

Tufts EMS extends its streak of continual service to three years with the help of EMS Planner

Since 1985, Tufts University Emergency Medical Services (TEMS) has provided prompt, quality medical aid to the Tufts Community. TEMS is an entirely student-run organization. Students who are Massachusetts-certified EMTs volunteer their time to respond to more than 350 requests for aid each year. TEMS, with over 40 members, had a problem that many other volunteer EMS squads also face—inefficient methods of scheduling. They needed to find a user-friendly, affordable solution to their scheduling problems.

Situation

The Director of Operations, Bracken Babula, was having an increasingly difficult time scheduling members for shifts. He first tried having members sign up for shifts at the monthly meetings, but trying to fill every shift was very slow and difficult. Next, he tried using mass emails and a whiteboard to organize the schedule. Frequent emails were sent with Excel spreadsheet attachments to notify members of their work schedule.

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Babula complained, “People had to call the scheduling director for every single shift to find out who was on and [they] never knew when the open shifts were because the Excel spreadsheets were constantly going out of date.”

Bracken Babula
Director of Operations
Tufts EMS

TEMS faced the challenge of finding a solution that was affordable and user-friendly. Private website designers often charge several thousand dollars for a job. If one considers the ongoing server fees and the time spent trying to test, fix, and manage a website made from scratch, the cost is substantial—especially for non-profit volunteer organizations.

Results

The Executive Director for TEMS, Michael Garshick, oversaw the transition to EMS Planner's scheduling system. “Traditional scheduling methods are inefficient and cause many problems. As a community these are problems we don't want,” says Garshick. “People can get hurt at any time, and you can't ask someone to have a heart attack conveniently only on Mondays and Tuesdays. The community expects healthcare providers to be available 24/7.”

EMS Planner eliminates the headaches associated with scheduling and helps ensure someone is always on call. Since the transition, TEMS has been able to provide more reliable aid to the community, continuing into its third year of uninterrupted service.

“EMS Planner allows me to focus more of my time on patient care, rather than tedious scheduling,” says Babula. EMTs are faced with many challenges and tasks on a daily basis. Scheduling should not be one of them.

About EMS Planner

EMS Planner is a nationwide scheduling service designed for volunteer EMS and Fire squads that enables squad administrators to easily plan and manage their shift schedules online. The system encourages members to sign up for shifts, and then lets the squad administrator approve or reject those requests. As a social venture, EMS Planner offers this service to at a discounted rate to qualified squads. For more information, visit <http://www.emsplanner.com>.