Why Use a Two-Way Radio Instead of a Cell Phone?

The Benefits of Two-Way Radios vs Cell Phones

Two-way radio systems have many advantages over cell phones for commercial users
Here are some of the top reasons to consider a two-way radio system over a cell phone solution for your organization.

Lower Cost

Two-way radios cost less than cell phones, especially with new smart phone models selling for more than $1,000.

DMR two-way radios that conform to the Digital Mobile Radios (DMR) industry-standard have a lower Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) compared to cell phones over the life of the system because there are no monthly fees, service contracts, roaming charges, or expensive data plans.

Compared to a Push-to-Talk over Cellular (PoC) system the monthly cost of a PoC radio is much lower than a cell-phone subscription rate. In addition, PoC radio systems use the cellular infrastructure of Mobile Network Operators, so there are no network investment or maintenance costs.

Purpose-Built Devices

Two-way radios are purpose-built devices that are rugged and easy-to-use for quick and reliable worker communications. With a two-way radio, an employee is always connected to their co-workers, even if they are working alone at a remote site. This is even more advantageous if the location has spotty or non-existent cell phone coverage.

Two-way radios can be restricted to system use and radio users cannot use the system for personal calls. Providing an employee with a dedicated two-way radio ensures employees will answer calls because they are not busy talking to friends or watching cat videos on social media.

Durability

If you have ever dropped a cell phone, you will appreciate the fact that Hytera two-way radios are built to US military specifications to withstand impact and vibration. Hytera radios also conform to IP ratings that prevent water and dust intrusion, and they can operate in extreme hot and cold environments. Every Hytera radio is factory-tested for compliance with each specification.

Learn more about IP ratings and MIL-STD certification for two-way radios

Instant Push-to-Talk Calling

Radios provide instant calling at the touch of a button, also called Push-to-Talk (PTT). This is critical in emergency situations when every second counts. Cell phones can require entering a password, launching a calling app, opening a contact list, and finding the contact to call; all of which requires several navigation steps, in addition to waiting for the phone to ring to be answered.

Group Calls and Individual Calls

Two-way radios also have the capability to instantly call pre-defined groups of coworkers. This is useful when sharing information within departments, or with administration and management. For example, if there is suspicious activity at a store, or a hospital, or job site, an employee can alert security and administration to investigate the situation. Group calls can also be initiated by dispatchers who need to give a select group of workers instructions.

Audio Quality

Working conditions are often in noisy environments such as industrial facilities, manufacturing floors, construction sites, and live concerts. If you have ever tried to talk on a cell phone in a noisy environment, you know how the ambient noise makes it very difficult to hear and be heard.

Two-way radios feature real-time noise cancellation technology that filter out the background noise, so it is easy for the person at the other end to hear your call. In addition, two-way radios feature high-volume loudspeakers so the caller can hear in the noisy environment.

Worker Safety

Two-way radio systems offer instant connectivity with the press of a button. This feature is vital in emergencies or hazardous environments in which instructions and information must be relayed quickly. Cell phones are limited in this area because of the time taken by the device to connect to the network and for the network to establish a connection to another user. Additionally, remote workers may be outside of cell phone coverage.

Two-way radios also feature dedicated emergency buttons that enable workers to send immediate emergency alarms to other radios, groups of radios, and dispatchers. If worker is injured or in an emergency situation, other workers can be quickly notified without even having to call them.

Radios can be configured to automatically initiate emergency calls with features like Lone Worker and Man Down. Radios with integrated GPS can enable dispatch to locate remote workers in an emergency and utilize Geo Fencing to notify workers when they are entering hazardous areas.

Mobile radios are available for vehicles and provide safe and lawful communications inside work vehicles. Handheld two-way radios are available with dash-mounting kits and handheld Bluetooth microphones for in-vehicle use.

Learn more about how two-way radios improve worker safety

Dispatching and Fleet Management

A two-way radio system provides significant dispatching advantages over cell phones. DMR and PoC radio systems can be deployed with dispatching and fleet management software that provides tracking of driver locations and travel routes with time stamps. The dispatch application works with the GPS integrated into two-way radios and supports geo fencing capabilities.

Dispatch applications support instant group calling as well as individual calling. The dispatcher may stun (turn off) and reactivate a radio, perform Lone Worker monitoring, receive emergency alarms, along with full call recording, logging and playback.

Secure Communications

Workers should never assume any call is completely private, especially cell phone users making Wi-Fi or IP-based calls. Cell phones are susceptible to spying software that can be installed on the phone to track a phone's location, give access to full log of all calls sent and received, show text messages, and even listen in on phone calls.

Two-way radios feature advanced over-the-air encryption that prevents snooping on calls. This end-to-encryption protects digital voice calls, data transmission, and streaming video to ensure all business communications stay private and secure.

Longer Battery Life

Another advantage in the two-way radio design is battery life. Cell phones can stay operational for several hours, sometimes all day on a single charge, but this can vary dramatically based on the usage, Wi-Fi connectivity, background apps running on the cell phone, and even screen brightness.

Two-way radios are designed to last an entire work shift, and can typically last 14 to 16 hours, and some up to 24 hours without a charge.

https://www.hytera.us/resources/two-way-radios-vs-cell-phones/ for more information