



# Enhancing Crisis Communications using BlackBerry devices

Presentation at the 2007  
Environmental Information  
Symposium

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# Presentation Overview

- Problem to be solved
- Description of pilot
- Pilot results
- Path forward
- Note: Graphics in this presentation used courtesy of Onset Technologies

# Problem to be solved

- How to ensure that Continuity of Operations (COOP) personnel have the **correct** version of the **right** information easily **accessible**
- How to **distinguish** important COOP e-mails from the everyday e-mail traffic
- How to **continue** using BlackBerrys (BB) if EPA's e-mail infrastructure is **damaged**

# A Potential Solution is located

- Through market research, potential solution is found: Emergency Communications METAmesssage product from Onset Technologies
- METAmesssage is a BB application that allows:
  - Storage of documents on BB, automatically pushed from a central server
  - Message alerts based on a variety of rules
  - Enhancements to PIN-to-PIN BB messaging
  - Note: product includes other features not highlighted above

# Storage of documents

Document Storage	Hide Menu
HDS	Read
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>📁 Maps</li> <li>📁 Make a Plan</li> <li>🔗 Biological.rtf</li> <li>🔗 <b>Contact list.xls</b></li> <li>🔗 Documentation protoc</li> <li>🔗 Egress routes.ppt</li> <li>🔗 First aid procedures.</li> <li>🔗 First day plans.mpp</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Print to Fax</li> <li>Print to Printer</li> <li>Set as Default</li> <li>Network Logon</li> <li>Close</li> </ul>
Last refresh: 2/13/200	

## Emergency Contacts

Medical - Administer first aid with local resources. If ambulatory, proceed to:

- 1442 16th St.
- 351 Cross Ave.
- 9899 5th St.
- 112 8th Ave.

Law Enforcement -

- 1440 16th St.
- 783 Willem St.



# Message Alerts

**Message Alert Rules**

message types: ▲  
 Email And Pin Messages

Select Rule Condition(s):

Email/Pin Subject Contains:  
 TestTrack

Message Body Contains:

From Contains:

All Messages

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Select Action:

Vibrate

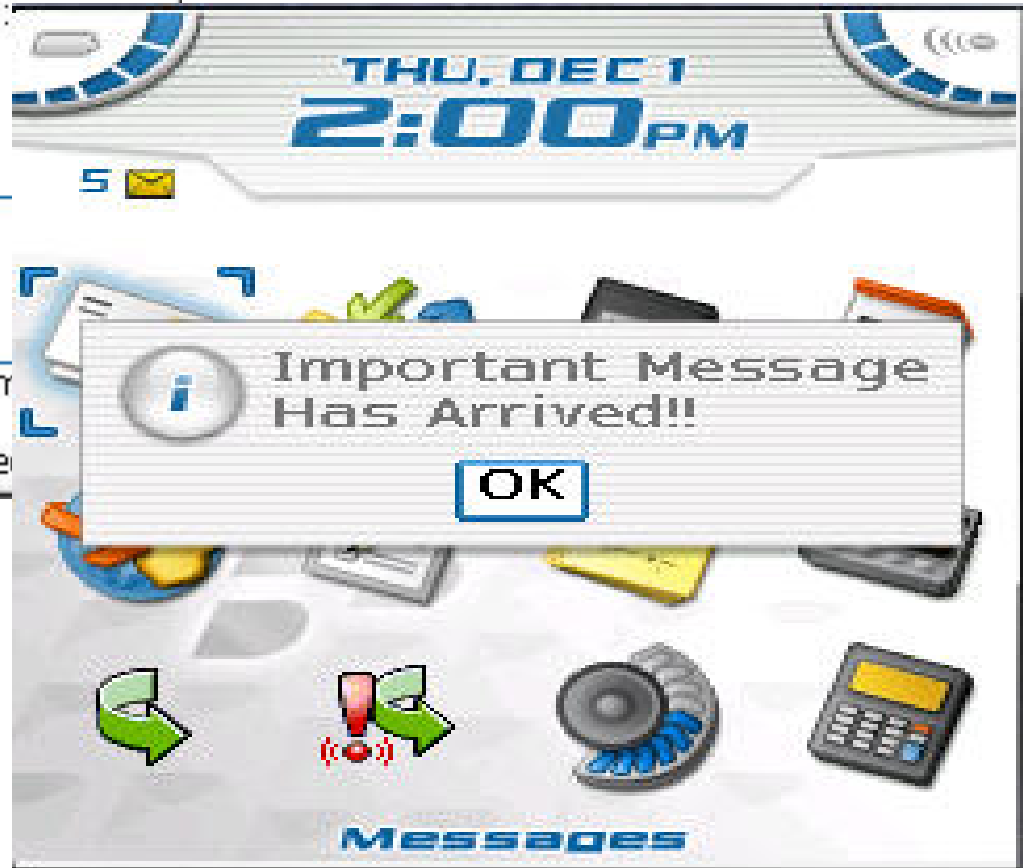
Play Tune

Show Popup Window

Select Tune: METAn

Select Volume:

Play alert until acknowledge

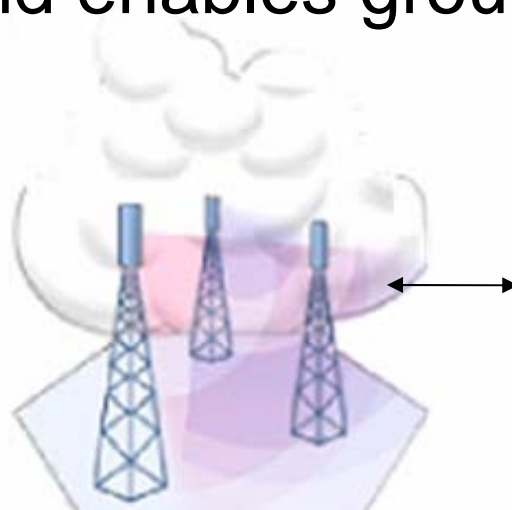
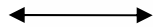


# PIN-to-PIN messaging

- Not commonly used at EPA since it bypasses EPA e-mail system
- Requires knowing PIN address of recipient
- METAmesssage automatically updates PIN addresses and enables group messages



Field handhelds



PIN-to-PIN transmissions via the wireless network



Field handhelds

# Project Pilot

- Pilot funded by OEI from appropriated funds
- Objectives
  - Assess METAmesssage compatibility with EPA BB infrastructure
  - Determine support and installation costs
  - Engage COOP user community to determine value of product
  - Gauge user willingness to fund production deployment



# Project Pilot, Continued

- Pilot Period: 9/4/07 – 9/31/07
- Participants
  - Open to all Program Offices and Regions
  - Participants included
    - Regions 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, and 10
    - OAR, OARM, OECA, OEI, OIG, OPPTS, OW

# Results: Participant Comments

- Handheld document storage useful, as long as it was organizationally specific
- Message alerts were useful, especially audible alerts, although BB passwords hindered functionality
- Message alerts meaningful addition to existing COOP automated notification system
- PIN-to-PIN messaging add-ons useful, especially the automatic directory population

# Results, continued

- Compatible with EPA infrastructure
- Support and installation costs being researched
- Little support for increased BB charges to deploy product
- Note: In order for a BB solution to be affective, users must have BBs

# Path Forward

- Compilation of final comments from participants
- Development of production installation and support cost estimates
- Present findings to management



# Q & A