

American Red Cross, National Capital Area Chapter

Case Study



The American Red Cross is a humanitarian, volunteer-led organization that provides relief to victims of disasters and helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. The National Capital Area Chapter serves the Washington, D.C., area and also provides assistance at the state, national or international level.

OBJECTIVE

The Red Cross National Capital Area Chapter wanted to empower its staff and volunteers to provide a higher level of service for disaster relief and mass care. This nonprofit organization chose to conduct a pilot study that would use CDMA2000 1xEV-DO technology to allow workers wireless access to email, the Internet and custom Red Cross applications. The study would also help the Red Cross National Capital Area Chapter better understand how high-speed wireless capabilities can change the way it accesses critical disaster-relief information.

SOLUTION DESCRIPTION

The Red Cross National Capital Area Chapter teamed with Zumasys, a technology solutions integrator, to develop a CDMA2000 1xEV-DO-based solution that enables Red Cross relief workers to improve the service level for disaster relief and mass care.

The solution relies on Panasonic®, Dell™ and HP®/Compaq® laptops equipped with Verizon Wireless™ PC 5220 cards. Citrix® MetaFrame® Presentation Server, a remote access infrastructure that allows staffers and volunteers to wirelessly access key applications such as Microsoft® Outlook®, the Red Cross CHERS database, a web-based application that activates Client Assistance Cards and a FrontRange Solutions® GoldMine® database that stores additional information. Verizon Wireless provides the data service over its CDMA2000 1xEV-DO network in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area.

CHERS is a custom application for managing caseloads and the delivery of services such as lodging, food and clothing that are provided to disaster victims. With 1xEV-DO, workers can now



www.redcrossdc.org

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

- The American Red Cross National Capital Area Chapter helps people in the Washington, D.C., area prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies that may be local or at the state, national or international level.

OBJECTIVE

- Provide a higher level of service for disaster relief and mass care
- Pilot EV-DO to provide wireless access to email, the Internet and custom Red Cross applications for disaster relief
- Understand how 3G CDMA-based high-speed wireless data solutions can change the way that the Red Cross does business

SOLUTION DESCRIPTION

- Panasonic, Dell and HP/Compaq laptops outfitted with Verizon Wireless 5220 PC cards and running Citrix MetaFrame Presentation Server
- Wireless connectivity through the Verizon Wireless CDMA2000 1X and 1xEV-DO network
- Access to Microsoft Outlook, the Red Cross CHERS database of disaster victims, a web-based expense card activation software application and FrontRange Solutions GoldMine database

RESULTS

- Provided better coordinated mass-care services to 140,000 attendees at the World War II Memorial events in May 2004
- Increased response capabilities and responsiveness for disaster relief
- Evaluated how to expand the initial use of EV-DO to full-scale adoption, incorporating it into the organization's standard operating procedures

use CHERS in real time, rather than writing everything down and driving back to the office to enter the information into the system.

“We have seen how our business can be changed by CDMA high-speed wireless technology,” says Jim Kiker, director of IT at the Red Cross National Capital Area Chapter.

RESULTS

In May 2004, the Red Cross decided to use 1xEV-DO to help provide mass care for the World War II Memorial events. More than 140,000 visitors, including elderly veterans, attended the events in Washington, D.C. Ease of deployment for the wireless solution was paramount, as time was short. Kiker met with Zumasys less than a week before the May events,

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*Jim Kiker
Director of IT
American Red Cross National Capital
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and they sped up production deployment. Zumasys equipped five laptops and fully configured the EV-DO service a mere three days before the event.

The National Capital Area Chapter staged water and first aid supplies out of RFK stadium, the District of Columbia Mall and other sites and provided medical treatment to visitors. Staff and volunteers used EV-

DO-enabled laptops from two mobile command centers. They gained real-time access to information, which resulted in better coordination of volunteers and supplies throughout the weekend.

The high-speed EV-DO solution also supports Red Cross disaster-relief efforts. When it has warning of an impending major disaster, the Red Cross activates a rapid deployment team. Now the relief workers take their EV-DO-enabled laptops on-site, so they are up and running on the first day. Prior to this technology, the staff mainly relied on two-way radios and pen and paper.

In addition, EV-DO has shortened the time it takes the Red Cross to activate its new Client Assistance Cards. Disaster victims receive these debit cards, which are authorized for certain purchases. EV-DO lets dispatchers activate the cards over the Internet using wireless devices, rather than finding a wired connection. Quicker activation of the Client Assistance Cards gets disaster victims back on their feet faster.

Because of the success so far, the National Capital Area Chapter is increasing its use of wireless and developing procedures that will allow for a full-scale adoption—and change how the Red Cross manages its business. “EV-DO supports the business very well,” Kiker says. “The feedback from our disaster-relief department is very positive.”



American Red Cross is a 2004 finalist for the A-List Award in the Nonprofit category.

The 3G cdma-A-List Awards program honors the leading builders of successful wireless data solutions based on 3G CDMA2000 1X or 1xEV-DO technology. **To learn more about the A-List, please visit www.qualcomm.com/enterprise**

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

The A-List also recognizes supporting partners for their enabling role in assisting winners with their wireless data deployments.

