



PCM

Peace of Mind

# Client Success Case Study

The Implementation of the POM System  
at Creighton University

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Creighton  
UNIVERSITY





# Organization Profile

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**Organization Type**

Private University, Coed

**Organization Location**

Urban, Mid-Size City

**Religious affiliation**

Jesuit, Catholic

**Enrollment**

8,654 (4,255 undergrad)

**Gender Demographics**

54% Female / 46% Male

**On Campus Residents**

2,400



# Executive Summary

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Campus safety is the number one concern of parents when sending their children to school. Current campus safety technology is antiquated and ineffective. For example, colleges found blue light emergency phones to be underused and expensive.<sup>1,2</sup>

Newly-hired Senior Director of Public Safety, Michael D. Reiner, evaluated existing campus security and technology. He sought to enhance the sense of safety on campus by making it easier for the community members to reach help and improve the sense of security on campus. After researching the current solutions on the market, Mr. Reiner found POM to be the best option.

Prior to implementation, Mr. Reiner conducted a thorough test of the POM system. Students and staff members tested the devices throughout campus to evaluate the accuracy and reliability of POM. After successful testing, Creighton offered POM devices to students, faculty, and staff at the beginning of Fall 2017.

As of fall 2022, over 3,100 POMs have been distributed, primarily to undergraduate residential students. Creighton Public Safety received over 800 alerts and resolved a number of critical situations. Subsequent user surveys show that 84% of the students carry the POM regularly and 72% report feeling safer carrying the POM.

Creighton University considers POM a great success, allowing users to quickly request emergency assistance and providing them with an increased level of security.



# The Goal

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“An easy-to-use and cost-effective method for any member of the University community to quickly call for emergency assistance, whenever and wherever needed”

Mr. Reiner was keen to take a proactive approach to campus safety. In December of 2016, he retired as a colonel in the United States Air Force Security Forces and assumed his position as the Director of Public Safety. Mr. Reiner evaluated the current technology and systems in use at Creighton and determined that Creighton needed an updated and more advanced way for the campus community to reach help.

Like many college campuses, Creighton has over 30 blue light emergency phones across the campus. However, these phones hadn't been used for a legitimate emergency call in over a decade. This technology is dated and costly to maintain. It also provides no assistance when students travel off-campus.

Mr. Reiner came to the conclusion that there had to be a better way to leverage mobile technology as an enhancement to the campus security strategy. The new system would have to be agile, enabling community members to call for assistance anywhere, on or off campus, in a variety of situations.

His goal was to provide an easy-to-use and cost-effective method for any member of the University community to quickly call for emergency assistance, whenever and wherever needed. This would enhance the sense of security on campus and increase the ability of the Public Safety Department to quickly locate and assist individuals in distress. After extensive research and comparisons, Mr. Reiner selected the POM system for on-site testing and evaluation.



## Why POM?

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Mr. Reiner looked at several app-based “panic buttons” and devices to decide which system would be suited best for Creighton. He dismissed any system that required users to handle their phones in emergency situations. POM is a robust system that is designed specifically for campus safety.

App only solutions are problematic for numerous reasons. They require the user to have the phone in their hand to activate an alert. He felt that an expensive smartphone could distract students from ambient dangers as well as attract unwanted attention. In addition, the cold winters in Nebraska make operating a touch screen based panic button difficult with gloves. The phone would also have to be unlocked, and at the ready in the student’s hand, for an app based alert to be initiated quickly. This leads to more time lost or may even be impossible to do in a stressful situation.

Instead, Reiner focused on devices that allow students to call for help without handling their phones. Compared to competitors, the POM is easier to operate and has many unique features that are custom-made for the higher education environment. These include the Walking Escort, AutoCall, AutoText, and Fake Call features.

“I consider POM to be a strategic investment in our campus security infrastructure. I would rather put POMs in the hands of our students than continue to maintain obsolete blue light emergency phones.”

**Michael D. Reiner**

Senior Director of Public Safety



# Product Trial

Before implementation, Creighton University leadership wanted to thoroughly test the device on campus. The POM team worked with the University to design and execute a three-day test of the POM system.

1

Phase 1 consisted of training the Public Safety staff to use the POM Command Center and POM User Management System. The POM team distributed devices to the test volunteers and instructed them on how to use the device.

2

Phase 2 was the live test. 37 alerts were activated with an average location accuracy of 13 feet. Three alerts were tested in difficult basement settings of large buildings and returned a location accuracy within 300 feet of the user. At the end of the day the participants returned the POM devices and gave their feedback in a focus group. The participants were impressed with the accuracy and responsiveness of the POM system. In the focus group everybody expressed their support for the implementation of the POM system on campus.

3

Phase 3 consisted of a meeting with key leaders from Student Life, Public Safety, Student Government, and Admissions to discuss the successful test and next steps. The group made an enthusiastic and unanimous decision to implement POM on campus.





“Leaving her here alone is really difficult for me. It is nice to know that she has the POM just in case.”

**Creighton Parent**

“This [POM] is great. I feel so much more comfortable leaving my child, knowing that the POM can get her help when she needs it.”

**Creighton Parent**

# Implementation

Creighton first distributed POMs on Move-In Day in August 2017. Creighton and the POM team worked collaboratively to distribute devices and educate users. To generate interest in the new program, Mr. Reiner spoke to parents during Summer Preview sessions, sent informational e-mails to admitted students, and spoke during new student orientations.

During the first week of academic year 2017-18, Creighton distributed nearly 400 POMs, primarily to first-year residential students. By the end of the year, over 750 members of the Creighton community had purchased POMs.

The passion and enthusiasm of Mr. Reiner and the University were crucial factors for the success of the implementation. The reaction to POM was overwhelmingly positive. Most students knew about the POM and were very excited

and interested. Parents felt more comfortable with their children adjusting to college with the POM. Students responded well to POM and were excited to set each other up as POM buddies for AutoText and AutoCall.

The university also received positive press attention about the new POM implementation on the web and TV.<sup>3</sup>

# Post-Implementation

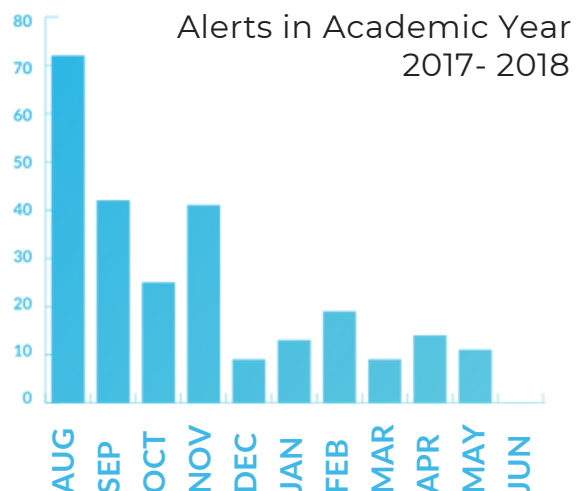
Since 2017, POM has been integrated as part of Creighton University's permanent safety strategy. Creighton distributes new POM devices to incoming freshmen each academic year. In the first year, they distributed over 750 POMs, followed by over 500 more during academic year 2018-19.

At the end of academic year 2018-19, there were over 1,250 active POM devices on campus, accounting for 717 alerts, 182 walking escorts, over 100 fake phone calls, and 114 AutoCalls successfully activated.

Within the initial rollout, many students tested the POM to learn how it worked. In the first month, over 500 students received POM devices and used them to contact campus safety 72 times.

Over time, students became more familiar with the system and the alert rate dropped.

Creighton's Public Safety Department did not require additional staffing because of the additional calls for service. The University continued to sell additional POM devices as word spread through the campus community. The Department chose to distribute POM devices through the Community Outreach Officer in the Public Safety facility, assisting students with setup and answering any questions.





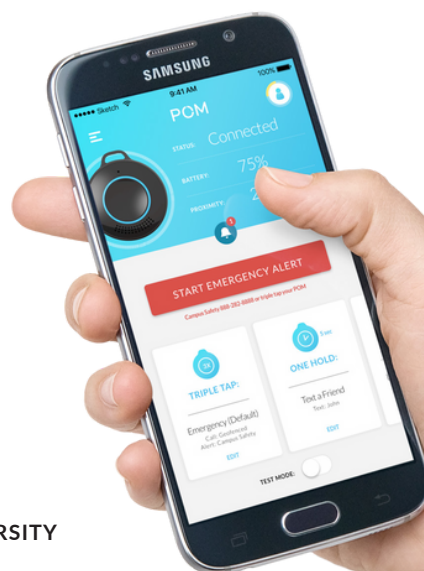


## Continued Testing & Support

The Department of Public Safety regularly tests the POM system to ensure that dispatchers understand how to monitor the system and manage alerts and that officers know how to respond to any calls for service. Mr. Reiner also briefs key stakeholders on the success of the system.

As part of POM's commitment to continuous support, the POM team is available by email and phone to help any student with their POM. The POM staff is ready to troubleshoot any issues as well as help students should they break their POM. POM also sends out periodic emails to students who opt in for product updates, helpful reminders, and product support.

The POM team also hired and trained two Creighton undergraduate students as Brand Ambassadors. These students provided education about how the POM system works and assisted their peers with any device issues.



# Success Stories

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Since implementation, the POM has been used in a variety of situations at Creighton University.



## Assault & Attempted Murder

One harrowing example of POM's effectiveness came from a woman who had purchased the device for her own personal use. Just one day after setting up her POM, on Aug. 25, 2017, she was physically attacked by a man in her home. She reached into her pocket and activated her POM device, which called the 911 dispatcher. The dispatcher's voice came through the POM speaker and startled the attacker, which caused him to flee. The attacker was later arrested and put in jail. In her own words, "the POM helped save my life." She admitted there was no way she could have gotten to her phone to dial 911.



## Medical Emergency

The POM was used by a Creighton student experiencing a non-life-threatening medical emergency off campus. The student activated the POM and was connected with 911 and Public Safety. Public Safety officers responded directly to her location and transported her to the hospital.



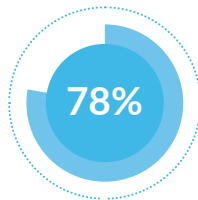


# User Survey & Feedback

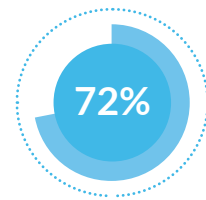
After 16 months POM conducted a series of user surveys to provide qualitative data on POM users. The goal of the survey was to determine feelings of safety, frequency of use, and critical feedback. The survey respondents reported:



Students who carry the POM at least 1-3 times a month to every day.

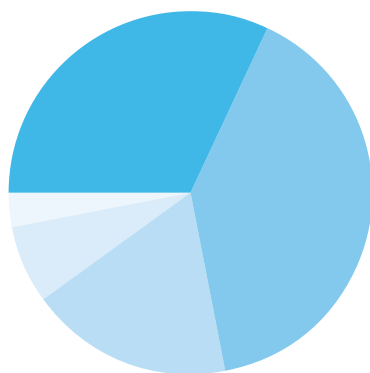
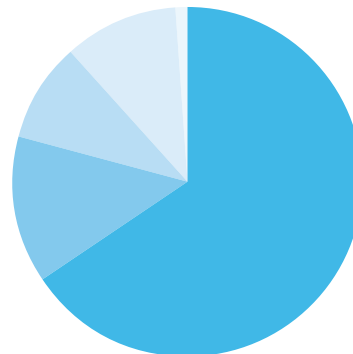
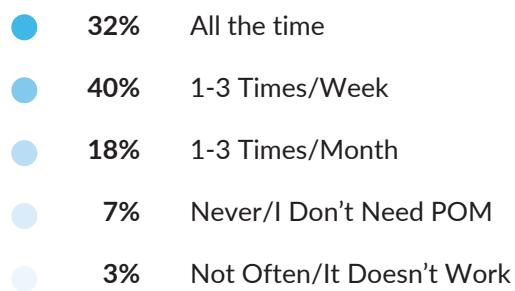


Connected to the POM at least 1-3 times a month for temporary situations/events.

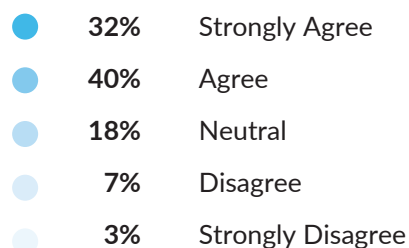


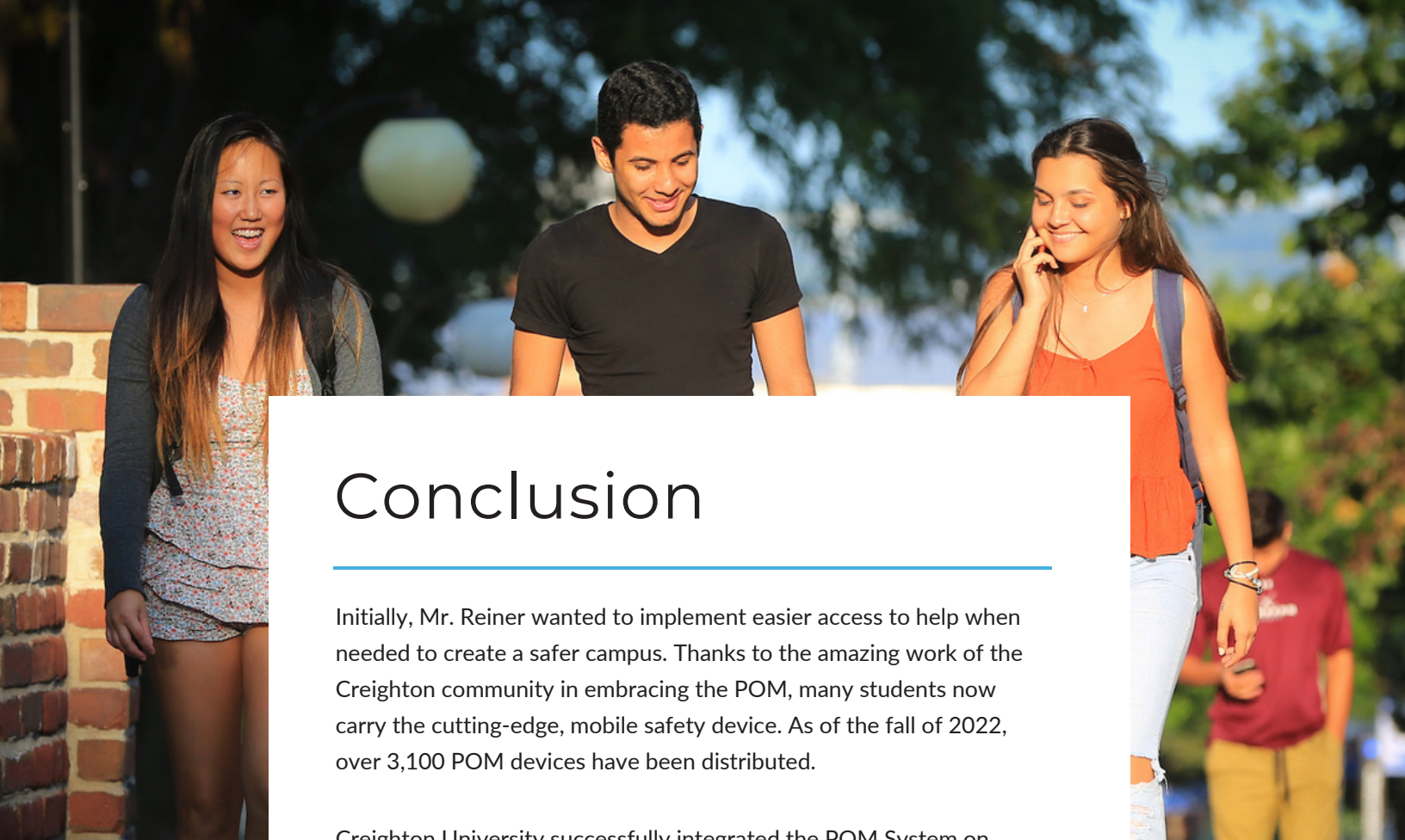
Feel safer with the POM

## How often do you carry your POM with you?



## I feel safer carrying my POM.





## Conclusion

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Initially, Mr. Reiner wanted to implement easier access to help when needed to create a safer campus. Thanks to the amazing work of the Creighton community in embracing the POM, many students now carry the cutting-edge, mobile safety device. As of the fall of 2022, over 3,100 POM devices have been distributed.

Creighton University successfully integrated the POM System on campus as a proactive approach to campus safety. The enthusiasm of the security team and students helps to solidify POM as an important tool in enhancing student safety every day. The administration can now provide students with instant access to help. Parents feel more comfortable leaving their child in the new college environment with the support of POM and students have new peace of mind that help is always just a tap away.

Overall, Creighton is convinced that the POM was the best tool for them to secure the campus and are actively supporting the POM system to this day.





# SOURCES

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- 1 <https://www.colorado.edu/today/2015/12/14/police-chief-why-we-are-removing-campus-blue-light-phones>
- 2 <https://www.thepostathens.com/article/2018/08/blue-lights-ohio-university-never-used>
- 3 <https://www.ketv.com/article/peace-of-mind-for-creighton-university-students-carrying-around-a-new-safety-device/13086691>

