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# MXVISION WEATHERSENTRY ONLINE®

CASE STUDY

## PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

STATE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA

Founded in 1855, Penn State University is located in State College, Pennsylvania. They are a NCAA Division I school and a member of the Big 10 Conference. The school's mascot is the Nittany Lion. Nittany is believed to come from an Algonquian Native American term meaning "single mountain."

### THE CHALLENGE

With more than 100 acres of outdoor fields — including the football team's famed Beaver Stadium — Penn State's athletic department has a considerable maintenance challenge. In addition, State College is located in a valley between two mountain ranges — making the weather hard to predict.

The athletic field maintenance department at Penn State needed accurate and up-to-date weather information to stay on top of constantly changing conditions. Some of their regular maintenance activities include mowing, aerating, seeding, chemical applications, and field line painting. In addition to natural turf, the department must maintain artificial surfaces as well.

### THE DTN/METEORLOGIX SOLUTION

Penn State selected MxVision WeatherSentry Online® *Turf Edition* from industry leader DTN/Meteorlogix. In particular, they opted for the

solution's professional package — which includes the online service, MxVision WeatherSentry Mobile™, MxVision Weather Information Notification System® (WINS), Lightning Manager®, and Alert Manager™.

MxVision WeatherSentry Online *Turf Edition* is a real-time, Internet-delivered solution designed to help users stay on top of changing weather conditions that can impact turf maintenance decisions and the safety of employees.

MxVision WeatherSentry Mobile is a "portable" weather system that provides on-the-go weather information delivered by cell phone, to help personnel stay on top of the weather anywhere they go.

MxVision WINS delivers instant, personalized weather alerts on any e-mail compatible cell phone, PDA, pager, or P.C. The service constantly monitors custom weather parameters for the university, 24 hours a day, allowing staff to focus on other duties.

Additionally, Penn State chose to include a real-time lightning solution with their DTN/Meteorlogix service. Lightning Manger gives reliable, advance warning to dangerous weather



conditions by using real-time lightning data — not predictions that can lead to false alarms or delayed reporting after deadly lightning has already struck.

The system's Alert Manager notifies university staff of significant weather changes within their area. This customizable, safety-focused tool can also sound alarms for changes to weather conditions like wind speed, or when the National Weather Service issues a watch, warning, or advisory.

## RESULTS

"We primarily use our system to monitor the day-to-day weather conditions," said Herb Combs, assistant athletic field supervisor for Penn State University. To do so, he uses both the real-time local radar and detailed local forecasting tools on the system.

Knowing what the weather will bring helps Combs manage staffing and scheduling. "For example, some chemical applications are delayed to a day when it is not as windy,"

explained Combs. It also allows him to plan precipitation-sensitive jobs like fertilizer applications and field line painting that require sufficient dry time for maximum effectiveness or longevity.

Combs and his team use alerts to let them know of changing weather conditions in their area. The alerts can be customized to their own unique weather thresholds, including temperature, wind speed, humidity, and more — all factors that can greatly impact much of their operations.

"Plus, our coaches and trainers use the lightning information to know when to get athletes off the field or move practice indoors," added Combs. The real-time lightning information — which includes customizable zones of protection — also helps keep Comb's team safer while they are out working in the field.

## THE CLIENT'S VIEW

"MxVision WeatherSentry Mobile allows us to stay on top of the weather and gives us a heads up so we don't get caught in a storm."

Herb Combs, assistant athletic field supervisor, Penn State University

*DTN/Meteorlogix, DTN's brand of commercial weather services, delivers industry-specific weather management capabilities for its customers to manage business risks, maximize personal safety and minimize financial loss.*

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