

## **Midwest Paging Member Profile**

Midwest Paging and Owner/President Tom Jackson have a long history of critical messaging service to Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. The company was founded 30 years ago by Jerry White and Bill Roller. In 1990 Tom sold his two-way radio shop, Diversified Electronics, in Jefferson City, MO, and started work for Midwest Paging as Technical Manager. He became General Manager for the operation in 1997 and went on to purchase Midwest Paging in March 2009.

“When I first came onboard at Midwest, we had a solid customer base of hospitals and emergency and public safety workers, with consumer use of pagers declining,” said Tom. “Our core healthcare base remains strong, and we’re seeing some public safety customers return to paging after having bad experiences using cell phones for their critical messaging.”

### **Providing Service in the Eye of the Storm**

It’s no surprise that first responders and emergency personnel in Midwest Paging’s service area are experiencing firsthand the unreliable nature of cellular service for critical messaging. This territory is part of “Tornado Alley,” and in recent years the states served by Midwest Paging have seen some of the most destructive tornadoes in history. One such devastating event from last year remains clear in Tom’s memory.

On May 22, 2011 an EF-5 tornado ripped through Joplin Missouri, leaving a mile-wide path of destruction. It was the deadliest U.S. tornado since 1947, leaving 161 people dead and more than 1,000 injured. In the eye of the storm was St. John’s Mercy Hospital, a Midwest Paging customer. The paging transmitter and antenna on top of the hospital were blown off the building, but Midwest Paging’s simulcast network delivered uninterrupted critical messaging when it was needed most.

“The cellular systems in the Joplin area were disabled following the tornado for up to four days, but our surrounding transmitters kept the paging network up and running for critical messaging to the hospital’s medical personnel and first responders,” said Tom. “Severe weather is a factor in our service area, so we work to be as prepared as possible. We even have portable generators to offer customers in the event of multiple sites coming down, though this hasn’t happened.”

A rare glimpse of the destructive force of Joplin’s tornado was captured by security camera footage in the emergency waiting room at St. John’s Mercy Hospital as the tornado hit. The hospital recently posted this video for public viewing:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqKzq58UMNM&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqKzq58UMNM&feature=player_embedded)

### **An Eye to the Future**

Under Tom’s leadership, Midwest Paging is focused on providing superior service and customized solutions to its customers – the majority of which are hospitals. In the last few years, Midwest has expanded its coverage territory within the states it serves and has added close to 20 new transmitters. The company’s also recently added new members to its salesforce, focused on the hospital and healthcare market.

“We’ve seen increases in our healthcare business every month, and it’s clear that for this customer base cell phones just don’t meet their critical messaging needs,” noted Tom.

“Our approach is to work with each hospital to develop customized solutions that meet their individual needs and to provide a high level of service.”

Midwest Paging’s solutions range the gamut from operating antiquated in-house paging systems to integration of paging systems with a variety of other communication devices and apps. In addition to on site and off campus paging coverage, Midwest Paging keeps a focused specialty on code blue, emergency and other critical alert systems for its customers.

Looking forward, Tom notes that the company’s always looking for a niche to fill, finding new solutions for new problems. And, like many others in the critical messaging business, he’s looking forward to the development of a reliable acknowledgement back paging solution.

Midwest Paging  
405-C West Highway C  
Purdy, MO 65734  
800-922-9282  
[tom@mwpaging.com](mailto:tom@mwpaging.com)  
[www.midwestpaging.com](http://www.midwestpaging.com)