



CASE STUDY



Netherlands rattled up by 'cross medial siren' when child goes missing

Officially launched by the Dutch Minister of Justice, Mr Hirsch Ballin, in November 2008, AMBER Alert Netherlands is a cross medial nationwide alert system. Giving the Dutch federal police the tools it needs to immediately alert the whole of the Netherlands when a child goes missing or is abducted - using PC and television screens, websites, social networks, email, text messages, instant messaging, television and radio. The system was initiated, developed and sponsored by software company Netpresenter. And can also be used as emergency or terrorist alert system.

In 2009, the AMBER Alert system was awarded the IBC Special Award. The system received this recognition from the broadcasting and electronic media industry because it is the first time that any alert system combines so many different media types, alerting both public and press instantly.

Netherlands press conference, the Minister was the first to download the AMBER Alert Player software onto his laptop. 80.000 Dutch citizens followed into his footsteps within two months. "On top of that, key radio and TV stations, as well as major online news sites have pledged to help alert the public when an AMBER Alert goes out. Meaning the police can alert the whole nation within minutes - millions of extra eyes and ears to look out for the child. Highly increasing the chances of a positive outcome," said Ed Kraszewski, spokesperson for the Dutch federal police, the Netherlands Police Agency.

"Receive Alerts wherever and however you choose"



AMBER Alert poster



"Anyone can register to receive AMBER Alerts via the website. When registering, you can choose how and where to receive AMBER Alerts. For example as a pop up alert on your PC or Digital Signage screen, per e-mail, as a text message, via Instant Messenger, as a pop up or banner on your website, as an RSS Newsfeed, directly on your personal page on an online community or iGoogle, or all of the above. There also is a PC screensaver and Digital Signage Player available, containing a continuous presentation of missing children APBs," explains Frank Hoen, Netpresenter CEO and initiator/sponsor of AMBER Alert Netherland.

"Alert the whole nation within minutes"

AMBER Alert Netherlands is based on the American AMBER Alert Plan that has saved the lives of hundreds of children, but adds a wide range of media to the alert option portfolio. During the AMBER Alert

“Millions of extra eyes and ears with ‘one push of a button’”

Sending out an AMBER Alert is done by authorized users from the Netherlands Federal Police Agency (Klpd). Guidelines have been implemented to ensure AMBER Alerts are only sent out in the most urgent cases of child disappearances and abductions.

“Because a central, online management tool is used, our team can send out a nationwide alert anytime and from any location – all with one push of a button,” says Kraszewski. “Recent American research shows that of those children that are abducted and found dead later, over 70 % is killed within the first 3 hours. Underlining just how important it is to have access to millions of extra eyes and ears in those crucial first hours.”



“Warn everyone in case of an emergency or terrorist threat”

“TV and radio used to be the only way to reach a mass audience instantly. But nowadays there is so much choice in media; the only way to get such an important message across to everyone within minutes is to mobilize all available media,” says Frank Hoen, Netpresenter CEO and founder/ sponsor of AMBER Alert Netherlands. “AMBER Alert is proof of concept: cross medial times ask for cross medial measures. In any type of emergency. Similar solutions by Netpresenter are used by, for example, police forces to get APBs on missing and wanted persons out to their officers. And helping schools, hospitals, airports, large organizations and even oil refineries to instantly warn everyone in case of an emergency or terrorist threat.”

In 2009, Netpresenter was awarded the IBC Special Award for its innovative AMBER Alert system. Michael Lumley, chair of the IBC Innovations Award judging panel: “Often these special awards go to world-renowned research bodies or program makers, names on the lips of all of us. This year the special award went to a company which is perhaps less well known. But it is presented for a new application that fulfils a real and vital need, a practical and rapid response to one of the most frightening and emotionally charged events imaginable.”

AMBER Alert Netherlands

AMBER Alert is the new nationwide alert system for urgent cases of missing children and child abductions. This system enables the police to immediately warn the Netherlands nationwide in the case of a missing or abducted child by means of PC and television screens, websites, email, text messages, instant messaging, television and radio, highly increasing the chances of a positive outcome.

<http://www.amberalertnederland.nl>
(also available in English)

Sector

Law enforcement

Challenge

Quickly alert the whole of the Netherlands when a child goes missing or is abducted and the police fears for the child's life or safety.

Solution

Netpresenter's AMBER Alert Netherlands platform offers the Dutch police one single solution to automatically alert radio, TV stations and online sites, as well as all Dutch citizens. AMBER Alerts are sent out as text messages, e-mails, Instant Messages, pop ups on PCs or large screens, pop ups or banners on websites (also on online communities) and as news feeds (RSS). There also is a missing children screensaver and Digital Signage presentation available (continuous presentation). Users can select how they would like to receive the alerts when signing up via the website.

Benefits

- Cross medial solution to instantly get a detailed message out to the target audience (whole nation or specific postal code area). Enables the Dutch police to alert millions of people within minutes, asking them to look out for a child that has gone missing or was abducted;
- Same technology has multiple uses: emergency alert system for schools, hospitals, airports, large organizations and governments, anti terrorist alert tool and law enforcement tool.