



Business Continuity: **HURRICANE HARVEY**

In August 2017, Hurricane Harvey made landfall on U.S. shores leaving large portions of Texas underwater and claiming its place in history as one of the costliest hurricanes on record.

In a four-day period beginning on the 23rd of August, many areas received between 40 and 60 inches of rain as the system moved slowly across eastern Texas. Harvey's unprecedented flooding caused \$125 billion in damages, destroyed thousands of homes, and disrupted more than 350,000 utility customers in its passing.

With our client's operations disabled in the impacted area, there was an extensive need for help to handle the sheer quantity of calls coming in. Clearly many callers did not know whether their homes and belongings were salvageable, and as the days turned to weeks, they were negotiating utility bills for existing services in homes they were unable to occupy, and new services as they resettled, temporarily or permanently. Understandably, the sensitivity in the handling of these types of calls took on a whole new meaning.

The client needed a partner who could not only step up and flex, but also do so with an appreciation of the gravity of the situation, and a compassion that echoed the voice of the client's brand during this devastating time.

Client Details:
Major Texas Utility
Company

SOLUTION

Having accepted the call for hurricane relief support for a number of travel and hospitality clients based out of Florida in the past, Arise knew the drill when it came to flexibility. We also understood the heavy emotional burden that these calls carried. Callers were traumatized and frustrated and not every agent could truly empathize to their situation.

As the nation came to terms with the level of destruction and the extensive rebuilding that would be required, Arise appreciated that support would be needed for significantly longer than the initial few weeks expected (which, in the end, amounted to over four months of relief support when it was all said and done).

In building our ongoing support strategy in real-time, we identified that Service Partners in Florida and other hurricane prone states (over half the network) had an innate ability to strongly empathize and build a rapport with Texas customers caught in Harvey's aftermath. This helped our client strengthen customer loyalty as the state recovered, unifying with their Texas neighbors through authentic customer connections.

RESULTS

During the months following Hurricane Harvey, the Service Partners on the Arise platform were able to help our Texas client by:

- Ramping up to 116% above forecast
- Maintaining a quality score of over 84% during this difficult time
- Handling over 9k additional hours of support per month for the three months post-storm
- Providing that extra level of care to help the brand remain consumer-focused and empathetic to its impacted customer base.