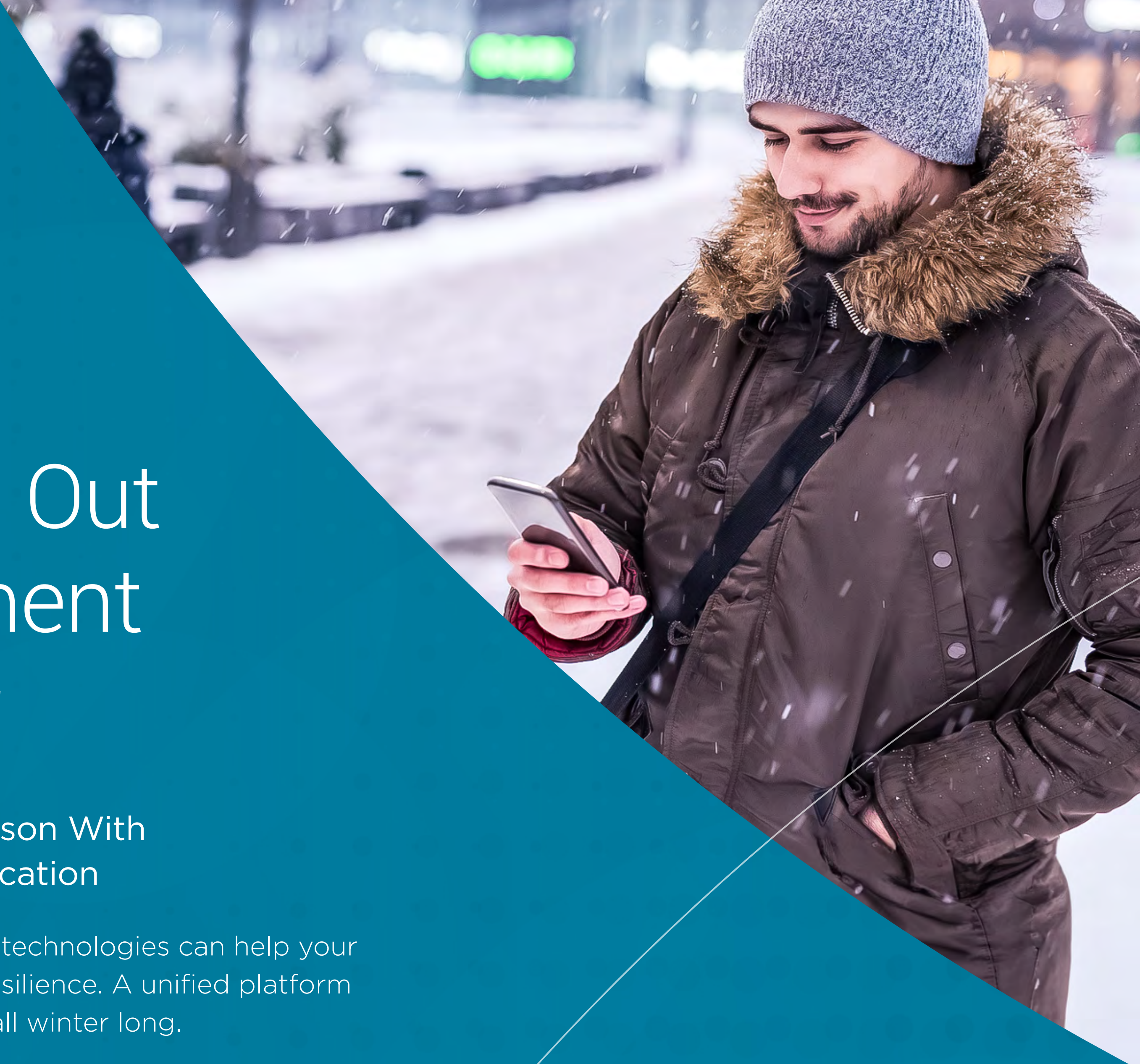ONSOLVE®

EBOOK

6 Ways to Get the Most Out of Your Crisis Management Technology This Winter

Keep Your People Safe and Operations Running All Season With
AI-Powered Threat Detection and Seamless Mass Notification

Winter weather is on its way. Threat detection and mass notification technologies can help your organization maintain business continuity and achieve operational resilience. A unified platform delivers the agility you need to protect your people and operations all winter long.

Unpredictable Precipitation: This Winter's Mix

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, damage from weather and climate disasters rose nearly 10 percent, from $156 billion in 2021 to over $171 billion in 2022, with numbers continuing to climb.

What's in store for winter 2023-24?

- The World Meteorological Organization declared the onset of El Niño for the first time in seven years. This change may cause an increase in global temperatures, as well as disruptive weather and climate patterns.

- The U.S. Geological Survey reports that during an El Niño winter, the northern U.S. usually experiences temperatures that are warmer and drier than average, while the southern parts of the continental U.S. tend to get cooler and wetter weather.

- Climate.gov expects El Niño to continue into winter, with a 56 percent chance of this weather pattern becoming a strong event when it peaks.

How Might This Result in Dynamic Risk and Cascading Damages?

Dynamic risk is typically characterized by rapid change, an element of surprise and impacts that cascade throughout the organization. Winter weather often has the potential to fall into this category of risk, with storms, ice and freezing temperatures resulting in power outages, accidents and other infrastructure issues.

Looking back at last year's data, organizations should be prepared for plenty of winter weather and the effect it may have on operations and business continuity. Winter storms and blizzards were up 216 percent in the U.S. from 2021 to 2022, according to the 2023 OnSolve Global Risk Impact Report.

Weather — particularly the slippery conditions brought on by winter – can have a significant impact on transportation and infrastructure. Poor driving conditions, damage to roadways and delays in airline and railway operations are just a few ways winter weather presents a dynamic risk. These factors can impact business on multiple levels — from employees who drive to work or need to take children to school, to your supply chain's reliance on shipments by plane, train or 18-wheeler.

While only time will tell what this winter holds, one thing is clear: Organizations need advanced detection to better prepare for weather-related threats and a reliable system to communicate with all their people quickly before, during and after cold fronts, precipitation and freezing conditions set in.

Winter Is on Its Way — Weather Any Storm With Risk Intelligence and Mass Notification

As cold weather — along with cold, flu and COVID variants — sets in, the prospect of delivering alerts, updating schedules and overcoming all the other winter roadblocks to your operations can feel mind-numbing. With the right technology in place, it doesn't have to be that way.

A mass notification system and AI-powered risk intelligence can take the bite out of winter's frost. Automation can detect relevant threats and enable rapid alerting, all from one intuitive interface. With advanced warning and the ability to inform everyone with just a few clicks, you can keep all your people and your operations out of harm's way.

This winter, use these six tips to make the most of crisis management technology for risk detection and communications.

Defrost Historical Risk Data to Identify the Top Winter Weather Threats

What happened in the past is directly correlated with current and future possibilities. By analyzing historical threat data, organizations can gain insights into patterns and trends. In addition, a review of your successes and challenges during last year's cold weather season can help you make better decisions for improved outcomes this year.

Historical Analysis: Comprehensive reports on critical events from past winters (sorted to specific geographic areas and types of events) can help organizations forecast and prepare for what to expect during this year's cold season. A historical reporting solution provides a better understanding of the risks associated with winter weather across all of your locations.

Communications Review: Was your mass notification system able to reach all of your designated recipients in their preferred language and channel (email, text, voicemail, desktop notification or in-app push notification)? The ability to set these preferences gives your alerts the best chance of being seen, heard, understood and acted upon. Two-way communications and read receipts are also a must so you know who has received your alerts and avoid leaving anyone out in the cold.

Did you know?

Only

37%

of CEOs said they have a plan for extreme weather.

— 2023 OnSolve Global Risk Impact Report

Stay One Step Ahead of Old Man Winter

Did you know?

In 2021 the Texas Freeze resulted in:

- **6-9 consecutive days** of freezing temperatures

- **10 million people** without power

- **49% of the state** suffering water disruptions

- **Hospitals facing staff** and supply shortages

- **$600 million** in agriculture losses

- **At least 246** resulting fatalities

— Dynamic Risk: 3 Examples and How to Prepare

While forecasts of winter weather are helpful, blizzards, ice and freezing temperatures can quickly take a turn for the worse and result in unforeseen problems like power outages, road closures and supply chain issues. Organizations need a better way to stay ahead of bad weather and which aspects of the business it may impact.

Advanced Threat Detection: Human-driven analysis is not enough to keep up with the enormous quantity of data on incoming winter weather and cascading complications. AI-powered Risk Intelligence constantly monitors human-validated sources, including weather reports and alerts from governmental and non-governmental sources. Machine learning technology pulls out the information relevant to your organization, delivering actionable intelligence, including dynamic maps of forecasts for facilities, logistics and personnel movements — in real time.

Custom Monitoring: From fixed assets like offices and warehouses to traveling employees, remote workers, delivery trucks and other points in your supply chain, there's a lot to keep safe from dangerous winter weather. The ability to get custom alerts based on specific monitoring criteria including severity levels and proximity helps organizations prevent operations and employees from being left out in the cold.

Warm Up With a Simple Yet Powerful System

Winter storms and complications are stressful enough. Detection and communication shouldn't add to the wintry mix. Depending on their role, users should be able to easily send, receive and reply to alerts, as well as view reports and update their contact information.

Intuitive Interface: A user-friendly system will provide a dashboard view so leaders can easily see a big-picture overview so they can make fast, informed decisions. Whether they're using a desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone, an easy-to-use system makes it easy to send alerts, even from a mobile app.

Self-Update Portal: All users should be able to keep their contact information and preferences current, so your alerts have the greatest likelihood of reaching everyone. Automated reminders can prompt everyone to check and confirm their details regularly. This is another way to ensure everyone stays familiar with logging into and navigating the system.

Did you know?

93%

of CEOs believe technology would help protect their employees and operations from physical threats.

— 2023 OnSolve Global Risk Impact Report

Unfreeze Communications Blockages

Did you know?

An isolated winter storm in Buffalo, N.Y. caused nearly a **week-long driving ban in December 2022**, keeping employees from going into work and halting deliveries.

— NPR

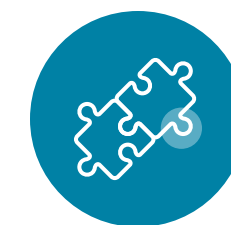Are all your departments able to communicate effectively? A unified platform with features like a convenient conference bridge can help get the word out quickly and bring everyone together virtually. When every minute counts during a winter storm or freeze, technology keeps stakeholders connected.

Accountability Hierarchy: During a crisis, every single person in your organization should know who to report their whereabouts to, under what conditions and how. By mapping this out and providing a plan for how those communications will be sent, organizations can ease the stress of blizzards, cold-snaps and other winter hazards.

Coordination of Effort: By identifying where different departments overlap for core responsibilities and goals, leaders can proactively share information and coordinate responses across the entire organization. Mass notifications provide the ability to quickly check in with team members and leaders, so everyone stays on the same page — especially during times of ice, sleet or snow.

FIVE

Prepare Alert Templates Before Temperatures Drop

By pre-creating both contact groups and message templates in advance, leaders can speed up their alerting process. With a variety of messages at the ready and stakeholders sorted by group for potential scenarios, alerts can go out with just a few clicks. This saves lives, time and effort during blizzard conditions and other severe winter weather.

Tailored Contact Groups: A sophisticated mass notification system can sort recipients into contact groups based on a range of criteria such as location, role and shift assignment. By thinking through how different events may affect different stakeholders, leaders can save themselves time when a winter storm is on the horizon.

Customizable Message Library: After matching the events with the different groups they're likely to impact, you can pre-create messages for employees, customers, business partners, investors and any other stakeholders. That way, when roads ice over hours before a major operation, you can quickly send relevant information to exactly the people who need it.

Practice for the Precipitation

Advance drills, practice and rehearsals can vastly improve response times and reduce stress when every minute counts. When power lines go down or your heating system has to switch to a backup generator, everyone should know where to go, what to do and how to reach one another.

Standard Procedures: Throughout the year, as well as immediately before a forecasted weather event, it's important for everyone to familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures they'll need to follow during inclement weather. Your mass notification system should provide a convenient way for users to check this information, as well as a test-track where everyone can practice carrying out their prescribed actions during an emergency.

Contingent Updates: In fluid situations, it's likely you'll have to send updates on a rolling basis. As your risk intelligence technology provides new data, an integrated mass notification system will help you relay the right information to the right people at the right time.

Weather is Less Worrisome with the Right Technology at Hand

The OnSolve® Platform for Critical Event Management delivers advanced threat detection with a fully redundant system for mass notifications, so you can reach every stakeholder with just a few keystrokes. Features like custom event filtering and detailed situation reports take the hassle out of getting all your people read-in, even when the lights go out.

No matter where your people and operations are located (or in what kind of weather), you can quickly detect threats and alert your people, from anywhere, any time. Business continuity and operational resilience are year-round endeavors but require proactive planning for the snow, ice and freezing temperatures winter may bring. When cold weather's on the way modern and innovative crisis management technology can insulate your operations from winter disruptions.

Melt the Stress of a Winter Freeze With **Risk Intelligence and Mass Notification**

[Request a demo](#) to see how the OnSolve Platform can help you keep your people safe and informed all season long.

Visit onsolve.com

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