Case Study

NJ Turnpike Authority Implementation of ILOG's IRIS Locate™ Solution for Enhanced Traveler Assistance

Introduction

ILOG's Locate™ is an innovative solution to enhance roadside assistance and improve emergency response times for motorists in distress that has been deployed at the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA). ILOG's IRIS Locate™ system empowers dispatchers to pinpoint the exact location of travelers experiencing vehicle breakdowns, crashes or other emergencies, even when the motorists do not have the SafeTripNJ mobile app. This case study explores how IRIS Locate™ streamlines the process of identifying a motorist's location, reducing response times and enhancing traveler safety.

Challenges Addressed

IRIS Locate™ addresses several challenges faced by traffic managers

- Difficulty locating stranded motorists who could not provide specific information about their whereabouts

- Dependence on motorists' descriptions of landmarks or mile markers, which often led to delays and confusion

- A need for a seamless, app-free method to assist travelers

The IRIS Locate™ Solution

IRIS Locate™ addresses these challenges by offering a streamlined process for obtaining a traveler's precise location via text message:

1. Call Received by Traffic Management Center (TMC) Dispatcher: When a motorist contacts a TMC for assistance, the dispatcher evaluates the situation and offers the option of using IRIS Locate™ to identify their location.

2. Consent and SMS Link: Upon receiving the traveler's consent, the dispatcher enters the motorist's phone number into a secure web portal. The system then sends an SMS containing a unique URL to the motorist.
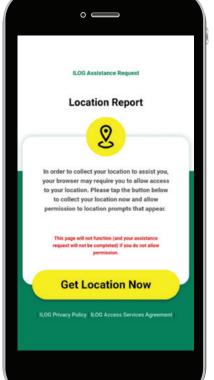
3. User Interaction with Link: The motorist clicks the link and is directed to a web page where they can share their location with a single tap on the "Get Location Now" button. The system retrieves the latitude and longitude coordinates from the motorist's phone and uploads them to the dispatcher's interface.

4. Data Utilization: The dispatcher uses the location data to quickly determine what road the traveler is on and can dispatch roadside assistance or emergency responders. The data is also logged in the portal for reporting and analysis. The IRIS Locate System™ does not save phone numbers or any personally identifying information to protect motorist's privacy

Key Features and Integration

▪ Web-Based Portal: The IRIS Locate™ portal allows dispatchers and administrative users to view real-time location data, create detailed reports and analyze trends over specific time periods.

▪ Single Sign-On (SSO): The IRIS Locate™ system integrates seamlessly with NJTA's existing SSO infrastructure, ensuring secure access and proper authorization for their different user roles.

▪ SafeTripNJ Integration: In addition to SMS Locate, the portal aggregates data from Roadway Issue Reports submitted via the SafeTripNJ app, providing a unified platform for incident management.

Benefits Realized

▪ Improved Response Times: Dispatchers can now locate travelers within seconds, reducing the time needed to dispatch help.

▪ Enhanced Safety: By eliminating the need for motorists to describe their location manually, the system minimizes the risk of miscommunication and speeds up assistance during emergencies. This reduces the danger for both the motorists in distress, and the responders.

▪ Operational Efficiency: The comprehensive reporting functionality enables NJTA to analyze incidents and optimize resource allocation, ensuring better service delivery across the highway network.

▪ User-Friendly Experience: Travelers benefit from an easy-to-use interface that requires no additional app downloads, making the service accessible to all.

Conclusion

The implementation of ILOG's IRIS Locate™ solution has significantly enhanced the NJ Turnpike Authority's ability to assist motorists on its facilities efficiently and effectively. ILOG's cutting-edge technology allows the NJTA to overcome traditional challenges in location identification, demonstrating their commitment to safety, innovation and customer service. The execution of this initiative has allowed NJTA to enhance their position as a leader in using advanced traffic management solutions to improve highway operations and traveler experiences.