Introduction on communication during Emergency
Understanding Social Media and its Importance

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Information sharing between public safety organizations and communities is critical in emergency situations, especially large-scale events such as, CBRN events, Pandemics, floods, earthquakes, and hurricanes

INFORMATION FLOW
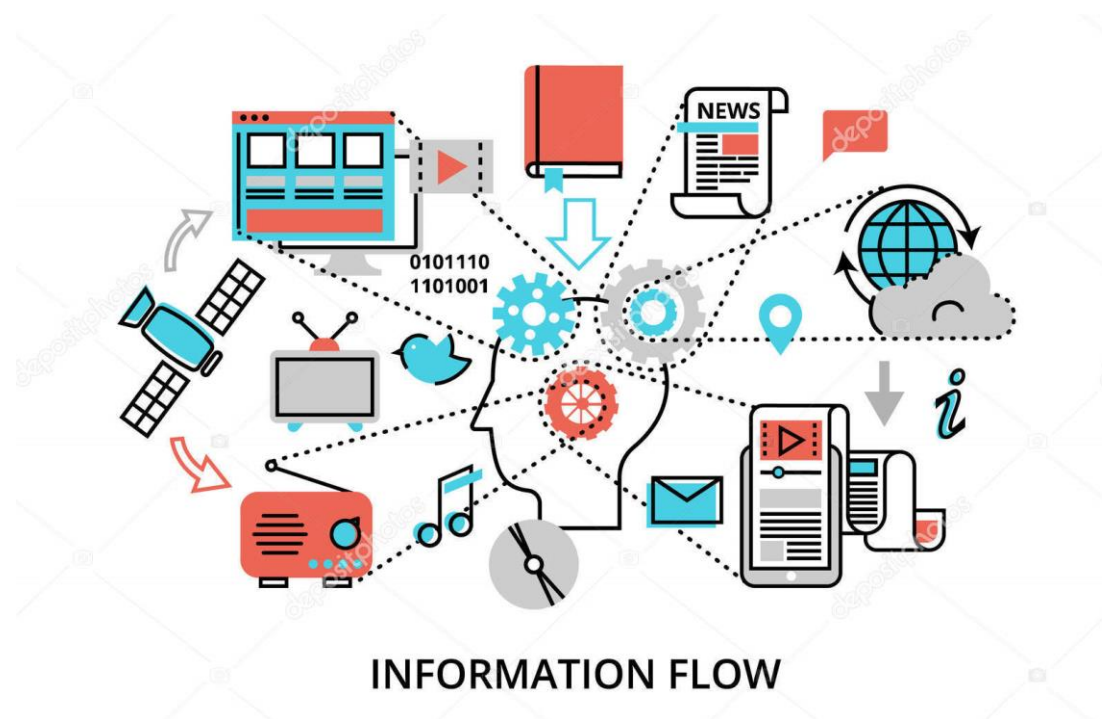
"**Social media and collaborative technologies** have become critical components of **emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.**"

Through the use of social media, members of the public who witness incidents **can provide public safety organizations with timely, geographic-based information**.

This information **can be used by decision-makers in planning response strategies**, deploying resources in the field, and, in turn, providing updated and accurate information to the public.

Social media can provide public safety organizations with improved abilities to:

- ❑ **Engage** in ongoing collaborative **communications** with community members and **better prepare** them for emergencies; and

- ❑ **Gather, analyze, and act** on <u>**real-time**</u> emergency information provided directly <u>**by social media users**</u> within the community.

Established social media networks are in widespread use and allow for the dissemination of **data-rich, contextual multimedia including narrative, photos, and videos**.

Therefore, by incorporating social media into their **communications strategies**, public safety organizations can **leverage the power of these popular information-sharing** technologies to enhance their efforts through all phases of an emergency.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

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Social Networks
Social networks are web platforms that allow users to create an account, establish a profile, and interact with other members.
Most social networks permit users to manage their privacy and preferences for sharing content and personal information.

Examples of social networks include Facebook, Google +, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

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Media-Sharing Networks

Media-sharing networks provide users the ability to upload photos, videos, or slide presentations and share them in a public forum. Within emergency management, media-sharing networks allow community members to post geographically identified (i.e., geotagged) photos and videos captured on smartphones. This content can then be used to create crisis maps, which display social media content by location.

Examples of media-sharing networks include FlickrTM, Instagram, Picasa, Pinterest, SlideShare, and YouTube

Community Forums

Community forums are online discussion sites that give users the ability to create content, comment on posts by other users, and upload and share files. Within emergency management, they can also serve as a valuable source of information and resources following a disaster. Organizations interested in building and hosting a community forum can use tools and services offered by third-party providers such as IdeaScale and Ning.

Examples of emergency management community forums include Country Fire Authority (CFA), Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) National Preparedness Community, Firefighter Nation, First Responders Communities of Practice, and GovLoop.

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Blogs

Blogs are a chronological online diary that allow visitors to post responses to a discussion thread on a particular topic. Blogs can support in-depth interactive discussions better than a microblog such as Twitter that limits message length; however, they require creative content to entice the public to participate in the information-sharing process.
Examples of blogging platforms include Blogger and WordPress

Feed Readers

Feed readers are internet browsers or websites, which can be used to subscribe to favorite websites through the use of really simple syndication (RSS) feeds. The desired content is automatically aggregated into one application for easy viewing.

Examples of feed readers include FeedburnerTM, IceRocket, My Yahoo!, NewsGator®, and Reddit

Mashups

Mashup technologies display overlays—or a mashing together—of two or more data sets. Within emergency management, mashups are commonly used to map different types of incident-related data (e.g., the location of shelters, evacuation routes, and water mains), generate crisis maps, and improve situational awareness during a disaster. Mashups can also allow citizens to contribute to a response effort by posting photos, videos, or comments on road closures, damages, etc.

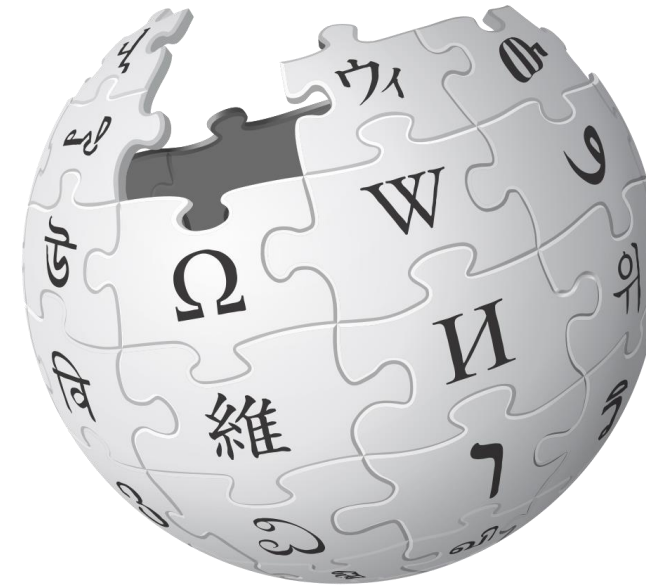Mashup examples include Crisis Map, EsriTM, Google Maps, and Ushahidi.

Wikis

Wikis are collaboration websites that allow members to add, remove, and edit content. The Hawaiian term wiki means "fast," and people often use wikis to build knowledge collaboratively on a particular topic and share it with others. Wikis have been set up during disasters such as the 2007 California wildfires and the 2011 Joplin, Missouri, tornado, with community members contributing text, photos, and videos to help others seeking information.

Examples of wikis include Wikipedia® and Intellipedia.

WIKIPÉDIA
L'encyclopédie libre

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Social Media Management Tools

Social media management tools allow users to monitor and manage their social media networks as well as generate metrics for determining their reach and effectiveness. Some applications are free and may offer upgrades to professional-level services, while others require a licensing fee or paid subscription. Examples of social media management tools include Crowdbooster, Facebook Insights, Geofeedia, Google AnalyticsTM, HootSuite, Radian6, TweetDeck, and Twitalyzer.

Short Message Service (SMS)

SMS is a communications protocol used for sending text messages on cell phones and other mobile devices. Many public safety organizations allow users to sign up to receive alert messages, which can be especially valuable during an emergency if an agency's existing phone service cannot support the volume of incoming calls from the public. The effectiveness of SMS messaging can be limited because it may rely on community members opting into the service and is generally used by public safety organizations for distributing messages, not sharing information.

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPLEMENTATION

SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR

Social Media Plan

1 Listen

- Locate consumers
- Assess their social activities
- Look for small, focused audiences

2 Plan

- Define business Objectives
- How can your brand's strengths be extended online?

3 Strategy

- How and where will you do it?
- How will relationships with consumers change?
- Who will be leading this effort?

4 Tools

- Decide what social tools you will use.
- How will you monitor acitivities and measure success?

1- Develop a Strategic Plan

Identify the target audience, objectives, tactics, and staffing requirements including roles and responsibilities
Create a governance structure for approvals
Identify desired social media channels and processes

2- Establish and Adopt Policies

Develop overarching documents that provide guidance to
emergency managers for the effective use of social media
Implement policies that help foster leadership support
and sustainable strategies

3- Establish a Social Media Presence

Establish accounts on popular social media platforms and become familiar with the online culture by sustaining an active presence
Establish a complementary mix of social media
Engage with the community in advance through social media and recommend standard hashtags

4- Manage Expectations

Engage early and often with the public to help set realistic expectations during emergencies
Disclose the source, type, and frequency of official emergency communications

5- Establish a Concept of Operations

Determine how social media will be managed during emergencies
Establish training and staffing plans to allocate more resources to social media monitoring during an incident
Incorporate social media strategies into emergency management exercises

6- Distribute Timely and Frequent Updates

Pre-engage the public to increase visibility and credibility by posting regular updates during all phases of emergencies and during times of non-emergencies

7- Coordinate with Partnering Organizations

Partner with other organizations to coordinate consistent key messages
Set up a central online source for emergency-related information from a variety of official sources
Coordinate social media efforts regionally

8- Actively Monitor Social Media Content

Monitor conversations on popular social networks
Engage with community members by responding to
questions and comments and providing clarification

9- Evaluate Public Information

Monitor social media channels to assess the manner in which official messages are being received
Quickly correct any misperceptions or inaccurate rumors
Use social media management tools to track, analyze, and document messages

10- Utilize Maps to Increase Visual Context

Use mashups and location services such as crisis maps to provide visual and spatial viewing of social media content
Include layered map data such as evacuation zones and shelter locations
Allow community members to submit damage reports containing photos, videos, and eyewitness accounts relating to the emergency response

11- Engage with Digital Volunteer Organizations and Virtual Operations Support Teams

Enlist digital volunteer communities to help satisfy demand for information when in-house resources are taxed
Use a VOST to monitor sites, spot trends, and seek and disseminate information

12- Improve Community Awareness

Engage in community discussions and follow relevant hashtags in order to build and maintain better awareness for the Whole Community3

Include collaborative dialogue about hardships, consequences, and developing safety concerns

13- Plan for Loss of Connectivity

Ensure the network infrastructure is robust and able to handle peak demands during disasters
Establish a contingency plan that can mitigate loss of power and connectivity

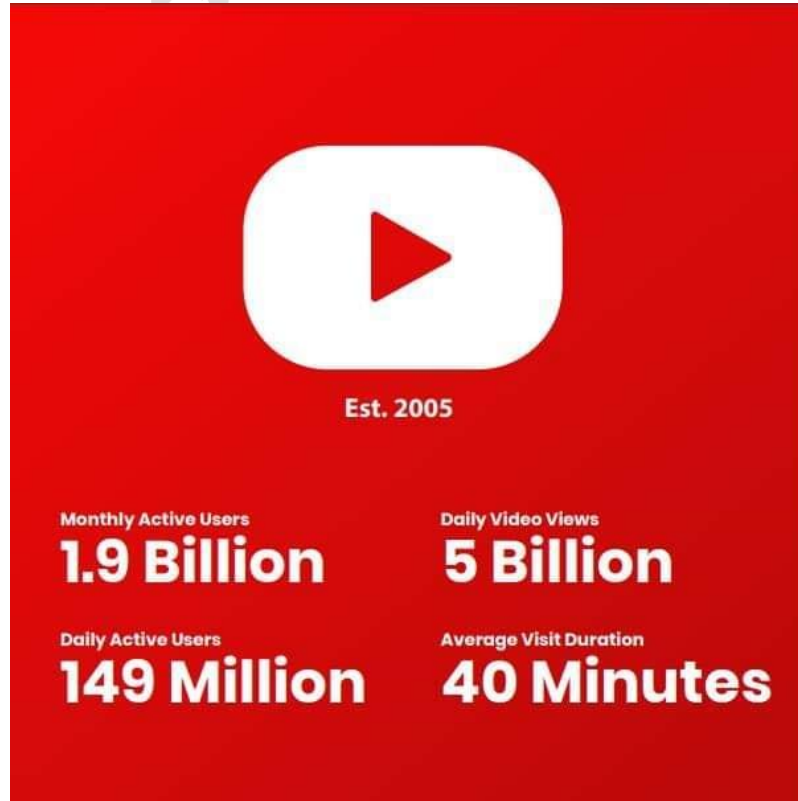**14- Engage with Community Members After an Incident**

Seek feedback from community members to help assess the usefulness and frequency of information shared through social media
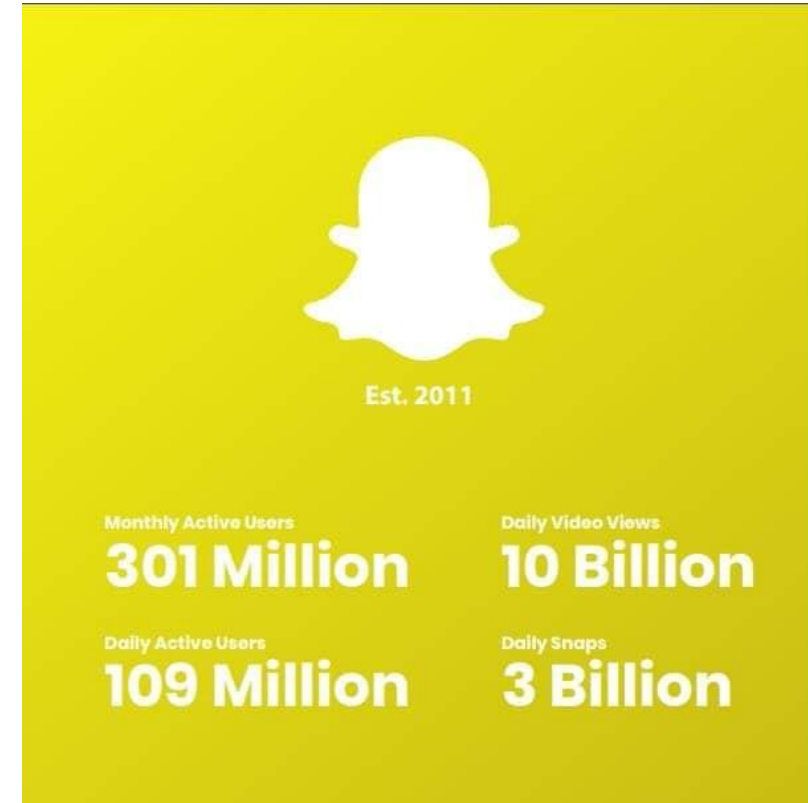
Facts & Numbers about Social Media

SOCIAL INDICATORS

SOCIAL MEDIA PENETRATION as A PERCENTAGE of THE TOTAL POPULTION — 15%

AVERAGE TIME SOCIAL MEDIA USERS SPEND EACH DAY — 2H54M

PERCENTAGE of MOBILE USERS USING SOCIAL MEDIA APPS on THEIR HOME — 74%

PERCENTAGE of MOBILE USERS USING LOCATION-BASED SERVICES — 32%

Source: We Are Social SG JAN 2014

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CASE STUDIES OF INNOVATIVE USES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Colorado National Guard

Colorado National Guard was the third organization included in the on-site visit in Colorado. The Colorado National Guard serves as the State of Colorado's first military responders during state emergencies as directed by the governor.

Social Media Overview

National Guard resources from four states provided relief assistance during the 2012 Colorado wildfires. Organized under the Department of Defense, the National Guard follows the structured social media strategies of the Army.[5] These strategies are implemented by the Colorado National Guard's Public Affairs Office and coordinated with the Colorado Office of the Governor. The Colorado National Guard has its own website and regularly posts news releases. The website also includes links to the Colorado National Guard's official social media accounts.

Social Media Presence

The Colorado National Guard maintains social media accounts on Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and YouTube. They have developed a synergy between their social media websites and often link photos and videos to their Facebook and Twitter feeds.

Facebook–The Colorado National Guard posted to Facebook several times per day during the wildfires to keep the community apprised of their missions.

Flickr–More than 200 photos of the High Park fire were uploaded to the Colorado National Guard's Flickr account, providing compelling images of the fire and demonstrating the resources being used in the field. This content helped reassure the public that an effort was being made to protect their lives and personal property.

Twitter–The number of actionable Twitter messages sent out during the wildfires increased dramatically, demonstrating the power of collaborative communication in the formulation of an effective response to a large-scale emergency. The Colorado National Guard consistently referenced incident hashtags and the primary @USNationalGuard account.

YouTube–Videos uploaded by the Colorado National Guard provided visual and audio coverage of the support at the High Park fire and subsequent road closures in Larimer County.

Conclusion

❑ Social media can play a significant role during emergencies;

❑ Agencies should proactively engage with community members before, during, and after an emergency; and

❑ Agencies should adopt the use of social media in combination with mobile technology such as smartphones to distribute information quickly.

Conclusion

❑ Do not suppress social media sites on internal networks;

❑ Actively use various social media accounts;

❑ Use social media to distribute alerts, warnings, and updates;

❑ Use mobile technology to collect and send information to the public;

❑ Actively respond to social media content from the public; and

❑ Use information from social media for situational awareness and to influence decision-making during incidents.

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