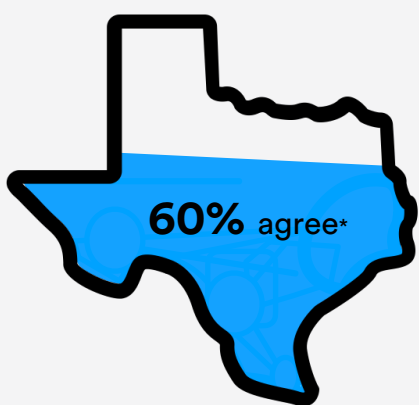


Extreme Weather Sparks Emergency Preparedness Trend

CLIMATE CHANGE FORCES BEHAVIORAL SHIFTS

Last month, Texas experienced several winter storms that brought with them abnormally cold weather, resulting in massive power failures and shortages of water, heat, and food. The dire conditions brought on by this real-world impact of climate change has people thinking about how prepared they would be in the face of a crisis. According to ML:Next's latest research, 60% of people agree that recent events have caused them to think about how they can prepare for emergencies. Undoubtedly, **these events will begin to impact consumer behavior, providing companies and brands with a unique opportunity to arm people with the resources they need.** While brands have historically supported victims in emergencies by shipping products or donating to relief organizations, the important role of technology in consumers' lives provides an opportunity to leverage new solutions to help people through these challenges.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IS TOP-OF-MIND



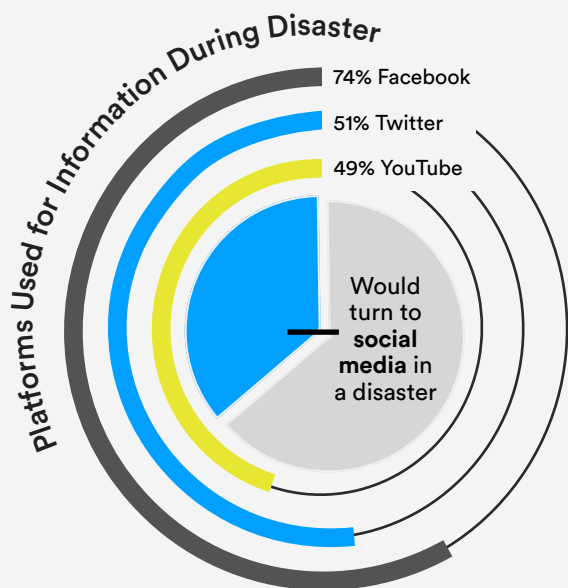
“The recent events in Texas have made me think about how I can prepare for natural disasters or severe weather.”

Q: “How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”
* % somewhat or strongly agree

TECHNOLOGY AS A LIFELINE

Technology-enabled platforms and apps are integral in disseminating necessary information during disasters. **People in crisis report seeking out vital information from diverse channels, each with unique content catered to its core audiences.** Some of the most popular channels include news outlets (59%), radio stations (48%), and government websites (35%). **More than one-third of respondents said they'd turn to social media in a disaster**, with the top social platforms being Facebook (74%), Twitter (51%), and YouTube (49%).

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE IN DISASTERS



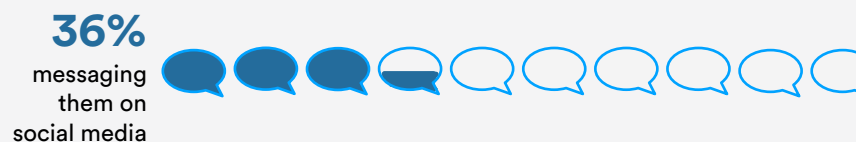
Q: “If you were to experience a natural disaster or severe weather, where would you turn for information about what to do to remain safe and healthy? Select all that apply.”
“Which of the following social media platforms would you turn to for information?”

Social media is particularly critical for urban dwellers, with 49% using social media when looking for up-to-date information on breaking news, more than those in suburban (36%) and rural (36%) areas. Newer platforms such as Reddit (27%)*, Snapchat (25%)*, and TikTok (23%)* appear to be more popular among urban respondents. Fewer suburbanites use these new platforms, sticking with traditional media such as TV news (63%)* and radio (52%)*.

People are reliant on technology to connect with loved ones impacted by a disaster or emergency. Outside of calling and texting, **social media was the most frequently cited contact method among respondents**—slightly more than one-third utilizing social media direct messaging (36%) and a similar proportion checking their accounts (34%). In recent years, platforms including Facebook have rolled out tools like “Safety Check” to let others know that they are safe. These social platform features are widely known, with nearly half of respondents having already seen or used this functionality during emergencies.

*Note low base size:

WAYS OF REACHING OUT TO THOSE IMPACTED



Note: One icon represents 10%

Q: “If there were a natural disaster or severe weather where you know somebody, how would you check in on them? Select all that apply.”

EXAMPLES

Social-Powered Connections During Emergencies



Facebook's Safety Check feature is activated in the platform during disasters and terror-related events. The feature allows users in affected locations to quickly check-in to notify friends and family that they are safe.



Snapchat released their Snap Map feature, enabling users to locate people whose posts are public. Snapchat has also become a useful tool for documenting real-time preparation efforts, storm progress, and the destruction storms cause.



Google created Person Finder, a free tool that is switched on in response to natural or humanitarian disasters. It helps people share vital information and reconnect with friends and loved ones to ensure that they are safe.

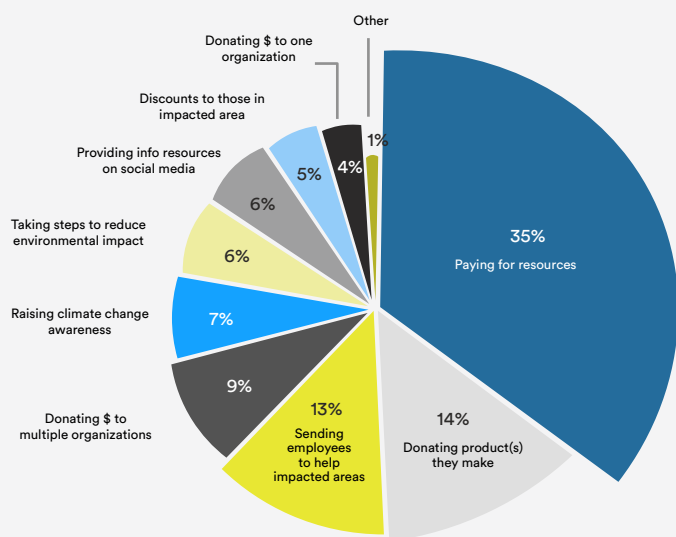
Extreme Weather Sparks Emergency Preparedness Trend

TANGIBLE RELIEF AND AMPLIFICATION OF INFORMATION

When it comes to how brands can play a role, roughly two in three consumers agree that it would be helpful if brands shared important information during disasters or severe weather. If they're unable to provide resources or human assistance, brands can help by sharing content containing helpful information. But brands must walk a fine line between altruistic and self-serving motivations. Forty-five percent "agree" that it is insincere for brands to post non-informational content about natural disasters or severe weather.

Respondents also report that brands can step in by paying for resources, e.g., food, water, or supplies, (35%), donating products they make (14%), or sending employees to the affected communities to provide help (13%).

BRANDS' OPPORTUNITIES TO ASSIST



Q: "In the wake of a natural disaster or severe weather, which of the following actions from a brand do you think would have the biggest impact on the affected communities? Select one."

Retail chains have a unique opportunity as aggregators of a wide variety of brands and items across product categories. Smart retailers, recognizing the opportunity, could help prepare consumers by selling emergency kits. Eighty nine percent of respondents think it would be helpful for retailers like Walmart, Target, and Amazon to create these emergency kits. There is a great need for them—nearly a third of people report not having an emergency kit at home or in their car, and even less have an emergency meetup location (18%). Brands, partnered with retailers, have an opportunity to connect with customers by creating emergency checklists and kits tailored to different disaster scenarios customized for each region in the U.S. based on its unique risk factors.

MANY ARE UNDERPREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY

89% Helpful if retailers create emergency kits

49% Have kit at home

30% Have kit in the car

18% Have meetup location

32% Don't have emergency kit



Q: "Would you find it helpful if big box brands (e.g., Walmart, Target, Amazon, etc.) created emergency kits?"
"Do you have any of the following for disaster emergencies? Select all that apply."

EXAMPLES

Leveraging a Brand's Products and Services in Disasters



Bass Pro Shops donated resources during Hurricane Harvey, including nearly 100 boats to government agencies and rescue organizations for rescue efforts in devastated areas.



During Hurricane Irma, Tesla released a software update to owners in Florida, allowing drivers to extend their battery life at no additional charge to help them evacuate during the storm.



Airbnb started a program that gives hosts on the platform the option of providing free accommodations to disaster victims and aid workers deployed to the location.

A THREE-TIERED APPROACH TO DISASTER RESPONSE

Brands should think about their approach to natural and humanitarian disasters in three parts: before, during, and after.

BEFORE

The preparedness phase

"Emergency preparedness" has been increasingly top-of-mind, with the term seeing a notable uptick in Google searches since February. Several start-ups, including JUDY, hello harbor, and Uncharted Supply Co., have recognized the opportunity and now offer an array of turn-key solutions for consumers. Similarly, brands in the retail and consumer goods spaces should consider selling preassembled emergency preparedness kits or sharing checklists for DIY kits. At a higher level, this is the phase where brands need to develop an internal plan that details how resources and assets might be positioned before and deployed during an emergency situation.

DURING

When events are unfolding and in their immediate wake

This is a time when people need real-time support in the form of essential resources or through facilitating information-sharing. Brands that operate in sectors like travel, retail, and healthcare are ideally positioned to act as "corporate first responders." Those with a prominent social media following can leverage it to share vital information. Travel companies can repurpose transportation assets to move people or resources. Retailers can utilize their supply chains as a distribution network for supplies. Healthcare workers can check in on those with medical conditions who live in the affected areas.

AFTER

An open-ended period of time marked by rebuilding and recovery

Financial support becomes most critical here. Financial services, for example, can showcase their commitment to the community by financially investing in local rebuilding efforts. More generally, all organizations can use this "post-emergency" time period to assess the impact of their efforts and evaluate opportunities to support long-term, always-on CSR efforts such as climate change initiatives.

Rather than trying to offer a little bit of help in a lot of different ways, brands should be strategic by considering their areas of expertise and the products and services they provide. These capabilities are unique to each business and can be utilized in new and innovative ways. Targeted deployment of these capabilities will be more effective in aiding recovery efforts and fostering authentic emotional connections with consumers.