

CHANGES IN DISASTER RESPONSE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Some decades ago, people tuned in to their radio whenever a disaster struck. The radio provides news and updates of weather condition and the conditions on the ground that was impacted. One drawback of the radio was that it was dependent on its reporters on the ground, who could not be in two places at the same time. News reports were sent by the reporters to their stations by way of the means of communications obtaining at that time, usually the two-way radios. Telephone and telegraph lines were often cut off as a result of a disaster. Air transportation to ferry reporters and from ground zero may not always be available. The result is late or inadequate reports.

Fast forward to today. After a disaster struck, news reports could be easily sent to the radio and television stations for immediate dissemination to the population. Again, the drawback here is the inability of the reporters to cover all areas affected by a disaster, resulting still in incomplete and inadequate reports.

So, where do you check next? The best place to check for news about your loved ones will be the social media. While the telephone and other means of communications may not work that well at the aftermath of a disaster, social media does. People post their messages on social media in order for their relatives and friends to find out how they are doing. Cell phone service could be overloaded or overwhelmed by the sheer volume of users but social media postings will go through.

If you have family members or friend in the area where the disaster struck, it is understandable that you want to check on their safety as well as their whereabouts. Scanning all radio and television reports may not give you the information that you need.



Considering how people today use social media in every aspect of their life, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter could be the best platform for getting in touch with one another during disasters.

Businesses and other institutions could use the social media platforms in disseminating information to their employees and other stakeholders in times of a disaster. Companies can distribute emergency notices, estimate damages based on pictures and information shared on social media. It will allow companies to get in touch with their employees to find out what they need and where to send help.



Businesses should draw up a plan of how to get in touch with one another during a disaster, such as choosing a common social media platform that will be used by every employee in such situations like a disaster.

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