



 WHITE PAPER

Evolution of Mass Notification into Critical Event Management:

ENABLING OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE



According to the 2020-21 MIM Annual report, **73%** of respondents felt that their companies either did not invest or did not invest enough into Major Incident management.



Building a holistic CEM strategy ensures the safety of your people, the continuity of business operations, the reliability of consistent revenue, and resilience against the impacts of future critical events.

According to the 2020-21 MIM Annual report, 73% of respondents from around the world felt that their companies either did not invest or did not invest enough into major incident management.

What if your organisation could create a reality in which any critical event that may affect your people or your operations had already been anticipated? When it comes to thinking ahead about how your organisation will manage a critical event, this reality is not a far-fetched ideal but an attainable goal.

In order to achieve this, your ability to manage critical events must evolve alongside the trajectory of your organisation. Your organisation likely has a mass notification solution in place already but, as your organisation grows, a stand-alone mass notification solution is no longer enough to confidently tackle the escalated situations you may have to face. These events could include impacts from severe weather conditions, bushfires and other natural disasters, IT outages, and cyber-attack incidents.

According to the 2020-21 MIM Annual report, [73% of respondents felt that their companies either did not invest or did not invest enough into major incident management](#). If you expand into another county, state, or even become a global presence, how will you be armed with the information and tools you need to respond when time is of the essence?

If you think into the future, mass notification is just the first step toward a complete critical event management, or CEM, strategy. Building a holistic CEM strategy ensures the safety of your people, the continuity of business operations, the reliability of consistent revenue, and resilience against the impacts of future critical events.

The Difference Between Critical Event Management and Mass Notification

It is likely you have some form of an emergency preparedness program in place already, however organisations today are faced with an increasing number of critical events. For example, CrowdStrike found that intrusions threatening organisations' cybersecurity across the globe [grew 400% in 2019 and 2020 combined](#), and that is just one type of critical event.

The [Black Summer bushfires in 2020 cost the Australian economy in excess of \\$100B](#) and resulted in almost 19 million hectares of land being razed. Being fully prepared for critical events not only keeps people safe, it also helps to significantly reduce the financial fallout.



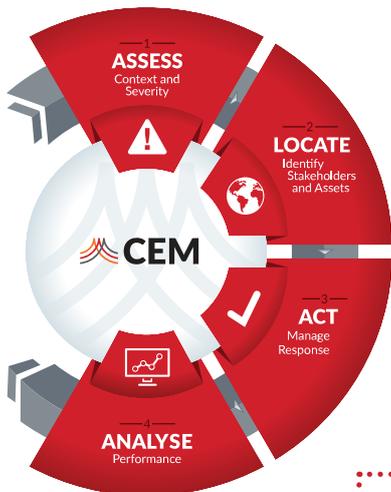
CEM is a holistic approach enabling organisations to become more efficient by digitising processes, while ensuring maximum resilience against physical and digital threats.

Having a stand-alone emergency solution, such as mass notification, is often no longer enough for organisations in Australia to handle a critical event in the most effective and efficient way possible. This is where CEM comes in.

A CEM platform leverages technology to take manual, paper-driven processes and digitally transform them. Benefits include:

- + Consolidating information about risks to the organisation in a common operating picture, enabling rapid risk detection and assessment.
- + Consolidating information about the organisation's assets into the same common operating picture, enabling detailed understanding of risk.
- + The ability to automate the initiation of incident response activities.
- + The ability to manage the incident lifecycle from beginning to the end of the incident.
- + Faster recovery of operations during or after the incident.
- + More complete assessment of your risk profile to move from a reactive crisis response approach to a proactive crisis prevention approach.
- + Accelerated analysis of your performance.

Think of a CEM platform as the structure that houses all the information and technology you need under one roof in order to successfully manage any critical event that may affect your organisation. Incorporating a complete CEM strategy is so much more than just having mass notification capability. It is a holistic approach enabling organisations to become more efficient by digitising processes, while ensuring maximum resilience against physical and digital threats.



Assess, Locate, Act, Analyse: The Four Stages of a Holistic CEM Strategy

Having a mass notification solution in place is a strong place to launch your CEM strategy. First, you need to understand the value of a solution that allows you to act more efficiently and effectively when a critical event takes place. This is a proactive step toward becoming a more resilient organisation. However, it is important to understand that mass notification itself is just one component of a complete CEM strategy.

A successful CEM strategy has four parts:



Assess the impact of a critical event using relevant real-time intelligence.



Locate your people and assets that might be in harm's way using dynamic tracking technology.



Act consistently and appropriately with the help of automation.



Analyse how your organization managed the event, what you did well and what can be improved in future circumstances.



ASSESS, LOCATE, ACT, ANALYSE:

Where Does Mass Notification Fit Into Critical Event Management?

Assess: Context and Severity



It is important to be aware of and assess a risk or an event that may impact your organisation in a timely manner. A mass notification system alone does not collect intelligence, nor automatically trigger set workflows depending on the unique situation at hand.

A complete CEM platform allows organisations to assess situations in real time with the most up-to-date and highly relevant information gathered from thousands of data points. Additionally, predetermined automation allows the system to assess the situation for you while keeping any stakeholders abreast of the situation.

Locate: Identify People and Assets at Risk



Once you understand that a risk will likely have an impact on your organisation, it is important to locate and identify the specific people, facilities, and business services at risk.

Without the ability to quickly determine only the individuals that are affected by an event, organisations may use their mass notification system indiscriminately. A blanket notification will be sent to the entire company any time the system is used, resulting in people receiving unnecessary alerts. This can lead to recipients ignoring potentially important alerts because of “message fatigue” and reduces response during highly critical times.

A CEM platform automatically locates all your people and assets and dynamically determines only those that need to be alerted. Sending only highly relevant communications to the correct people at the right time mitigates the risk of notification burnout and keeps your critical event management effective and efficient.

Act: Communicate, Engage, Orchestrate



Once you are aware of what is happening and you have located the assets and people who are potentially impacted during a crisis your mass notification system can tell people at risk what they need to do. But it is important to only send alerts and messages to the right people at the right time and when they are in the right place.

However, the right mass notification solution works beyond the scope of a crisis. Mass notification working within a complete CEM platform allows for full integration across all systems. This means that mass notification can and should be used to manage everyday operations from providing detailed task lists to the correct teams, sending across necessary forms, or providing updates across an entire organisation. Communication is as vital to everyday operations as it is during a crisis. Having one solution that handles both enables maximum business continuity and helps to build trust in the system.

Analyse: Performance



Organisations that implement mass notifications as their only form of emergency preparedness technology tend to only focus on the success of message delivery and response. However, post-incident, organisations should have as much data as possible in order to determine exactly where improvements can be made.

A complete CEM strategy includes data-based analysis after any critical event. CEM enables all data from the incident to be collected so you can use it for process improvement and tabletop exercises. This builds resiliency and allows you to finetune details that will keep your people even safer and your organisation running no matter what critical event may occur.

Five Facets of an Organisation to Consider During a Critical Event

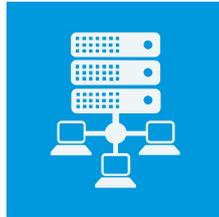
More than ever, C-suite executives are concerned about how they will ensure resiliency and ultimately success across five main facets of organisations during a critical event:



People



Buildings, Physical Infrastructure, and Operation



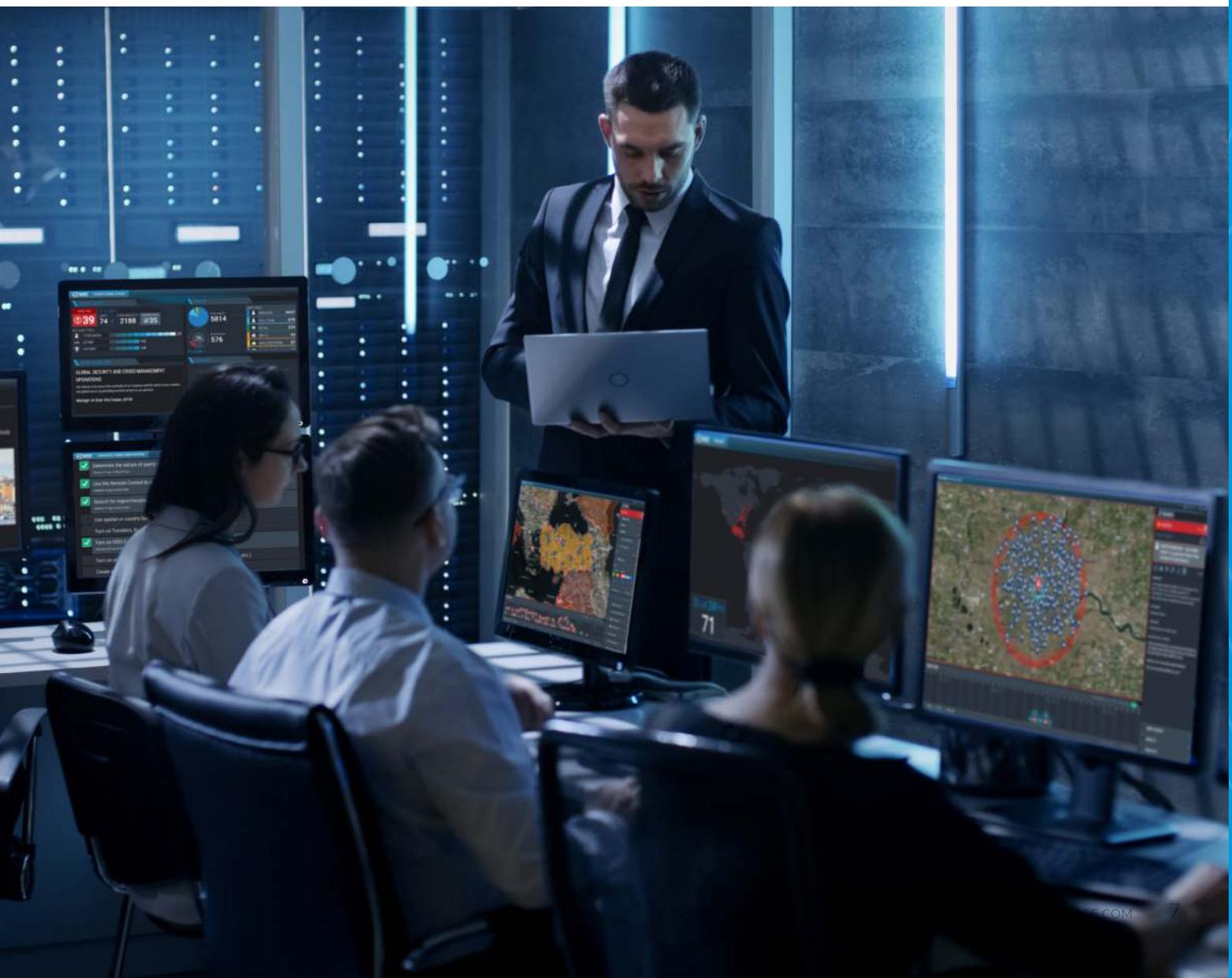
Digital Infrastructure



Supply Chain



IT Department and Cybersecurity





Protecting People and Assets During a Natural Disaster

People are the most valuable asset to your company. Imagine a cyclone is approaching your city, putting one of your worksites at risk. You need to be able to quickly identify, locate, communicate, and confirm the safety of your people who may be in harm's way.

Using only a mass notification system depends on separate teams to manually track the cyclone's path, determine what employees are working at the site, and what managers are available to receive task lists to prepare for the storm. Processes are scattered between siloed personnel systems and your mass notification system. This leads to confusion and results in delayed alerting putting your people at greater risk.

With a complete CEM platform, as soon as your system detects a severe storm heading toward your people, automation is triggered that can dynamically locate all of your potentially impacted employees. This enables you to send predefined storm preparation instructions to the correct individuals when every second counts, keeping all your people safe.

As well as protecting people, having a system that alerts people as early as possible ensures valuable assets can be locked down and protected. For example, a mine site in northwestern Australia can ensure trucks and cranes are safely stowed so, when the cyclone hits, the chance of damage is minimised. As well as avoiding repair and replacement costs, this can ensure normal operations are resumed as soon as it's safe.



Digital Transformation During the Pandemic

During this past year, we all experienced the challenge of keeping businesses and operations running smoothly due to the pandemic. [However, digitising processes as much as possible facilitated continued success for organisations.](#)

It is more apparent than ever that investing in technology will help your organisation digitally transform into a smart enterprise. This enables agility when dealing with any critical event, not just the pandemic.

How will you make your technology work for you? From smart automation, secure IoT management, big data and advanced analytics, these technologies will only serve to increase your ability to act quickly and effectively in the face of a disruption.



Mitigating Disruptions in Your Supply Chain

Proper management and optimisation of supply chains and routes benefit from an overarching critical event management platform and strategy. CEM leverages automation allowing your organisation to identify risks to suppliers, routes quickly and accurately.



Protecting Against Digital Threats

As the world becomes increasingly virtual, critical events are no longer threats to only people and physical assets. Protecting IT systems from internal and external threats requires a solution that can operate in the cloud and ensure your organisation is empowered to operate digitally with reduced risk.

Implementing a CEM platform and overall strategy helps streamline processes when IT incidents occur. CEM expedites the time it takes to validate system failures as well as identifying the available individuals that can assist with the problem. Every little step that CEM can automate throughout the lifespan of an IT outage adds up to massive amounts of money saved and ultimately improves customer satisfaction.



Being resilient requires taking proactive steps toward developing a plan and implementing the right technology that can successfully guide and protect your people and your assets before, during, and after an incident.

Be Proactive, Stay Compliant, Assess Your Technology, Ask Questions

While it is difficult to imagine your organisation being affected by a critical event, it has unfortunately become much more a “when” than an “if”. Being resilient requires taking proactive steps toward developing a plan and implementing the right technology that can successfully guide and protect your people and your assets before, during, and after an incident.

Laws and regulations are being put in place in Australia that will require enterprises to budget and plan for implementing certain critical event management technology. For example, ASX listed companies are obligated to notify the stock market of any event that materially affects share price. There are mandatory data breach rules that require all affected parties to be notified and new legislation is in development requiring companies to report ransomware attacks.

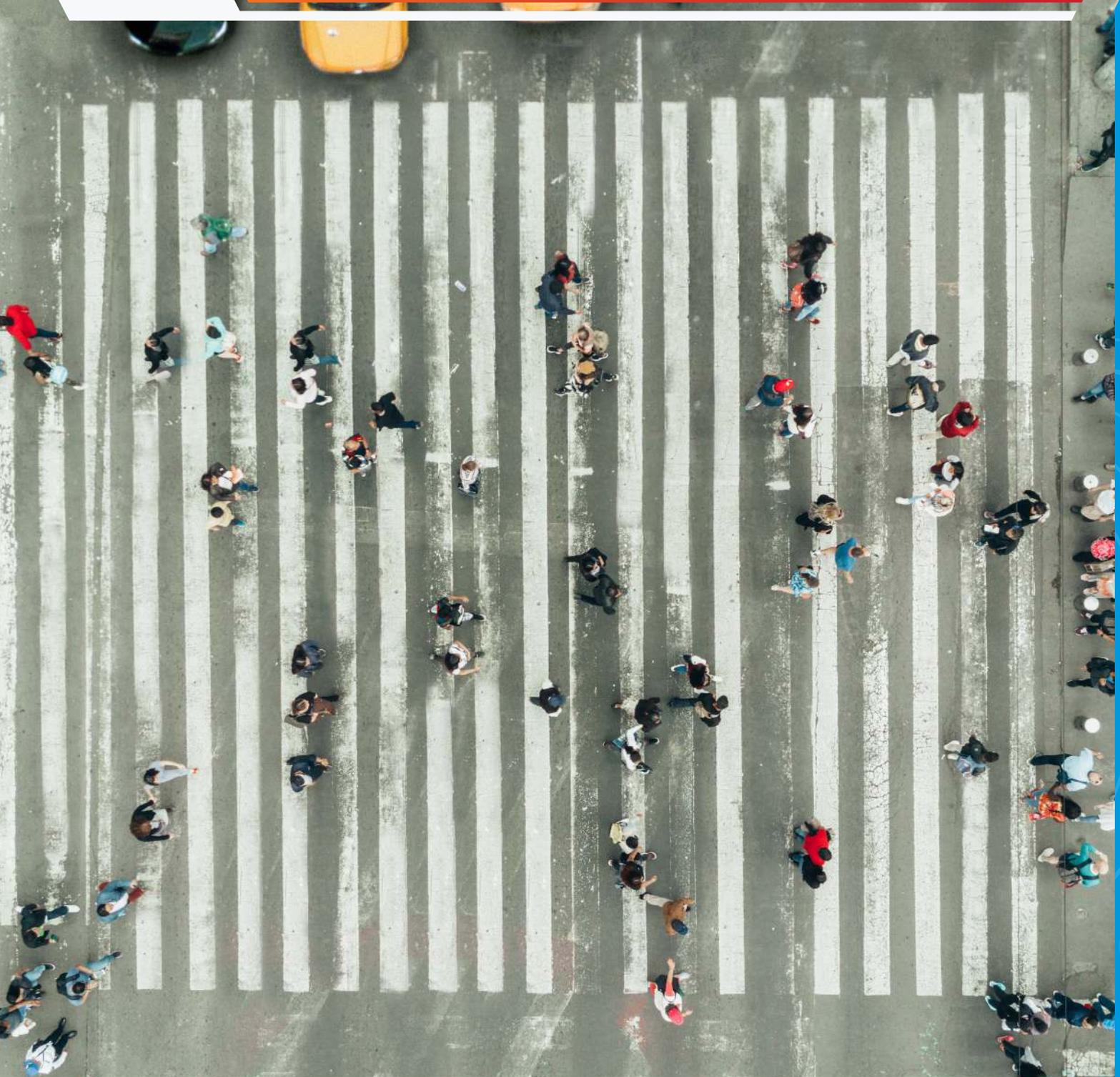
These are in addition to industry-specific regulations requiring other types of notification. For example, in the electricity market, when supply is constrained or there is a lack of reserve capacity, there are regulated notification processes.

Begin by scheduling dedicated assessments of your current risk management practices to determine whether your organisation has outgrown them, or if they are working as effectively as possible for your evolving environment while remaining compliant with state and federal legislation.

Finally, your CEM solution must scale as your organisation evolves. Ask your vendors if their solutions can cover people, physical infrastructure and operations, digital infrastructure, supply chain and cybersecurity for your organisation. Can it successfully carry you through every stage of a critical event? Ensure you have a vetted solution that can grow with you and provides your organisation with the tools it needs to confidently conquer any challenge, keep your people safe and maintain smooth operations.



If you would like to take the next step in learning about critical event management, watch this webinar: [The Digital Path to Business Resilience and Continuity](#).



Let's Talk

Want to learn more about Everbridge Critical Event Management?

Contact us if you would like to evaluate your risk environment and see how digital transformation with CEM can produce a better result than your current manual processes.

About Everbridge

Everbridge, Inc. (NASDAQ: EVBG) is a global software company that provides enterprise software applications that automate and accelerate organizations' operational response to critical events in order to Keep People Safe and Organizations Running™. During public safety threats such as active shooter situations, terrorist attacks, a global pandemic or severe weather conditions, as well as critical business events including IT outages, cyber-attacks or other incidents such as product recalls or supply-chain interruptions, over 5,800 global customers rely on the Company's Critical Event Management (CEM) Platform to quickly and reliably aggregate and assess threat data, locate people at risk and responders able to assist, automate the execution of pre-defined communications processes through the secure delivery to over 100 different communication modalities, and track progress on executing response plans. Everbridge serves 9 of the 10 largest global consulting firms, 8 of the 10 largest global automakers, 7 of the 10 largest technology companies in the world, and 8 of the 10 largest U.S. cities. Everbridge is based in Boston, Massachusetts – USA with additional offices in 25 cities around the globe including Abu Dhabi, Auckland, Bangalore, Beijing, Budapest, Chicago, London, Munich, Oslo, Pasadena, Singapore, Sydney, Tilburg, and Vancouver.

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