

Frequently Asked Questions

How does the **Connect-ED[®]** for Higher ED notification service work?

The **Connect-ED** service combines the power of the Internet with the pervasiveness of the telephone to give users an affordable and easy-to-use tool to reach out to their communities. Users record a voice message in their own voice using just a telephone or type a message to be sent to text receiving devices. In all, the multi-modal service helps officials reach out to students and staff via:

- Voice messages to home, work, and cell phones
- Text messages to cell phones, PDAs and other text-based devices
- Written messages to e-mail accounts
- Messages to TTY/TDD receiving devices for the hearing impaired

How many calls have been sent through the **Connect-ED** service?

NTI is currently sending 20-25 million time-sensitive calls per month solely on behalf of government entities and schools via its Connect family of services which include:

- **Connect-ED** for K-12 schools and school districts
- **Connect-ED** for Higher ED
- **Connect-CTY[®]** for municipalities
- **Connect-GOV[®]** for state and federal agencies

How many campuses are using the service?

Over 150 campuses are using the **Connect-ED** for Higher ED service to send messages to 1 million students and staff. Campuses currently using the **Connect-ED** for Higher ED service include Georgia Tech, Princeton, Tulane, University of Notre Dame, Caltech, Williams College, University of Iowa, University of Hawaii, University of Oklahoma, Baylor University, and Wesleyan. NTI is prohibited from listing its clients without prior consent – all clients quoted above can be mentioned as they have provided consent. If you would like to speak with any of the referenced clients, please contact Natasha Rabe at 818-808-1790 or via e-mail at nrabe@ntigroup.com.

Additionally, over 14,000 sites nationwide are using one of NTI's Connect services to reach 9 million recipients.

What is multi-modal communication? Are text messages alone sufficient?

With the **Connect-ED** for Higher ED service, campus officials can reach their community members in their own voice (at landlines, cell phones, and via e-mail) and via text messages (at cell phones, PDAs/other text-receiving devices, e-mail accounts, and TTY/TDD receiving devices for the hearing impaired).

During a time-sensitive situation, multi-modal communication is critical as it is a more comprehensive way to reach people in the environment they may be in at the moment an issue arises. Communication is sent simultaneously to all available contact points for each person.

Relying on any single way to reach constituents (whether it is through just voice calls or just SMS) introduces a single point of failure. Additionally, text messages to cell phones, while a great back-up communication medium, is not stable enough to rely upon solely for time-sensitive communication. Cellular carriers did not design SMS (Short Messaging Service) as a reliable medium for transmitting high volume, time-sensitive communication within geocentric communities (such as a college campus). As with any communication vehicle, it is important to combine voice, text-messaging, and e-mail to better ensure that you can reach your community in as many ways possible.

How much does the *Connect-ED* for Higher ED system cost?

The service is based on a flat per-student rate that varies slightly from campus to campus depending upon the planned use (e.g., emergency only versus comprehensive). NTI does not quote rates for individual clients. Please check with the campus for additional information.

How has the *Connect-ED* system been used?

The *Connect-ED* system has been used to communicate vital information when a critical situation has taken place. It is also used to issue alerts to campus members as outlined in the Clery Act. Additionally, some campuses use the service for more routine communication, including communicating during the admissions process and to alert students to important financial aid and/or payment deadlines.

What if an emergency occurs and the school can't access the Internet to send a message?

Each user is given a personal, wallet-sized Emergency Messaging card. In case of an evacuation or power loss, school administrators can use the information on this card to send a time-sensitive notification to all their contacts or to a pre-determined emergency response team using just a telephone. NTI maintains client care representatives to assist users 24/7/365 should alternative means be necessary such as encountered throughout both Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Wilma.

Does the *Connect-ED* service require any additional equipment?

No. The only thing needed is an Internet connection, a browser that meets or exceeds Internet Explorer 5.5 or Netscape 7.0, and a telephone. Schools don't have to buy or maintain any special equipment, have special phone lines installed, or install any software applications or plug-ins. NTI provides training, which typically takes less than 30 minutes, a detailed step-by-step user guide for reference, and uses industry-standard file types to interface with school data systems so they will be able to get up-and-running immediately.

How does the *Connect-ED* system get access to student and staff contact information?

NTI provides an encrypted, online process to securely import a school's existing data into that school's account in a secure and reliable manner. The school maintains all data. They have full ownership over that data. NTI also provides a system that allows schools to schedule automatic updates as frequently as they like, and/or they can add, remove, and delete individual contacts at their convenience.

Additionally, students and staff are encouraged to ensure that their contact information is up-to-date so that the school can contact them should an issue occur.

Does NTI share the school's information with anyone?

No. NTI does not sell, lease, share, or rent personally identifiable information (names, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) to any companies or persons outside of NTI or NTI service providers.

How long has NTI provided this service?

NTI's first client sent its first **Connect-ED** for K-12 communication in early 2001 under the PACE brand. Since then, NTI has delivered hundreds of millions of messages on behalf of schools and public officials.

How can the *Connect-ED* service reach thousands in minutes?

The NTI Group, Inc.'s (NTI) mass notification engine supports the **Connect-ED** system. NTI maintains access to tens of thousands of phone lines originating from multiple locations throughout the United States to ensure that its clients' communications are delivered quickly and efficiently. Moreover, NTI employs sophisticated call throttling logic to identify the proper schematics needed to deliver calls based upon whatever congestion the local telecommunications providers are experiencing at the moment calls are being attempted. This is a crucial point of differentiation versus both auto-dialers and other ASP/Software as a Service competitors who lack experience delivering time-based mass notifications.

What is NTI?

The NTI Group, Inc. (NTI) is a privately held company located in Sherman Oaks, CA that provides comprehensive communication services designed specifically for local, regional, State, and Federal government entities that enable rapid dissemination of critical information via voice and text devices.

NTI owns and distributes the **Connect-ED[®]**, **Connect-CTY[®]**, **Connect-GOV[®]**, and **Connect-MIL[®]** family of notification services for use by schools, municipalities, government agencies, and military institutions. NTI designs systems specifically for each vertical serviced to ensure quick adoption by end-users. NTI services are developed with the assistance of end-users within each vertical and are regularly upgraded based upon requests made by a panel of industry-specific users and non-users to ensure that we are providing the best services possible.

Who do I contact for more information about NTI?

The NTI media relations team is prepared to provide additional information. Please call our Media Hotline at (818) 808-1789 or email us at press@ntigroup.com.