

Overcoming Community Engagement Challenges

THE CHALLENGE

Emergency and non-emergency systems are experiencing a high volume of calls for routine requests or incident/case updates. At the same time, the public's service expectations have increased exponentially due to private sector technology. Agencies need a way to move administrative and non-emergency requests away from emergency lines while still fulfilling community members' needs.

Augment your agency's operations and services by modernizing your community engagement capabilities. These solutions offer a better way to communicate and engage with the public. They also help your agency to refocus on higher priority issues and streamline workflows.

Transform how
your agency
engages and
communicates
with the
community
you serve

At the Intersection of Communications and Public Safety

The way we get and share information has changed due to generational preferences and technology advances. For example, mobile and smart phone usage continues to increase. Two recent contributors to the increase have been social networks and messaging apps according to eMarketer's Global Media Intelligence Report.

Other industry studies have shown that people prefer texts over emails and phone calls are less likely to be answered. The public has become accustomed to receiving timely updates digitally about their transactions, activities, and account information. We like to know when deliveries are delayed, our boarding gate changes, or something is expiring. Another part of modern communications and life is ordering and requesting things online or via an app.

Traditionally, investigation and case communications have been in person, by phone, postal mail, or emails. New public safety solutions help improve communications and service without placing additional strain on current resources. Automation tools can fill the gaps by providing a way to easily file a non-emergency report or sending incident and case notifications after an emergency call. Delivering information in a preferred format reduces the number of callbacks community members and crime victims must make to ask for updates, information, or resources.

Building Goodwill Through Service Excellence

In the realm of public safety, it's a common occurrence for reporting parties or victims to follow up on their service requests. Conversely, Emergency Communications Centers receive the majority of such initial updates requests. This procedure, while well-intentioned, is inherently inefficient as it ties up valuable emergency lines. The influx of calls from individuals seeking information or reporting non-emergency incidents further compounds the issue. Sometimes the requests are only asking for information, such as how to reach another department, while others necessitate a report.

As an essential service organization, you are acutely aware that the expectations placed upon you are continually on the rise, largely influenced by the service standards set by the private sector, often leveraging advanced technology. The cornerstone of building trust within your community lies in offering different levels of communication.

These same innovative solutions can help your agency serve people the way they want to be served without an additional resource burden. By providing this level of care and service, your agency can cultivate goodwill and trust within your community.



Improve
Public Safety



Enhance Efficiency
& Effectiveness



Increase Trust
& Cooperation

3 Types of Useful Automation



Community Engagement: The first involves sending notification updates after a 9-1-1 call. These updates can provide information on arrival times of the patrol response, crime victim resources, or even updates about their case if the incident is investigated. The notifications can be sent via text or email which reduces the number of callbacks by reporting parties and offers a higher level of care for community members involved in the crime. Additionally, a survey can be sent to gather feedback about the interaction with the agency that provides actionable insights.



Non-Emergency Reporting: Another form of automation is designed for non-emergency incidents, such as reports of damaged or stolen property. In this case, a virtual investigator guides individuals through the reporting process, improving the efficiency of non-emergency reports entering the RMS and reducing backlogs. A 9-1-1 telecommunicator can easily refer the reporting party to the online system, saving call center time. The generated report, validated for CCJS and NIBRS offenses to ensure compliance, is then sent to agency staff for review, while community members receive automatic notifications about their report submission.



Smart Call Agent: Finally, non-emergency phone calls can be automated with a virtual agent to guide callers through short questions which quickly pinpoint the nature, and location, of their reason for calling. The virtual agent can resolve many calls without the need to transfer the caller into the Emergency Communications Center. The resolution can be an SMS message with a link to an appropriate web page, such as to non-emergency incident reports, or provide other agency information. Calls can be transferred to 3-1-1 or other extensions according to agency policies. A call transfer to the telecommunicators in the ECC is used for only those callers who cannot otherwise be resolved.

How Your Agency Benefits

Declining satisfaction

Long hold/response times or limited communication can lead to dissatisfaction or a negative perception



Improve satisfaction with automated updates related to their call or non-emergency report filing

High call volume

Can create a perception of unresponsiveness



Relieve stress on dispatchers, officers, and others by reducing admin calls and callbacks

Low patrol capacity

Long response times for lower priority services



Redistribute coverage by focusing on higher priority services

Immediate service expectations

Low satisfaction when service is not direct and/or immediate



Almost instant access to help or resources the public needs, including priority needs

Engagement uncertainty

Community may be unsure of next steps or how to get additional help



Public can select their preferred communication and interaction methods

Connect with Your Community Enhance Your Effectiveness

Your relationship with your community depends, in part, on how effectively you respond to community members seeking your assistance. Deploying automation technology enhances your agency's service capacity while optimizing your operations. With increased communication and advanced customer service options, your agency can improve transparency and foster trust within your community.

Versaterm's community engagement solutions are based on best practices in the private sector and strategically designed to reduce administrative call volumes that typically follow a service request. This approach not only benefits your personnel by freeing up resources but also empowers them to focus on high-priority matters. This proactive outreach and exceptional service can improve your agency's public perception and cultivate goodwill within the community.



Discover how community engagement solutions can enhance your operations and service. >

About Versaterm

Versaterm is a global public safety solutions company helping agencies transform their organizations by providing innovative solutions, expertise, and an unwavering dedication to customer service. Formed in 1977, we are on a journey to build an ecosystem that will enhance community safety by creating purposeful integrations across the public safety spectrum. We deliver intuitive tools developed for public safety agencies, forensic labs, court systems, schools, and other institutions. Our selective growth strategy focuses on improving customer and user workflows for more efficient and effective operations, leading to better service and more just outcomes. For more information, visit [versaterm.com](https://www.versaterm.com), [LinkedIn](#), or [Twitter](#).