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Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): Updating flood maps quickly and accurately

FEMA implements Flood Map Modernization (Map Mod) to update the Nation's flood maps efficiently by providing mapping contractors with the tools to create digital flood maps and update flood information

Challenge

Working with U.S. flood maps that were out of date, FEMA could no longer accurately gauge flood risk in many areas. As a result, many properties in danger of flooding were not insured because their owners did not recognize the risk. FEMA knew it needed to update the country's flood maps, but its prior mapping process was neither digital nor automated. If FEMA went ahead with its existing processes, the updating effort would require decades of work. Instead, FEMA looked for a way to automate the full lifecycle mapping process to create digital flood maps.

Solution

To launch Map Mod, FEMA engaged a highly decentralized team of independent mapping contractors, giving them the tools and associated training they need online. FEMA uses its Mapping Information Platform (MIP) to provide these contractors with:

- Mapping tools to produce and maintain digital flood hazard data and maps
- Program management tools to monitor and control map development

- Access to flood hazard data and maps via the Internet
- A state-of-the-art, secure, scalable and reliable infrastructure

Benefits of innovation

- Gives community planners and local officials a better understanding of flood hazards and risks to their community
- Provides detailed information to builders and developers for making decisions on where to build and how construction can affect flood zones
- Offers one-stop access to flood map updates for insurance agents, companies and lending institutions
- Helps home and business owners to make more informed decisions about their current flood risks

IBM is proud to host FEMA's portal (<https://hazards.fema.gov>), providing the public with fast, easy access to information online on disasters and hazards, including floods.

FEMA: Stemming the tide of disaster with better information.