



Business Issue: How can I communicate to staff and suppliers during a disaster or incident?

Client: Henkel Ltd – Hemel Hempstead (Buncefield), Hertfordshire, UK

Service: Callagenix Emergency Information line

Buncefield Oil Fire

At 06:00 Sunday Dec 11th 2005 the blast woke much of South East England. The Henkel site with 324 staff is 400 metres from the Oil Depot. The resulting fire was the largest in Europe for 60 years.

Some of the immediate key Issues Henkel Ltd had to deal with:

- Denied access to their business for 4 days?
- Communicate to staff what to do, where to go?
- Communicate to customers and suppliers, business is as usual?

Thankfully nobody was injured in this disaster but it did create real problems for businesses in and around the surrounding areas.

During early 2005 Callagenix worked with Henkel Ltd to implement a disaster emergency line that enabled staff and customers to receive the very latest information and instructions should an incident occur.

Staff and clients in the UK were given a dedicated 0845 local number while callers in Ireland were given a local Dublin number.

The service was setup to allow the Henkel response team to update the information from any telephone (or internet PC) using a separate phone number with PIN security. As and when new information became available the Henkel response team made it available.

On the morning of 6th December 2005, Henkel had cause to use the service. Over the next 4 days, thousands of calls were made to the information line from staff and customers.

As the service was a hosted one, all telephone lines used in the emergency were provided by Callagenix. The information line service (as is the case with all Callagenix services) has the ability to open multiple simultaneous telephone lines to cope with large volumes of simultaneous callers.

The Henkel emergency information line was judged to be a success by the extremely positive feedback from the staff affected by the crisis.



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Alan Thomas, Henkel Crisis Team Manager said

"...one of the lucky breaks with this crisis was that we were just about to roll out our Crisis Line solution which had been set up and tested 1 month ahead of the Buncefield fire. It is a cost-effective low-maintenance system which is a key component in our crisis communication strategy. The "try before you buy" option from Callagenix allowed me to set up and refine before presenting to the Board as part of our Regional Crisis Plan."

