

Measuring Critical Communications Effectiveness:

An Analysis of Private Sector Broadcast Confirmation Data

 Default Contacts
 User Pref Contacts
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Executive Summary

Successful crisis management depends on an organization's ability to manage critical communications. This means ensuring fast, efficient delivery of an important message as well as determining if recipients receive and understand its content. Measuring the recipient confirmation rate is an effective way to quantify success of these factors.

An analysis of message confirmation rates from private sector customers (48,162 broadcasts representing 7.1 million messages) revealed the following best practices:

Optimizing for Early Message Delivery is Important

- Using efficient, text-based paths early in the delivery cycle is critical
- On first attempt, text-based paths have a **4X** greater confirmation than voice
- In addition, **90%** of confirmations occur within the first 3 contact attempts

Using Multiple Communication Paths is Essential

- Using multiple message path types increases the likelihood of confirmation
- Multipath broadcasts have a **79%** higher confirmation rate than a single path

Allowing Recipients to Set Preferences Boosts Confirmation

- Broadcasts with contact preferences enabled show higher confirmation
- Confirmation rates are **44%** higher than default setting broadcasts

Utilizing Multiple Paths & Contact Preferences is Optimal

- Data shows **using more than 3 paths is ideal** when both are enabled
- Rates are higher when **email, SMS, phone & Mobile Member** are used

Measuring Effectiveness

In the critical communications world, analyzing data associated with notifications allows us to measure the overall effectiveness of crisis communications, as well as gauge customer success in using EMNS tools across verticals and industries. Examining this data can reveal fresh insights that can be leveraged to help other customers moving forward. For this reason, an analysis of broadcast confirmation rates was performed using customer data extracted from the Everbridge system. The findings of this analysis are presented in the white paper below.

Broadcasts and Confirmation Rates Explained

Broadcast

A broadcast is the act of sending out critical messages to a predefined list of recipients for a set amount of time. From a data perspective, an individual broadcast groups all the messages, confirmations, and contacts under a single logical entity.

Confirmation Rate

The broadcast confirmation rate is the percentage of contacts who indicated they received a message (via reply to an email, SMS, phone, etc.) out of the total number of contacts who were sent a message during the broadcast. The confirmation rate enables management to understand if the information they are attempting to communicate is being delivered and understood by their contact base.

Background

Critical Communications

During a crisis, getting the right message to the right individual is essential in order to successfully manage the situation. This means ensuring that communications reach the necessary contacts through the fastest and most efficient means possible. However, while outbound communication is key, inbound information is also important during an emergency. Understanding who has been informed and their status can help organizations determine the right strategy for managing resources and time constraints. Maintaining this real-time awareness throughout the life cycle of an event is the cornerstone of an effective critical communications strategy.

Successful and timely distribution of a critical message is determined by the availability of its delivery paths. During an emergency, critical communication infrastructure such as cellular and traditional phone networks can become inundated and unusable for certain periods of time. This makes diversifying the types of communication paths used for broadcasts an important goal. Using a multipath approach that includes e-mail, SMS, voice, and mobile applications increases the probability of messages being successfully delivered and responded to. In addition, using the most efficient communication paths first in a broadcast cycle (such as text-based paths) ensures messages are delivered quickly and drives the overall confirmation rate. This also increases overall infrastructure efficiency by reducing the load on mobile and landline networks.

Finally, allowing recipients to designate which communication path they prefer to be contacted on is also a good practice. This essentially allows them to indicate the path by which they are most likely to respond which, in turn, increases the overall broadcast confirmation rate.

Case Study: Analysis of Confirmation Rates

Overview & Methodology

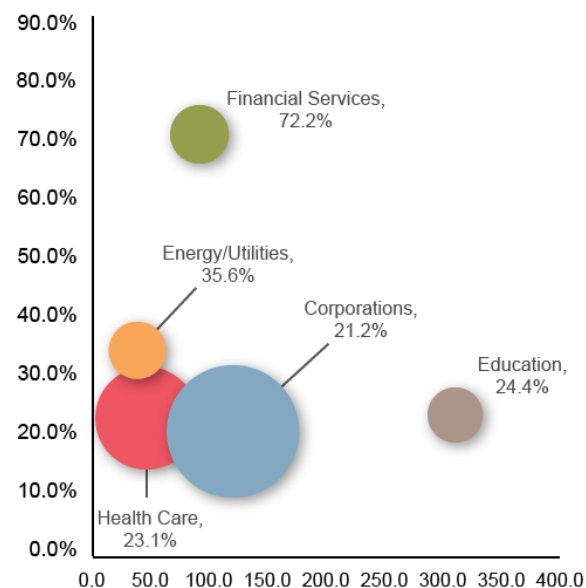
A sample of 48,162 broadcasts representing 7.1 million messages from private sector customers was selected for analysis. Customers with atypical use cases and extreme outliers were excluded. Broadcast data was joined with CRM customer account data to bring over associated vertical and industry fields. The resulting data set represented 775 accounts across 5 distinct verticals.

Data Context

Overall, the confirmation rate for all private sector verticals combined was 28.1% (Figure 1) and the average number of contacts per broadcast was 72.0. Financial Services customers had the highest confirmation rate at 72.2%, while Education customers had the highest average contacts per customer at 308.0.

Optimizing for Early Message Delivery is Important

Figure 1. Confirmation Rate & Average Contacts per Broadcast

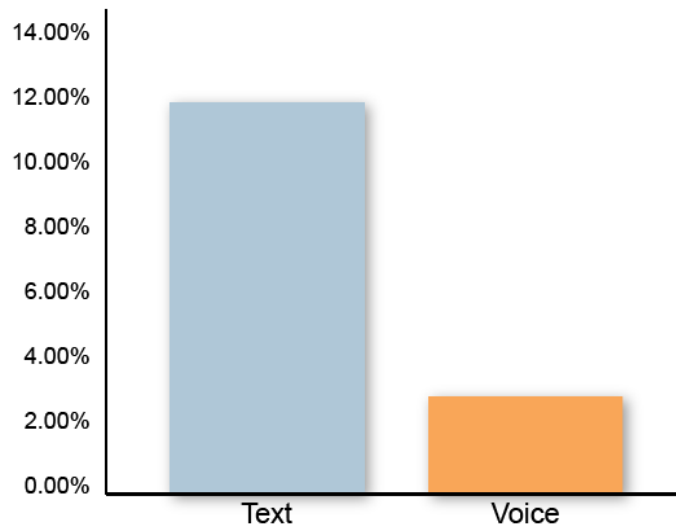


Note: Size of sphere corresponds to number of total contacts

*Transportation, Services, Media, Tech, Manufacturing, Real Estate, Telecom, Retail, Insurance

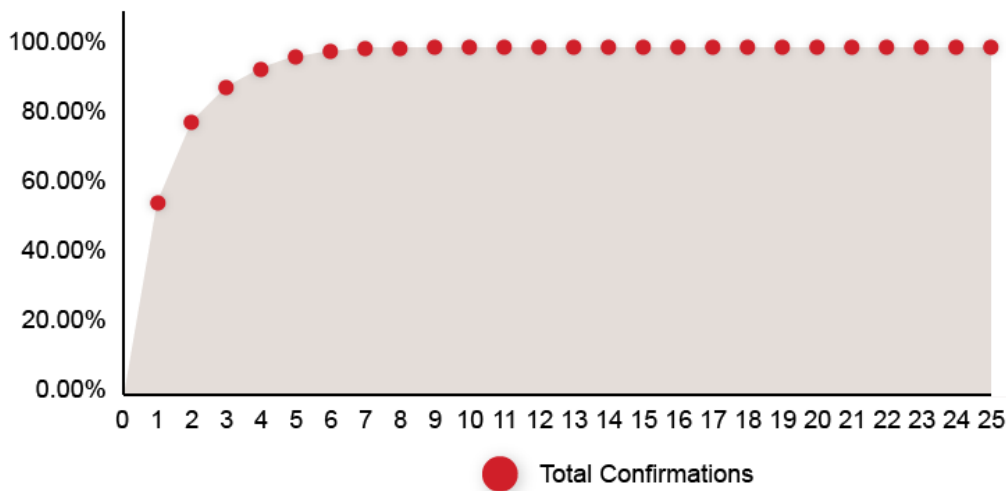
Using the most efficient means of message delivery early in the contact process helps minimize time to delivery and optimizes the overall confirmation rate. Logically, this is important so that an organization's contacts are notified as soon as possible and can act accordingly. Since voice-based paths are often overwhelmed during a crisis, text-based paths are typically the most efficient and fastest way to reach contacts. Furthermore, analysis of the data shows **text paths have a 4X greater first attempt confirmation rate than voice paths.**

Figure 2. First Attempt Confirmation Rate is 4X Higher for Text vs. Voice Paths



In addition, the data also shows that most of the recipients who confirm do so early. In fact, **approximately 90% of confirmations occur in the first 3 attempts to make contact.**

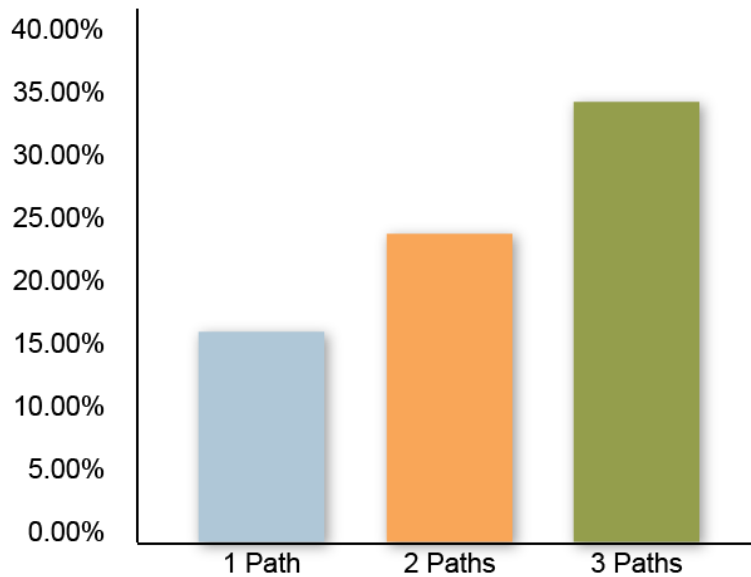
Figure 3. The Majority of Confirmations Occur within First 3 Contact Attempts



Using Multiple Communication Paths is Essential

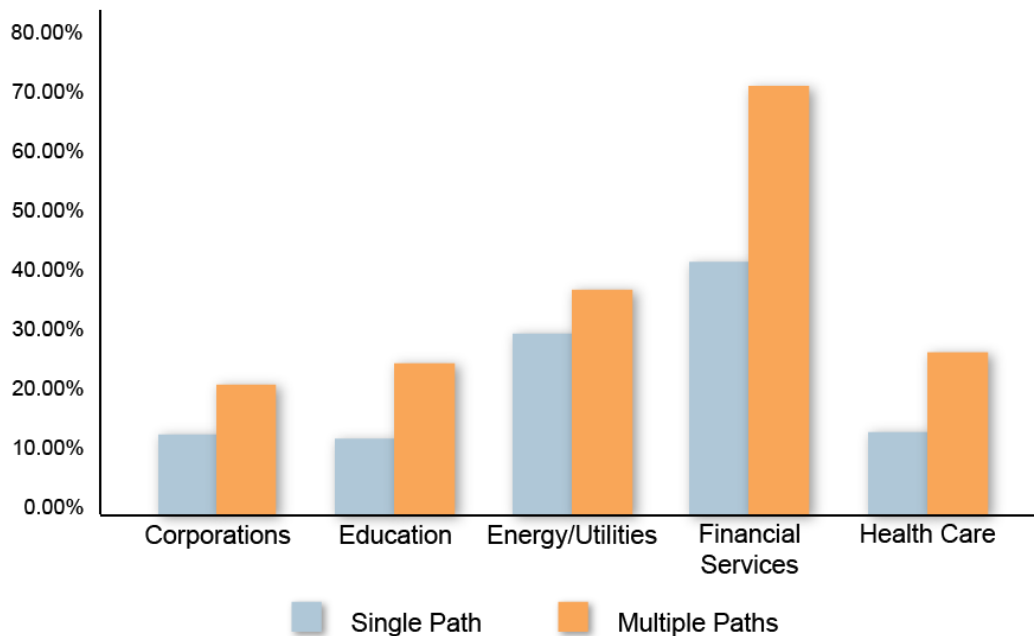
The role of multipath message delivery is integral to the success of critical communications. Using multiple paths to reach contacts ensures successful message notification even when certain delivery types are unavailable. It also leads to higher confirmation rates, as the data shows a **79% higher confirmation rate** for broadcasts where multiple paths are used.

Figure 4. Multiple Path Communication Leads to Higher Confirmation Rates



This also holds true when broken down by vertical as well, where the confirmation rate for multipath broadcasts is higher in all cases (see Figure 5)

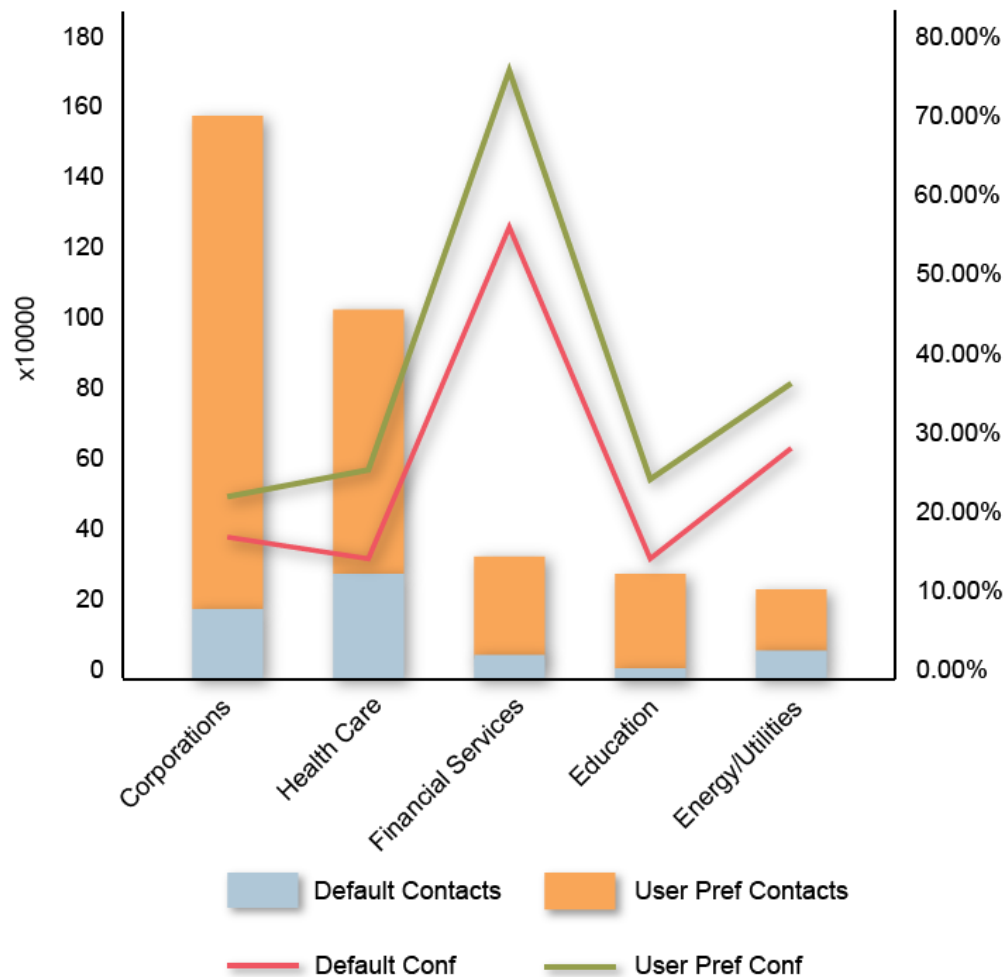
Figure 5. Single Path vs. Multiple Path Confirmation



Allowing Recipients to Set Preferences Boosts Confirmation

Giving recipients the ability to select and prioritize their preference for contact modality is also an important factor in improving confirmation rates. This drives efficiency and responsiveness by allowing contacts to indicate the best mode of reaching them in the case of a crisis. According to our sample, broadcasts where user preferences are enabled have a **44% higher confirmation rate** than those with the organization default setting.

Figure 6. Effect of Enabling Contact Preferences on Confirmation Rates



This holds true for all verticals, but the difference is greatest for Financial Services and Healthcare customers. Healthcare and Financial Services customers have a **67% and 32% higher confirmation rate** respectively when user preferences are enabled for the broadcast.

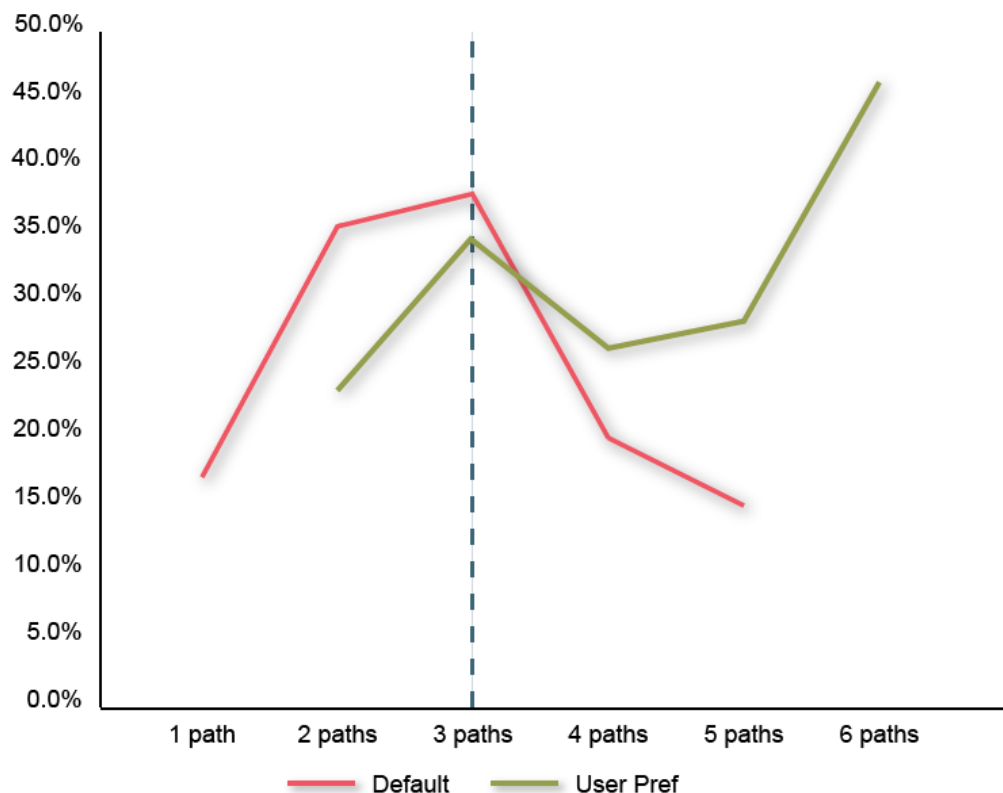
When looking at the difference in settings by unique path, the results reveal a different aspect of the data. As shown in Figure 7, when default contact settings are used the confirmation rate rises slightly and then tapers off as unique delivery paths are added. In contrast, Figure 8 shows that when preferences are enabled the confirmation rate trends upward as paths are added.

Utilizing Multiple Paths & Contact Preferences is Optimal

It's clear that using multiple delivery paths is important for improving message confirmation. It's also clear that enabling user contact preferences boosts contact responsiveness as well. However, the combination of the two is optimal, and allows for the highest confirmation rates as unique paths are added.

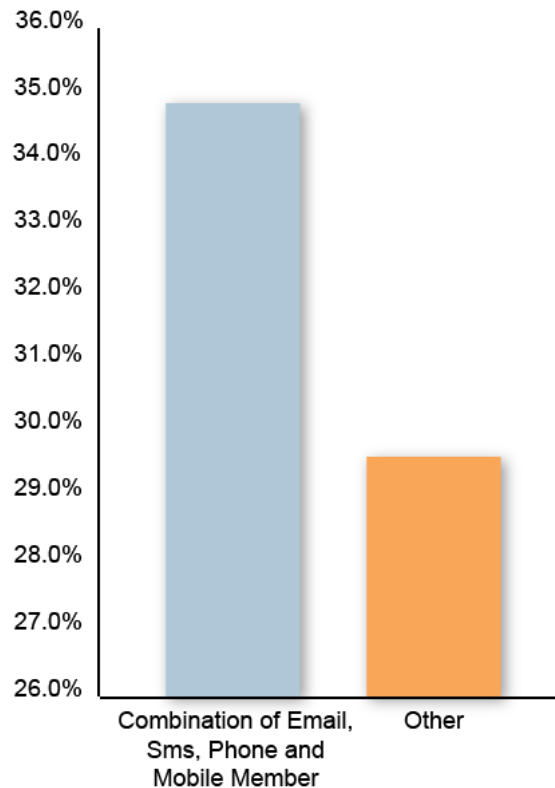
In order to see this, we can overlay the two confirmation rates from Figure 7 and 8 above in Figure 9 below. The result suggests that customers can optimize confirmation rates by enabling user contact preferences and encouraging recipients to **use more than 3 unique delivery paths**.

Figure 7. Optimal Configuration



More specifically, the data also shows that **customers with contact preferences enabled who use e-mail, SMS, phone, and the Mobile Member application have higher confirmation rates** (as shown below).

Figure 8. User Preference Enabled Broadcasts with >3 Paths



Conclusion

In a crisis situation, having an efficient and accurate system for notifying individuals is an invaluable asset. EMNS systems can be enhanced by:

- Optimizing for efficient, early emergency notification delivery
- Using multiple contact paths when broadcasting messages
- Allowing recipients to set and prioritize their contact preferences

Doing this before a crisis occurs allows an organization to be ready when it matters most, and can mean the difference between success and failure during an emergency.



About Everbridge

Everbridge provides a unified critical communication suite that helps clients be better prepared, make better decisions, and respond quickly and confidently during disruptive events. When an incident happens, whether it's a natural disaster or an IT service outage, we automate communications to ensure that the right messages get to the right people at the right time.

Widely recognized by analysts as the market leader, Everbridge solutions are trusted by clients in all major industries and government sectors to connect with over 50 million people around the world.

THE ONLY END-TO-END PLATFORM

- **Planning:** Everbridge is easy to set up, maintain, and organize, meaning that you're always ready for a quick, coordinated response. Everbridge ensures that the right messages get to the right people - with the most advanced opt-in portal on the market, streamlined integration with internal and external data sources, and simple group and contact management.
- **Assessment:** When trouble strikes, you need rich insight, presented simply - so you can quickly assess potential impact and make an informed decision to avoid loss. Everbridge offers the only solution on the market that meets these demanding requirements, with the most advanced interactive dashboard in the industry.
- **Response:** In critical situations, ease-of-use can mean the difference between an effective response and a mistake that carries serious consequences. Everbridge is engineered to be simple to use under pressure, with a user interface that accelerates time-to-message and reduces the likelihood of errors.
- **Delivery:** Even during large-scale disruptions, Everbridge stays on. The most advanced platform in the industry ensures that you reach your contacts - every time. And with worldwide coverage and capabilities, including globally local calling infrastructure and data storage, we're ready to support you wherever your people are in the world.

Visit www.everbridge.com to learn more.