

## International Center for Enterprise Preparedness (INTERCEP)

### Fine-Tuning Situational Awareness To Your Organization: Case In Point, How Can The MRN TX360 Technology Be Customized To Your Organization?

#### Web Forum

On September 25, 2018, **Pete O'Dell** shared his insights on the importance of situational awareness and intelligence, and the latest technology developments in this area. He is the President and Founder of **Swan Island Networks**, which developed the **TX360 technology platform** as an affordable, cloud-based, easy to deploy and use situational awareness platform that can help organizations with real-time monitoring, risk reduction, and response. The core **TX360 platform** can be tailored to the specific needs of an organization. **David Jones**, CTO of Swan Island Networks, provided a demo of this technology platform.

#### Introduction

**Swan Island Networks** has been involved with the International Center for Enterprise Preparedness (INTERCEP) for a number of years, and the TX360 platform is used to develop the situational awareness dashboards that are used by the Metropolitan Resilience Network (MRN). The platform can also be leveraged by organizations to further their situational awareness capabilities.

**Situational Awareness** is having an accurate understanding of our surroundings – where we are, what happened, what is happening, what is changing and what could happen next.

Every organization has horizontal shared threats as well as unique threats to them. Situational awareness can help organizations to address those threats and respond to incidents.

**Resilience** refers to the capacity to emerge better and grow from a disruptive experience. Information sharing is a cornerstone of that. Scenarios can be used to help organizations be prepared and become more resilient.

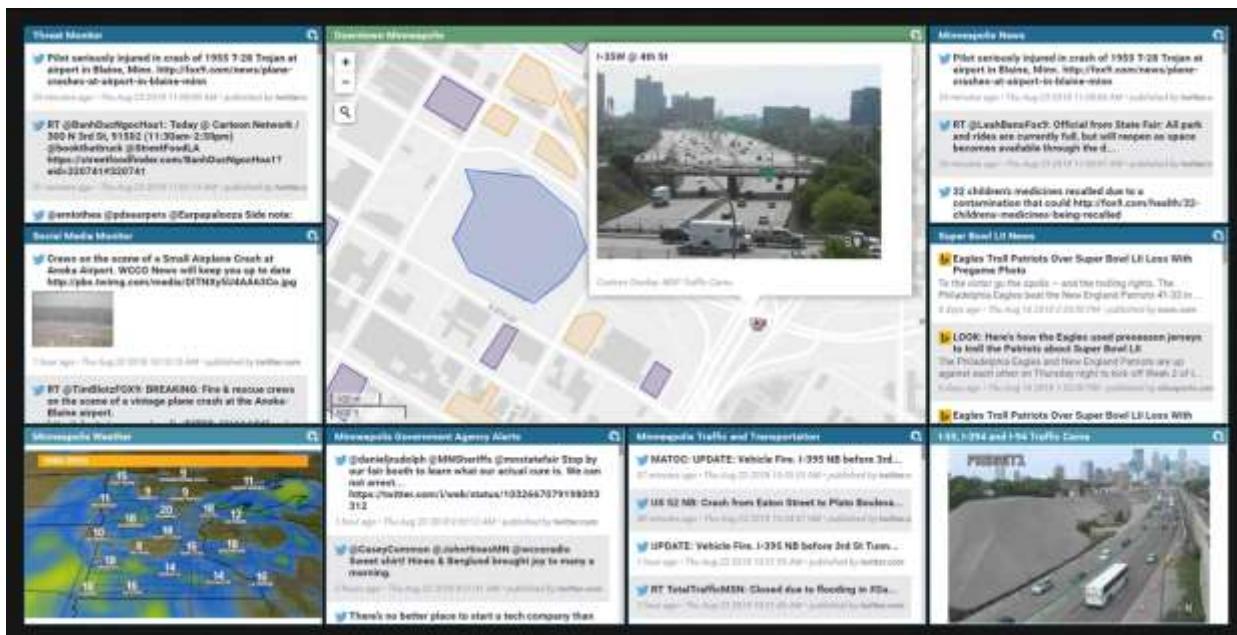
Another key element is the threat cycle. Situational awareness is great for blue sky days, when there are imminent threats and as something is happening, during a disaster, and as part of recovery efforts.

**Interoperable data** is a cornerstone of the TX360 platform, and being able to use standard formats to share information is a key feature of successful information sharing.

## TX360 platform

The TX360 platform allows organizations to create **dashboards** that display information that is automatically updated through filtering. One dashboard can provide information from many web pages, social media and other information sources in one place. The platform can be adjusted to meet the needs of an organization. Figure 1 shows an example of a dashboard created with this platform.

Figure 1. FACILITY SITUATIONAL AWARENESS: Monitoring operational issues and disruptions around a facility or event locale.



Source: Swan Island Networks.

TX360 is a platform that is in the cloud and can be used by hundreds of thousands of customers.

It is extremely affordable, easy to deploy, and very easy to use. By allowing for the creation of dashboards and alerts, as well as the ability to integrate it with other existing tools, TX360 allows an organization to be in control of its destiny.

The Internet of things, drones, and robots involved with sending information, these existing and emerging technologies can also be integrated into the platform.

The ease of use of the platform means there are time savings benefits for an organization using it, since developing situational awareness can otherwise be very time consuming. The platform also facilitates developing situational awareness since Swan Island Networks has partners that provide shared resources in case of emergencies.

Key elements of the platform include:

- Intelligence channels
  - Organizations can create their own channels, without any programming, and they can do a huge amount of aggregation
- Dashboards
  - Asset monitoring – locate assets on a map and monitor them
  - The MRN dashboards are focused on wide geographical areas, some companies may need dashboards focused on a building or facility
- Smart alerts
  - Alerts can be distributed to people and they can be automatically created or curated by analysts

**David Jones** provided a demo of the TX360 platform and highlighted these key elements.

TX360 is a tool for analysts to monitor information from hundreds or thousands of sources of information, and a tool to work with information to disseminate to people in the organization or to stakeholders and other partners.

Dashboards can pull in **geographic information systems (GIS)** content and different kinds of information feeds.

Organizations that are currently using the MRN dashboards can augment that content to their specific needs. Organizations can customize dozens of dashboards, and these can be reactionary after a crisis, like an active shooter event, or they can be built during blue sky days to be prepared for a number of different threats.

Users have access to hundreds of channels that are already available as part of the platform. In addition, there are premium channels curated by Swan Island Networks analysts. Additional channels can be easily built using social media data sources. Twitter is the most commonly used one.

Smart alerts allow for proactive monitoring of incidents. These alerts are about specific information a user has asked for, and they can be received within the dashboards or via email.

An example of a smart alert would be to choose channels and information that a user is interested in such as earthquakes, for example. In this case the United States Geological Survey (USGS) would be a very important resource. A user can actively filter the information provided by this source to focus on an area of interest, such as the Northwest of the country, for example.

If an organization has multiple facilities, their location can be imported to the platform, and threats in the area, such as a large earthquake close to any of those facilities, would prompt the platform to send out a smart alert.



The platform allows for an easy way to integrate in-house capabilities in geographic information systems (GIS) or services provided by ESRI.

The dashboards allow an organization to examine geo-located social media that can be fine-tuned to specific interests, such as a brand name.

Proximity alerts can be set for incidents in a specified area. For example, an amber alert can be sent when something happens within a mile of a facility. This type of alert can be used to activate an organization's security staff.

A large-scale manufacturer and importer company that uses the platform has a special interest in the area around the Port of Long Beach, and Swan Island Networks designed some dashboards to collect information about what happens in the area.

Another example is a customer who was interested in build dashboards to monitor different things around the world, including the spread of Zika virus, immigration issues in Europe, and safety in the Middle East.

## Q&A

*Is there an app for mobile devices?*

We don't have an app because there are so many apps and in an emergency people may forget about an app if they have several apps to look at, so it's important to think about how people react during an emergency.

*Can you set up multiple screens for one location?*

Yes, and you can also have one, for example, designed to be set up for internal situational awareness analysts and another one for your customers.

## Additional Resources:

- Swan Island Networks: [www.swanislandnetworks.com](http://www.swanislandnetworks.com)
- Peter O'Dell, 2014. *Cyber 24/7: Risks, Leadership and Sharing: Sound advice for board members, the C-Suite and non-technical executives*. Amazon Digital Services LLC.
- Peter O'Dell, 2013. *Silver Bullets: How Interoperable Data will revolutionize information sharing*.