Case Study: USACE Use of Social Media for the Great Flood of 2011

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Water, Water Everywhere ...

- More than 600% of average rainfall in a two-week period (in all the wrong places)
- Most water the nation has had in the Mississippi River and Tributaries watershed in history
- Mississippi River is breaking records at many points, with levels not seen since 1927
- More than 4 million people live or work in the affected areas
What are We to Do?

Collaborate
REPEAT
Communicate
Evaluate
Collaborate, Communicate

Birds Point New Madrid Floodway Joint Information Center

- Established April 30
- 16,340 fans within the first week
- Timely photos, videos, updates
- Answered questions by citizens affected by the New Madrid levee
- Stood up Operation Watershed FB Page on May 6 (9,300 fans)
And Repeat ...

- Headquarters captured all Joint Information Center, Division and District updates
- Reposted updates via HQ Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter accounts in order to reach a larger audience.
- Headquarters also captured and posted updates from FEMA, The National Weather Service, and the National Guard.
Evaluate

- On average, a Facebook Page has 4,596 fans.
- Four percent of pages have more than 10,000 fans, 0.76% of pages have more than 100,000 fans, and 0.05% of pages have more than a million fans.
- Michael Jackson is the most popular page on Facebook, with 10 million fans
  - 16,340 fans within the first week on Birds Point Page
  - 9,300 fans on Operation Watershed Page
Evaluate

- Some 53% of YouTube's videos have fewer than 500 views.
- About 30% have less than 100 views.
- Meanwhile, just 0.33% have more than 1 million views.
- 3,558 views of the Operation Watershed Video
- 29% of tweets actually produce a reaction - that is, a reply or a retweet.
- Just 6% of all tweets are retweeted. Virtually all retweets happen within the first hour after the original tweet.
- 468 USACE tweets regarding flooding, 17 retweets—3.6%
Coverage

Army Corps uses social media to spread flood news

Reported by: John Snell, Anchor
Email: jsnell@fox8tv.net
Last Update: 5/07 8:32 pm
Lessons Learned

- Collectively come up with *one* fan page for the entire mission or rely on the *existing* Division and/or District fan pages
- Remember rules for release of information
- Place information on agency’s public websites…
Contact Information

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