

# Product Profile **Companion**

Companion wireless emergency calling system offered by Evergreen PD



## **Why is this lady smiling and what's that gadget in her hand?**

There could be several reasons why she is smiling. In particular, maybe it was because the guy with the camera asked her to smile. Then, it could be because she has a good job as a manager at a cash advance business, but the real reason probably relates to the gadget in her hand!

The most rapidly growing small business's in many areas of the USA are arcades (at least in Alabama), cash advance services and pawn shops - all of which have one thing in common, an abundance of cash and a small staff (often only one person). These business's join the ranks of traditional targets for hit and run robbers - banks, convenience stores/gas stations, drug stores, grocery stores, and small retailers who primarily deal in cash (dry cleaners, electronics stores, even hair salons!).

Until recently, there were few choices available for enhanced personal protection. A gun under the counter is rarely effective as are wired panic buttons. If the employee isn't standing at exactly the right place, they can't call for help. More recently, some security companies have offered wireless panic alarm buttons that tie into a telephone dialer. The dialer sends a message (sometimes) to a central dispatch center, often hundreds of miles away, where an operator verifies the call, then calls the local 911 operator, who in turn dispatches law enforcement personnel. Unfortunately, there are several problems in this scenario. Sometimes, the telephone dialer doesn't work. Sometimes the dispatch center operator has the ability to listen in before calling 911. This can be done with some alarm systems using speakerphone type technology. The problem is that this monitoring process wastes valuable time. Worse yet, some dispatch services actually call the premises to verify the event - *Hello, may I speak to the robber please?* (Just kidding!).

The point is that the typical response time for a call placed directly to a 911 center is a little over 5 minutes. Since the call cannot be placed directly in a holdup situation (911 operational procedures do not allow calls to be processed from automated devices), you have to add the time required by the third party dispatch center to process and forward the call to 911. Figure at least another 2 minutes. This equates to a typical BEST CASE response time of approximately 7 minutes! Guess how long it takes the bad guy to get in and out? Generally, less than 4 minutes! So what is the solution? The answer is simple - *Direct notification to law enforcement!*

You don't have to go to New York City to find advanced technology in action. The fact is that things can happen quicker in a smaller city such as Evergreen, Alabama where a new system known as *The Companion* is being offered to users who want the highest level of personal protection. The young lady above is the manager of Pay Day Cash Advance in Evergreen. Her company was the first commercial customer in the USA for the new *Companion* system. Here's how it works.



If a disruptive, suspicious, or aggressive individual threatens the safety of the manager, owner, or employee; all they need do is push a button similar to the electronic wireless door locks now available on many vehicles. The difference is that this button sends a coded message to the *Companion* CPU located in an out of sight location. The CPU then translates the coded signal into a voice message such as *Assistance needed at Pay Day Advance*. This message is automatically transmitted directly over the Evergreen Police radio channel where all on duty personnel can receive it. Typically, within less than two minutes, law enforcement officers arrive on the scene to take care of the assailant. There is no third party dispatch center, no delays in processing calls through 911, or any possibility of the alarm message being disrupted by a disabled telephone line.

Unlike wired panic buttons, the *Companion* button works throughout the premises with a range of up to 60 feet in all directions from the CPU. The CPU is a completely self contained premise monitoring and notification system equipped with a ultra high frequency digital receiver the picks up the ID code from the associated button, a conversion module that translates the ID code to a voice message corresponding to the activated button, and a *smart* radio transceiver that operates on the police radio frequency. Both VHF and UHF models are available and both units have auto-sensing circuitry than eliminates any possibility of the *Companion* transmitting at the same time normal law enforcement communications are in process. Since no phone lines are used, the *Companion* is impervious to a cut telephone line. Even if the AC power is disrupted, the *Companion* system still performs since it is equipped with a long life rechargeable battery and charging circuit.



The *Companion* system was specifically developed by Falcon Direct, working with the Evergreen Police Department, to provide affordable, rapid notification capability in the event of an emergency. Each *Companion* CPU can accommodate up to two individual addressed buttons. The cost is only \$699 with NO MONTHLY CHARGES! In some cases, two adjoining retail stores may be able to share a single CPU. By purchasing two additional buttons for \$100, the two stores can split the cost of the CPU. This works out to less than \$400 each! That's a small price to pay for enhancing the safety of owners and employees!

The *Companion* system is based on a three-way partnership between a participating police department, local area business, and Falcon Direct. There are no monthly fees to users of the system.

If there is already a *Companion* system established in your area, you can contact your local police department for additional information. If you are interested in establishing a *Companion* system in an area presently not served, contact Burch Falkner at 800.489.2611.

For those areas where Companion service is not available, we offer an alternate solution known as the *Merchant Protection Network* or MPA.

In Birmingham, Alabama a Radio Shack manager was recently killed working alone. This is not uncommon and it's happening everywhere - at restaurants, convenience stores, and anywhere else where there is money and the opportunity to attach a single individual. So what could have been done? The *Companion* system may have saved his life, but short of that, the MPA system can be very effective. Here's how it works.



Each merchant in a shopping mall or adjoining area can be interconnected with other merchants through the use of a digital calling device known as a DTR communicator. The DTR looks very similar to a conventional walkie-talkie, but the capabilities are quite different. The DTR can function as a 2-way radio, but unlike ordinary 2-way radios scanners can't monitor it. All merchants, institutions, and general offices participating in the program make a one-time purchase of \$300 for their DTR communicator. There are NO monthly fees or continuing costs.

In the event of an emergency, the user simply presses a button that transmits the user ID and distress message to all users within a range of approximately one mile. Other users can take action as defined by their individual action plan. In some cases, this may involve armed intervention. In others, a unit may be assigned to local law enforcement officers, and in other cases, the procedure may be one of calling 911 on behalf of the one in distress. Regardless of the procedure, it's certainly a whole lot better than being alone.

Setting up an MPA network is fairly simple, effective, and affordable. Call us for more information, locally in the Birmingham, Alabama area at 205.854.2611 or nationwide toll free at 800.489.2611. You'll be glad you did!



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