

With new product, Amcom targets broader customer base

BY MARK REILLY
STAFF WRITER

Amcom Software Inc., a company that develops communications systems for high-profile government and health care clients, is making an aggressive push into other markets, as well.

The Edina company's software automates internal and external communications so personnel can be quickly contacted in emergencies. That's made it a big seller in high-stakes sectors like government, the military and health care. Amcom's products are used by the White House, the U.S. Army and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

As it launches a new version of its e.Notify software, Amcom is looking to lure new customers such as utility companies. This week the company announced a partnership with Team U.S. Inc., a consulting firm specializing in the utilities market. The two companies touted Amcom's e.Notify at the annual Edison Electric Institute (EEI) conference in Washington, D.C.

SOFTWARE

Jack Collins, CEO of Amcom, said utilities share many traits with Amcom's traditional customer: an often scattered work force and a need to respond quickly to unpredictable events.

Kathy Veldboom, Amcom's chief operating officer, said the company has focused on mission-critical tasks since it was founded in 1984. The company's first target market was the health care industry, providing group-paging systems to hospitals and the like.

From there it began developing speech-recognition tools and eventually Internet-based applications that let communication departments customize in-house alerts or find just the right person to respond to an emergency, wherever they might be.

The latest version includes a customization tool that would allow new phone lists to be generated on the fly. If there's a chemical spill offshore of San Diego, Amcom's software could

AMCOM SOFTWARE INC.

City: Edina

Top official: Jack Collins

Business: Communications software

Employees: 74

Revenue: Undisclosed

Web site: amcomsoft.com

manage a list of affected businesses and homes downstream that would need to be notified.

Those sorts of capabilities have become more important in recent years, as businesses have grown more serious about disaster planning and business-continuity services.

Veldboom said that while the federal government and health care sectors continue to be a strong source of business, the corporate arena is a growing source of demand. Intel Corp. is one big commercial-sector user of Amcom.

"We were being pulled into this sector; they were coming to us," she said.

But Amcom hasn't done a lot of proactive marketing toward corporate clients before now. "Commercial people are tougher to sell to," Veldboom said. "They don't all go to one trade show or reach one publication. But having more business-continuity managers out there makes it a growing field."

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