

The Solacom logo is displayed in white, bold, sans-serif font. It is centered within a circular graphic consisting of several concentric rings and a network of lines connecting nodes, all set against a solid orange background. The orange background is a large triangular shape that occupies the left and top-left portions of the page.

SOLACOM



Consolidating City and County 9-1-1 Services With Solacom Solution Brings Savings and Efficiencies

Urban and rural communities of Owensboro-Daviess County, Kentucky better served with Solacom



Daviess County, Kentucky has a population of almost 100,000. More than half of those residents live in the county seat of Owensboro, a city of just under 60,000. The rest of the county's residents live in small towns and rural communities spread across the county — an area of about 475 square miles along the south side of the Ohio River. Up until July 2010, 9-1-1 services in Daviess County were managed from two separate Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs): One serving Owensboro and the other dispatching calls from residents from across the rest of the county. These PSAPs were located at two separate sites, with 15 call takers working at the county PSAP and 10 in the city. Depending on the caller's location, call takers forwarded calls to various agencies for dispatch: The Owensboro Police Department, Daviess County Sheriff's Office, Owensboro Fire Department, Daviess County Fire Department, the Daviess County Volunteer Fire Departments, and various locally contracted ambulance services.



CHALLENGE

Operating and maintaining two separate systems for the county's urban and rural populations was proving to be inefficient, logistically challenging, and financially burdensome.

"In addition to the cost of maintaining separate sites and phone lines, the two PSAPs used different 9-1-1 controller systems," said past Judge Executive Reid Haire. "This added delays and complications when calls needed to be transferred between facilities."

The idea of consolidating the two sites had been talked about since the 1980s and gained momentum over the years.

"Perhaps the most compelling argument for consolidation was simply better service to the community," said Reid. "We couldn't have a situation where somebody calls the city and call takers have to transfer the call to the county, and the county then has to dispatch somebody — it made no sense."

As part of a consolidated effort to find a more effective way to manage emergency calls, Owensboro and Daviess County officials decided a consolidated approach would provide efficient call handling and management.

"I fully supported the need to raise the level of service in the community. The primary responsibility of government is public safety, and one of the most significant components of that responsibility is communication. A 9-1-1 center is the public's lifeline for assistance," said Ron Payne, who was the mayor of Owensboro at the time.

It quickly became evident that what Daviess

County officials needed was a new 9-1-1 call handling system to support their vision of a streamlined, efficient call center. With legacy systems dying out and callers using new IP-based technology, they also had to update to a system that could handle new technological advances, new calling habits, and new industry requirements.

"I have always been a keen advocate of preparing now for the inevitable change that next-generation 9-1-1 will bring," said Paul Nave, who was the county 9-1-1 director at the time. "We were looking for a new system that would place us on the cutting edge of those changes so we could adapt and progress as the technology and the standards evolved."

"We started searching for an i3-ready system that would be user friendly to our call takers from both the rural and urban 9-1-1 centers, and one that could allow those call takers to easily transfer to the correct agencies be they rural or urban."

With legacy systems dying out and callers using new IP-based technology, Owensboro-Daviess County needed a new 9-1-1 call handling system that could handle new technological advances, new calling habits, and new industry requirements.

SOLACOM SOLUTION

Daviess County officials selected a Solacom solution to address their emergency call handling and management requirements. The Solacom solution was part of the new Owensboro-Daviess County Central Dispatch unveiled in July 2010. Staff from the city 9-1-1 center and the county 9-1-1 center were now working under one roof in the Owensboro City Police building.

The new Central Dispatch employs 25 full-time and four part-time call takers. Nave estimates the center receives about 70,000 9-1-1 calls per year — 50,000 of which are wireless — and takes about 200,000 administrative calls for the city and county.

Emergency call handling and management is streamlined through Solacom's **Guardian 9-1-1 Solution** — the most flexible, user-centric voice, data, and video emergency call management solution for PSAPs. Designed to support all current and emerging standards and compatible with previously installed emergency response platforms, it provides a simple, evolutionary path to next-generation emergency call management requirements and enables future enhancements without replacing the underlying infrastructure.

At the desktop the **Guardian 9-1-1 Call Handling** solution is a user-centric, customizable call handling solution designed to enable call takers to quickly and efficiently respond to every call. The modular user interface provides the highest level of flexibility to fit the unique and individual workflow of each call taker. It can be customized to fit individual user preferences

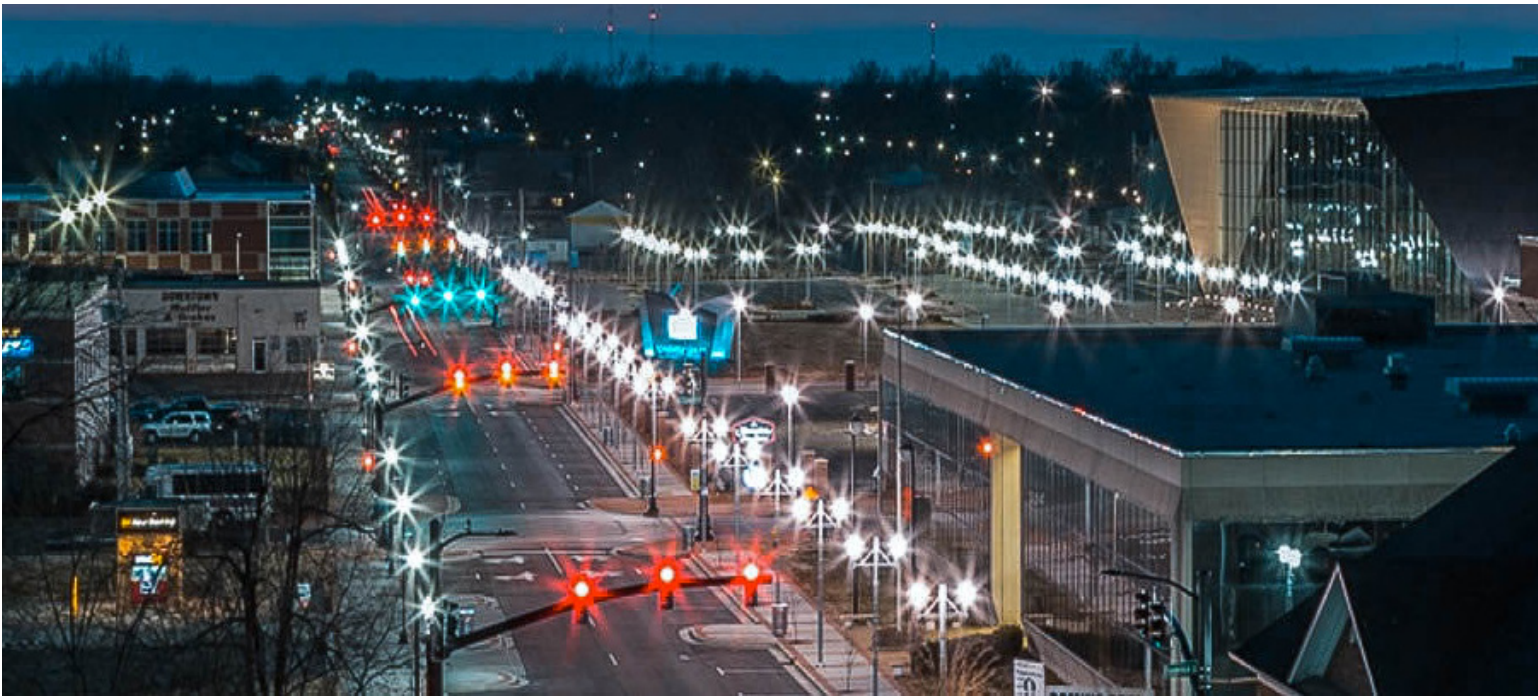
based on login or a standard configuration for all users. This IP-based touchscreen capability allows for rapidly transferring calls to the appropriate first response agency whether it is within the city limits or elsewhere in the county.

Solacom's user-centric, customizable solution supports administrative and emergency call processing. It is engineered to respond to emergency and administrative calls, perform call distribution functions, transfer calls with the click of a button, provide unlimited conferencing, and allow call takers to see and manage every leg of an active call.

Behind the desktop, the Guardian 9-1-1 Call Handling solution leverages the full power of Solacom's innovative call control system. This full-featured, customizable system is specifically engineered for legacy and IP-based emergency call management and control and for converging traditional voice and data into a single communications workflow.

For maximum flexibility, the Guardian 9-1-1 Call Handling solution and the call control system are

Emergency call handling and management at Owensboro-Daviess County central dispatch is streamlined through Solacom's **Guardian 9-1-1 Solution** — the most flexible, user-centric voice, data, and video emergency call management solution for PSAPs.



engineered to interface easily with the facility's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.

"The functionality is extremely easy to manage — to add buttons, to add transfers. Those things are very valuable to us because if we can do something ourselves rather than waiting for a technician to come and do it for us, we can save time and that's the essence of our job," said Nave, who became the new Owensboro-Daviess County Central Dispatch director.

"The new system is a lot quicker. It's easier to use; one touch and call takers can transfer to just about anyone."

At the desktop, the graphical interface uses different colors to distinguish between 9-1-1 and administrative calls, and uses custom icons for transfer keys to the various agencies. For example, the city police line uses the Owensboro police department badge and the county sheriff line has the sheriff badge.

"Those types of things are not important to the system functioning but they are

important to the call taker to delineate which line is ringing," said Nave.

The badges also provide call takers with distinct visual cues that assist them in making vital split-second decisions, ensuring that callers get dispatched to the correct agency — and quickly. It didn't take long for the call takers to familiarize themselves with the buttons and all the advanced features on the new desktops. They especially appreciate the touchscreens and the speed of one button for everything from transferring calls to opening or closing garage doors directly.

In October 2011, Owensboro-Daviess County Central Dispatch added Solacom's Emergency Notification System (ENS) to extend its level of service to mobile phone users who register their number to receive emergency alerts. This allows the 9-1-1 center to draw a circle or polygon on a map and quickly generate a custom calling list that includes all landline phones in the defined area, as well as all mobile phones registered to receive emergency notifications — then automatically send an emergency message to the complete list.

BENEFITS

“While we were combining services, we had to deal with personnel, we had to deal with budgets, and there was still, out in the rural areas, some element of suspicion about whether or not this was going to work,” said Haire. “But the proof is in the pudding — the citizens of Owensboro and Daviess County are now served more swiftly and completely than they were in the past. And this system will save taxpayer dollars and taxpayer lives.”

For example, not long after the cutover date, the consolidated center received a 9-1-1 call reporting a suspicious person trying to break into a vehicle at a county address bordering a city subdivision. The 9-1-1 center dispatched a county sheriff unit, but then received information that the suspect had run into the city subdivision. Within 30 seconds, Central Dispatch had a city patrolman en route to that location to back up the county sheriff. They apprehended the suspect, who had felony warrants out of another state.

“Because we were all in the same area together and could communicate, law enforcement was able to quickly arrest a felon off the street, and it could have saved an officer’s life by having someone there as a backup,” said Nave.

Daviess County officials conclude that the Solacom Guardian solution works efficiently and improves the bottom line.

“There is a significant cost savings, both from attrition and consolidating services that otherwise would be duplicated and



from being able to configure and manage the system ourselves. It's a win-win for the city and the county," said Nave.

Further benefits were seen at the level of maintaining optimum performance and security. Changes on the old systems meant staff had to go through the supplier and wait to complete the service, and there was always a cost for modifications. With **Guardian Managed Services**, Solacom's operations management services ensure the Solacom Guardian 9-1-1 Solution is always operating at peak performance — 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"We can modify the Solacom system ourselves; we can add a transfer button or an icon on the screen, save it, push it out to all the positions, and we're done," added Nave. "It's a big benefit for us because of our stringent budget."

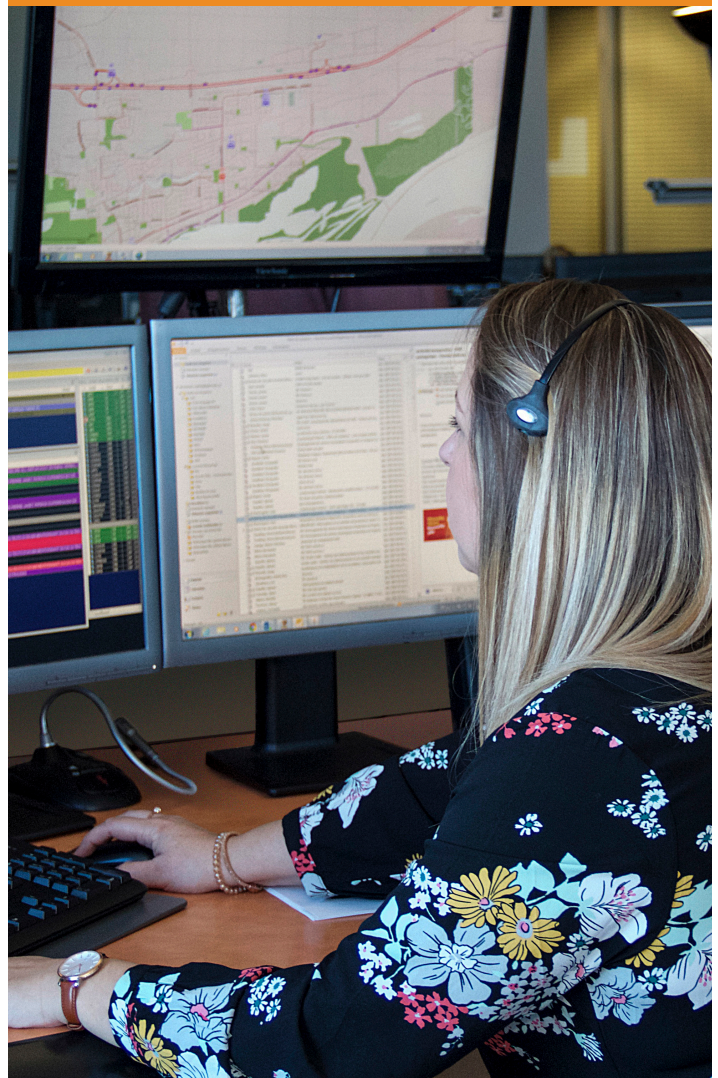


**For more information about
Solacom Technologies and
the Solacom Guardian 9-1-1
Solution, visit:**

www.solacom.com

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— Paul Nave, former county 9-1-1 director





Partner With an Industry Innovator

At Solacom, public safety communications management is not a sideline, it's our single focus. Our 9-1-1 call handling and management solutions are built on more than 30 years of research and innovation in the application of advanced hardware and software technologies for public safety. Today, our 9-1-1 solutions support thousands of agencies affecting millions of lives annually. From dense urban environments to statewide deployments, our solutions are trusted to streamline 9-1-1 call handling and management processes and enable more efficient collection of critical information in emergency situations.

To Find Out More, Contact:

sales@solacom.com

Call Toll-Free: 1 (888) SOLACOM (765-2266)

Call Direct: 1 (819) 205-8100

Visit: www.solacom.com

