

# AIRFLARE

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The business case for AirFlare location  
and search platform technology

**2024** White Paper

# AirFlare EFFECT

**The cost savings and improved efficiencies of the AirFlare search platform more than cover its annual subscription fee.**

## Findings:

- Improves operational efficiency
- Improves response time to guests in need
- Increases guest likelihood to return
- Improves patrol team morale
- Reduces lawsuit risk
- Saves lives



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***Bottom Line: The cost savings and improved efficiencies of the AirFlare search platform more than cover its annual subscription fee.***

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**AirFlare has emerged as an essential technology** that seamlessly intertwines safety, operational excellence, and guest satisfaction into a single, robust platform. **The cost savings and improved efficiencies of the AirFlare search platform more than cover its annual subscription fee.**

**The platform's efficient pinpoint locating capabilities significantly improves routine response capabilities to guests in need,** directly cutting down operational expenses through increased efficiency. Furthermore, AirFlare reduces the scope and scale of after-hours searches, minimizing the risks and costs associated with these intense operations.

Operational costs are reduced and patrol staff experience less stress and fatigue, translating into fewer instances of burnout and a healthier, more vibrant workplace culture. **Patrol teams report less stress and more manageable workloads,** contributing to a more positive work environment and lower turnover rates.

Resorts employing AirFlare see a **noticeable increase in guest loyalty indicators,** as evidenced by repeat visit intentions. This is corroborated by guests' increased sense of safety and their perception of being valued, which in turn, is derived from their personal experiences with the AirFlare system in action. These experiences often lead to powerful endorsements that resonate widely, enhancing the resort's reputation.

While AirFlare offers a significant advantage in operational efficiency and guest safety, it also aligns with the emerging legal landscape where proactive safety measures are increasingly viewed as a standard for due diligence and **an effective deterrent of nuclear lawsuits.** This aspect of AirFlare's offering is especially appealing to leadership, presenting not just an operational tool, but a strategic asset in risk management.

In summary, AirFlare is more than a technological addition; it's a comprehensive operational strategy. It **fortifies a resort's commitment to safety, enriches guest experience, and streamlines patrol operations,** all of which converge to underscore the platform's role as a vital component of modern ski resort management. It's a decision that speaks to a resort's dedication to excellence, ensuring that guests and staff alike benefit from a safer, more connected mountain experience.

For a General Manager, these metrics offer a clear indication of the business wisdom behind AirFlare—**an investment that pays dividends in reduced operational costs, enhanced reputation, reduced liability, and increased revenue. Simply stated - AirFlare more than pays for itself.**

# OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

“AirFlare has proven to be an indispensable asset for Schweitzer, significantly improving our operations. We utilize it not only to locate lost individuals in the backcountry but also to pinpoint injured skiers within our ski area boundary. Thanks to AirFlare, our search times have seen a remarkable reduction, allowing us to offer our guests a superior experience.”

- Angie Nylund, Sr. Ski Patroller and Trainer

**AirFlare redefines incident response, translating data into action with unrivaled precision.** Patrol directors champion the system for its seamless coordination of both routine and complex rescue operations, highlighting the platform’s direct influence on enhancing patroller performance and guest safety.

Embracing AirFlare’s technology not only streamlines the critical tasks of locating and aiding guests, but also weaves a fabric of trust and competence that is felt throughout mountain operations.

**Respondents unanimously attest to the drastic reduction in time and resources required for guest response and search operations.** Testimonies affirm the enhancement of patrol operations’ professionalism and sophistication. A significant number underscore the operational efficiency gains, substantiating AirFlare as a catalyst for expedient guest assistance.

Narratives from the front lines tell of AirFlare’s ready-in-your-pocket convenience, enabling rapid response capabilities that were previously unattainable. From easing the anxious moments of a lost skier to coordinating complex rescue missions, AirFlare stands as an effective and reliable tool.

**100%**

## Location Data Efficiency

100% agree AirFlare’s accuracy in location data has substantially reduced the time and resources needed for search operations.

**67%**

## Professional Image

67% of respondents perceive AirFlare as instrumental in elevating their ski patrol operations’ professionalism and sophistication.

**83%**

## Operational Efficiency

83% affirm that using AirFlare bolsters operational efficiency when assisting guests.

**83%**

## Risk Reduction

83% confirm that incorporating AirFlare into operations reduces risk, underscoring its value in enhancing safety protocols.

*AirFlare Patrol User Survey 11.2023*

# IMPROVED GUEST RETURN RATE

“Within minutes ski patrol was there. Until I got the text on my phone, my husband had been talking to them describing where we were and it was frustrating for him to get them to me. He gave them my number and I got the text and was able to connect my location.”

- Appreciative guest

## Creating Guest Loyalty Through Proven Safety and Rapid Response

AirFlare's capability to provide precise location data in emergencies is vividly described by guests. One recounts, **“Once I deployed my location, patrol was there in about 5 minutes. Amazing service...”** while another expresses profound gratitude, “AirFlare was extremely useful... It allowed me to be rescued efficiently... Thank you so much for everything!!” These sincere expressions of relief and thankfulness illustrate the platform's effectiveness, turning guests into vocal advocates of the resorts' commitment to guest safety.

Endorsements such as **“FABULOUS rescue by Paul and his team. We are BEYOND grateful. A thousand thank-yous!!”** and “You guys rock thank you so very much!” reflect the emotional connection fostered by such interventions. These experiences are testimonials in themselves, evidencing AirFlare's contribution to an overall sense of care that extends beyond the slopes, embodying the resorts' full-circle approach to guest satisfaction.

Stories of efficient rescues like those at Silver Mountain, where ski patrol responded “in a very timely manner,” and Stevens Pass, where the use of AirFlare led to a quick location setup and fast help, resonate with guests far beyond their stay.

**8%**

**More Likely to Return**

The intent to return is a critical indicator of guest satisfaction and loyalty. According to Guest Research INC, guests using the AirFlare app are 8% more likely to revisit the ski area than those who do not use the app.

*GRI Guest Survey 2023/24 Season*

The prompt action taken by the patrol teams, supported by AirFlare's technology, turns potential distress into uplifting stories of excellent guest service, often shared across social networks and among peers, increasing the likelihood of repeat visits and recommendations.

***The voice of the guest reinforces AirFlare's significant influence on loyalty through the lens of safety and swift intervention.***

These stories of real-life applications of AirFlare, complemented by the quantitative data from Guest Research Inc., support the argument for ski resort decision-makers.

***Investing in AirFlare is not only a commitment to guest safety but a strategic move towards cultivating a loyal guest base that values, celebrates, and promotes their resort experience.***

# AFTER HOURS SEARCH STUDY

“By improving the efficiency and effectiveness of search operations, AirFlare can alleviate the physical and emotional toll on ski patrol teams. ***The savings from preventing even one search with AirFlare could easily cover its annual subscription.***”

- Denis Lee, AirFlare co-founder

After-hours search operations at ski resorts are complex, resource-intensive, and often stressful for patrol teams. Ski areas surveyed expressed a crucial need for efficient, cost-effective solutions. ***AirFlare’s search platform presents a breakthrough in mitigating the challenges associated with these operations***, offering significant advantages in speed, efficiency, and risk reduction.

These missions are critical but can strain resources and impact patrol morale. The adoption of AirFlare technology can dramatically reduce the financial and emotional impacts of these vital tasks.

***Reducing Personnel Needs:*** With precise location data, AirFlare minimizes the number of personnel required for each search operation.

***Decreasing Operation Times:*** AirFlare’s accurate and rapid location capabilities significantly reduce the average length of search operations.

***Improving Staff Morale and Safety:*** Enhanced efficiency reduces the stress and risk associated with prolonged search operations, improving overall team morale.

Typical after-hours search costs upwards of \$600, not factoring in chairlift, transport, and other expenses. With searches happening 3-6 times a season, the savings from preventing even one with AirFlare could easily cover its annual subscription.

***Ski areas reported after hours searching occurring from three to six times a season, at an average cost of \$600 each. The AirFlare app’s ability to prevent or greatly reduce search costs will more than pay for the annual subscription fee.***

## 5 - 10 Responders

With 8 being the most common response.

## 1 - 6 Hours

Length of Search with some outliers reporting searches of up to 10 hours.

## \$200 - \$1000 / Hour

Transport (Chairlift / Snowcat / Snomo)

## Other Costs

**Commonly mentioned other expenses included volunteer costs, staff morale, burnout, reputational harm, and direct costs like food & fuel.**

A typical after-hours search costs \$600 based on an average of eight patrollers, searching for more than three hours at an averaged rate of pay.

*Not including transport support or other costs.*

*AirFlare Patrol After-Hours Search Study  
April 2024*

# FORTIFYING PATROL MORALE

“We have got to give our patrollers the tools they need to do their jobs, and technologies like AirFlare are dramatically improving SAR outcomes. Patrollers rightfully love to make these kinds of saves, it fuels them, we need to help them - and our guests - get these types of wins.”

- David Byrd, NSAA Director of Risk and Regulatory Affairs

## Intangible yet significant costs expressed by Patrol Directors

**Team Morale and Burnout:** After-hours rescues lead to staff burnout and declining morale, affecting the well-being of the team members, leading to higher turnover rates, increased hiring and training costs, and potentially lower standards of guest safety due to fatigue or understaffing.

**Workers' Compensation and Risk to Staff:** Search operations increase the risk of injury to patrol staff, which can result in workers' compensation claims. These injuries lead to staffing shortages and impact overall safety operations.

**Rescuer Fatigue/Reduced Work Capacity:** Patrol teams required to stay for prolonged search operations after a full day's work, lead to fatigue, which can result in diminished capacity to work the following day. This has a knock-on effect on the quality of service and safety the next day.

**Reputational Harm:** Unsuccessful or prolonged searches can attract negative media attention, which can harm the ski area's reputation. This, in turn, can affect guest loyalty and potentially reduce visitation.

**Stress Continuum:** The cumulative effect of stress on patrol teams can lead to a continuous strain, which can affect mental health, job performance, and the overall operational efficiency of the ski area.

## The Best Outcome: Preventing an After-Hours Search

AirFlare's precise location capabilities serve as a pivotal innovation in preventing the initiation of after-hours search operations. When a guest is reported missing, time is of the essence, and traditional search methods can often lead to lengthy operations that extend well into the post-closure hours of a ski resort.

**By enabling ski patrols to quickly pinpoint a lost guest's location, AirFlare obviates the need for extensive physical search parties, significantly cutting down the response time.**

This immediate location identification can often allow ski patrols to establish contact and guide a guest back to safety before the resort's closing time, effectively circumventing the need for a resource-intensive after-hours operation. The implications are far-reaching: reducing the risks associated with night searches, minimizing the financial burden of overtime labor and equipment usage, protecting the well-being of both guests and ski patrol teams, and maintaining the resort's operational integrity and guest satisfaction.

This technological leverage enhances the immediate response to potential emergencies and also upholds a culture of safety and readiness that resonates with both staff and guests.

# AIRFLARE SAVES LIVES

“He had nothing on him. He was pretty poorly dressed for the conditions. He was freezing. His phone was dead. He was hypothermic when they got him out of there. Truthfully, if he would’ve had to stay overnight...”

- Schweitzer Mountain Incident 2023

## 01 *Schweitzer Mountain, Idaho 2023 Season*

**Scenario:** A snowboarder became lost after dark in a remote area. With his phone battery nearly depleted, he contacted patrol for help.

**AirFlare’s Role:** Using AirFlare, patrol was able to receive his location before his phone died. A rescue team on snowmobiles was dispatched based on these coordinates.

**Outcome:** The team found the snowboarder, who had made a temporary shelter but was hypothermic. He was safely extracted and taken to an emergency room, crediting AirFlare with playing a crucial role in his survival.

## 02 *Soldier Mountain, Idaho January 21, 2024*

**Scenario:** A father and his young son skied out of bounds into foggy, avalanche-prone terrain. The father contacted the resort’s patrol upon realizing their predicament.

**AirFlare’s Role:** The patrol director texted a link, which provided precise location data to the patroller. This allowed for a direct and safe route to the stranded skiers.

**Outcome:** The patroller reached the skiers and guided them back without incident, turning a potentially dangerous situation into a successful rescue.

## AirFlare is highly effective for routine responses and critical searches

These incidents collectively highlight the critical role of AirFlare in enhancing the capabilities of ski patrol operations. **By providing immediate, accurate locational data, AirFlare not only speeds up the response times but also directly contributes to saving lives.** Its impact is evident in both routine and extreme rescue operations, making it an indispensable tool for ensuring the safety of guests in ski areas. The technology allows for a more targeted response, which not only conserves resources but significantly reduces the risk and duration of exposure for both rescuers and those in need. This ability to swiftly locate and assist injured, lost or endangered guests underscores AirFlare’s substantial contribution to operational safety and efficiency.



# LIFE SAVING INTERVENTIONS

“I was the blue dot and he was the red dot. And so all I had to do was ski to the red dot. I was avoiding avalanche terrain as much as I could, and I was trying to stay high so that I wouldn’t get below him, but I had a pretty good idea of right where he was at.”

- Soldier Mountain Incident 2024

## 03 *Soldier Mountain, Idaho* *December 11, 2022*

**Scenario:** A skier ventured out of bounds in foggy conditions, becoming disoriented and lost. Despite minimal visibility and harsh weather, the skier was able to contact the resort’s patrol using her mobile phone.

**AirFlare’s Role:** After responding to an AirFlare location link sent by resort staff, the skier was quickly located on the patrol’s map. This precise location capability allowed the patrol team to efficiently reach and safely escort the skier back.

**Outcome:** The skier, who was physically fit and cooperative, managed to exit the area with patrol guidance, crediting AirFlare with a significant role in ensuring her safety.

## 04 *Mt. Ashland, Oregon* *2023 and 2024 Seasons*

**Scenario:** In two separate incidents, skiers accidentally crossed into dangerous terrain beyond the ski area boundaries. The terrain was remote, with sufficient cell service for emergency communication.

**AirFlare’s Role:** Once reported missing, skiers were instructed to download AirFlare if not already installed. The app provided exact coordinates to patrol teams, significantly cutting down the time to reach the individuals.

**Outcome:** Both rescues were executed within about an hour of the skiers being reported lost, demonstrating AirFlare’s effectiveness in drastically reducing rescue times and potentially saving lives.

## AirFlare’s Role in Mitigating Risk and Providing Safety Assurance

AirFlare’s location and search platform can be an invaluable risk management asset. With the ability to swiftly locate guests, even in deep snow immersion situations, AirFlare helps patrol respond rapidly to emergencies. This capability not only increases the chances of a positive outcome in the event of an accident but also significantly bolsters a resort’s defense against potential legal actions by demonstrating a commitment to guest safety.

# LAWSUIT DETERRENT

“The jury’s decision highlighted the effectiveness of the resort’s efforts to educate and inform guests about the potential dangers, which ultimately contributed to the resort’s exoneration. This outcome serves as a compelling argument for ski areas to adopt comprehensive guest response platforms capable of addressing safety concerns proactively.”

- Reporting: Mt. Bachelor exoneration from wrongful death suit

## AirFlare - A risk management deterrent to “nuclear” law suits

While AirFlare offers a significant advantage in operational efficiency and guest safety, it also aligns with the emerging legal landscape where proactive safety measures are increasingly viewed as a standard for due diligence and an effective deterrent of nuclear lawsuits. This aspect of AirFlare’s offering is especially appealing to leadership, presenting not just an operational tool, but a strategic asset in risk management.

The inherent risks associated with outdoor activities like skiing and snowboarding are substantial, and while the thrill of these sports is undeniable, they also present significant safety challenges. Ski areas, by nature, operate in environments that can swiftly turn perilous due to sudden weather changes, challenging terrains, and other natural elements. The recent verdict in favor of Mt. Bachelor, wherein a jury found the resort not liable in a \$15 million wrongful death lawsuit, underscores a pivotal aspect of resort operations: proactive guest safety communications and risk management practices can play a critical role in mitigating legal liabilities.

Investing in a sophisticated guest response platform like AirFlare is not just about enhancing

## AirFlare: Legal & Reputational Advantages:

### Demonstration of Due Diligence:

Utilizing advanced technology like AirFlare illustrates a resort’s proactive approach to guest safety, which can be a significant factor in legal defenses, as seen in the Mt. Bachelor case.

### Reduction in Liability Exposure:

By effectively managing and mitigating the risks associated with outdoor activities, resorts can decrease their vulnerability to lawsuits alleging negligence.

### Enhancement of Resort Reputation:

Resorts known for their rigorous safety measures and innovative use of technology to protect guests are more likely to be viewed favorably by both patrons and the public, enhancing their marketability and community standing.

operational efficiency or improving guest satisfaction; it’s also a strategic move to shield ski areas from the potentially devastating impacts of nuclear lawsuits. By demonstrating a clear, actionable commitment to safety, resorts can significantly mitigate their legal risks while fostering a safe, enjoyable environment for all guests.

# The AirFlare App

“The AirFlare search platform is a robust tool for locating guests with mobile devices at ski resorts. Its capabilities are significantly amplified when guests have the AirFlare app installed on their phones, enhancing guest safety and streamlining patrol response by mitigating potential emergencies more effectively.”

- Eliot Gillum, AirFlare Founder

## Seamless Location Services and Empowered Guests

The AirFlare app provides an unmatched level of automation in emergency responses:

**No Manual Intervention Required:** For AirFlare subscribers, the app automatically replies to a location request in critical situations, such as when a guest is incapacitated or not actively monitoring their phone. This feature is crucial for quick location without needing any action from the guest.

**Immediate Location Sharing:** Subscribers can voluntarily share their location with friends or family, reducing unnecessary patrol dispatches. This feature was utilized approximately 2,000 times last winter, illustrating its effectiveness in preventing potential patrol calls.

**Direct Communication Features:** Guests can access the patrol's contact information directly through the app and share their precise coordinates, enhancing communication clarity during emergencies.

**Emergency Texting Capability:** With AirFlare's "Subject Chat", guests can text with patrol even in spotty cell service, ensuring rapid response and continued communication in critical situations.

## Guest App Marketing and Operational Advantages:

Encouraging app downloads among guests provides benefits for your resort community:

**Enhanced Collective Safety:** The more guests use the app, the easier it becomes for everyone to maintain safety standards and prevent accidents.

**Boosted Guest Confidence:** Knowing that the resort advocates for such a sophisticated safety tool enhances guests' perception of the resort's commitment to their well-being.

**Operational Efficiency:** With more guests using the app, patrols can focus their resources on more pressing needs rather than routine searches, optimizing overall operational efficiency.

Resorts that promote the AirFlare app to guests receive a \$1000 renewal credit on their AirFlare search platform subscription. AirFlare also provides:

- On-mountain signage promoting AirFlare
- Free onboarding and training
- Free AirFlare app subscriptions for your entire resort workforce
- Free AirFlare Field Console app for patrollers
- Custom guest engagement digital, email and social media messaging campaigns

# The Strategic Value of AirFlare for Ski Resorts

## Conclusion:

***Integrating AirFlare into ski resort operations significantly enhances operational efficiencies and reduces costs, more than covering the annual subscription cost.***

This technology not only reduces the time and resources required for search and rescue operations but also significantly boosts patrol morale by streamlining their workflow and reducing stress levels. The system's precision in locating guests ensures quicker responses, directly enhancing guest safety and satisfaction.

AirFlare's documented safety measures provide robust legal protection, crucial for defending against potential lawsuits and reinforcing the resort's commitment to guest safety. This, coupled with the technology's marketing potential, elevates the resort's reputation and encourages guest loyalty, emphasizing a secure and responsive recreational environment.

In essence, AirFlare presents a multifaceted solution that aligns with the operational, legal, and marketing goals of modern ski resorts. Its adoption not only addresses immediate safety concerns but also serves as a long-term investment in the resort's operational excellence and competitive standing in the industry.

## The AirFlare Search and Location Platform

***The essential benefit of AirFlare is to pinpoint the location of injured skiers, greatly reducing response times and improving the guest and patroller experience.***

The Mountain Resort platform is cloud-based and can also be deployed on a responder's mobile device, providing accurate mapping to a guest in need.

***The technology is optimized to perform in low-cell-service environments and provides tools to locate guests with or without the AirFlare app.***

***It is affordably priced so that just one successful search can pay for its annual subscription fee.***

## Ease of Onboarding

The AirFlare platform is designed for swift and straightforward onboarding, typically completed in less than an hour. This quick setup is complemented by comprehensive training sessions tailored for patrol users, ensuring they are fully equipped to utilize the system effectively right from the start. This combination of easy onboarding and thorough training enables immediate integration into daily operations, maximizing the platform's benefits.



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