



Customer Success Story

Department of Defense's APAN Leverages Community Technology to Aid in Disaster Relief

Customer:

All Partners Access Network (APAN), US Department of Defense (DOD), US Pacific Command (USPACOM)



The All Partners Access Network (APAN), formally known as the Asia Pacific Area Network, is a community of unclassified web portals offering information exchange in a collaborative planning environment to enhance partnership building, security cooperation initiatives, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and event planning. APAN bridges the gap between US military, foreign military and non-government organizations. APAN is hosted by Commander, US Pacific Command (USPACOM) and was first developed in 1999. The military planned to use APAN to communicate across borders, particularly in countries without sophisticated communication technology.

APAN provides a unique military operational capability necessary to support multi-agency operations, government and non-government organizations during complex operations and events. Over the past 11 years APAN has used a variety of software applications and tools in support of its mission. In January 2009, APAN began designing a new software application based upon social networking principles in an easy to use community with file sharing applications, wikis, blogs, chat and calendar tools. This new software would enable both government and non-government users to openly communicate with people across the globe.

Industry:

Government

Products:

Telligent Community
Telligent Analytics

URL:

community.apan.org

Challenge

APAN was identified as the primary information sharing platform during Haiti Humanitarian Aid/Disaster Relief Response Efforts

The new APAN community was in the evaluation process, but it had not been launched when Haiti was devastated by an earthquake on January 12, 2010. US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) was charged with humanitarian response coordination following the earthquake. A swift decision was made that APAN would be the central communication hub throughout the response. SOUTHCOM decided to use APAN as the primary unclassified, non-military Haiti information sharing, collaboration and communication hub during emergency response operations.

“There is no question the flexibility of Telligent Community enabled us to hit the ground running... and save lives.”

Jerry Giles, Chief of Information Services Management (ISM), USPACOM, APAN Branch

Solution

APAN launched an emergency response community to leverage instant unstructured information sharing

APAN was used to swiftly launch a Haiti relief community on January 13, a full 10 months ahead of its software development schedule. APAN service desk support and software development engineers worked 24 hours a day to modify and increase community capabilities. Even though APAN was still in the development and evaluation phase, it was used to support all Haiti relief unclassified coordination operations.

The use of the APAN community during the Haiti relief operations signaled a fundamental shift in US military communications from “top-down” structured data architecture to a more horizontal collaborative, unstructured data community technology. APAN, a component of PACOM, leveraged Telligent Community to connect international relief agencies, non-governmental organizations, military teams, and other agencies.

The importance of unstructured data quickly became evident during the Haiti response. APAN community collaboration tools include forums, used to tag content and set up dialog on specific issues; a chat tool that allows for real time collaboration; wikis for ease of dissemination and retrieval; and mobile Mail Gateway that makes APAN services accessible to mobile users (email and SMS text). Finally, file sharing is enabled for more than 3,500 files (imagery, photos, documents). APAN was also integrated with various features of other systems and data sources including Google, In Relief Mapping, Sahana (Disaster Management System), Ushahidi and AIMS (bio-surveillance tracking).

APAN chose Telligent for several critical reasons: very little, if any, downtime; scalability; integration capabilities; quick, responsive support; simple user interface; mobile access; and analytics. Customization was of particular importance when choosing a platform. PACOM needed a solution to suit a wide range of customers, and the flexibility and adaptability of Telligent Community made it an ideal fit.

APAN leverages Telligent Analytics to understand usage and apply best practices for the next disaster. By evaluating usage patterns after a disaster, resources can be more swiftly dispatched and efficiently allocated.

“For the first time in a disaster response, I saw government and non-government organizations actually communicating and sharing information on a single platform from both the disaster site and operations center.”

Jerry Giles, Chief of Information Services Management (ISM), USPACOM, APAN Branch





Results

APAN has changed how emergency response personnel share information

APAN's successful implementation during the Haiti operations proved its value in sharing information — situation reports, imagery and other crucial statistics — with the humanitarian aid and disaster relief community. The results? A quicker response, better allocation of resources, and ultimately, lives saved.

- A post in the APAN Haiti community forum indicated family members were receiving SMS messages from a victim buried in rubble. Within 30 minutes, a reply was posted to the APAN Haiti forum that provided contact info for assistance.
- One post identified the need for emergency access to a brain scan machine. The request was answered by a donor in Miami who had a functional machine that could be donated if transportation to Haiti could be arranged. Air transportation options for the equipment were volunteered and coordinated in the same thread.
- A forum post stated that one Haitian encampment's rations of food and water were depleted. A quick response to the APAN post indicated there was a US and Canadian forces relief camp nearby.
- A hospital in Milot suffered no earthquake damage and was fully staffed and operational. Four days into the crisis only six patients had been admitted. Hospital staff tried unsuccessfully to reach out to the responder community through several other channels. Immediately upon posting to APAN, injured survivors began being transported to the hospital. Within a week, the hospital admitted nearly 250 injured patients and conducted 42 rooftop helicopter landings.

These are simply a few examples of how APAN was able to enhance relief efforts after the earthquake in Haiti. Government organizations will be able to apply best practices to prepare for the next disaster. Through the APAN community thousands of people in hundreds of organizations were connected, lives were saved, and emergency response was changed forever.

“With Telligent Community, we can customize features to meet our customers' needs and be responsive to operational demands. In our line of work, that is key to survival.”

Jerry Giles, Chief of Information Services Management (ISM), USPACOM, APAN Branch



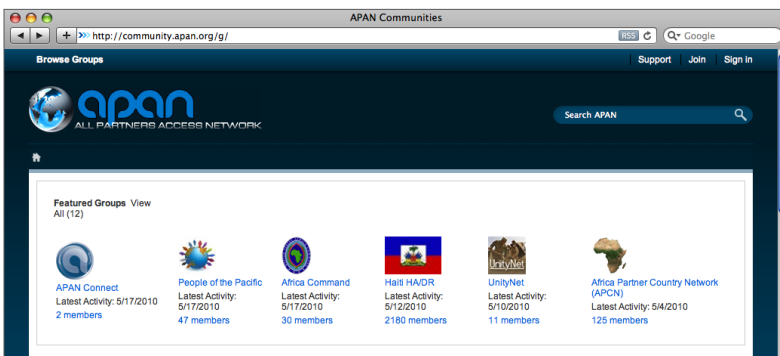
What's Next

Due to the great success achieved during the relief efforts following the earthquake in Haiti, APAN will now be the first responder destination for disasters worldwide. APAN will continue to evangelize how government organizations use collaboration technology, as the model solution and the main application into which others will be integrated.

- Leveraging Telligent Analytics will provide critical data and insight to mission commanders via a dashboard, allowing them to continually monitor communications from their desktop.
- There will be increased integration with other platforms.
- APAN plans to test the application in other military missions.
- The use of APAN for classified information will mirror unclassified.
- In the future, there will be expert locators and profiles.
- Aerial photographs will be downloaded in real time to media galleries.

About Telligent

Telligent is an enterprise collaboration and community software company. The company's fully integrated platform and portfolio of applications transform how organizations listen to, engage and measure interaction with customers, partners and employees. Telligent powers collaboration for many of the world's largest brands, including Dell, Microsoft, Electronic Arts and Reader's Digest. For more information, visit www.telligent.com.



“We’ve had a lot of interest from organizations around integrating their information with our community. As a result, we’re building new relationships and exploring further integration capabilities.”

Jerry Giles, Chief of Information Services Management (ISM), USPACOM, APAN Branch