

MobileSphere Speeds Release of SMS Services

April 26 2007

MobileSphere announces an emergency SMS notification service early due an increased demand after the Virginia Tech shootings.

In an effort to speed up a product release after the shooting tragedy at Virginia Tech, MobileSphere has announced an emergency SMS notification service earlier than planned.

"The timing was increased due to the need that arose from last week's tragedy," said Tracy Wemett, who handles public relations for MobileSphere in an e-mail to eWEEK. Originally, the company had intended to announce their product in May.

MobileSphere is not the only company finding profit in the wake of the Virginia Tech tragedy. The other SMS messaging companies interviewed for a recent article on SMS alerting systems report high levels of interest in their products from colleges and universities, and are doing all they can to accommodate schools that want to get up and running as soon as possible.

The MobileSphere's Emergency Broadcasting Text Message Solution is built on the technology that the company already uses in its Joopz product, which is a consumer text messaging service.

"After the incident at Virginia Tech, there are a lot of universities, colleges and high schools and local governments looking for ways to reach people during times of crisis," said Gavin Macomber,

MobileSphere's executive vice president of marketing.

One feature in MobileSphere's service that stands out is that it allows recipients to reply with full text messages. Like the other services in this field, the MobileSphere product uses a Web interface and supports both direct SMS and SMTP sending capabilities.

Also, the company has made arrangements to work with carriers to see that their messages get through.

Macomber said that pricing for the MobileSphere service is still being finalized, but he said that there will be a hosting fee and a per-user fee for sending messages. He said that he anticipated the cost to be about two to three dollars per recipient per year, which is roughly two to three times the cost of most other systems.

The Emergency Broadcast Text Message Solution will be released in late May.

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Citation: MobileSphere Speeds Release of SMS Services (2007, April 26) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2007-04-mobilesphere-sms.html>

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