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# Smartphone Adoption in the U.S. and its Impact on Personal Security

Smartphone adoption is on the rise in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> and now accounts for more than half of all mobile subscribers, and has penetrated well beyond 50% of all adult Americans for the first time. The Pew Research Center places the figure at 56%, up from just 35% two years ago while noting the number of adults with no cell phone at all has fallen by half in that time, to just 9%<sup>1</sup>.

In fact, by the end of 2014, the number of mobile-connected devices will exceed the number of people on earth, and by 2018 there will be nearly 1.4 mobile devices per capita<sup>2</sup>.

Needless to say, people are becoming more attached to their smartphones as lifelines to access Internet services ranging from email and Twitter, to maps and personal security. Research shows that [73 percent of Americans would feel "panicked"](#) if they lost their mobile phone, while 14 percent took it a step further and said they would feel "desperate" without their device<sup>3</sup>.

This whitepaper will discuss the impact of increasing smartphone adoption in the U.S. and its value in personal safety. Mobile technology is playing an increasingly larger role in personal safety – whether in the workplace, on college campuses or while traveling internationally. With the rapid growth of smartphones, security teams are able to leverage mobile technologies to better monitor, manage and respond to real-time threats against those they protect.

## **The Problem with Legacy Systems**

Large universities and colleges, and the Fortune 200 alike are adopting mobile applications that transform smartphones into personalized mobile safety systems. On campuses everywhere, security is a primary concern and many colleges are taking a proactive approach to security. Enterprise organizations are using smartphones to provide more pervasive and ubiquitous security to their employees, whether they're working at the office, remotely or abroad.

The convenience of GPS-enabled apps can provide authorities with location-based information to help track victim whereabouts, but many threats happen too quickly and victims are often unable to unlock their phones and activate the apps.

Legacy systems have limitations that have slowed adoption, usage and the ability to stay top-of-mind with enterprise users, such as:

- The need to charge and carry secondary, single-use devices to summon help.
- Inability to perform two-way crisis communication and notification, especially critical for employees travelling internationally.
- Inconvenience of having to seek out stationary help points when every second counts.
- Delayed, and inaccurate or non-existent location data of the caller.
- Significant delays with intermediary services reporting incidents to corporate security.
- Phone lock-screen passcodes make summoning help difficult when time is of the essence

The proliferation of smartphones also extends to students in educational institutions. Students are rarely without their smartphones and many have used them to initiate calling or text messaging systems to notify campus security of emergencies.

However, such security initiatives are antiquated and do not take advantage of new technologies that are ingrained in today's youth culture. Parents are more tech savvy than before and demand personal safety measures that ensure the safety of their children both on and off campus. Campus security systems must employ advanced technologies that allow authorities to reach entire student bodies in an accurate and timely, manner.

### **TapShield: Personal Safety Designed for the Digital Age**

Quick action is necessary when lives are at the line. TapShield technology turns smartphones into *personalized mobile safety systems* with the ability to send relevant information to emergency responders in a single gesture, so help arrives more quickly and better prepared. TapShield appeals to today's student and business demographic because it leverages personal technologies like smartphones and crowdsourcing that are ingrained in modern culture.

TapShield dramatically reduces time to response and overall response times by up to 47 percent. Whether users need to maintain discreet, two-way communication with authorities throughout a crisis, or covertly send an emergency alert if threatened through TapShield's innovative Yank™ technology, Tap Shield enhances established

emergency reporting and response methods with advanced technologies that are already a central part of everyday life.

The TapShield Safe Campus and Enterprise solutions are used by some of the largest colleges and corporations in the U.S., and allow security officials to lower risk and provide users with their own personalized safety device. TapShield feature highlights include:

- **Silent Alarm** - TapShield is the only mobile safety application capable of sending a covert emergency alert without the user having to touch his/her smartphone. TapShield Yank™ uses advanced smartphone technology to issue an alert once the headphone or a Smart Dongle™ is pulled out of the device, instantly sending real-time GPS and caller info to authorities.
  - **Always Connected** – TapShield enables discreet, two-way communication between users and authorities through secure Voice Over IP (VoIP) during and after a crisis.
  - **Never Alone** - Using TapShield Entourage™, users can alert their contacts when they depart one location for another location to ensure that they arrive safely at their end destination. If the user does not arrive at his/her scheduled destination within the allotted time, authorities are alerted to the users' precise location enabling them to respond effectively.
  - **Community-based Security** - Instead of relying solely on Blue Lights, call boxes or nearby authorities, TapShield is the only mobile app to crowdsource emergency reporting and response, essentially expanding security forces into a pervasive, campus-wide network of potential responders. SafeCircle™ alerts other relevant responders in the surrounding area as to whether their help is needed or whether they should evacuate the area.
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- Dispatchers use Shield Command™, a cloud-based incident response platform, to receive real-time GPS location, key caller identification information and nature of the emergency within 5 seconds.
  - Mobile Mass Notification System (MMNS) can alert up to one million users within a specified area using Geofencing technology, all within seconds.
  - Using the latest in native and cloud technologies, implementation is easy with no server, hardware or software installation required.

## Summary

As mobile and social technologies become more pervasive, the need for personal security solutions that leverage these trends is important in order for adoption to be natural, ubiquitous and useful.

TapShield empowers students and business professionals with their own personal security system, giving them peace of mind knowing that help in an emergency is only a tap away on the device they already own. Learn more at [www.tapshield.com](http://www.tapshield.com)

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> – *More Than Half Of Us Have Smartphones, Giving Apple And Google Much To Smile About.* (2013, June 6, Forbes online <http://www.forbes.com/sites/markrogowsky/2013/06/06/more-than-half-of-us-have-smartphones-giving-apple-and-google-much-to-smile-about/>)

<sup>2</sup> – *Cisco Visual Networking Index: Global Mobile Data Traffic Forecast Update, 2013–2018* [http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/service-provider/visual-networking-index-vni/white\\_paper\\_c11-520862.html](http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/service-provider/visual-networking-index-vni/white_paper_c11-520862.html)

<sup>3</sup> - Mobile Mindset Study, 2012 <https://www.lookout.com/resources/reports/mobile-mindset>

<sup>4</sup> – College Students and Mobile Devices, 2012 <http://geniusrecruiter.com/2012/12/17/college-students-and-mobile-devices/>

## About TapShield

TapShield is the market leader in mobile personal safety. We design, develop and market enterprise grade mobile solutions for emergency notification and response. Learn more at [TapShield.com](http://TapShield.com).



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