Digital Volunteerism during Crisis Events: Crafting the Crowd for Response

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NetHope Webinar
July 25, 2017
Evacuation notice for Eldorado Springs just ordered. Officials are telling residents to head to the barn @ 2875 Cty Rd 67 #boulderflood

11:22 PM - 12 Sep 2013

74 RETWEETS 1 FAVORITE
Citizen Reporting

From a viewer in Lyons. Wow. #9news. #boulderflood
pic.twitter.com/wuvxr16ZqX
2:41 PM - 12 Sep 2013
Digital Volunteerism

Boulder Flood Relief
8,451 likes - 25 talking about this

Community
THE PROBLEM ISN'T OVER! REQUEST HELP or VOLUNTEER at boulderfloodrelief.org. @BoulderFlood #boulderfloodrelief

Need Help?
Want to Volunteer?
Sign Up at boulderfloodrelief.org
Digital Volunteerism
Digital Volunteerism - Organization Types
Digital Volunteerism - Organization Types

- Emergent Organizing
"Crowdsourced reports streaming in from New York’s Dutchess, Ulster, Sullivan, Schoharie and Greene counties show firsthand images and accounts of businesses, homes and entire towns entirely engulfed by water."
RT @SpyDrMedia I am stunned. we have gotten supplies in. saved ppl from rubble. brought them doctors. we have the best team! We R voluntwitters!

4:03 PM - 20 Jan 2010

Digital Volunteerism: Emergent Organizing

2010 Haiti Earthquake
“I think that’s when I went on Twitter and started tweeting. Then I discovered a whole bunch of people tweeting for Haiti and started doing it myself and building up connections as much as I could in order to try to save some lives if possible.”
Digital Volunteerism - Organization Types

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- Digital Volunteer Organizations
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Digital Volunteer Organizations

Virtual Operations Support Teams (VOSTs)
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- Virtual Operations Support Teams (VOSTs)

Trusted online volunteers mobilize to contribute in pre-determined ways to an organization’s response.
How do Digital Volunteers Work?
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Different Approaches to Organization of Work

1. Traditional (Hierarchical, Top-Down)
2. Improvised and Collaborative (Lateral)
3. Routinized, “Microtasks” (Distributed)
How do Digital Volunteers Work?

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Many Digital Volunteer Organization are Hybrid
How do Digital Volunteers Work?

Two Types of Engagement

1. Episodic
2. Committed
Why are they volunteering?
Why are they volunteering?

Several motivation profiles

1. Altruistic
2. Reputation
3. Social Engagement - Bridging
4. Social Engaging - Bonding
5. Self-Actualization
6. Financial?
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Motivations may change over time.
Why are they volunteering?

Specific drivers for disaster-related volunteerism

1. Connection the affected location
2. Previous experience w/ a similar event
3. Relevant expertise
   - Knowledge about the location
   - Specific skill set
Mapping Motivations to Organizations & Workflows

Commitment
- Episodic
- Committed

Motivation
- Altruistic
- Reputation
- Social (bridging)
- Social (bonding)
- Self-actualization

Workflow
- Hierarchical
- Lateral
- Distributed
- Microtasks
Mapping Motivations to Organizations & Workflows

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Workflow
- Hierarchical
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- Distributed Microtasks
Commitment

Motivation

Workflow

Episodic

Committed

Altruistic

Reputation

Social (bridging)

Social (bonding)

Self-actualization

Hierarchical

Lateral

Distributed

Microtasks
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Workflow
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- Lateral
- Distributed Microtasks
Recommendations

Training

Opportunity for Social Engagement

Visibility

FEEDBACK!
Thank you!

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