American Red Cross

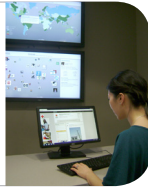# Technology Bolsters Red Cross Disaster Relief

March 2012
The Red Cross opens its Digital Operations Center—powered by Dell. A second center opens in Dallas in 2014.

November 2013
Volunteers use crowd-sourced mapping technology to assist after Typhoon Haiyan. Months later, the technology tracks the spread of the Ebola virus in Africa.

Spring 2011
Red Cross digital volunteers connect people affected by disasters to real-time information, resources and comfort. The Red Cross develops several courses to train digital volunteers.
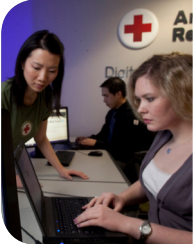
2012
The Red Cross launches its mobile app suite. Downloads spike for the Hurricane app during Hurricane Sandy and propels it to the #1 free weather app.

2006-2007
The Red Cross begins actively listening and engaging online communities on social platforms.

2008
Disaster relief workers begin using handheld GPS devices to upload disaster response maps.

2002-2004
Innovations like mobile satellite dishes, laptop computers and voice-over IP technology improve efficiency during disaster response.

2005
Interactive geographic information system (GIS) mapping goes online to support Hurricane Katrina response.

2000
Modern satellite technology enables full connectivity in disaster zones when local infrastructure is wiped out.

2002
Trucks equipped with satellite technology improve communications in remote areas and allow for pre-positioning of assets.

1992
The Red Cross uses cell phones to support relief efforts after Hurricane Andrew hits South Florida.

1989
The Red Cross deploys computers and floppy disks to track records at disaster sites.

Late 1980s to Early 1990s
Satellite phones provide communication in areas lacking infrastructure post-disaster.

1931
Amateur two-way radio users and Red Cross radio frequencies help relay messages across the country to aid disaster response.

Early 1900s
Responders utilize telephone lines for the first time.

1881
Telegraphs relay the first Red Cross disaster response communications.

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