

## American Red Cross San Diego

*“The flood of support for the American Red Cross during this terrible San Diego tragedy has been heartwarming, and gratefully appreciated. More than \$1 million has been collected through our website at [www.sdarc.org](http://www.sdarc.org), which helped tremendously to keep our phone banks manageable.”*

**Jeff Wiemann, Chief Financial Officer**  
American Red Cross San Diego/Imperial Counties Chapter

### The Challenge

**Sunday, October 26, 5:21PM**

The call came in. It was the American Red Cross San Diego/Imperial Counties chapter (SDARC), asking Kintera Inc. to help the nonprofit organization raise funds for immediate relief of victims and manage volunteers in the wake of the worst wildfires in San Diego history. Financial gifts would enable the Red Cross to quickly provide shelter, food, counseling and other assistance to those in need.

### The Solution

**Sunday, October 26, 5:32 PM**

Kintera, an innovative provider of software as a service for nonprofits, mobilized a team of web developers and marketers within minutes to plan and execute a highly coordinated, efficient online disaster campaign for the Red Cross. With no time to spare, Kintera agreed to build a secure software platform to enable online donations and volunteer registrations for the organization based in San Diego.

### The Goal

- Create an easy-to-use emergency website – melded seamlessly with the organization’s website at [www.sdarc.org](http://www.sdarc.org) – with online donation and “spread the word” capabilities.
- Guarantee that the online donation collection function will handle the expected rush of activity, and ensure that all funds get to The American Red Cross.
- Rally local media to direct donors to the site.
- And finally, add to the site a volunteer section where community members can designate any of various jobs they want to do to help during the emergency.

The 105-year-old American Red Cross counts on the Internet to play an integral role in the secure collection and management of donations, registration of volunteers and other areas of operation to provide efficiency for the national organization.

Each chapter has its own website, with information specific to the location. In response to the San Diego wildfires, online contributors were offered a choice of donating to:

- National Disaster Relief Fund designated to the Southern California Wildfires
- National Disaster Relief Fund
- Other (can be specifically used to designate donations for San Diego County)

### The Results

**Sunday, October 26, 7:09 PM**

The donation and “spread the word” website to aid victims of the San Diego wildfires was built and launched in less than two hours. Donors could give using a credit card, an electronic check or funds from their PayPal account. They could also use easy online tools to spread the word to family and friends, and encourage support.

**Sunday, October 26, 7:13 PM**

With help from local San Diego broadcast media in generating exposure for the disaster website including the secure donation area, the first online donation came in – a \$75 gift made with a credit card. Two minutes later, a second donation of \$25 came in, and then, a \$500 credit card contribution was sent. The site was working.

**Sunday, October 26, 9:00 PM**

Just two hours after the disaster relief website went live for the American Red Cross, 109 online donations totaling \$11,447 were received to help support the hundreds of San Diego residents who were displaced by the fire – many losing everything they owned. And by the end of the day, \$22,883 was raised from 223 donations.

**Monday, October 27, 10:47 AM**

Monday morning, the Kintera team executed the second phase of the emergency plan, and posted the volunteer registration section.

*(Continued)*



**Monday, October 27, 2:39 PM**

The first online volunteer completed the form. Three and a half hours later, 37 volunteers were on board.

**Monday, October 27, 7:20 PM**

An upgraded volunteer form was posted, enabling volunteers to choose from seven tasks – shelter work, feeding operations, logistics, casework, nursing, assessment, and phone bank. Almost immediately, a volunteer signed online to help with nursing. Fifteen seconds later, another volunteered for shelter work, and eighteen seconds later, a supporter signed on for five of the seven assignments (all but nursing and assessment).

**Monday, October 27, 11:59 PM**

By the end of the second day, the American Red Cross saw an outpouring of kindness with 2,197 donations totaling \$282,388, and 113 generous volunteers offering to help. Most donations were sent within the first 72 hours after Kintera developed the online donation and spread the word functionality for the organization. With encouragement from Kintera, the local San Diego media also helped by featuring the [www.sdarc.org](http://www.sdarc.org) URL in newspaper articles, on radio and television news, posted on websites and scrolling it on-air during the NFL Monday Night Football broadcast.

## The Results

The ease and security of using the Internet resulted in an outpouring of online donations and web-based volunteer registrations for the local chapter of the American Red Cross, according to Jeff Wiemann, CFO at the organization.

Results for the American Red Cross San Diego/Imperial Counties chapter wildfires disaster relief include:

- \$1,003,315 raised online with 6,867 donations from contributors using credit cards, electronic checks and PayPal.
- 1,071 people volunteered their services in support of The Red Cross disaster relief efforts.
- 370 people used the “forward to a friend” email tool to send 2,623 emails to tell families and friends about the emergency, and encourage support.

**Figure 1** is a graph of the amount of donations that came online through the site between October 26 and November 17.

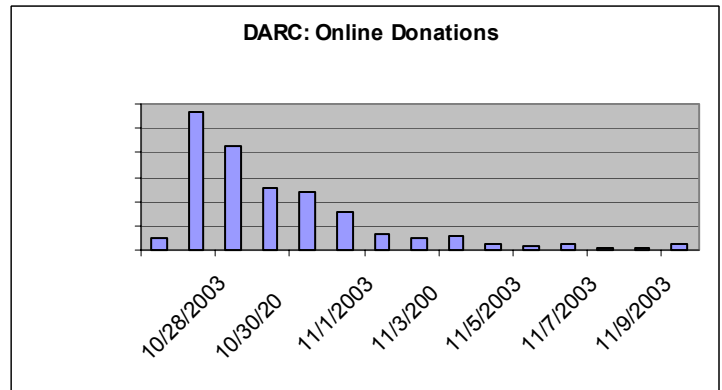


Figure 1: Fifteen Days of Online Donations

**Figure 2** is a graph of the donations that came in online through the site on October 27.

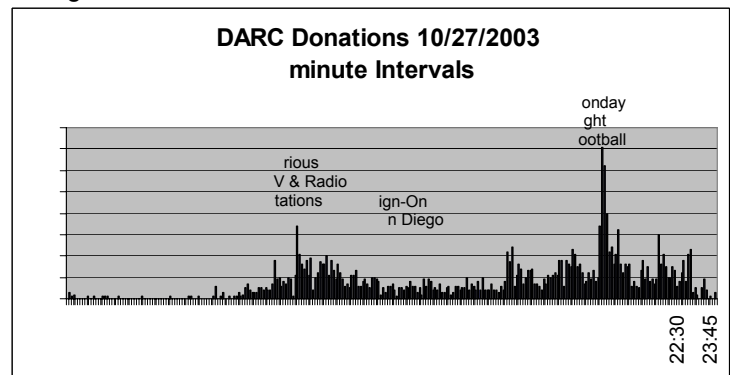


Figure 2: Twenty-Four Hours of Online Donations

**Figure 3** is a graph of the number of volunteers that signed online through the site between October 27 and November.

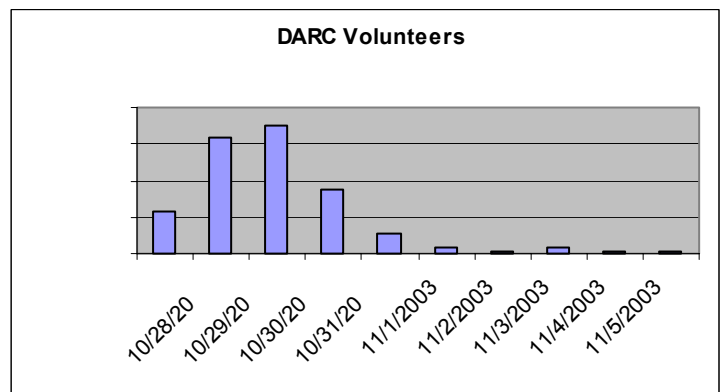


Figure 3: Ten Days of Volunteer Registrations  
(Continued)



## The Conclusion

The Internet can be used for managing rapid response to disaster relief, generating and collecting donations, and acquiring and categorizing by task and times availability of volunteers.

Rapid response requires cross-marketing of the website using traditional and Internet media. Most of the gifts were received by the American Red Cross in San Diego within the first 72 hours, highlighting the need for immediate response so as not to miss the peak of community response.

The Internet also allows for highly detailed donor information, including both the intent of gifts and detailed information about availability for volunteering. Of most importance, websites built on robust database systems allow for convenient interactions with donors, immediate recognition of donors and the establishment of a long-term digital relationship, to be leveraged in future disaster responses.

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## About Kintera

Kintera® Inc. is an innovative provider of software as a service that helps nonprofit organizations foster a powerful sense of community to achieve their mission. Kintera's Knowledge Interaction technology strengthens an organization's community by providing volunteers, members, donors and staff web-based tools to efficiently fulfill their tasks and share real-time data and information. The company's Internet innovations include its Friends Asking Friends® solicitation program and Kintera Sphere™, an enterprise-grade software system that provides content management, contact management, communication tools, commerce applications, community-building features and reporting functions. Kintera's technology is built on a unified database and payment processing engine. A web browser is all that is needed to use Kintera Sphere to help increase donations, reduce fundraising costs and build awareness and affinity for a cause.

## Find Out More

To learn more about how Kintera can help you:

***Raise More Funds • Reach More People • Run More Effectively***

Visit us today:



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