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## St. Louis Area Regional Response System (STARRS): Setting new standards for rapid disaster response

A regional disaster response agency implements a revolutionary rapid response system, leveraging wireless technology for real-time information sharing

### Challenge

When disaster strikes, every second counts. One of STARRS' top responsibilities is to deploy resources rapidly to protect people in case of a catastrophic event. Yet, until recently, the system's telecommunications equipment and supporting information technology (IT) infrastructure was not fully up to the task. This made it very difficult to manage potentially critical situations, which require quick decision-making and action.

STARRS needed a cutting-edge rapid response system that could provide fast and reliable communication, powerful collaboration tools and integrated incident response management. The goals for the new system were threefold: to evolve with STARRS changing needs, to deliver maximum value from the IT investment, and to provide the best and fastest service delivery possible for the people of the St. Louis area.

### Solution

The new Rapid Response system is a fully integrated solution of world-class technologies. Built using IBM hardware and software, it provides:

- Seamless communications
- Powerful collaboration tools
- Pervasive technologies
- Incident response management
- Geo-spatial mapping

The system is designed to handle day-to-day emergency response as well as catastrophic response. A highly resilient wireless communications network ensures rapid communication at all times. First-responder units are now equipped with Wireless Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), ensuring communications even when power and telephone lines are inoperative. A single portal provides access to over 1,000 employees at once, enabling all key personnel to view critical data at the same time—including assets and resources—enabling them to make well-informed decisions for their communities.

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The result: A solution that is transforming how agencies in the St. Louis area work together by delivering seamless wireless access and real-time data exchange.

### Benefits of innovation

- Expected increase in responder productivity of 10-15% during emergencies
- Greater public safety
- Optimizes the use of county-to-county resources through inter-county monitoring of the information portal, providing citizens with faster and better recovery strategies
- Serves as a nationwide model of multi-disciplinary integration

STARRS: a revolutionary new model for swift, synchronized disaster response.