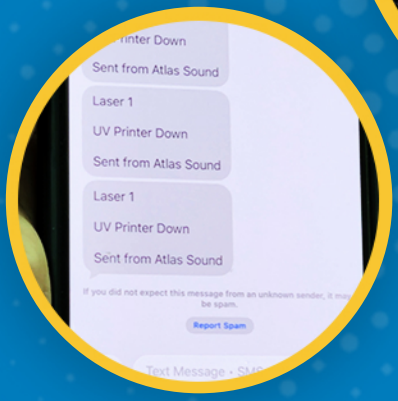
Case Study:
AtlasIED











How a Texas Audio Manufacturer Keeps People Safe and Production Moving With InformaCast

singlewire software

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The Challenge

AtlasIED, a global leader in commercial audio, security, and communication technology, runs a large manufacturing facility for its IP endpoint devices in Ennis, Texas. Two problems made everyday communication across that plant challenging. Emergency messages, such as severe weather and evacuation alerts, passed through several layers of leadership before they reached the floor, and the message often changed along the way. At the same time, the company had no fast way to know when an automated machine went down. A stoppage could go unnoticed for up to 30 minutes, quietly costing hours of production.

The Solution

AtlasIED connected its production lines and the IP-enabled devices already in its building to Singlewire InformaCast, a critical communication and incident management platform. Now one clear message reaches every corner of the 280,000-square-foot facility in seconds by speaker, screen, phone, and text. The same platform watches the automated lines and sends an alert the moment a machine needs attention.

One Message, One Busy and Noisy Floor

In Ennis, Texas, about 100 AtlasIED partners (the company's term for its employees) keep the floor running. Safety is a top priority, followed closely by product quality and keeping production on schedule.

For years, though, getting a clear message to everyone on the floor was harder than it should have been. When severe weather rolled in, the facility relied on a meeting with the leadership team, who then passed word to their leads, who then told partners on the floor. By the time the message reached its third set of hands, it had often changed.

"Once it's hitting three messages, it's mixed, and you don't know exactly what's going on," said Jeff McGroy, facility manager at AtlasIED. "It created confusion."



Production had a similar gap. The lines had no way to report a problem on their own.

"We didn't really have any announcements for anything on the production lines. It was just standard scheduled announcements for breaks and start times," said Joel Anderson, process engineer for automation at AtlasIED. "The challenge was how to get the communication from what was happening on the line to the announcement system. There really wasn't a good way, because everything had to be preplanned and scheduled."

As AtlasIED leaned into automation, partners were no longer tied to one machine. Someone might bend metal in one cell while watching an automated line in another, so a stopped machine went unnoticed.

"Before, we would have machines down for 20 or 30 minutes before anybody understood that machine was down," Anderson said. "Some of these machines are out of the way, so unless someone specifically went to that area, they would never know it was down."

In injection molding, the lost time compounded fast.

"A 20-minute stoppage could actually cost you an hour to an hour and a half of downtime, because the machine goes into a reset mode," McGroy said. "It drops its heats and turns its pumps off, and then a partner has to stand there and get everything back up and running."

A Platform Built on Existing Devices

When AtlasIED looked for an answer, it wanted a proven platform its existing IP-enabled devices could connect to, not a rip-and-replace project. The company chose Singlewire InformaCast, which unifies the speakers, phones, signage, and devices an organization already owns, and delivers audio, text, and visual alerts that reach every person.

Setup followed a consistent pattern across the plant. When a machine faults, it sends a signal to a controller that passes it to the IP-enabled device on the line. That device sends the alert through InformaCast, which announces exactly which machine needs attention and repeats the message until the issue is cleared. AtlasIED now runs this across 10 automated lines, including its injection molding machines, press brakes, lasers, and paint line.



"As long as they're on the same network, InformaCast will see the devices and adopt them into the system," Anderson said. "It's very quick and very simple."

Reaching Every Corner of the Floor

On a manufacturing floor, an alert only matters if people can hear and see it over the machines. When a message goes out, it plays across the connected speakers, screens, and flashers throughout the building, reaching every corner at once.

With InformaCast, starting an alert is just as easy. A supervisor can send one from a desktop app or a mobile app, and partners on the floor can use the IP consoles in their work areas. If someone spots a problem in their cell, a button press on the console calls for help.

AtlasIED's team is bilingual, and the system helps deliver messages everyone can understand.

"When we have an emergency such as a severe weather alert, a supervisor can use their phone to activate a scenario on the dashboard, and it makes an announcement throughout the building in both English and Spanish," Anderson said.

Color and sound help partners read a message at a glance. Routine announcements scroll across a blue screen, while emergencies turn the screens red, start a red flasher, and lead with an alarm sound.

"The siren really grabs your attention and lets you hear it over the machines that are running, so you know to listen to what's coming," Anderson said.

Weather alerts now reach partners even before they leave home. During new-hire orientation, AtlasIED asks partners to opt in to text alerts, so it can send an update by text if it needs to pause or close.

"HR can send one message out in English and Spanish telling everyone what our plan is," McGroy said. "So everybody gets one message. It's the same message, and it's a very clear message."

Catching Problems in Seconds, Not Minutes

The same platform that keeps partners safe also keeps the lines moving. Instead of waiting for the next quality check, AtlasIED now hears about a problem the moment it happens.

"Before InformaCast, when a machine would go down, the partner monitoring it wouldn't necessarily know, because they were doing hourly quality checks," Anderson said. "If it went down shortly after a check, we lost all that production for that hour and never knew it. After InformaCast, we're getting messages within seconds, finding the problem and resolving it within minutes."

Some lines carry their own escalation. On the lasers, a message repeats every minute until a partner clears the fault; if it is still down after 30 minutes, InformaCast texts the production supervisor, and after an hour it reaches the plant manager. It can also look ahead: on the paint line, it warns the operator about five minutes before an automated change is due, so the line never has to stop.



"Most of the partners feel it's helpful, because they have other tasks throughout the day," Anderson said. "When the alarm goes off, it lets them know to go check, and it saves them from constantly going back and forth to monitor the automated lines."

In one recent 24-hour stretch, 35 alerts went out through InformaCast — some automatic, such as machine faults and break schedules, and others sent directly by a supervisor.

Less Downtime, Less Stress, and Peace of Mind

The results show up in both safety and production. Unplanned downtime has dropped, because partners find and fix problems in minutes instead of losing most of an hour. Injection molding resets happen far less often. And when severe weather threatens, one clear message reaches everyone at once.

McGroy points to the first time the facility used InformaCast for inclement weather as the moment it clicked.

"It felt really good, because I knew the partners weren't going to drive in because of a miscommunication," he said. "I felt safe about it, and I felt our partners were safe."

The platform has also proved simple and dependable.

"InformaCast is very easy to use. It's very intuitive, with an interface that's easy to understand," Anderson said.

"InformaCast has done everything that we've needed to do so far from a communication standpoint, and it's working effectively," McGroy added.

For AtlasIED, the strength is that one platform handles both jobs a manufacturer cannot afford to get wrong: protecting people and protecting production.

"In any factory I've been in, communication has always been an issue that everybody is trying to resolve," McGroy said. "InformaCast allows us to resolve a good portion of the communication throughout the facility."

Visit www.singlewire.com/solutions-manufacturing to learn more about how InformaCast can enhance safety and communication in your manufacturing facility.