

# Tri County Puts Out Fires Two Ways

The wide variety of products Zetron sells has allowed Tri County Communications of Oneonta, New York, to pursue a variety of opportunities within their local area. This story features two very different Zetron products that proved to be the perfect fit for their respective applications: the Model 30 WorldPatch, and the ULTRAc SCADA system.

### Model 30 puts out the fire:

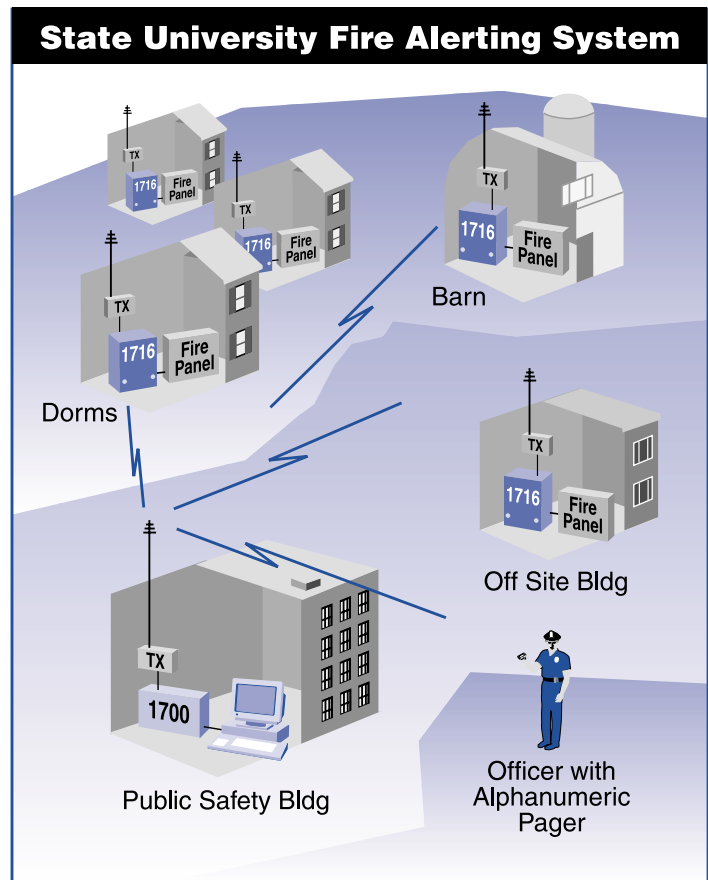
Like many rural public safety entities, the New Berlin Fire Department is an all-volunteer force. As is the case with volunteer fire departments everywhere, it operates on an extremely tight budget. Given its limited finances, the department had made periodic updates to its aging fire alerting system, but by the late 1990s the resulting hodge-podge had just about reached the end of its useful life.

Rick Thompson, a technician with Tri County describes New Berlin's existing set up: "They had an old DC remoted Motorola base station. Over the years they had added features to it like local paging, and a box that would receive the siren tones and then trip the base and send the page tones out locally to get more coverage. They had also added a telephone interconnect which was kind of a home made deal."

### Time to upgrade:

Not surprisingly, this cobbled-together arrangement was beginning to perform erratically. The Fire Department decided it had to upgrade to something modern, simple, and reliable, and contacted the experts at Tri County Communications. When Rick called Zetron to find out about interconnect options, he was steered to the Model 30 WorldPatch.

"As a package deal we put together a Motorola Maxtrac 60 watt base with a Model 30," Rick said. "The only thing we had to change was the tones sent out by the County Fire Control. Their old unit just looked for three touch tone digits. The Zetron wanted to see four digits. It worked out so that the one little



Model 30 replaced one of their decoders plus their telephone interconnect, and of course, it works much better."

Under the new system all the fire calls for New Berlin come in via 9-1-1 to the Central County Dispatch. Dispatchers then send out siren tones followed by pager tones, and then a voice message.

### ULTRAc goes to college:

In a different application of Zetron technology, Tri County used Zetron's ULTRAc SCADA equipment to upgrade a fire alarm system at State University College at Delhi, New York.

Sales Manager, Jim Westfall, explains what was involved:

"Basically it was an upgrade of an old Motorola Intrac system. We reused the Motorola Intrac transmitters and wired them directly into Zetron Model 1716 RTUs that are being used to monitor fire alarms both on- and off-campus. We have twenty-seven RTUs, one in every dorm and in some off-campus barns and stables. They are interfaced to various manufacturers' fire alarms."

**Maximizing security dollars:**

Westfall explained that the Zetron RTUs send the alarms back to a PC in the public safety building running the ULTRAc+ software. If an alarm condition comes up on the PC screen, it is then sent to an Air Apparent system that pages campus security officers with an alphanumeric message that provides dorm name, alarm location, and the status of the alarm.

"Because of cut backs in funding, no one is actually sitting at the PC watching for alarms," Westfall explained. "That was why we needed to make this a strictly wireless system. A lot of the dorms have up to twenty-five alarm locations. Campus security officers don't have to go back to the public safety building to find out the location of the alarm. They get an alphanumeric page, which gives the name of the dorm and the specific location within the dorm like 'third floor, west wing.' This allows them to respond directly to the facility which saves considerable time."

**Cost-effective upgrade:**

Westfall points out that because they were able to reuse so much of the existing Intrac system (transmitters, etc.) Tri County was able to save the customer a lot of money.

"I think this is a great use of ULTRAc," Westfall said. "The total cost was somewhere around a third of what it would have cost to update with a MOSCAD system. We'd done small ULTRAc installations before. This was our first large scale installation, but it was very straightforward."

Reprinted from Zetron's monthly newsletter, the Advantage, February 1999.

Zetron, Inc. PO Box 97004, Redmond WA 98073-9704 USA



Ph: (425) 820-6363 Fax: (425) 820-7031 Email: [zetron@zetron.com](mailto:zetron@zetron.com) Web: <http://www.zetron.com>

European Office: Zetron, Inc. 27-29 Campbell Court, Bramley, TADLEY, Basingstoke, RG26 5EG, UK Phone: +44 1256 880663 Fax: +44 1256 880491  
See Zetron price list for option pricing. Specifications subject to change without notice. Literature number: 005-7188 February 1999