Message Mapping: Can You Hear Me Now?

Robert C. Chandler, Ph.D.
Director, Nicholson School of Communication
About Everbridge

- Leader in incident notification systems
- Fast-growing global company with more than 1,000 clients in more than 100 countries
- Serve the Global 2000, healthcare systems, state and local government, federal government, military, financial services firms, and universities
- 100% focused on incident notification solutions that merge technology and expertise
Agenda

Part 1: Presentation

• The latest rules for message mapping
• Must-have tools for creating messages
• Why formalized, planned communication is vital to emergency preparedness

Part 2: Q&A
Q&A

Note:
slides are currently available to everyone on blog.everbridge.com

Use the Q&A function to submit your questions.
Bracing for the 2010 Hurricane Season

Message Mapping: Can You Hear Me Now?

Dr. Robert Chandler
University of Central Florida
### Overview

Campus safety is a vital concern at the University of Connecticut. The University Alert Notification System provides a number of ways in which the University may contact the community in the event of an emergency. The components of the University Alert Notification System include website alerts, email, voice mail, outdoor sirens and Code Blue Phone Kiosks. Each of these components is intended to enhance communications during an emergency situation.

In the event of an emergency, this website will provide the latest information, including possible action. Regular updates will be posted as they become available.

Periodic testing of each of the alert components will be conducted; the university community will be notified in advance of any tests.

In any emergency situation, reacting quickly and calmly is of utmost importance. Obtain general information about [University Alert Notification System](#) and learn more about campus safety.

### News and Announcements

**Register Your Cell Phone**

The University has created a text message alert service as one method by which members of the UConn community may be contacted in the event of an emergency. Please register your cell phone today.

It's easy to do - follow the [registration link](#).

Log in using your NetID and password, and then enter your cell phone number and provider.

To verify or edit your existing cell phone information, follow the [registration link](#).

Log in using your NetID and password to view your information.
The challenges: Communication (Just a few…)

• Insufficient communication planning

• Psychological noise

• Communication breakdowns (messages, processes, people)

Crisis communicators must overcome these challenges
The challenges: Recipient / Message

- Attention
- Perception
- Understanding
- Comprehension

- Selection
- Behavioral request
- Feedback

Crisis communicators must overcome these challenges
Three tiers of an effective message

**Tier One**
Long-term core messages of 3 or 4 words
Used in all phases of an event
High redundancy

**Tier Two**
Three memorable phrases
Used during an event alert phases
Modern redundancy

**Tier Three**
Three sentences with limited word counts
Used during acute phase of an event
Little redundancy
Anatomy of an emergency notification message

DA 4 - 3 & 30 - 60 & 6

Danger - Action Structure
4 Key Components
3 sentences & 30 words
60 readability score & 6th grade reading level

(Chandler Method)
Four components of effective emergency notification messages

- Information
- Urgency
- Instructions
- Confirmation
The solution: Message Maps

What are Message Maps?

- A database of messages in predictable sequences (templates, sample wording, etc.)
- Checklist of important messages, audiences, etc. to serve as roadmap for communicating
- Clear, concise messages created in advance of an incident that simplify complex concepts and improve communication during chaos.
- Useful before, during, and after an incident as well as for routine and on-going communication.
Audience poll

Have you implemented message maps in your notification system?

- O Not started
- O Working on it
- O Completed
Audience results
Next step:
Creating a basic Chandler message map in five easy steps

1. Begin with the overall communication goals in mind
2. Determine the messages & audiences (who & what) for each Crisis Phase
3. Identify three sub-points that relate to the goal for each
4. Create matrix of Predictable Sequences for Messages
5. Create three sentences for each message goal (Tier 3)
Message matrices

• Who / what / how of messages
• How to build a message matrix
## Message matrices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Key Messages</th>
<th>Com. Channel</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Spokesperson</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>General public</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Basic message mapping tools

- Stock templates
- Word choices
  - Keyword lists
  - Lexicon
  - Thesaurus
- Goals and strategies
Next step:
The good and the bad of incident notification

- Use multiple avenues to reach people
- Ensure a reliable technical infrastructure
- Use simple and specific messaging
- Appoint the right people to address the emergency
- Evaluate and assess potential messages for optimal format
- Develop a comprehensive message plan, including maps

- Waiting too long to take the opportunity to notify people
- Letting the rumor will take the place of needed information
- Not reaching audiences through their highest-probability modalities
- Not having proper technologies to handle notification situations
- Letting delays elapse between the stages of a crisis
Effective communication strategies

• Be first, be right, be credible
• Acknowledge with empathy
• Explain and inform about risk
• Describe what you know, don’t know, and what you’re doing about it
• Commit to continued communication
• Keep communication channels open
Always remember

- Nothing can destroy hard-earned credibility more quickly than failure to communicate well in a crisis.
- The message you send represents everyone in your organization from the governor to the on-scene responders.
- Only quick, confident, actionable, and easily understandable communications will ensure your constituents’ life-safety.
Incident Notification

Marc Ladin
Chief Marketing Officer, Everbridge
Incident notification solutions address common communication challenges

- **Communicate quickly, easily, and efficiently** with large numbers of people in minutes, not hours, making sure that the lines of communication are open

- **Receive feedback from your messages** by using polling capabilities

- **Ensure two-way communications** to get feedback from message receivers

- **Reduce miscommunications and control rumors** with accurate, consistent messages

- **Satisfy regulatory requirements** with extensive and complete reporting of communication attempts and two-way acknowledgements from recipients

- **Deliver refined, prepared, timed messages** to each pre-designated audience group, by scenario
Key evaluation criteria for an incident notification system

• Experience *and* expertise
• Ease of use
• Ease of integration
Missed anything? Slides are currently available on blog.everbridge.com

Use the Q&A function to submit your questions.
Crisis communication resources by Robert C. Chandler, Ph.D.

Additional authored or co-authored books include:

• Surviving the Pandemic: A Communication Management Guide for Business
• Crisis and Emergency Communication Planning
• Media Relations
• Crisis Communication Planning
• Pandemics: Business Continuity Planning Priorities for the Coming Outbreak
• Disaster Recovery and the News Media
• Managing Risks for Corporate Integrity: How to Avoid an Ethical Misconduct Disaster

Available on Amazon.com (free shipping) and other online booksellers.

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Contact information

Robert C. Chandler, Ph.D.
rcchandl@mail.ucf.edu
1.407.823.2681

Marc Ladin
marc.ladin@everbridge.com
1.818.230.9700

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White papers, literature, case studies
www.everbridge.com/resources

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• System Demo (November 16)
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1 Point for each webinar