COORDINATING RESPONSE EFFORTS AFTER HURRICANE SANDY

Hurricane Sandy struck the Eastern Seaboard in October 2012. Team Rubicon, a disaster response organization composed of military veterans, was the first national non-profit organization to deploy into affected areas. Team Rubicon set up a command center on New York's Rockaway Peninsula and used Palantir Gotham to coordinate response efforts.

THE PROBLEM

After any natural disaster, there is a critical period of time between the disaster itself and the arrival of conventional, state-supported aid. Team Rubicon filled this gap after Hurricane Sandy by deploying Veteran Emergency Response Teams (VERTs) to provide necessary supplies, clear transportation routes, and coordinate over 10,000 spontaneous volunteers. To perform these tasks efficiently, Team Rubicon needed a way to collect requests for assistance, communicate the requests to the command center, and prioritize them according to urgency.

PALANTIR'S SOLUTION

Palantir sent several engineers to camp out at Team Rubicon's command center in the Rockaways. There, they partnered with team leaders to develop an application that enabled volunteers to enter requests for assistance into Palantir Gotham through web-enabled mobile devices. Within days, volunteers on the ground were using iPads and smart phones to file requests for water, medical supplies, and home repairs in Palantir Gotham, where they were aggregated and analyzed as part of Team Rubicon's broader operation. Volunteers also used the mobile devices to capture photos of flooded spaces, damaged buildings, and blocked roads, which were entered into Palantir Gotham as media objects and used to inform response planning.

Analysts at Team Rubicon's command center used Palantir Gotham to maintain situational awareness across all response activities. Coordinators tracked volunteer progress and dispatched additional support as needed. Analysts at Team Rubicon's command center also used Palantir to connect to data sources provided by other organizations, including information on fuel availability, power grids, and available medical clinics. Volunteers on the ground accessed this information using Palantir and relayed the information to affected individuals. Using Palantir Gotham's Map application, dispatchers could see where volunteers were located in relation to damaged houses, and re-position volunteer groups to areas of highest demand.

PALANTIR'S IMPACT & RESULTS

» In less than a day, Palantir engineers developed a plug-in that allowed volunteers to **collect requests for assistance in real time** using smart phones and iPads.

» Using Palantir Gotham, **analysts at the command center monitored response efforts** in real time and dispatched volunteers to areas of greatest need.

» "The Palantir software acts as **a force multiplier**. The software addresses a common problem in dispatching crews for disaster relief: lack of real-time communication."

> — Ford Sypher,
> Regional Director,
> Team Rubicon

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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