

# CONFERENCE CALLS

## Emergency Response / Recovery Communications Needs

With the advent of 9/11 and the threat of other terrorist attacks, emergency communications has been a priority topic in the forefront of many meetings and conversations the past several years in both business and federal/state/local governments. Yet, the need for emergency communications has been around for decades. With the new awareness, many new entities have now decided, or been edicted to install these systems. Such special systems are needed and used in all kinds of emergencies:

- Hurricanes/ Tornadoes
- Forest fires
- Flash floods
- Snow storms
- Airplane emergencies (commercial and military)
- School Campus Emergencies.
- Refinery fires
- Power plant explosions
- Power-grid failures
- Fuel pipeline failures

The list goes on, for example the recent event at Virginia Tech highlights another area where emergency communications becomes critical.

Many of the emergency communications systems in use today are over 15 years old, subject to failure, and lack much of the current technology for faster response plus records of calls made and records of respondents. These kinds of data are getting more important in today’s litigation-prone world. Many systems are tested regularly to assure proper operation, but not all. And many tests on older systems identify problems, which may or may not be noted, or are “worked around”. Do you know if all the smoke detectors in your house are operational, or if the fire extinguisher in your garage still has a charge?

Forum has the latest technology in systems designed specifically for use in the emergency preparedness – disaster recovery communications market.

The **A.L.E.R.T. Plus** System is the most popular of several products available from Forum. With this system, one of several people can pick up the “red phone” and immediately



be ringing the phones of a desired group of people.

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## Product Updates

### Mediator II

Businesses recognize that traveling is a major expense and loss of time. What firm would not benefit from reducing operating costs and lost productivity in traveling? Such trips are usually related to generating revenue. But what if some trips are related to litigation? Besides the time and expense of travel, whether across town or across the country, there’s the hassle of bringing files along, and the delays and wasted time if an important file was left at the office.

Want a better way to meet with attorneys and judges without wasting time traveling and staying at hotels? Forum Communications’ Mediator II gives businesses back their time, a precious commodity. In use by federal mediators for over 15 years, Forum’s Mediator is designed for the utmost efficiency and security. The Mediator II combines the latest technology with the inputs from past users to enhance and expedite the process of resolving problems.

With complete control of the conference, the mediator judge can hold discussions with both parties allow for secure sub-conferences and/or talk with individuals one-on-one. Whether you’re the mediator judge or one of the participating parties, wouldn’t you want to take advantage of the features of the Mediator II?

Mediate and negotiate settlements and contracts remotely via voice or web conferencing. Raise the bar on internal communication and accountability with daily/weekly team calls; stay connected with road warriors and telecommuters. **Time is money!**



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(Product Updates continued)

### *Consortium II Offers Podcasting*

**W**hy is podcasting so popular? Podcasts makes it possible for users to listen to what they want, whenever they want. What the web did for brick-and-mortar shops, podcasting will do for businesses, as well as educational institutions; the freedom to listen to conferences/classes at their convenience. This will change the way enterprises listen to conferences. If C level officers have conflicting schedules, no problem they will be able to listen to both meetings. The British Broadcasting Corporation stated that, "by 2010, three-quarters of all people who own portable digital music players will listen to podcasts, a growth from less than 15% last year."<sup>1</sup> It is expected that podcasting will be ubiquitous. Forrester Research predicts that by 2010, 12.3 million households will be using podcasting<sup>2</sup>. Podcasting will give businesses the freedom to listen to conferences anywhere, anytime around the world.

The Consortium II is a powerful conferencing server that can support multiple conference types, Meet Me, Recurring calls or Quick Conferences. To learn more about the features and capabilities that Consortium II offers and how it can benefit your business contact us today.



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### *Confer SE Is A Big Hit*

**W**ith the CONFER III, Forum has provided added capacity and features to the time-proven Confer product line. But the most popular size in Confer sales remains in the 18 to 24 ports. Users are excited about the new features that are now available.

Forum has responded to customers desires, and developed a compact version of the Confer III, calling it the **CONFER SE**. The confer SE has a capacity of 8 to 24 ports in a rack-mountable housing that's only four inches high. And we have bundled the most popular features into the package, resulting in a Plug-And-Play bridge at a very attractive price. Now you can get big-bridge features in a popular bridge size at an unbeatable price. Call us now to find out more about the **CONFER SE**.

### *Food Service Company Taps Special Forum Bridge for Routine Calls*

**H**ave you ever been to a supermarket or superstore where people have little stands for you to sample special foods or recipes? Did you ever think about the planning that goes into getting those people and food items in the right place at the right time?

It is not as simple as the store calling a few friends to come in on Friday. It's often a nationwide program which is sponsored by major food-processing companies. There is a lot of planning behind it. And when you consider that it's happening all over the country, you can begin to realize the work involved.

It is a big business and **CROSSMARK**, of Plano, Texas is one of the leaders in this kind of program. CROSSMARK provides business services for manufacturers and retailers in the consumer-goods industries

Vendors contract CROSSMARK for such presentations. All the details are worked out and schedules set up. Then CROSSMARK contacts the "demonstrators" to inform them of the schedules. That could be a LOT of phone calls doing it the old fashioned way.



CROSSMARK contacted NEC, one of Forums Platinum dealers to look for an efficient and expedient way to handle the hundreds of calls, which occurs almost every week. Mark Sweedler, Account Manager with NEC, told them about a Forum bridge. Although it was an application not exactly envisioned when the equipment was designed, the similarities were great enough to take a closer look.

The **BLAST 911**, was designed to rapidly place hundreds of calls, when activated, to send a pre-recorded message relating to some emergency such as flash floods, hurricanes, forest fires, or terrorist activities. It's used like a conference bridge in reverse. And, of course, it can also be used in the usual mode for planning conference calls, or administrative conferences.

With a capacity of up to 384 ports, the equipment can go down a call list in minutes instead of hours. That's rapid response. And with Forum's reputation of reliability and customer service, the bridge is ideal for critical applications, even in the food service industry. So imagine what we can do to for your business!

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<sup>1</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/4658995.stm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.forrester.com/Research/Document/Excerpt/0,7211,36428,00.html>

(Emergency Response continued from page 1)

Multiple numbers can be called and there is no ring back tone after the first person answers. A sensor, detecting a possible emergency, can also initiate such a call.

The **BLAST 911**, which has a larger capacity, can send a voice or **text** (SMS) message to cell phones, pagers or e-mail addresses to get important messages to a desired group of people.

Both systems have abundant features to enhance their use during emergency situations and enjoy the reliability for which Forum products are renowned.

Contact Forum to discuss your requirements. We can customize a system just for your needs.

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#### *Air Force bases and airports on A.L.E.R.T.*

**L**ike so many places in the U.S. today, air bases and airports have a new sensitivity to disaster preparedness and recovery.

Both have been reviewing their procedures and equipment for readiness to respond to disaster. One of the key elements of this is the communications equipment for contacting emergency personnel when a disaster is eminent or has happened. Depending on the situation, and only a few possibilities relate to terrorist attacks, certain groups of individuals or departments must immediately join a conference call to assess the situation, decide which entities are involved and the steps to take. Time is of the essence.

With the Forum **A.L.E.R.T.** (Automatic Local Emergency Response Teleconference) system, the most state-of-the-art equipment is available to ring phones, sound alarms, flash strobe lights, make public-address announcements, and open or close doors. And it starts with the lifting of a receiver and the push of a button. Or even the action of a sensor. A variety of appropriate prerecorded messages can open the conference, depending on the type of emergency.

The ALERT can operate completely independent of the regular facility phone system for maximum reliability and security, or can also utilize the public phones to contact remote people, such as local police and/or hospitals.



The **Hurlburt Air Force Base** in Florida was the first of several bases to install the ALERT system in 2003, and the **John Wayne Airport** (Orange County, California) was the first commercial airport to do the same. Since then, ALERT systems have been going into military bases around the country and the world.

Other industries include utilities and energy companies as well as some city and county governments.

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#### *Verizon Wireless Upgrades In-house Bridge*

**A**bout three years ago, **Verizon Wireless**, in Houston, Texas inquired about the **Consortium** conference bridge. Not to provide conference services, which is usually why phone companies buy bridges, but for in-house use. Like any large corporation, they have the need for conference calls to efficiently run their business. After looking at the market, they purchased Forum's 96 port Consortium Bridge.

Recently, Hal Buckholts Director of Network Operation at Verizon, called to inquire about increasing the capacity and, by the way, what was new in the product line. Neal Jabara, Verizon's account manager at Forum, informed him about the second generation product, the **Consortium II**; what new features they have and the increased capacity to 384 ports.

After some brief discussion, Verizon ordered a 144-port Consortium II. According to Mr. Buckholts, Verizon has been very satisfied with the operation of the first bridge, liked the user interfaces and Forums service. So why not stick with a good thing. With the new features, added capacity, and a reasonable trade-in consideration, the decision was easy.

We appreciate their confidence in Forum, like many of our long-term customers. Consider upgrading today!

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#### *Extended Warranty Deal*

**D**o you buy health insurance on the way to the hospital? Do you buy home-owners insurance when you smell smoke? Of course not, it's a little late at that point. You buy it before you need it. Some people think that's a waste of money and are ready to take the gamble of not having insurance. Good Luck!

Buying Extended Warranty on your Forum bridges is like buying insurance. You don't expect to need it, which is understandable, so why spend the money. Well, let me tell you why.

If you should have a problem, you want it fixed as soon as possible. But without the warranty, you have to get a purchase order or Forum has to send you a credit card authorization to fill out and return, and you don't know what it's going to cost. Time's a wastin'.

With extended warranty, your problem is immediately addressed and you know the cost will be .....zero dollars.

As an added incentive, with Extended Warranty coverage, you get free software updates automatically, and can purchase new releases at a discount. What a deal!

So don't wait. Call us today and take advantage of the extended Warranty program.

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### *Time for a Trade-In?*

**M**ost people trade in their cars every four or five years. Some drive them 'til the wheels fall off. But most people like to take advantage of the new features and options available in the newer models like anti-lock brakes, air bags, stability control, navigation systems and other options.

Conference bridges, like cars, offer new features and options, over the years, which the users find not only nice, but very useful and sometimes necessary.

Many of our customers have had one of our bridges for five, seven or even ten years. The darned things just keep working, so they never consider replacing it. That is, until we call them to see how things are going and tell them about

some of the things available in today's products. Like added security, sub conferences, more, internet-accessible administrator functions and, of course, added capacity to name a few.

If you think you could use some of these new features, don't wait for us to call you. Call us and ask about what's available. With all the customers we have to call, it may be a while before we get to you, so don't wait, **call us**.

Did you know that back in 1990, Forum had *ONE* product: the six-port CONFER meet-me bridge, with one option, Authorization Code. Now it takes two pages to list the prices of all our products and options.

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### *Forum around the World*

**G**lobal trading is nothing new. Even before the Roman Empire, the Greek civilization was trading with other foreign nations. This of course was expensive and very time consuming. Only the Aristocrats could afford to purchase the merchandise brought from abroad. Today we continue to do business just as our ancestors did but with a lot less constraints. The Internet has revolutionized the way we do business. Time is no longer a barrier as it was centuries or even a decade ago. As we continue to move towards a global market and borders are no longer a factor technology is exponentially becoming ubiquitous. One of Forum's tenets is to continue R&D to meet the demanding changes in technologies. This dedication allows us to stay on top of technologies and provide you, our customer, the latest in conference bridges.



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