chose Varolii Profiles to help them manage emergency response groups and keep all staff informed during critical events. Profiles helps the company manage the complex communications component for a business assurance program – which keeps their widely dispersed staff informed of critical events while managing emergency response groups within their mobile workforce.

Profiles enables companies to rapidly communicate in urgent or time-sensitive situations through the rapid delivery of guaranteed, interactive notifications. To ensure the greatest reach, Profiles can reliably deliver thousands of notifications per minute, through any contact channel – including voice, SMS (text message), e-mail, fax and TTY.

An Answer to Communication Challenges

The firm foresaw a number of challenges based on the nature and scope of their business operations. These included:

- Managing cultural, statutory/regulatory, and technical differences among countries
- Competing for employees' attention in an information overload environment
- Reaching a mobile workforce, which made creating location-based teams problematic

To meet these challenges, the office used Profiles' flexible, role and team-based access capabilities to allow local-level maintenance of the platform. In addition, they developed a set of best practices around emergency management.

Keeping it Simple

The consultants developed a consistent, sustainable set of locally managed response and communications plans. Best practices included recommendations to develop two teams (an Incident Control Team and an "All Staff" team) and a selective deployment of Profiles' feature set in a way that best met organizational goals.

Their best practices also helped them selectively enable the capabilities in Profiles that they deemed necessary to help coordinate responses while "keeping it simple", including:

- **Local:** The ability to tailor messages for local requirements.
- **Custom:** The use of Profiles' custom data field capabilities to capture business continuity and crisis management information on a per-employee basis.
- **Multi-Channel:** The option of connecting employees through Profiles' multi-channel capabilities directly to the company's 24/7 live Emergency Hotline.
- **Centralized:** Using Varolii's Message Center™ (the inbound component of Profiles) to host their Office Status Hotline meant employees could call a toll-free number and hear regular recorded updates about office closures and other emergencies.

CLIENT

A leading strategy and technology consulting firm

CHALLENGE

Keeping staff effectively informed of critical events while managing emergency response groups in a mobile workforce.

SOLUTION

Deploying Varolii Profiles™, which allowed rapid communication to a large, mobile field force.

RESULTS

- **Usage:** The company was able to communicate effectively during incidents four times in less than a year (see following page)
- **Personalization:** Use of Varolii's unique capabilities ensures messages are tailored for local recipients, which enables more relevant business continuity communications.
- **Custom Data:** Quick creation of custom data fields that enable crisis management information to be stored in Profiles on a per-employee basis, further improving relevance.
- **Central Control Base:** Use of Varolii Message Center™ as an inbound complement to outbound communication, allows employees to call in to a centralized, toll-free number to hear recorded status updates. Message Center also enables employees to post status updates.

“Profiles worked well during several real-world emergencies - the ultimate test.”

– *Leading Technology Firm, Operations Manager*

Reliability and Utility – the Implementation Proves its Worth in the Field

The final test of the value of a business continuity communications deployment occurs when there is a critical event or emergency situation. With their size and global deployment, the consulting firm has experienced a number of events that tested both their organizational best practices as well as their Profiles deployment. In each of these cases, they noted that Profiles performed as needed in aid of their emergency response and communications efforts.

Incidents putting Varolii Profiles to use included:

- **July 2007 – A steam line explosion Manhattan:** notified and accounted for affected staff.
- **September 2007 – Southern California wildfires:** created an ad hoc team to alert staff traveling to the region and provide ongoing updates
- **February 2008 – Colorado Springs snowstorm:** Provided staff with updates about office status as well as delivering guidance from local authorities, helping ensure staff safety, and providing operational management.
- **March 2008 – Atlanta tornado:** updated staff about road closures and office status, helping protect staff and maintain as much operational capability as possible.

Future BC Communication Plans

The use of Varolii Profiles has proved a valuable adjunct to the company’s existing business continuity programs. In the future, the business assurance department plans to expand the utility and reach of its Profiles deployment, including:

- **Human Resources:** Integration of Profiles with their HR database to make updates simpler, more automatic, and more consistent. Integration will also simplify the process for employees, as they will need to provide their contact information once only.
- **Business Continuity Application:** Integration of Profiles with their business continuity application to allow delivery of Profiles’ messages from within the application itself and to store any information deemed sensitive within the business continuity application.
- **Traveler Services:** Integration of Profiles with their own Traveler Tracking Service, to allow them to notify their business travelers who might be affected by an emergency situation.

ABOUT VAROLII

Varolii® provides on-demand communication software and services that enable organizations to more effectively reach and interact with their customers and employees, getting the best result from every interaction.

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