

Flooded With Data

*Hurricane Harvey
Demonstrates the
Rising Value of
Social Media Content*



This viral photo from Hurricane Harvey originated on Twitter.

Torrential rains.
Massive flooding.
Millions in trouble.
And billions in damage.

When Hurricane Harvey hit Houston, chaos followed.

The fourth largest city in the U.S. had never before experienced this scale of devastation. Harvey made landfall as a Category 4 Hurricane with winds of 130 mph, dropping record-setting rains on the city and surrounding areas.

The hurricane was also the first natural disaster of this scale to strike the U.S. in the social media era. One of the most iconic photos of the event originated on social media — a small circle of senior citizens sitting waist-deep in the waters of their flooded nursing home.

This memorable image captures the growing value of publicly available information—especially social media—during natural disasters.

This particular photo was, like many posts made during the hurricane, an effort to reach emergency responders when traditional channels like 911 became overwhelmed. (And it worked. All of them were rescued.)

There were many other examples, all of which illustrate the profound versatility of social media as an all-purpose emergency communications portal:

Search and rescue:

As floodwaters rose, state and federal officials responded to people in the Houston area who needed assistance, many of whom used social media to ask for help. Images from these posts helped first responders understand the details of each individual's situation.



Shea a friend needs a boat in Cypress. 14810 Wallach Dr. They are stranded on the roof.

CHATTER
August 28, 2017 • 1:55 PM

This Dataminr alert shows detailed information about the location and circumstances of a family in need of rescue.

Protecting infrastructure:

The storm threatened major transportation networks, healthcare facilities, chemical plants, jails, and other critical infrastructure. Social media posts helped first responders react faster and prioritize those areas in greatest need.



Office building on fire downtown 🚒

CHATTER
August 28, 2017 • 10:22 AM

Seeing an image of the fire could help first responders prioritize needs and dispatch resources. It could also inform corporate security professionals of incidents happening at or near their locations.

Dataminr's corporate security clients, for example, used our real-time alerts to keep people, assets, and supply chains safe as conditions on the ground continued to worsen.

Beyond emergency response

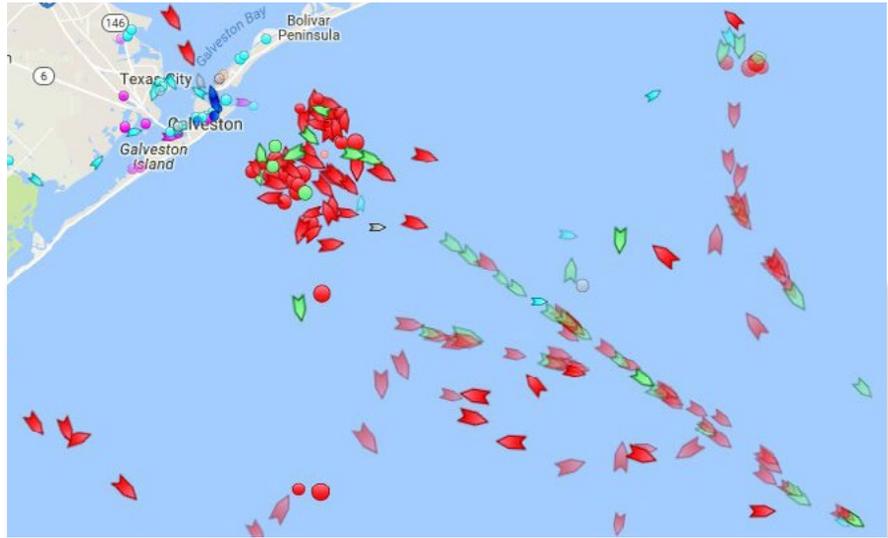
Emergency response agencies were not the only ones to benefit from information delivered through social media during Hurricane Harvey. Dataminr's corporate security clients, for example, used our real-time alerts to keep people, assets, and supply chains safe as conditions on the ground continued to worsen.

To cite just one example, Dataminr for Corporate Security clients learned about the imminent closing of the Port of Houston. A closure of this nature requires ships to alter their routes, causing massive delays and trickle-down effects for shipping, rail, and trucking providers. Receiving this information sooner than major news reporting of the incident helped our clients make alternate arrangements and minimize additional expenses at a time when the entire transportation industry was scrambling to reroute cargo and establish alternate supply lines. Follow-up alerts helped these clients navigate the aftermath of the hurricane as the industry struggled to cope with flooded roadways, truck shortages, and backlogged freight.

Financial organizations benefited from real-time alerts when the hurricane forced the closure of Motiva, the largest oil refinery in the U.S. Dataminr for Finance clients received early notice of this event, giving them extra time to take action. This was important for these firms as speculation about the closure caused a spike in gas prices when the news was finally confirmed.

For newsrooms, social media is the "tip line" of the 21st century. Millions of people use these platforms to report what they see and post photos from the scene. Eyewitness accounts enable journalists to get a jump on fast-moving stories and educate the public more quickly in times of crisis. During the hurricane, newsrooms relied on social media alerts to perform their jobs more effectively.

Learning about citizens rescuing each



Oil tankers, LNG tankers and bulk cargo carriers leaving Port of Houston ahead of #Harvey.

CHATTER
August 25, 2017 • 7:44 AM

Tankers and cargo ships left a Texas port as a precaution, resulting in costly impacts across the shipping, rail, trucking, and retail industries.



Interstate highway 45 is submerged from the effects of #Hurricane #Hary seen during widespread flooding in Houston, Office building on fire downtown

CHATTER
August 29, 2017 • 7:53 AM

Follow-up alerts like this one gave insight into flooding and closures that were affecting cargo transportation.

First Dataminr Alert:

It's happening. The biggest U.S. #refinery now shutting due to #Harvey -- Motiva Port Arthur refinery preparing to shut down -sources

REPORTER
August 29, 2017 • 1:50 PM

Early news of the Motiva Port Arthur refinery closing gave Dataminr for Finance clients extra time to prepare before a spike in gas prices. This alert came from a reporter who posted the information on Twitter before publishing it on traditional platforms.

other from flooded areas, for example, helped news organizations understand where evacuations were most needed and where to find dramatic stories of individuals going the extra mile to help each other.

In all of these examples, one of the biggest challenges social media poses for decision-makers is its volume. Manually checking social media feeds during an already chaotic and fast-moving event is not likely to produce actionable information. New technology offers a better way to do this, with solutions like Dataminr giving all kinds of organizations a more effective way to quickly identify the most relevant information and receive it automatically.

Too often, social media platforms are seen as generalized indicators of sentiment or trending topics. Disasters like Hurricane Harvey clearly demonstrate they have much more to offer. With technology that can identify critical breaking information, social media content can save time, money, resources, and even lives. (Would the response to Hurricane Katrina have been different in the social media era?) Across industries, decision-makers who must react to natural disasters would be well served to explore how to use social media as a strategic tool for real-time response.

New technology offers a better way to do this, with solutions like Dataminr giving all kinds of organizations a more effective way to quickly identify the most relevant information and receive it automatically.



Abe Minor out rescuing some folks that are flooded !! Hats off to Abe Minor! Thank you! Stafford Division in Texas!!

CHATTER
August 27, 2017 • 10:57 AM

Alerts about citizen rescues and similar events helped journalists pursue the most meaningful stories and make more informed editorial decisions.

Alert Delivered by Dataminr:

I need rescue in #meyerland asap. Water is to chest in house #houstonflood 4815 Jason please help #Harvey

CHATTER
August 27, 2017 • 8:40 AM

Citizens asking for rescue on social media spawned stories about the need for more first responders as well as this new way for people in trouble to request assistance.



by Frances Cooperman Executive Vice President of Marketing and Communications at Dataminr

Frances Cooperman manages marketing and communications for Dataminr, a leader in real-time information discovery that transforms the public Twitter stream into actionable alerts about breaking news, real-world events, off-the-radar content and emerging trends, ahead of traditional sources.

About Dataminr

Dataminr Inc discovers high-impact events and critical breaking information long before it's in the news. Dataminr has been recognized as one of the world's leading businesses in AI and Machine Learning innovation, pioneering groundbreaking technology for detecting, classifying, and determining the significance of public information in real-time. Our solutions for Corporate Security, PR/Communications, News, the Public Sector, and Finance are relied on 24/7 by thousands of clients in over 70 countries.

Experience the power of Dataminr

Learn more about Dataminr

info@dataminr.com
dataminr.com
212.292.8160



©2017 Dataminr, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
MKT-289 12/17