

# Pagers Make Economic Sense

By [Leslie Prichard](#)



America has seen its share of economic downturns before and, no doubt, will see them again. However, the current economic crisis this country has been facing has caused many people in government and private industry alike to face the very real problem of running out of money. Typically when faced with shortfalls in budgets and looming deficits the first fix jumped upon is cutting jobs. Unfortunately, in the economy we find ourselves in today, cutting jobs is only fueling the problem of unemployment and, as a result, hurting our economy even more. A better plan before leaping off the pink-slip bridge is to tighten budgets and rein in spending. Many cities, municipalities and governments have ample room to cut costs and keep people employed. One of the areas to be considered for an overhaul is communications and the usage of cell phones.

With the growth of the cell phone industry, many city and state governments did what many private businesses did and began supplying cell phones to employees. Little did they realize with the expansion and improvement of technology and the capabilities of the phones, the likelihood of cell phone abuse increased as well. Employees use the phones for personal use, searching the web, texting and every other function available without regard for extra charges for use of these features. One response may be to simply restrict what is allowed for employee cell phone usage. While that may seem like a logical solution, it will probably not eliminate the problem or the need for someone to police the usage of potentially hundreds of employees, review bills, identify the problem and employee, confront the employee and try to find a resolution. That process, in itself, is a waste of time and resources. It also does not eliminate the base per person cost for each phone which can be very costly. A better solution would be to return to something proven to be reliable, efficient, durable and cost-effective, and that is the pager.

Pagers are an easy way to decrease costly budgets and still maintain the communication needed with employees. Advancements in pagers over the past several years are incredible and today's pagers are not simply "beepers" anymore. The pagers of today are capable of confirmed delivery

even with basic one-way communication, which may be all that is needed for many employees. In addition, pagers with two-way communication, internet and email capabilities are some of the options on the market today. Pagers also allow for easy distribution of mass messages for all employees or groups of employees. With pagers there is no fear of reception issues found with cell phones since pagers operate on a radio frequency instead of the cell service networks. This will eliminate the problem of an employee not being in range and not receiving a message with critical importance. Unlike cell phones, pagers do not require charging and operate on a battery with usage times in the months and years, not hours like many of the newer cell phones on the market today. Not only does this eliminate the problem of a dead phone, it also cuts the electricity usage for charging phones, which in our environmentally conscious day and age is a very good thing for everyone. Imagine the reduction in electricity usage multiplied by the vast number of employees working in government offices, it is significant. Pagers are also less intrusive into the workplace as there are no obnoxious songs blaring with every call, pagers are much more discreet and less distracting, creating a more work-friendly environment.

Motorola conducted a study which showed almost 75 percent of all communications needed to be one-way, things like, "I'm running late," "Pick up milk on the way home," or "The meeting time has been changed to 3:30." Not only would using pagers simplify message delivery for many employers, it also eliminates another real problem for companies today, which is usage of cell phones for personal time. It's been shown employees spend an average of one hour a day on personal cell phone calls. Add to that another hour of personal internet usage on cell phones and the employer has now just donated two hours of company time and money to the employee per day just to make sure the employee's Facebook status is updated properly.

Pagers are making their way back into the world of business these days as employers are finding cell phones to be expensive, intrusive and counter-productive to the workplace, and just another way for employees to waste time playing with the many functions. There is no risk of an employee abusing a pager for excessive texting, web surfing, Twitter, Facebook, personal calls or unauthorized charges. It's also less likely friends and family will page an employee as opposed to calling them on a cell phone, which ensures frivolous phone calls will end and productivity will increase. The other important financial benefit of making a switch to pagers is the base cost for equipment and monthly charges. Supplying pagers to employees runs much less than supplying a cell phone and eliminates the possibility for abuse and overcharges as currently occurs with cell phones. Pagers are also less expensive and easier to repair.

In this tightening economy, it's prudent to return to the basics of balancing a budget and eliminating overspending so money is available to run programs and perform the functions government was intended to perform, in addition to keeping people employed. Instead of exasperating the economic difficulties this country is facing, why not be proactive by trying to save jobs and cut costs where it makes sense by eliminating cell phones and returning to the time-tested, practical, cost-effective and dependable use of a pager? It only makes economic sense.

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