

Communication in an Emergency

A User Perspective

Stephen Hagerich,
Emergency Planning Officer
British Red Cross
May 2016







Information Technology
and Telecommunications

ERU

Emergency Response



The Washington Post

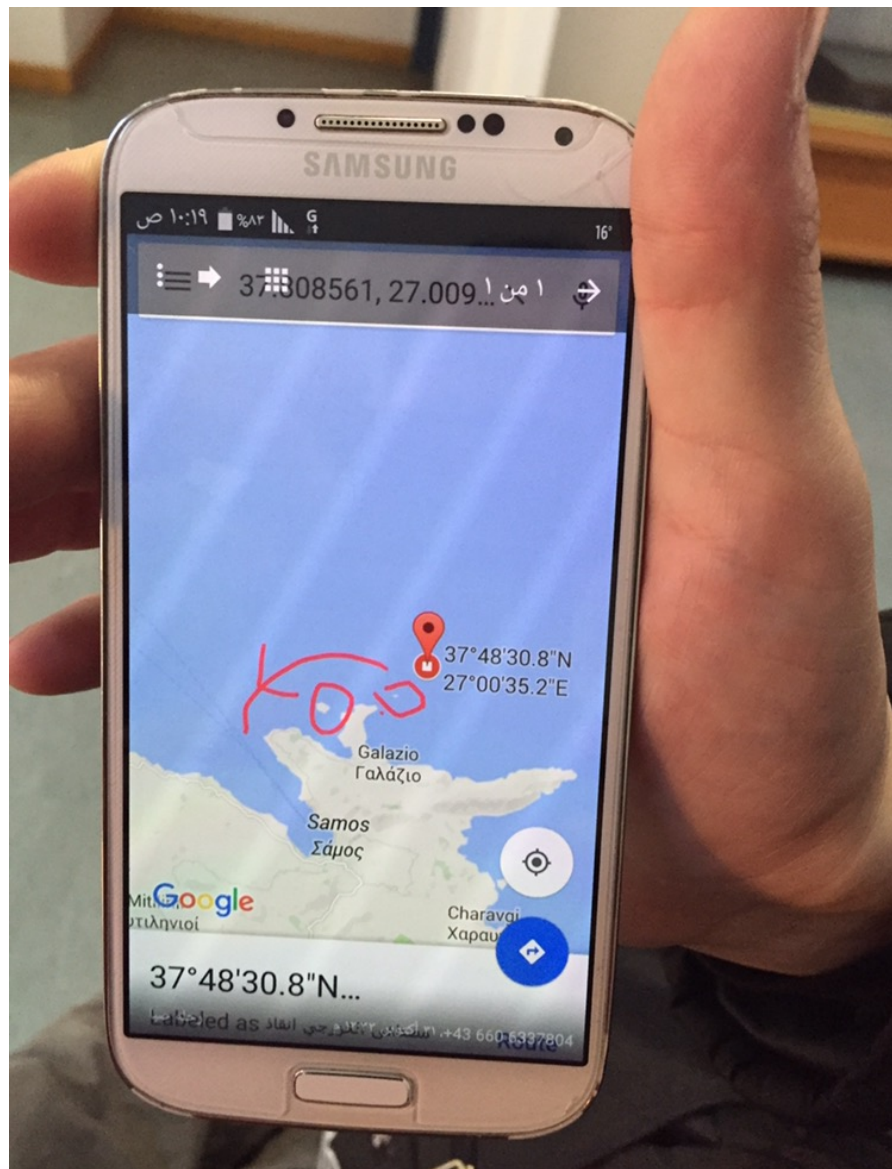
LIKE

The Switch

How a bunch of tech geeks helped save Nepal's earthquake victims

BY BRIAN FUNG
25 APR 2016, 6:35 PM

It was a few minutes before noon when it hit. The massive earthquake in Nepal touched off multiple avalanches in the snow-capped Himalayas, leaving hundreds of thousands of



IT/Telecoms Emergency Response Unit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=oE95IkpMTYk&app=desktop>



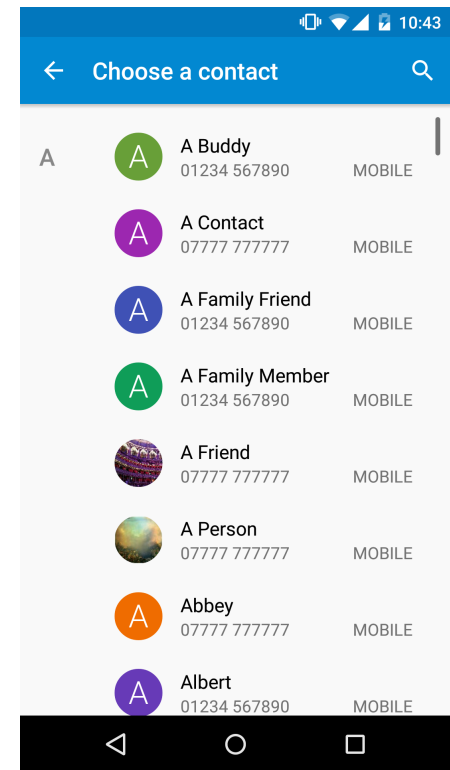
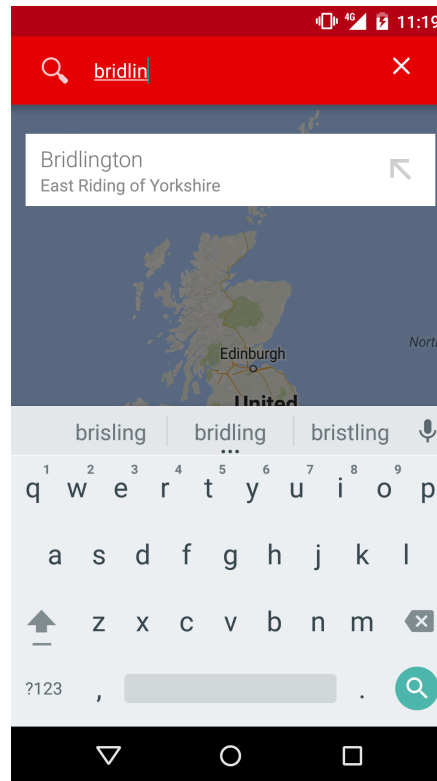
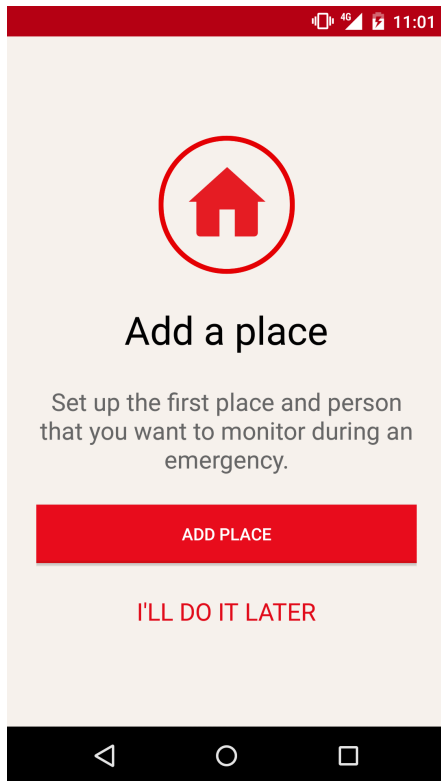


BritishRedCross

Refusing to ignore people in crisis

1. Real-time, location-specific alerts

Just add the places and people you care about...



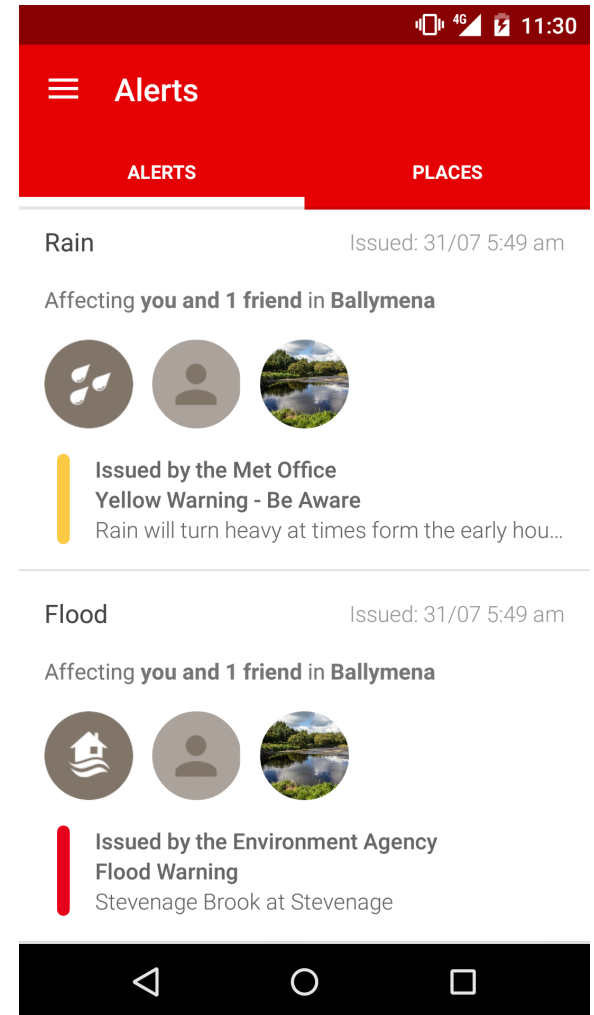
...and you'll get real-time, location-specific alerts for

> Rain, Wind, Ice, Snow, Fog
UK-wide, issued by the Met Office

> Flooding
Currently England-only, issued by the Environment Agency.

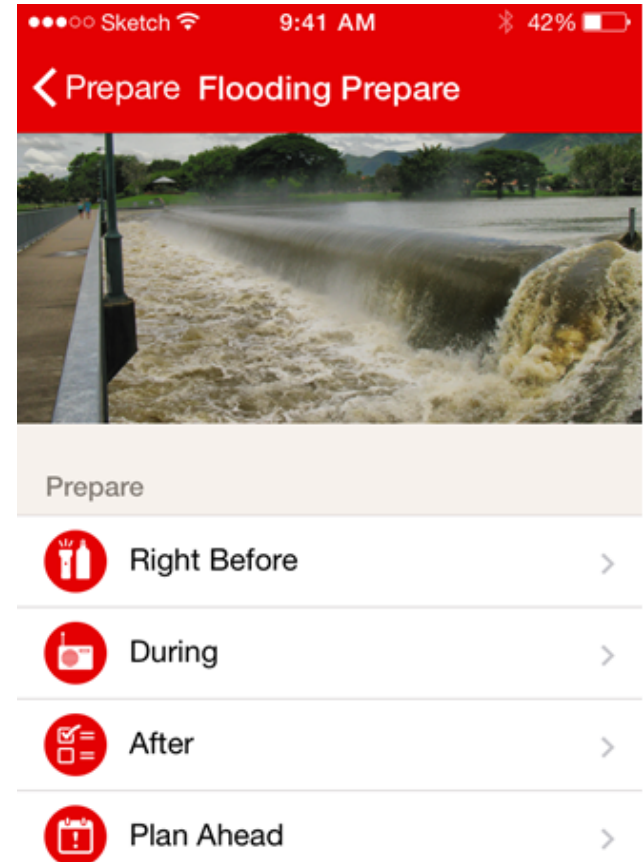
> UK threat level

> Red Cross alerts



2. Practical advice

- > Car breakdown
- > Chemical emergency
- > Crowd incidents
- > Drought
- > Fire
- > Flooding
- > Flu pandemic
- > Heatwave
- > Power failure
- > Severe winter weather
- > Storms
- > Terrorist attacks
- > Travel emergencies



3. Toolkit

- > I'm Safe

A quick, easy way to tell others you're safe

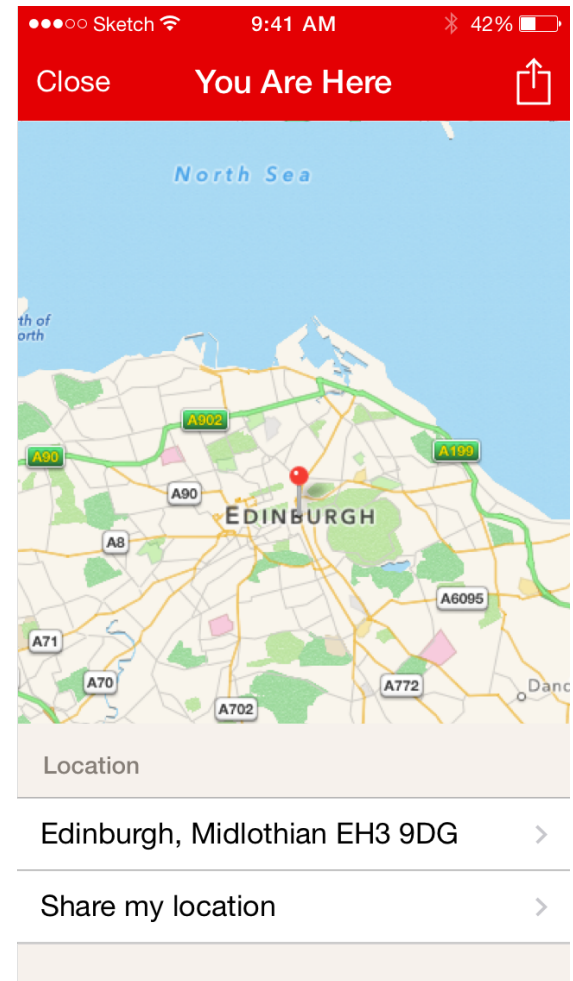
- > Where am I

Pinpoint and share your current location

- > Alarm

- > Flashlight

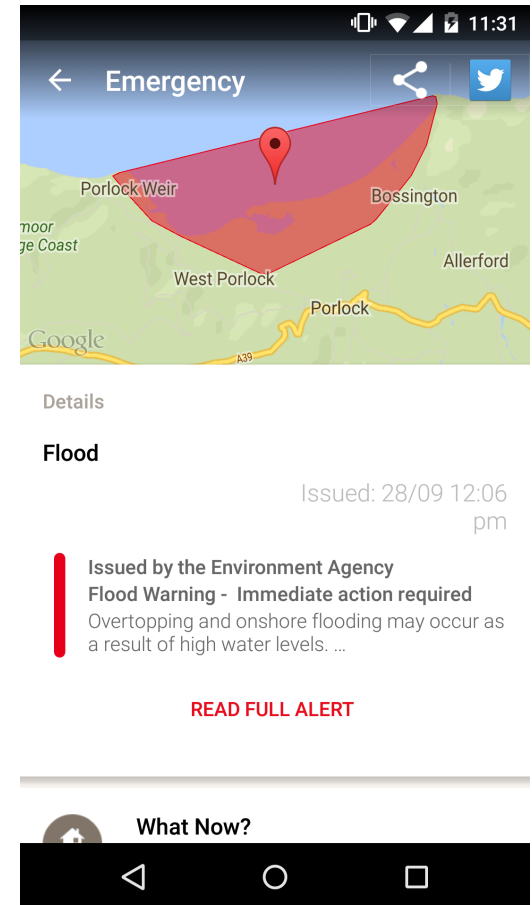
- > Strobe light



Case study: December flooding

Between Friday 4 and Sunday 6 December, we

- > sent out more than 20,000 real-time, personalised alerts to people across the UK
- > which referenced more than 270 separate flood, wind and rain warnings issued by the Environment Agency and the Met Office

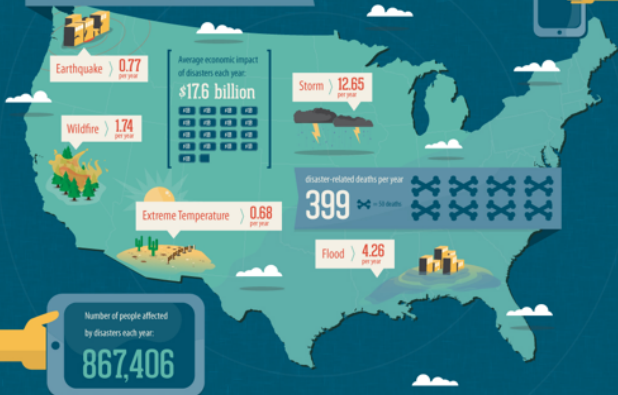


SOCIAL MEDIA

THE NEW FACE of DISASTER RESPONSE

With social media use ever on the rise, social networks have become a primary source of news and information. Take a look at social media's growing role in disaster response, and see how these networks have aided the rescue and relief efforts of multiple disasters already.

U.S. Natural Disasters from 1980 to 2010

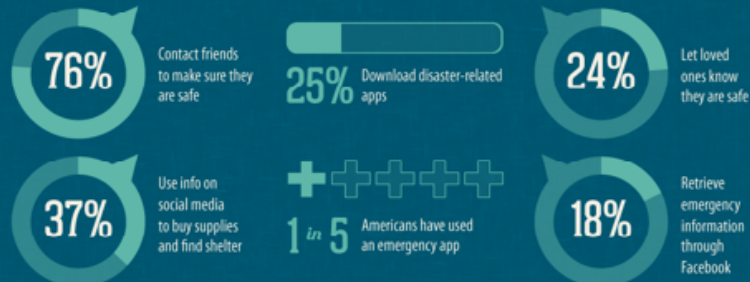


Deaths by Type of Disaster



Social Media: The Next Generation of Disaster Response

How Survivors Harness Social Media



1 in 5 survivors contact emergency responders via social media, websites, or email

44% Ask their online friends to contact responders

During disasters, social networks often replace 911 as the go-to source for help



35% Directly post a request for help on a responder's Facebook

25% Send direct Twitter messages

80% of Americans expect emergency response agencies to monitor and respond to social media platforms

1/3

expect help to show up within 60 minutes of a posting

60 MINUTES

A Proven Track Record: Social media's use during disasters

TORNADO SEASON



1,665

Number of tornadoes that ravaged the U.S., making 2011 the deadliest tornado year in the U.S. ever



A Facebook page dedicated to tornado recovery in Joplin, MO attracted

123,000

members within days of a devastating tornado

The page mobilized volunteers & assisted in the search for survivors



An employee of a hospital in Joplin used Facebook to successfully locate 1,100 missing hospital workers

Tuscaloosa, AL, created **Tuscaloosa Forward**, a social media website that let residents share ideas for rebuilding



300 IDEAS

shared
by
over

4,000
VISITORS



1 = 200 visitors

A school system in **Tuscaloosa** posted a request for volunteers to help with school cleanup efforts on social networks

[80 arrived **in** **30** **minutes** **]**
volunteers under

HAITI EARTHQUAKE



Number of Tweets containing the words "Haiti" or "Red Cross" between January 12 and January 14, 2010:



2.3 MILLION

189,024

of those contained the number

● = 10,000 Tweets



Texting that number sent a \$10 donation to the Red Cross

\$10.00

Survivors took to social media to alert aid agencies of their need. Countless lives were saved by volunteers monitoring social networks



This raised \$3 million the first 48 hours

\$3 MILLION



Number of tsunami-related Tweets sent each minute during the tsunami and resulting nuclear fallout:



1,188



27 MILES



One hospital in Japan, **located just 27 miles from the Fukushima nuclear plant**, desperately needed to move 80 patients away from the danger



HURRICANE SANDY



At its peak, Instagram users uploaded Sandy-related photos at a rate of :

T E N every S E C O N D

Facebook mentions of "Hurricane Sandy" and "Frankenstorm" increased by



Top 5 Shared Terms on Facebook

1. we are ok
2. power
3. damage
4. hope everyone is ok
5. trees

FEMA tweeted to its Twitter followers:

"Phone lines may be congested during/ after #Sandy. Let loved ones know you're OK by sending a text or updating your social networks."

23 RED CROSS STAFFERS



monitored **2.5 MILLION** Sandy-related social media postings



FROM RAISING MONEY TO LOCATING SURVIVORS, IT'S CLEAR THAT SOCIAL MEDIA IS QUICKLY BECOMING THE MOST EFFICIENT OUTLET FOR MANAGING DISASTER RESPONSE

Digital Disaster Operations Centre

> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkCWqIMsk2M&app=desktop>